

# THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY

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Substance of Speeches in New York, January 21 and May 11, 1863, the last as one of a series of Lectures before the Sixteenth Ward Republican Association.

[1] LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I understand this is a ward meeting,—the Sixteenth Ward of New York, the banner ward for radical Republicanism. [Applause.] A very good-sized meeting for a ward meeting. [Laughter.] I am glad, for the first time in my life, to be adopted into the politics of New York City, and to address a ward meeting in behalf of justice and liberty. The text of my address is, Patience and Faith. Possess your souls in patience, not as having already attained, not as if we were already perfect, but because the whole nation, as one man, has for more than a year set its face Zionward. Ever since September 22d of last year, the nation has turned its face Zionward; and ever since Burnside drew his sword in Virginia, we have moved toward that point. [Cheers.] Now, a nation moving, and moving in the right path, — what reason is there for doubt? what occasion for despair? We have found out at last the method, and we are in earnest. Patience, all the passion of great souls, makes victory certain; when the human heart is once capable of this greatest courage, no matter what clouds may be on the horizon, now and then God lifts the cloud so as to show us the blue sky behind; no matter how dark political mistake or treachery may lower, the moment comes when the North says that it is all a phantasmagoria, and behind, the great heart of the nation beats true to its destiny. [Cheers.] When I stood on this platform five months ago, men said: “You must not be surprised if blood flows in the streets. Traitors are trying to take the great Capital of the North out of our arms, and the Democratic party of the State is behind them.” But one fine morning there was prudent hesitation in the leading Democrat of Albany, and the Mayor of New York defeated him on his first move. [Cheers.] When the counties came to be represented, the leaders found an army with officers and no rank and file. And the Goliath of Connecticut Copperheads has been killed, not by a stripling, but by a girl. [Applause.] Or if we must add to her merits that of General Hamilton of Texas, the eloquent champion of the Union, then we can almost say that out of the mouths of girls and slaveholders God is perfecting liberty. [Applause.] Now I neither doubt nor despair. Gradually, one after another, the shams of the North fall away. It is to be a long fight, no local struggle, — only one part of the great fight going on the world over, and which began ages ago, — only one grand division, one army corps doing its duty in the great battle between free institutions and caste institutions, the world over. Freedom and Democracy against the institutions that rest upon classes. We may be the centre or only the outskirts of that struggle, but wherever caste lives, wherever class power exists, whether it be on the banks of the Thames or the Seine, whether by the side of the Ganges or the Danube, there the South has an ally, just as the surgeon’s knife gives pain when it touches the living fibre. [Cheers.] And against this mighty marshalling of everything that is strong in human selfishness the democracy of the North does battle. Some of our friends are anxious that able and earnest men shall go to England, make the real state of

the case known there, and so, they think, avert national collision. Instinct, Mr. Chairman, is a great matter. The ruling classes of England understand our quarrel only too well. They feel that victory for the North is ultimate ruin for them. The more of the truth you show them, the more their hearts lean to the Southern side, — their side.

[2] Every proud man who hates his brother is our enemy, every idle man too lazy to think is our enemy, every loafer who seeks a living without working for it is our enemy. [Applause.] Every honest man, asking only for his own, and willing fairly to do his part, is our ally, whether he eats rice on the banks of the Ganges or is enrolled in the army under Hooker: never till honest men realize this can there be peace or union. Till that time union means a submission to the old slavocracy, as bitter and more relentless than ever. The South counted on two allies in the ranks of her Northern enemy: one was hatred of the negro, the other Copperhead Democratic sympathy with the aristocracy of the South. She counted confidently on these allies, but found she had reckoned without her host. We have been accustomed to say on this platform, for the last ten years, that if circumstances should ever rouse to an antislavery purpose the rank and file of the Democracy, the victory for freedom would be as sure as the existence of God. The Abolitionists have always claimed that they had an invincible ally in that democratic prejudice against wealth and rank, and the ineradicable love which man has at the core for the rights of his fellow-man. [Applause.] When the war broke out, the first blow the South aimed at the Union, as if according to chemical law, crystallized that level of democracy into an antislavery mould, and from that hour to this it is the sheet-anchor of the Union, and while it holds the future is certain. The only reason why this element did not grope its way at once to victory was because it was led by men who did not intend to conquer. Our statesmen were only ready for the shibboleth, “Freedom, if necessary to save the Union”; it was a contingent freedom,—not freedom for itself and in any event. Not one of them welcomed the war as a God-given opportunity to do justice, and secure for the nation lasting, immutable peace. Under that sort of leadership we went to battle. The generals and the Cabinet meant no more than to play a part in the great drama of justice for which their hearts were not ready. Lucian tells us of an exhibition in Rome in which monkeys had been trained to take part in a play. They played their parts perfectly, for a while, before an audience composed of the beauty and fashion of the city, but in the midst of the performance some Roman wag flung upon the stage a handful of nuts, and immediately the actors were monkeys again. Our statesmen went to Washington monkeys in human attire, determined to compromise if possible; the South flung nuts among them for eighteen months, and they were on all fours for the temptation. [Laughter and applause.] That epoch is ended. As in Cromwell’s day they sloughed off such effete elements as Essex and Fairfax, we should slough off generals and statesmen; and never can we be successful till routine West Point and rotten Whiggery have been made to put on decent attire, or sent back to private life, and those put in their places who believe in absolute, uncompromising war.

[3] This real democratic element in the North is strong enough, were it one and united, to have crushed all its foes on this continent in ninety days. There never was a time since the commencement of the struggle when, if the North had been a unit, the war might not have been ended in three months; and, so ended, it would have left slavery

where it found it. But the North has never been a unit. With the North as a unit, democratic, intelligent, resolved, in earnest, the South never would have risked the struggle. But she knew that the North was divided into three great parties. One was routine, West Point, too lazy to think. [Great applause.] I resolve hunkerism into indolence and cowardice, too lazy to think, and too timid to think. The man of the past is the man who got his ideas before he was twenty, and had rather think as his father thought than take the labor of thinking himself: he is a hunker, and he will probably die such. [Laughter.] And the North had a second element, negrophobia, the Saxon contempt for a black skin, disgust with the question of the negro, hatred of him as another race, contempt for him as a slave, and weariness of the question. Outside of that was the democrat of the North, in the good sense of the term, — the man who believes in the manhood of his brother the world over, and is willing he should have his rights. Against such a North the South rebelled, — one of our hands tied up by negro hatred, and the other by constitutional scruples, and West Point on our shoulders. Against such a North the South rebelled. You remember it well, — the North that never dared to apply the line and the plummet to the ethics of its civilization,— that never dared to have a logic which would know no black, no white, when it studied its duties, — the North that, both in pulpit and in civil life, believed and obeyed the old proverb: “When the monkey reigns, let every man dance before him.” [Laughter.] As long as a wicked, contemptible institution had honors and wealth and fashion to bestow, so long the pregnant knee was crooked before it. That North the South met in battle, and she mistook, as we Abolitionists did, (that is, the issue will show whether we did mistake, we hope it is so,) how far the canker had gone, how great hold this routine of hunkerism had on the body of the people: that North, rallied for the struggle, poured out her money like water, and her sons with ever-growing willingness for the great battle betwixt democracy and slavery, betwixt God and the Devil, for the world and the century. The government was equally in the dark, equally undecided, equally uncertain what course to pursue, and for a long time we stumbled together. We have learned of events, and claim to know our times. The government seems neither to learn nor to forget anything. Why? Well, I think, because our rulers were educated as Whigs. The old Whig party, good as it was in many respects, virtuous in many of its impulses, correct in certain of its aspirations, had one great defect: it had no confidence in the people, no trust in the masses; it did not believe in the conscience or the intelligence of the million; it looked, indeed, upon the whole world as in a probate court, in which the educated and the wealthy were the guardians. And so, when our rulers entered on the great work of defending the nation in its utmost peril, they dared not fling themselves on the bosom of the million, and trust the country to the hearts of those that loved it. Your President sat in Washington, doubtful what he ought to do, how far he might go. Month after month, stumbling, faithless, uncertain, he ventured now a little step, and now another, surprised that at every step the nation were before him, ready to welcome any word he chose to say, and to support any policy he chose to submit; so that matters of vexed dispute, matters of earnest doubt, the moment the bugle gave a certain sound, have passed into dead issues. You know that when the rebellion first broke forth no man dared speak out touching the negro. The South fought to sustain slavery, and the North fought not to have it hurt. But Butler pronounced that magic word “contraband,” and summoned the negro into the arena. [Applause.] It was a poor word. Some doubt — I do not — whether it is sound law. Lord Chatham said, “*Nullus liber*

*homo*” is poor Latin, but it is worth all the classics. Contraband is a bad word, and may be bad law, but just then it was worth all the Constitution [applause]; for in a moment of critical emergency it summoned saving elements into the arena, and it showed the government how far the sound fibre of the nation extended. When Fremont [loud and long-continued applause] — why won’t you ever let me go on when I name Fremont? [Laughter.] I say, when he pronounced that word Emancipation on the banks of the Mississippi, the whole North, except the government, said Amen. [Applause.] The government doubted till the 22d of September, 1862. But the moment the government pronounced the word, it floated into a dead issue, and nobody worth minding now doubts or debates about the emancipation of slaves. [Applause.] It only shows you how strong the government is, if it will only act; how certain the heart of the people is to support it, if the government will only trust. If Mr. Lincoln could only be made to accept the line of the old huntsman song, —

“ Sit close in the saddle and give him his head,”

he could carry twenty millions of people with him over every barrier to victory and peace. [Loud applause.] I believe, therefore, in ultimate success, because every act of the government is more than indorsed by the intelligence and virtue of the people, — the virtue of the people. That is the only point at issue. Today, your city roars with the tumult of welcome for returning soldiers. Those soldiers will find here not a Virginia eaten over with barrenness, not starving people, not empty treasuries; they will find a North untouched, — so much money that we have not to go abroad to borrow any [applause], so much wheat that we could feed the world, such ample munitions of war that your traitor merchants smuggle them to Carolina [sensation], — a traveller might journey through half the North, and if he neither spoke nor read English, he would never dream there was a war in any part of the nation,—an untouched North, while the South, mustering all her white men and all her sympathizers the world over, has not yet reached the garnered treasure of Northern strength. We have not yet put forth the first beginning of our power. In Scripture phrase, “Truly there has been, a hiding of our power.” If we fail, it will be because we deserve to, because we have not virtue enough to prefer the end to the means. There is no question but of the conscience and intelligence of the North. Now, I believe in that, because thus far the government has never asked for anything, nor ventured anything, that the readiness of the people has not both given and indorsed. There is my ground of hope.

[4] I do not believe in Southern exhaustion. There may be starving men at the South, starving households, ill-clad soldiers, but there is no such exhaustion as approaches despair. The South has not yet begun to play her last card. The moment she feels exhaustion she will proclaim liberty to the negro. The moment her cause touches its downfall in the judgment of its leaders, she will call the black into her ranks, — call him by some proclamation of gradual emancipation, which will gather to her side the heartiest sympathy of the English aristocracy. England never was an antislavery nation. Her ruling classes never accepted emancipation on any basis. England herself never accepted immediate abolition on any basis. As O’Connell well said, the scheme of immediate emancipation was carried over Parliament by the conscience of the middle classes, and

they do not usually rule in England. Today, that party in the contest which offers England gradual emancipation will offer her all that her judgment approves. Before the South permits her flag to stagger, she will write on it gradual emancipation, and bring the House of Commons to her side. Many slaveholders will submit to be colonists of England where one would submit to Lincoln. General Hamilton goes to Boston, a slaveholder, and says on our platform, "I am glad that my slaves are gone if it saves the Union." If loyal men will surrender their slaves and save the Union, do you not suppose disloyal men will surrender theirs to save the Confederacy? Do you suppose the South will stop before she puts on to her banner Emancipation? The moment she utters that word, I shall admit that she feels weak in the knees, — never till then. There is no exhaustion yet that touches a traitor. The men that rebelled are the slaveholders, — rebelled under the pretence of slavery, with the real purpose of killing republican institutions and founding aristocratic institutions in their place. Slavery was the point to be protected, and the pretence that rallied the rebellion. But, now that it is afoot, its leaders throw off the mask, and, without concealment, avow at home that their object is to put this belt of the continent under the control of aristocratic institutions, for the perpetuation of that system, among others, which they love. That element has yet felt no exhaustion, — it boasts, justly, of rare military skill, and of as large armies as ordinary men can handle, — and with that element I have no plea of conciliation. I am for conciliation, but not for conciliating the slaveholder. Death to the system, and death or exile to the master, is the only motto. [Applause.] There is a party for whom I have ever the right hand of conciliation, and whenever the foot of military despotism is lifted from that party, I believe that in the South itself we shall be surprised at the weight, strength, and number of the men who still love the Union. There is a party for whom I have conciliation, and this [taking by the hand a beautiful little girl of five years old, with a fair complexion and light auburn ringlets] is its representative. In the veins that beat now in my right hand runs the best blood in Virginia's white races and the better blood of the black race of the Old Dominion [applause], — a united race, to whom, in its virtue, belongs in the future a country, which the toil and labor of its ancestors redeemed from nature and gave to civilization and the nineteenth century. [Applause.] For that class I have ever an open door of conciliation, — the labor, the toil, the muscle, the virtue, the strength, the democracy, of the Southern States. This blood represents them all, — the poor white, a non-slaveholder, deluded into rebellion for a system which crushes him, — some equally deluded and some timid and gagged masters, — the slave restored to his rights, when now, at last, for the first time in her history, Virginia has a government, and is not a horde of pirates masquerading as a State. No, the South has not yet felt the first symptom of exhaustion. Get no delusive hope that our success is to come from any such source.

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[5] This war will never be ended by an event. It will never come to a conclusion by a great battle. It is too deep in its sources; it is too wide in its influence for that. The great struggle in England between democracy and nobility lasted from 1640 to 1660, taking a king's life in its progress, and yet failed for the time. The great struggle between the same parties in France began in 1789, and it is not yet ended. Our own Revolution began in 1775, and never, till the outbreak of the French Revolution concentrated the attention of

the monarchies of Europe, was this country left in peace. And it will take ten or twenty years to clear off the scar of such a struggle. Prepare yourself for a life-long enlistment. God has launched this Union on a voyage whose only port is Liberty, and whether the President relucts, or whether the cabin-boys conspire, it matters not, — absolute justice holds the helm, and we never shall come into harbor until every man under the flag is free. [Applause.] Why do I say this? I will tell you. We are accustomed to use the words North and South familiarly. They once meant the land toward the pole and the land toward the sun. They have a deeper significance at present. By the North I mean the civilization of the nineteenth century,—I mean that equal and recognized manhood up to which the race has struggled by the toils and battles of nineteen centuries, — I mean free speech, free types, open Bibles, the welcome rule of the majority, — I mean the Declaration of Independence! [Applause.] And by the South, I mean likewise a principle, and not a locality, an element of civil life in fourteen rebellious States. I mean an element which, like the days of Queen Mary and the Inquisition, cannot tolerate free speech, and punishes it with the stake. I mean the aristocracy of the skin, which considers the Declaration of Independence a sham, and democracy a snare, — which believes that one third of the race is born booted and spurred, and the other two thirds ready saddled for that third to ride. I mean a civilization which prohibits the Bible by statute to every sixth man of its community, and puts a matron in a felon's cell for teaching a black sister to read. I mean the intellectual, social aristocratic South, — the thing that manifests itself by barbarism and the bowie-knife, by bullying and lynch-law, by ignorance and idleness, by the claim of one man to own his brother, by statutes making it penal for the State of Massachusetts to bring an action in her courts, by statutes, standing on the books of Georgia today, offering five thousand dollars for the head of William Lloyd Garrison. That South is to be annihilated. [Loud applause.] The totality of my common sense — or what-ever you may call it — is this, all summed up in one word: This country will never know peace nor union until the South (using the words in the sense I have described) is annihilated, and the North is spread over it. I do not care where men go for the power. They may find it in the parchment, — I do. I think, with Patrick Henry, with John Quincy Adams, with General Cass, we have ample constitutional powers; but if we had not, it would not trouble me in the least. [Laughter and applause.] I do not think a nation's life is bound up in a parchment. I think this is the momentous struggle of a great nation for existence and perpetuity. Two elements are at war today. In nineteen loyal and fourteen rebellious States those two elements of civilization which I have described are fighting. And it is no new thing that they are fighting. They could not exist side by side without fighting, and they never have. In 1787, when the Constitution was formed, James Madison and Rufus King, followed by the ablest men in the Convention, announced that the dissension between the States was not between great States and little, but between Free States and Slave. Even then the conflict had begun. In 1833, Mr. Adams said, on the floor of Congress: "Whether Slave and Free States can cohere into one Union is a matter of theoretical speculation. We are trying the experiment." In June, 1858, Mr. Lincoln used the language: "This country is half slave and half free. It must become either wholly slave or wholly free." In October of the same year, Mr. Seward, in his great "irrepressible conflict" speech at Rochester said: "The most pregnant remark of Napoleon is that Europe is half Cossack and half republican. The systems are, not only inconsistent, they are incompatible; they never did exist under one government. They never can." "Our

fathers,” he goes on to say, “recognized this truth. They saw the conflict developing when they made the Constitution. And while tender-conscienced and tender-hearted men lament this strife between slavery and antislavery, our fathers not only foresaw, but they initiated it.” They knew that these two systems would fight. But they thought under the parchment of the Constitution they could fight it out by types; they could discuss it to a peaceful solution; ballots and parties, types and free speech, would make brother States and sister States, — settle the conflict between two irreconcilable civilizations. What is the history of our seventy years? It is the history of two civilizations constantly struggling, and always at odds except when one or the other rules. So long as the South ruled, up to 1819, we had uniform peace. The Missouri Compromise was the first solemn protest of rising Northern civilization against the Southern. It was an unsuccessful protest. The South put it under her feet, but she did not kill it. It continued alive through the stormy days of Texas, and showed its head above water in the Compromise in 1850. And again it was strangled and put under the heel of fourteen States. But it culminated again by the irrepressible power of God’s own laws, and in 1861 wrote the name of Abraham Lincoln on the topmost wall of the Republic. This was not victory. Not victory, but the herald of victory. It was seventeen hundred thousand ballots recording the strength of the rising North against the South. And the statesmanship of the South read correctly this record. She said, “I can for four or eight or twelve years buy this man, and bribe that, and bully the other. But that is a poor and beggarly existence. There is another way open to me. I agreed at the outset to abide the issue of free discussion, and I put my system on trial against Massachusetts free speech.”

[6] Seventy years ago the North flung down the gauntlet of the printing-press, and said, “I will prove that my system— freedom — is the best.” The South accepted the Constitution of the United States, securing a free press, and took the risk. She said: “There is my slavery. I believe it will abide discussion. I am willing to put it into the caldron.” And Massachusetts put in her land and character and brains, and we made a “hodge-podge,” as the English law says, a general mess, a bowl of punch [laughter], of all the institutions of the nation, and we said, “There is the free press, untrammelled, for one element, and whatever cannot bear that must be thrown away.” [Applause.] For two generations, the experiment went on; and when Lincoln went to Washington, South Carolina saw the handwriting on the wall, — the handwriting as of old, — that the free press had conquered, and that slavery was sinking, like a dead body, to the bottom; and she said, practically: “I know I made the bargain, but I cannot abide it. I know I agreed to put myself into the general partnership, and now comes the demand for my submission to the great laws of human progress, — I cannot submit.” So she loaded her guns, and turned them, shotted to the lips, against the Federal Government, saying, “There is a fortification behind the printing-press, —it is the Minie rifle.” “ All well,” said the North; “now we will try that. [Applause.] I offered you the nineteenth century, — books; you chose to go back to the fifteenth, — armies; try it!” The South flung down the gauntlet; the North raised it, and has flung it back into the Gulf. [Applause.] Beaten in both ways, conquered on both issues, our civilization triumphant in brains, and still more emphatically triumphant in the bullets [applause], the question now comes up, Which shall rule this one and indivisible country? The South said, “I load my cannon in order that I may annihilate Massachusetts.” “I accept it,” said the Bay State, and, her cannon

being the largest and the strongest, she annihilates the South instead. [Renewed applause.] That is the argument. We should have gone to the wall had she beaten. One nation! — she goes to the wall when we beat. That is common sense; that is fair, sound policy.

[7] We have been planted as one nation; the normal idea of our existence is that it is to be one and indivisible. We are one nation. That being taken for granted at the outset, in this battle of civilizations, which is to govern? The best. I do not think we have any claim to govern this country on the ground that we have more cannon, more men, and more money than the South. That is a bald, brutal superiority. The claim of the North to govern must be founded on the ground that our civilization is better, purer, nobler, higher, than that of the South.

[8] The two ideas have always contended for mastery, till now by argument, by types; — now, with bullets. Our war is only an appeal from the nineteenth century of freedom and ballots to the system of the sixteenth century. The old conflict, — a new weapon, that is all. The South thought because once, twice, thrice, the spaniel North had gotten down on her knees, that this time, also, poisoned by cotton-dust, she would kiss her feet. [A voice, “No go this time!” and applause.] But instead of that, for the first time in our history, the North has flung the insult back, and said: “By the Almighty, the Mississippi is mine, and I will have it.” [Applause.] Now, when shall come peace? Out of this warlike conflict, when shall come peace? Just as it came in the conflict of parties and discussion. Whenever one civilization gets the uppermost positively, then there will be peace, and never till then. There is no new thing under the sun. The light shed upon our future is the light of experience. Seventy years have not left us ignorant of what the aristocracy of the South means and plans, if it has left the Secretary of State ignorant. [Laughter and applause.] The South needs to rule, or she goes by the board. She is a wise power. I respect her for it. She knows that she needs to rule. What does Mr. Jefferson Davis plan? Do you suppose he plans for an imaginary line to divide South Carolina from New York and Massachusetts? What good would that do? An imaginary line will not shut out ideas. But she must bar out those ideas. That is the programme in the South. He imagines he can broaden his base by allying himself with a weaker race. He says: “I will join marriage with the weak races of Mexico and the Southwest, and then, perhaps, I can draw to my side the Northwest, with its interests as an agricultural population, naturally allied to me, and not to the Northeast, with its tariff set of States.” And he thinks thus, a strong, quiet slaveholding empire, he will bar New England and New York out in the cold, and will have comparative peace. But if he bar New England out in the cold, what then? She is still there. [Laughter.] And give it only the fulcrum of Plymouth Rock, an idea will upheave the continent. Now, Davis knows that better than we do,—a great deal better. His plan, therefore, is to mould an empire so strong, so broad, that it can control New England and New York. He is not only to found a slaveholding despotism, but he is to make it so strong that, by traitors among us, and hemming us in by power, he is to cripple, confine, break down, the free discussion of these Northern States. Unless he does that he is not safe. He knows it. Now I do not say he will succeed, but I tell you what I think is the plan of a statesmanlike leader of this effort. To make slavery safe, he must mould Massachusetts, not into being a slaveholding Commonwealth, but into being a

silent, unprotesting Commonwealth; that Maryland and Virginia, the Carolinas, and Arkansas, may be quiet, peaceable populations. He is a wise man. He knows what he wants, and he wants it with a will, like Julius Caesar of old. He has gathered every dollar and every missile south of Mason and Dixon's line to hurl a thunderbolt that shall serve his purpose. And if he does achieve a separate confederacy, and shall be able to bribe the West into neutrality, much less alliance, a dangerous time, and a terrible battle will these Eastern States have. For they will never make peace. The Yankee who comes out of Cromwell's bosom will fight his Naseby a hundred years, if it last so long, but he will conquer. [Applause.] In other words, Davis will try to rule. If he conquers, he is to bring, in his phrase, Carolina to Massachusetts. And if we conquer, what is our policy? To carry Massachusetts to Carolina. In other words, carry Northern civilization all over the South. It is a contest between civilizations. Whichever conquers supersedes the other.

[9] I may seem tedious in this analysis. But it seems to me that the simple statement includes the whole duty and policy of the hour. It is a conflict which will never have an end until one or the other element subdues its rival. Therefore we should be, like the South, penetrated with an idea, and ready with fortitude and courage to sacrifice everything to that idea. No man can fight Stonewall Jackson, a sincere fanatic on the side of slavery, but John Brown, an equally honest fanatic on the other. [Applause.] They are the only chemical equals, and will neutralize each other. You cannot neutralize nitric acid with cologne-water. You cannot hurl William H. Seward at Jeff Davis. [Great applause and laughter.] You must have a man of ideas on both sides. Otherwise the elements of the struggle are unequal.

[10] Our object is to subdue the South. What right has our civilization to oust out the other? It has this right: We are a Union, — not a partnership, — a marriage. We put our interests all together in 1787. We joined our honor and our wealth. This question is not to be looked at like a technical lawyer dotting his i's and crossing his t's, and making his semicolons into colons. It is to be looked at in the broad light of national statesmanship. Our fathers, if they were honorable men, as we believe, accepted slavery as a part of their civil constitution on the ground that it was put into a common lot with freedom, with progress, with wealth, with education. If it stood its own, well; if it went by the board, so. It was an intelligible, if not an honest, bargain. They consented to be disgraced by the toleration of slavery; they consented to let the fresh blood of the young, vigorous free labor of many States build it up into longer and firmer life, only on condition that it should take its chances with all the other great national interests. It was with this fundamental understanding that the nation commenced, and the great special interests of the country are based upon it. For instance, the Illinois farmer, when he bought of the Union a thousand acres in the Northwest, he did not buy a thousand acres isolated in the Northwest; he bought a thousand acres with New Orleans for his port of entry and New York for his counting-house. And it was as much a part of the deed as if it had been so written. Now, if South Carolina can show that Illinois and New York have broken the deed, she has a right of revolution; that is, she has a right to reject it. But until she can show that they have broken the deed, she is a swindler. Illinois owns New Orleans as much as Chicago, in a national sense. So the negro who sat down and waited when Samuel Adams, who thought slavery a crime, and your Gouverneur Morris, who

thought it a disgrace and a sin, said, “Wait, the time will come when the constant waves of civilization or the armed right hand of the war power will strike off your fetters,” and the slave sat down and waited. In 1819, — the Missouri Compromise, — when the time had come, as John Randolph said the time would come, when the master would run away from his slave, the slave arose and said, “Fulfil the pledge; I have invested a generation of submission.” We begged him still to wait, and he sat down in the darkness of despair. God alone counted the moments of his agony. At last the gun sounded at Sumter, and the slave cried, “New York and Massachusetts, fulfill the pledge of your fathers in the name of God and justice.” [Cheers.] We are a nation by all these considerations. Today, the question is, not merely whether the negro shall be free; not, certainly, whether New York and Massachusetts shall dictate to sister States; but it is, whether the free lips of New York and Massachusetts shall be protected by the laws of the nation wherever the stars and stripes float; whether this great, free, model state, the hope of the nations and their polar star, this experiment of self-government, this normal school of God for the education of the masses, shall survive, free, just, entire, able not only to free the slave, but to pay the further debt it owes him, — protection as he rises into liberty, and a share in the great State he aided to found, not one merely in its ruins.

[11] Mr. Jefferson Davis has two hundred thousand men in arms today. I do not believe he ever had over three hundred thousand. Great is brag, and they have bragged three hundred thousand into six, and wooden guns into iron ones. He has got two hundred thousand in arms today. Before this body retreats into Mexico,—before, like his great father in the Gospel, he goes “violently down a steep place into the sea” [loud laughter and applause], —he will fight great battles somewhere. Let me grant you that we crush that army out, scatter it, demoralize it, conquer it, — where is it to go? What will become of its materials? What brought it together? Hatred of us. Will being beaten make them love us? Is that the way to make men love you? Can you whip a man into loving you? You whip him into a bitterer hate. Where will that army go? Into a state of society more cruel than war, — whose characteristics are private assassination, burning, stabbing, shooting, poisoning. The consequence is, we have not only an army to conquer, which, being beaten, will not own it, but we have a state of mind to annihilate. You know Napoleon said, the difficulty with the German armies was, they didn’t know when they were beaten. We have a worse trouble than that. The South will not only not believe itself beaten, but the materials which make up its army will not retire back to peaceful pursuits. Where are they going to retire? They don’t know how to do anything. You might think they would go back to trade. They don’t know how to trade; they never bought nor sold anything. You might think they would go back to their professions. They never had any. You might think they would go back to the mechanic arts. They don’t know how to open a jackknife. [Great merriment.] There is nowhere for them to go, unless we send them half a million of emancipated blacks, to teach them how to plant cotton. To the North, war is a terrible evil. It takes the lawyer, the merchant, the mechanic, from his industrious, improving, inspiring occupation, and lets him down into the demoralization of a camp; but to the South, war is a gain. The young man, melted in sensuality, whose face was never lighted up by a purpose since his mother looked into his cradle, — the mere wreck of what should have been a man, — with neither ideas nor inspirations nor aspirations, was lifted by the war to a higher level. Did you ever look into the beautiful

faces of those Roman young men, whose ideas were bounded by coffee and the opera, — till Garibaldi's bugle waked them to life, — beautiful, because human still? Well, that was the South. Over those wrecks of manhood breathed the bugle-note of woman and politics, calling upon them to rally and fight for an idea,—Southern independence. It lifted them, for the moment, into something which looked like civilization; it lifted them into something that was a real life; and war to them is a gain. They go out of it, and they sink down a hundred degrees in the scale of civilization. They go back to bar rooms, to corner groceries, to plantation sensuality, to chopping straw, and calling it politics. [Laughter.]

[12] Now, that South, angry, embittered, having arms in its hands, what is it going to do? Shoot, burn, poison, vent its rage on every side. Guerilla barbarities are but the first drops of the shower,—the first pattering drops of the flood of barbarism which will sweep over those Southern States, unless our armies hold them. When England conquered the Highlands, she held them, — held them until she could educate them; and it took a generation. That is just what we have to do with the South; annihilate the old South, and put a new one there. You do not annihilate a thing by abolishing it. You must supply the vacancy. In the Gospel, when the chambers were swept and garnished, the devils came back because there were no angels there. And if we should sweep Virginia clean, Jeff Davis would come back with seven other devils worse than himself, if he could find them, and occupy it, unless you put free institutions there. Some men say, begin it by exporting the blacks. If you do, you export the very fulcrum of the lever; you export the very best material to begin with. Something has been said about the Alleghanies moving toward the ocean as the symbol of colonization. Let me change it. The nation that should shovel down the Alleghanies, and then build them up again, would be a wise nation compared with the one that should export four million blacks, and then import four million of Chinese to take their places. To dig a hole, and then fill it up again, to build a wall for the purpose of beating out your brains against it, would be Shakespearian wisdom compared with such an undertaking. I want the blacks as the very basis of the effort to regenerate the South. They know every inlet, the pathway of every wood, the whole country is a map at night to their instinct. When Burnside unfurled the Stars and Stripes in sight of Roanoke, he saw a little canoe paddling off to him, which held a single black man; and in that contraband hand, victory was brought to the United States of America, led by Burnside. He came to the Rhode Island general, and said: "This is deep water, and that is shoal; this is swamp, that is firm land, and that is wood; there are four thousand men here, and one thousand there." The whole country was mapped out, as an engineer could not have done it in a month, in the memory of that man. And Burnside was loyal to humanity, and believed him. [Applause.] Disloyal to the Northern pulpit, disloyal to the prejudice of his race, he was loyal to the instincts of our common nature, knew that man would tell him the truth, and obeyed him. The soldiers forded where the negro bade them, the vessels anchored in the deep waters he pointed out and that victory was planned, if there was any strategy about it, in the brain of that contraband [applause]; and today he stands at the right hand of Burnside, clad in uniform, long before Hunter armed a negro, with the pledge of the General that, as long as he lives and has anything to eat, the man who gave him Roanoke shall have half a loaf. [Enthusiastic applause.] Do you suppose, that if I multiply that instance by four million, the American

people can afford to give up such assistance? Of course not. We are to take military possession of the territory, and we are to work out the great problem of unfolding a nation's life. We want the four million of blacks—a people instinctively on our side, ready and skilled to work; the only element the South has which belongs to the nineteenth century. You never can mistake them. It used to be said, in old antislavery times, that if a fugitive negro saw a Quaker coat, his heart beat easy, — he knew he was safe. I think the Stars and Stripes can float lazily down and kiss the standard, all over the South, when a black face is in sight.

[13] But I am not speaking for the negro; I am not asking now for his rights; I am asking for the use of him. I want him for the future. We have to make over the State of South Carolina, and we are not sure there is a white man in it who is on our side. Do you remember that significant telegram of McClellan from Yorktown, — and it was only the repetition of a dozen telegrams that preceded it, substantially this: — “To the Secretary of War: Sir, we have taken Yorktown; only one single white man in it.” He does not think it necessary to say there were some thousands of negroes. Of course there were. They stayed where liberty was coming, and ideas, and civilization, and men who worked with their hands and their brains, as they themselves did. They recognized in the Yankee a brother mechanic. [Laughter and applause.] They said: “Here are men who don't know how to do anything but eat, and they are going. The people who are coming are men who know how to manufacture, to create, and we, the creators of the South, stay to welcome the creators of the North.” [Applause.] But that one poor solitary white man, who always remains [laughter,] — just like  
“The last rose of summer,  
Left blooming alone,”  
[great merriment,] — he is only suggestive of that other kindred and friendly race which never flies.

[14] Colonize the blacks! A man might as well colonize his hands; or when the robber enters his house, he might as well colonize his revolver. What we want is systematic, national action. Confiscate those lands. Colonize them. Sell them with the guaranty of the government to the loyal Massachusetts man or New Yorker. Say to him, “There is a deed as good as the Union. Carry there your ploughshares, seeds, schools, sewing-machines.” Carry free labor to that soil, and you carry New York to Virginia, and slavery cannot go back. I want to supply the vacancy which this war must leave in every Slave State it subdues. The Slave States, to my mind, are men and territory, and nothing else. The rebellion has crushed out all civil forms. New government is to go there. It seems to me the idlest national work, childish work, for the President, in bo-peep secrecy, to hide himself in the White House and launch a proclamation at us on a first day of January. The nation should have known it sixty days before, and should have provided fit machinery for the reception of three million bondmen into the civil state. If we launch a ship, we build straight well-oiled ways upon which it may glide with facility into its native element. So when a nation is to be born, the usual aid of government should have been extended to prepare a pathway through which to step upon the platform of civil equality. It is nonsense without. We cannot expect in hours to cover the place of centuries. It is a great problem before us. We must take up the South and, organize it

anew. It is not the men we have to fight,—it is the state of society that produces them. He would be a fool who, having a fever, scraped his tongue and took no medicine. Killing Davis is only scraping the tongue; killing slavery is taking a wet-sheet pack, destroying the very disease. But when we have done it, there remains behind the still greater and more momentous problem, whether we have the strength, the balance, the virtue, the civilization, to absorb six millions of ignorant, embittered, bedeviled Southerners, and transmute them into honest, decent, educated, well-behaved, Christian mechanics, worthy to be the brothers of New England Yankees. [Applause.] That is the real problem. To that this generation should address itself. You know men take their floating capital, and fund it in a permanent investment. Now the floating virtue of forty thousand pulpits, the floating wealth of these nineteen millions of people, the floating result, big or little, of Tract Societies, is to be funded, — like sensible heat, is to be transformed into invisible, latent heat; it is to pass away into the Southern capacity of being educated. The water is to sink to its level. Harvard College, whose men can think, — though so often on the wrong side, — is to go down half way, and meet South Carolina, saying her A, B, C. That is what you are to do.

[15] It will take time undoubtedly. The nation is able to do it. The vigor and good sense and strength of endurance of these Northern classes is equal to the achievement, if we can only have leaders; but we have none.

[16] The government looks to the people for its initiative. Lord Lyons said (substantially) in his dispatch to Earl Russell: “The Republican government dare not initiate a policy; it looks outward and asks what its opponents will consent to.” That is now the condition of the government. Hence the necessity of outspoken, perpetual, constant education of public opinion. I do not believe in the government at Washington. I believe in the nation, I believe in events, I believe in the inevitable tendency of these coming ten years toward liberty and Union. But it is to be done as England did it in 1640, by getting rid gradually, man by man, of those who don’t believe in progress, but live and mean to live in the past. And as man by man of that class retires, and we bring to the front men who are earnest in the present, victory, strength, and peace are to be the result. Now, for the present, I believe in Hooker. [Loud applause.] Men say he has faults,— faults which some of his predecessors did not have. [Laughter.] Perhaps he has, but in my opinion a diamond with a flaw is better than a pebble without. [Applause.] I do not set one defeat against him. I think, as Lord Bacon says, that a soldier’s honor should be of a strong web which slight matters will not stick to. I believe Hooker’s is of that kind. He means to fight; he knows how to fight; and those two are new elements at the head of the army. On the other side there are three elements. Lee means to fight, and knows how to fight, and he is deadly in earnest. We have had men who neither knew how to fight, nor meant to fight, — of no ability. Now we have ability to match the other side. We yet lack earnestness, ideas, a willingness to sacrifice everything, a readiness to accept the issue, courage and industry in thinking. We have now two Commanders-in-chief. They both live in Washington. The sad news reaches us today that one means to take the field. [Laughter.] Lincoln and Halleck, — they sit in Washington, commanders-in-chief, exercising that disastrous influence which even a Bonaparte would exercise on a battle, if he tried to fight it by telegraph a hundred miles distant. But now it is said one of them

means to take the field. Heaven forbid! [Applause.] The difference between Halleck and Fremont is just this: one has not learned anything since he graduated at West Point, and does not wish to. As long as he rules, West Point, dead lumber, rules. An old adage says, "A fool is never a great fool till he has learned Latin." And so a man is never utterly incorrigible till he graduates at West Point. [Laughter.] General Halleck does not mean to undertake the labor of thinking. He is too indolent to go about to examine a new idea. It is enough for him that it was hot in the text-books when he graduated. [Laughter.] Battles were not fought so when he was taught, and if he is beaten according to the book, he is willing to be beaten. [Laughter.] The German commanders complained of Napoleon, when he first launched into the battle-field, that he violated all the rules. Now his Missouri rival occupied the nineteenth century, and thought out the issues for himself, — had the labor of meeting a new contingency. He went to the head of the army a living man, — not a dead book. I am beyond likes and dislikes. The day is too serious for antipathies or likings. All these men are nothing but dead lumber, to be thrown into the gulf, that the nation, over the path their bodies make, may march like an army with banners to liberty and peace. [Applause.] But never will this rebellion be put down while West Point rules at Washington. [Applause.] It does rule. That second Commander-in-chief cuts off everything which outgoes his own routine. There are two great classes in the army and in the state: one is, such a man as Halleck, who hates negroes, spurns novelties, distrusts ideas, rejects everything but red tape. The others are Hamilton, Butler, Phelps, and Fremont [loud applause], Sigel, who mean that this Union shall mean justice at any rate, and that if it does not mean justice it shall not exist; who know no nation except one that secures liberty. [Applause.] These are the men who are to shape the policy and guide the thunderbolts of the government. [Applause.] The cook takes an onion and peels off layer after layer till she gets to the sweet, sound vegetable. So you will have to peel off Seward and Halleck, Blair and Chase [laughter], till you get to the sound national element of civil and military purpose, the earnest belief, the single-hearted, intense devotion to victory, the entire belief in justice, which can cope with Stonewall Jackson. [Applause.] Never till then shall we succeed.

[17] I have compared General Halleck and General Fremont. You may take another parallel. One is Seward, and another is Butler. Seward does not believe in war, but in diplomacy or compromise. He has prophesied again and again that this war, like the divisions of former times, could be quieted in sixty or ninety days. He thought so; if he had not, he never would have risked his fame as a statesman upon the prophecy. He said by the voice of a regular army officer in the cabin of that ship which went down to dismantle Norfolk, when foreign-bred soldiers begged the American officers to stop and give them three hundred men to save two thousand cannon from the armies of the Confederates, and guaranteed to take that place and hold it three or six months, with two hundred men, — one of his class took a gentleman into the cabin and said, "You don't understand this thing; this is not a war, it is a quarrel: we have had a dozen of them; we shall get over it in sixty days." Seward believes it yet; he receives commissioners; he sends Frenchmen to Richmond to note terms; he sends letters abroad dealing with rebels as equals in fact. Butler is the first man who ever hung a rebel [loud applause], — and it ought to be recorded on his gravestone. If I were a politician and a general, I would not live an hour until I was his twin. [Laughter.] Let it go down to history, that one third of

the nation burst into insurrection, and there was but one man, and he a Democrat, who dared to hang a felon. [Loud applause.] A government in arms against criminals who have wasted its treasures and filled two hundred and fifty thousand martyred patriot graves, — rebels, not belligerents. Now in the two distinctions between Halleck, routine, and Fremont, Phelps, Butler, realities, is the change needed for the future in military affairs; in the difference between Seward, the politician, and Butler, the government, is the change needed in civil affairs. If Seward is a Republican, God grant us a Democratic successor. [Laughter] I want somebody to occupy the Presidential chair who believes in the government and in the people,—who will act without casting his eyes over his shoulders to see how far the people will support him. We need some one who believes in God and the people, in justice and the masses. The Democrat believes in the masses; the Whig is neither one nor the other. We want leaders that initiate, — that actually lead. Friends, my belief is, that you and I are bound to create an exacting, imperative public opinion which shall compel the government to the adoption of such measures and such men. I say such men, because, though I believe in events, which are stronger than cabinets, and are bearing us onward whether we will or not, I believe also in men as harmonizing the issue of events. Let me make the Generals, and I don't care who makes the proclamations. Only let me put at the head of the advancing columns of the Union certain men that I could name, and the Cabinet at Washington may shut themselves up and go to sleep with Rip Van Winkle till 1872. [Laughter.] For I know those one blast of whose bugle-horns were worth a million men, — only put them in the heart of the rebellion, where our armies ought to be. I do not like to fight on the rim of the wheel and let the enemy rest on the hub. [Laughter.] I am no anaconda fancier. [Laughter.] I would be at the hub. I would put men, whose names you know too well, among the black masses of the Carolinas and Mississippi, and fight outward, grinding the rebellion to powder. To hurt the rebellion by bringing the negro into the war, does not mean merely troops; it means localities. When we bring the negro into the war, we fight in his home, in the Gulf States, where he ought to fight. The heart of the rebellion is where the negro is. It is there where our army should stand; if victorious, the bottom of the tub is out. And you know whose name the slave cherishes like a household word in every hovel, and at whose bidding he will rise to the Stars and Stripes. Will the slave fight? Well, if any man asks you, tell him no. Will he work? If any man asks you, tell him no. But if he asks you whether the negro will fight, tell him yes. [Applause.] If he asks you whether the negro will work, tell him yes, —work even for patriotism without wages, as he has worked at Fortress Monroe, the United States promising him \$10 a month, keeping the first \$3 for any stray contrabands who might join him, taking the second \$4 for clothing the contraband himself, and the other \$3 Uncle Sam keeps. [Laughter.]

[18] But men say, “This is a mean thing; nineteen millions of people pitched against eight millions of Southerners, white men, and can't whip them, and now begin to call on the negroes.” Is that the right statement? Look at it. What is the South's strength? She has eight millions of whites. She has the sympathy of foreign powers. She has the labor of four millions of slaves. What strength has the North? Divided about equally — that is a very poor statement for your side — into Republicans and Democrats; the Republicans willing to go but half way, and the Democrats not willing to go at all. [Laughter.] I will tell you what it is. It is like two men fighting. We will call them

Jonathan and Charles. Jonathan is the North. His right hand, the Democratic party, he holds behind him. His left hand, his own tenderness of conscience uses to keep the slaves down. That is how he is to fight. No, that is not all. Upon his shoulders is strapped the West Point Academy, like a stone of a hundred weight. [Laughter.] The South stands with both hands, holding loaded revolvers, and, lest she should lose any time, John Bull is behind with additional pistols to hand the moment she needs them. Those are the two powers which are fighting this battle. Now the question is, whether in this great conflict, — not a boy's play between A and B, but the great struggle for the control of this continent in behalf of free labor, — is it not the duty of wise men to use every means within their reach? This is a contest between slaveholders and free labor, — nothing more; and in that contest the people, as in every contest against an aristocracy, are bound in their own right, in the right of their children, in the right of the great interests of the world which hang upon their success, to bestir themselves to understand, and to use the moment they see it, every weapon within their reach. I contend, therefore, that it is both constitutional and rightful, and, more than that, that it is absolutely necessary, that this government should, in the hour of its peril, call upon the four millions of blacks to aid it in a struggle which means liberty to them. I am not speaking now as an Abolitionist. I hold the hour to be a momentously serious one. Deeply in debt, with a terrible loss of blood, having fixed foul shame upon the cause of democracy by our indecision or delay, with a future before us complexed by every variety of dangers, the question is how we shall pilot the ship of state, the hope of the world, through this storm. The silver lining of the dark cloud that overhangs us is the irradicable loyalty of four millions of bondmen who hold the scale in their hands.

[19] Throw aside all these idle quibbles: a mighty work is before us; welcome every helper. Cease to lean on the government at Washington. It is a broken reed, if not worse. We are lost unless the people are able to ride out this storm without captain or pilot. Yes, in spite of something worse at the helm. The President is an honest man; that is, he is Kentucky honest, and that is necessarily a very different thing from Massachusetts or New York honesty. A man cannot get above the atmosphere in which he is born. Did you ever see the Life of Luther in four volumes of seven hundred pages each? The first volume contains an account of the mineralogy of his native country, the trees that grow there, the flowers, the average length of human life, the color of the hair, how much rain falls, the range of the thermometer, and in the second volume Luther is born. That was laying the foundation of Luther's character. Lincoln was born in Kentucky, and laid the foundation of his honesty in Kentucky. He is honest, with that allowance. He means to do his duty, and within the limit of the capacity God has given him he has struggled on, and has led the people struggling on, up to this weapon, partial emancipation, which they now hold glittering in their right hand. But we must remember the very prejudices and moral callousness which made him in 1860 an available candidate, when angry and half-educated parties were struggling for victory, necessarily makes him a poor leader, — rather no leader at all, — in a crisis like this. I have no confidence in the counsels about him. I have no confidence in the views of your son of York who stands at his right hand to guide the vessel of state in this tremendous storm. [Hisses.] That is right. I honor every man who expresses his opinion. I express mine; I would have every man express his dissent. I am saying nothing of the motives of Mr.

Seward, nothing. When a man is dying, an honest mistake in the medicine is as bad as poison. The question is whether his is the statesmanship of the hour, and if it is not, then, on every theory of parliamentary government, he is bound to retire from his position and let another man occupy it. He has never uttered a prophecy which events have not falsified, nor initiated a policy which he has not himself been obliged to forego.

[20] If the hope of the nation rested on the Cabinet he leads, I should despair; but our government is not at Washington, neither the brains nor the vigor of Washington guide people. It only blocks the path of the real government, — the people, — the people whose substratum purpose, underlying all honest parties and cliques, is to save the Union by doing justice and securing liberty to all. At least, if all do not consciously plan this, the vast majority are willing for it. I know there are those standing today among us who would stretch their hands over two hundred thousand martyr graves and clasp hands with the rebels. That element is to be put under our feet, with the declaration that the helm is ours, by party right, by natural right, by the right of absolute justice; and while God gives us the power, we will use it boldly in the service of freedom and the Union. [Applause.] The whole social system of the Slave States is to be taken to pieces; every bit of it. General Butler tells us that in Louisiana it has gone to pieces. [Great applause, followed by an attempt at cheering for Butler, not fully understood.] He deserves a better cheer than that [three cheers for General Butler called for, and enthusiastically responded to] for this reason: he is almost the only general in our service who acts upon the principle that we are all right and the traitors all wrong. [Renewed applause.] Most of our other generals act upon the principle that the rebels are half right, and we are half wrong. When Butler was at New Orleans last summer, he assembled some fifty slaveholders in the parlors of the St. Charles Hotel, and said to them: “Don’t you indulge the idea that there is a Democratic party in the North making a bridge back to Washington. I am a Democrat, and shall always be a Democrat; and I tell you I will burn every house in the State of Louisiana, and put every negro’s right hand upon every master’s throat, before I take down that banner and go home.” [Loud and long cheering.] Why is General Butler idle? Who can tell? Abraham Lincoln can’t; he says he knows nothing about it. [Laughter.] General Halleck can’t; he says he knows nothing about it. William H. Seward can’t; he says he knows nothing about it. One of the best generals in the service, the man who held the third city in the empire in his right hand like a lamb, that man comes home to the Capital, and cannot find a man in the Cabinet who will take the responsibility of saying, “I advised his recall,” or will tell him the reason why he was recalled. [Three more cheers for Butler.] Why is he, one of the ablest of the very few able men this war has thrown to the surface, — why is he idle?

[21] General Hamilton had the promise of the government at Washington, over and over again, that he might go and shut the back door of the rebellion, Texas, out of which the traitors mean to fly when they are beaten, and through which Vicksburg gets her strength today. Why has he not gone? Your own great fellow-citizen goes to Washington under the pledge of the President, too much in a hurry to allow him to leave Washington for six hours, stays for a week, and comes back without a command. Why? Because Abraham Lincoln is not President of the United States, or because he too ardently longs and plans to be so again. Either because the war is henceforth subordinate

to a policy dictated by the next Presidential canvass, or because behind President Lincoln, curbing his purpose, making conditions which balk his designs, making him doubt the purpose and the strength of the North, standing round him in civil and military positions, are men who do not mean that this battle shall be bravely and gallantly fought through. The worst rebellion in the land is the rebellion of the Cabinet and Generals against common sense and justice. Cromwell never succeeded until the Long Parliament sloughed off every man who believed in the House of Lords, and left nothing but democrats behind. We shall never succeed until we slough off everything that believes in the past, and bring to the front everything that believes there is but one remedy, — that is, to save the Union on the basis of liberty. [Cheers.] I believe that the President may do anything to save the Union. He may take a man's houses, his lands, his bank-stock, his horses, his slaves, — anything to save the Union; the government may make every slave a free man, no matter where he is, Kentucky or Louisiana, now or tomorrow, with compensation or without. We need one step further, — an act of Congress abolishing slavery wherever our flag waves. The same war power and military necessity which made the proclamation constitutional authorizes this act as much. There is but one thing the government can't do to save the nation, and that is to make a free man into a slave; everything else is within its power.

[22] I doubted somewhat when I heard the news from the Rappahannock, until I saw that reverses had taught the nation where its strength lay. God grant us so many reverses that the government may learn its duty. God grant us that the war may never end till it leaves us on the solid granite of impartial liberty and justice. [Cheers.] The government which has had two years of experience, of warning, and of advice, without profiting by it, must abide the consequences. In the words of the old proverb, "He that won't be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock." [Applause.] If they will not be ruled by wise counsels, they must abide disaster; if they won't hear advice, they must expect reverses. What we have to teach Washington is, that such is the full purpose of the millions, and under it and in it is the certainty of success, — the millions, not the leaders. In my judgment, unless the sky soon clears, the Republican party has proved its own incapacity, — written *Ichabod* on its own brow. Judging by the past, whose will and wit can we trust? None of them, — I am utterly impartial, — neither President nor Cabinet nor Senate. Peel off Seward, peel off Halleck, peel off Blair, peel off Sumner, — yes, Massachusetts Senators as well as others. No, I will not say peel off our Massachusetts Senators; but I will say their recent action has very materially lessened my confidence in their intelligence and fidelity. I will tell you why. When the government called on New England for a negro regiment, and we went from county to county urging the blacks to enlist, one Massachusetts Colonel dared to say, down in South Carolina, in the face of the enemy, that he had rather be whipped without negroes than conquer at their side, — a Massachusetts Colonel, in that hour of emergency and critical issue. His case within twenty days went before the Senate of the United States, and the very week that his apology was filed in the War Office at Washington, Massachusetts Senators begged their reluctant brothers to make him a Brigadier-General. Yes, Massachusetts Senators, thoroughly informed and put upon their guard, against the repeated remonstrance of their fellow-Senators, insisted on rewarding the mutineer. ["Shame, shame."] A private, ignorant, uneducated, just mustered into the service, mutinied in the streets of Boston,

and Colonel Lowell shot him rightfully. [Cheers.] A Massachusetts Colonel mutinied in the face of the enemy, and a Massachusetts Senator made him a Brigadier-General. Such Republicanism will never put down the rebellion.\* [Cheers.]

[23] Spite of these sad, sad short-comings, I have hope. Iron, they say, cannot be made to sink in the current of Niagara. The Cataract tosses it like a chip, and bears it onward. The Cabinet is unredeemed inefficiency, — heavy as molten and doubly-hammered iron; but in the Niagara of 1863 it is tossed onward like a chip. No thanks to it, but to the Niagara which will not be resisted. Neither the calculating or stupid stand-stillism of the Cabinet, nor the weakness nor the blunders of our own best leaders, can long delay us. In time they will punish the Colonel who treads on a negro as severely as if he had wronged a college graduate, whose home was on Beacon Street or the Fifth Avenue. The South is not strong in herself. All her strength consists in our unwillingness to strike. Why this, unwillingness to strike? Because we do not yet see John Hancock under a black skin; and until we do see him, we shall never wage an honest and utter battle. No man who does not grant to the negro his just place is fit to be enlisted in the army of the Union, or to stand in its Senate, if that Union means liberty; or if that is an exaggerated statement, certainly no man has a right to lead our Senate or our army who does not carry that idea in his heart. [Applause.]

[24] Never until we welcome the negro, the foreigner, all races as equals, and, melted together in a common nationality, hurl them all at despotism, will the North deserve triumph or earn it at the hands of a just God. [Applause.] But the North will triumph. I hear it. Do you remember in that disastrous siege in India, when the Scotch girl raised her head from the pallet of the hospital, and said to the sickening hearts of the English, “I hear the bagpipes, the Campbells are coming,” and they said, “Jessie, it is delirium.” “No, I know it; I heard it far off.” And in an hour the pibroch burst upon their glad ears, and the banner of England floated in triumph over their heads. So I hear in the dim distance the first notes of the jubilee rising from the hearts of the millions. Soon, very soon, you shall hear it at the gates of the citadel, and the Stars and Stripes shall guarantee liberty forever from the Lakes to the Gulf. [Continued applause.]

\* Colonel Stevenson said he had rather be whipped with white men than conquer with black men; and General Hunter took away his sword. When Adjutant-General Thomas went to the Southwest to muster negroes into our ranks, he lifted his index finger, and, pointing to Washington, said, “The wind blows North there” and from Brigadier to Lieutenant every man closed his lips and denied all prejudice against color. Negrophobia stabs nearer the heart of the government, has more power to wound, than Davis has. There will be none of it in our army at least, the moment government lets its will be unmistakably known. That is the chief reason why I blame our Massachusetts Senators for conferring on Colonel Stevenson the honor of Brigadier-Generalship just at the moment he defied and denounced the policy of the government. Gross insubordination existed in General Hunter’s department, — arising out of this among other causes, — the soldiers, taking courage from the temper and talk of their officers, had inflicted terrible outrages on the negroes there; at the North we were appealing to the negro to enlist. All over the land men tried to penetrate the real purpose of government in respect to the negro; —its friends, in order to help it; the negro, that lie might more cheerfully do his duty. We were calling, in our peril, on a wronged race, which had been cheated of its rights again and again in every national emergency, and begging them now to trust and to help us, obliged to tell them they would have no commissions, but must serve under white officers. “Will they be men whose *hearts* are with us?” we were constantly asked by the negro. We trembled while we

answered, "We hope so, we believe so." At this crisis, Colonel Stevenson, standing at Hunter's side, spits on the government's movements. It was a moment and an act which fixed the attention of the nation. It was an act which, so far as one man could, perilled a great and necessary movement. It deserved, therefore, severe rebuke. It was an act which gave the administration the very best opportunity to show the world its purpose beyond a doubt. One right, decisive word from the Senate, and no officer in the service would afterwards mistake the purpose of the administration, or dare to misuse a negro. That word was, "Colonel Stevenson, for your services and your apology we overlook your fault; but stay a Colonel till by faithful and hearty co-operation in the new movement you earn the nation's confidence, and let every officer take warning by your fate." Such was the message we urged the Senate to send to the mutineer. Instead of that, Massachusetts Senators reward the mutineer to conciliate hunker treason. Thus we see high-handed defiance of the government's policy enter the Senate a Colonel and come out a Brigadier. What rule for its conduct could the army take from such an example? Spit on the government, and expect promotion, — trample on the negro, and be sure of employment! Sigel, Fremont, Butler, Hamilton, Phelps, and a host of others idle, yet a negro-hater promoted on the plea of necessity to get good officers! When Mr. Sumner let personal feelings lead him to such a step, he betrayed the negro. If, as his friends allege, he allowed Hunter or Burnside — one a new convert, the other not converted at all — to dictate such a course, he forgot that we chose him, not them, our Senator, and trusted him, not them, with these grave powers. But I have the best authority for saying that General Hunter never asked of any Senator to promote Colonel Stevenson. I have the best reason for believing that he, like myself, looks on that act of the Senate as a grave error. This is only one case of a single and soon forgotten individual, but it tests statesmen as much as large matters. Massachusetts Senators must reform on these points altogether if they expect trust in future. Let them see to it, lest, while they think they are using often for good ends, they may themselves be made tools for base ones.