STAND BY THE GOVERNMENT.

Speech of Gerrit Smith,

In Albany, Feb. 27, 1863.

After offering the following resolution:

"*Whereas*, The one work of the nation is to crush the Rebellion; and whereas it can be accomplished through the Government only: Therefore

"*Resolved*, That Democrats, Republicans and Abolitionists—men of all parties and men of no parties—should stand by the Government, and sympathize with it under its embarrassments, and bear its burdens, and be grateful for its fidelity, and, whilst quick to condemn its wise measures, should never criticise its mistakes but in the spirit of patriotism instead of party, and but to make the Government stronger instead of weaker, and the enemy weaker instead of stronger."

Mr. Smith proceeded to say: I am not rightly represented in all respects. For instance, because I am an old and zealous Temperance man, it is assumed that I am for having Government take the Cause of Temperance under its wing. Whereas the theory, which I have spent so much time during the last twenty years in elucidating and commending, is that Government has nothing to do with Churches nor even with Schools, with religious institutions nor even with moral reforms; and that its only legitimate province is the narrow one of protecting the persons and property of its subjects. Hence when I would have Government shut up a dramshop, it is not because I would have it enact a sumptuary law or care in the least for the Cause of Temperance; but it is solely because a portion of the men, who frequent that dramshop, are wont to get crazed in it, and to go forth from it to perpetrate crimes against person and property. It is because that manufactory of madmen sends out one man to fire a dwelling, and another to murder a wife, and others to other deeds of mischief or misery. Then again because I am an old and radical Abolitionist, it is taken for granted that I would have our struggle to put down the Rebellion perverted into a crusade against Slavery. Whereas ever since the Rebellion broke out I have been entreating my countrymen not to fall away to any side issues, but to consecrate themselves "arm and soul" to the one work of putting down the Rebellion. Unceasingly have I summoned them to stand shoulder to shoulder in this work, notwithstanding their differences as Democrats, Republicans and Abolitionists. To this end was my printed Letter in 1861 to Edwin Croswell. To this end have been many of my writings and speeches. With this struggle to put down the Rebellion I have from first to last been unconditionally identified. The President's blocking up of Fremont's and Hunter's Abolition way did not in the least diminish my devotion to the one absorbing purpose of putting down the Rebellion; and his Proclamation of Freedom could not increase it. Whether the Government, in its changeful measures, was now for Slavery or now against it, I kept steadily on in my zeal and labor for the overthrow of the Rebellion.

Excuse the egotism of these introductory remarks. I dislike egotism, whether it be in myself or in others. But I felt that I must make them in order to get your unprejudiced and open ears. I felt that you would not respect what I have to say to you, unless I should first disabuse you of your false impressions regarding my attitude toward the Rebellion.

The way is now open for me to mention some of our duties at this crisis.

1st. *The Rebellion must be put down.*

2d. *All hands must help put it down.*

The Republicans, Democrats and Abolitionists must all help, be it at whatever risk to their respective parties. Indeed, so far as the Rebellion is concerned, they must all give up their parties, and become one party. Outside of this one party they may still maintain old party names and old party aims. But into this new and sacred party they must bring no party interests, no party jealousies, no party divisions. In this party all must be harmony; and its members must know each other only as Americans.

I add that whilst on the one hand the Abolitionists must help put down the Rebellion not merely because it is a Pro-Slavery one (—for, Slavery out of the question, they should be equally prompt to put it down—) on the other hand the Anti-Abolitionists must not withhold their help because it is a Pro-Slavery Rebellion. The Democrats must be as prompt to assist in putting down this Rebellion as they would be were it an Anti-Slavery one. They know that they would lose very little time in arraying (,and that too most vindictively,) all their might against a New-England Anti-Slavery Rebellion. They, who are now Peace Democrats, would then be War Democrats: and each of them, as are now the most tender to Rebels, would then be the least patient with Rebels.

I said that the Abolitionists must help put down the Rebellion. If any of them would not have it put down unless Slavery be put down with it or before it, they are wrong. The Rebellion is, aside from all questions of Slavery, an enormous evil; and, as such, all are bound to help suppress it, unconditionally and unicalculatingly. Moreover, in the light of a sound philosophy there is no right thing that *can* be damaged by ending an evil: and hence if the undertaking to abolish Slavery be a right thing, nothing is to be feared for it from the suppression of the Rebellion.

I called the existing Rebellion a Pro-Slavery one. I do not forget that there are persons who find it convenient to deny it that character. The Southern statesmen, one of whom calls Slavery the corner stone of their new nation, do not thank these persons for this denial. The Southern clergymen will not thank them for it. They entirely concur with the Southern statesmen at this point. Their Bishops, in their recent Pastoral Letter, are not ashamed to avow that the Rebel States "are about to plant their national line" on Slavery.

3d. *The Northern people should all admit—nay, to use a more positive and proper word—they should all* DECLARE *that the Rebellion is entirely groundless and exceedingly wicked.*

None among us should any longer say that the Abolitionists provoked the Rebellion. The saying of this goes if not to justify, nevertheless to excuse, the Rebellion; and it goes to reduce the hatred and horror of it, and also the strength of the purpose and endeavors to subdue it. I readily admit, that the Abolitionists did by their much talking and writing against Slavery greatly annoy the slaveholders. But surely this talking and writing, whether right or wrong, furnished no excuse for Rebellion. Free discussion is to be tolerated. If it is not, then the Missionaries, which our Churches have sent all over the heathen world to discuss idolatries and other forms of error, should be recalled; and then, indeed, the progress of mental and moral improvement, the earth over, should be arrested. Republicans and Abolitionists! will not you tolerate free discussion? I need not ask the Democrats whether they will. For, in the turn of things, they have become the champions of free speech. They, before whose frequent mobs against free speech I had twenty or thirty years ago to retreat and hide, have now become the loudest mouthed defenders of free speech.

But you will perhaps say that the Abolitionists went beyond free discussion, and pushed up some of the Northern Legislatures to unconstitutional legislation against Slavery. But even if it was unconstitutional, it certainly gave no just occasion for Rebellion. If nothing else forbade Rebellion, it was forbidden by the fact that there was the Supreme Court of the United States to pass upon the constitutionality of the legislation and to make a Decision that all would abide by. Right here, let me run a contrast between the North and the South for the purpose of taking all possible cavil and complaint at this point out of the mouth of the South. The whole South wrote or talked for Slavery. But it was only a small portion of the North which wrote or talked against it. Most of the Northern people either apologized for it, or absolutely defended it. Again, Southern men came North, and advocated Slavery in the broadest and most offensive terms. Nevertheless these Southern visitors were treated courteously and kindly. But when Northern men went South, they were, if however slightly suspected of being Abolitionists, insulted, frequently tarred and feathered, and not unfrequently murdered. And again, whilst the North was entirely willing to have the question of the constitutionality of her Anti-Slavery legislation go to the Supreme Court, the South sullenly and stubbornly refused to let her Pro-Slavery legislation undergo this trial. Such was the refusal of Charleston and New-Orleans, when Massachusetts sent Commissioners to those Cities; and the Commissioners had instantly to turn homeward in order to avoid violence and death. And now, to continue the contrast, whilst the North, though under the provocation of these deep wrongs, did not rebel, nor even remonstrate, nor scarcely murmur; the South, though suffering no wrong nor semblance of wrong, has rebelled, and armed herself against the nation. Nevertheless so debauched and blinded by Slavery had the North become, that, even in the face of this contrast, there are thousands amongst us who say and scores of thousands who believe, that the North and not the South is the aggressor—that the North is the guilty injurer, and the South the injured and the innocent!

"Oh judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason!"

4th. *The Rebellion must be put down unconditionally.*

Government must make no conditions, and accept none. Stern, uncompromising, unrelenting must be its policy until the Rebellion is suppressed. After that, the free play of a merciful and fraternal spirit the more will my heart rejoice. Nor must any Republicans propose a Swiss mediator or any other mediator. Nor must any Democrats recommend the disposing of the Rebellion by a Convention or popular Assembly to be held in Nashville, Louisville, or anywhere else. It is for Government, and Government only, to dispose of it. The people must not override their own Government. That is the most effectual way to disparage and destroy it. Our Government could never more to good for anything after the people had taken the Rebellion out of its hands. Henceforth it would be a derision both at home and abroad;—as contemptible, and probably as transient also, as a Mexican Government. Were a mob raging in your streets, would you leave it to the City of Troy to say what should be done with it? Certainly not. Nor would you, instead of encouraging and strengthening your City Government to disperse it, virtually get up another mob. This however you would do, should you, contemptuously thrusting aside your City Government, summon the people to deal with the mob. Yes, in that case your people would be mobbing their own Government most emphatically. Now, this Rebellion is but a mob—a mob on an extended scale: and it is as exclusively the work of the Federal Government to put it down, as it is of a City Government to put down a street mob; or of a father to put down the child who revolts against his authority.

I need not add that our Government will not tolerate Intervention, but will regard it as War;—and, this too, whether the Intervention be on the part of one nation or many nations; under the plea of commerce or humanity.

5th. *The Rebellion must be put down, let the consequences be what they may to the Constitution, the Union, or even to the country.*

I have not said this to startle you, but to reconcile you to it. The nation must be reconciled to it, or perish. Suppose the revolting child I referred to should say: "Father! you had better not try to put me down. It might be the breaking up and ruin of the family." How prompt and proper would be the father's indignant answer: "Family or no family, you young rascal, you shall be put down." And down he 'd put him, wholly irrespective of the bearing of the transaction upon the family. Nay, he would, as he ought to, entirely forget his family in his one absorbing purpose of subduing the rebel. Nevertheless in this forgetting of his family, he would best serve and most honor it.

Now, I hold that in just the spirit of this wronged and aroused father should the American people and American Government feel and act. Thus, more than in any other wise, would America set an example full of glory to herself and of benefit to mankind. But if from her lack of an immovable resolution to exhaust herself, if need be, in conquering the diabolical Rebellion, it shall finally remain unconquered; then will America bring greater disgrace to herself and greater detriment to mankind than any other nation ever did. The luster, which innumerable victories have shed upon the arms and name of England is infinitely less than would be that of her expending her last strength in crushing an utterly unprovoked and wicked revolt of a part of her counties. And that high-spirited nation would expend it rather than give up her Government and her boundaries. Shame to you, English rulers, that you are not willing to have this nation also maintain Government and boundaries at whatever expense or hazard! All honor to you English people, that you are coming out so bravely and so nobly against your rulers and for us at this point, which is so vital not only to us but to all mankind! And you do this too in the face of the arguments, that the giving up of our resistance to the Rebellion would give bread to your hungry ones. God bless these hungry ones for their patience and their sympathy with us, and for affording another shining instance that men of integrity "do not live by bread alone." The English masses, who have to confront aristocracy, can well sympathize with our brave armies, who have gone forth to battle with an aristocracy not less but more overbearing, and but little if any less mighty.

I add that the present is no time to talk, and get up issues and multiply divisions, about the Constitution, the Union and the country. One person may wish to have the Constitution altered, and another may not. For one I do not, and never did, wish any alteration in it. No Democratic stickler for *the Constitution as it is*, to be living or dead, has ever spoken or written as much as I have for *the Constitution as it is*. Two years ago the Democratic party and no small portion of the Republican party were ready for Pro-Slavery changes of the Constitution. I opposed them: but I did not ask for Anti-Slavery changes. I was entirely content with the Constitution just as the Fathers gave it to us. Again, whilst one person may wish the Union modified, another, like myself, may be satisfied with its present terms. And again, whilst one person may wish to have the country no larger, another may go as far as I did in Congress, and wish to have it include Cuba and all Mexico. Oh no, the present is no time to agitate, or even to mention, these questions. There is time now for nothing else than for all of us to band ourselves together, and to determine in the depths of our souls, that the Rebellion shall go down, even though Constitution and Union and country go down with it. But some of you will tell me, that you wish to save the Constitution, the Union and the country. So do I wish to save them. There is, however, only one way to save them; and that way is to forget them—to forget them in the one engrossing purpose to crush the Rebellion.

Now does all this, which I have just been saying, seem extravagant? Nevertheless it is only in the spirit of all this that the Rebellion can be overcome. It is this out-of-season talk for the Constitution and the Union all the way through the War, that has so confused the nation, and prevented the concentration of its interest and energies at the point which claims all its interest and energies; and that has done more than any and all things else to demoralize, debase, and destroy the nation. If the Democrats, Republicans, and Abolitionists would come into a mutual stipulation not to speak for ninety days of the Constitution, the Union, or Slavery, there would within that time grew up such an earnestness and unanimity in the work of annihilating the Rebellion, that it would be annihilated.

"*The Constitution as it is and the Union as it was*"—this, all the way through the War, has been the great motto, not of the Democrats only but of most of the Republicans also. I do not say that it was a bad motto with which to face the discontents, murmurs, and threats that preceded the War. I do not say that it was unwise in Mr. Lincoln and our statesmen generally to continue to recognize it, in those early stages of the war, which nearly all of us hoped would not result in actual and proper war. But neither consistency nor any other consideration required them to recognize it any longer. Its effect any longer could be but to deceive and destroy. And yet, even now, when the strife has taken on the dimensions of the widest war, and the character of the most horrid war, this motto is still current. Alas, what misconceptions of the hour have they who, in this life and death struggle, would inspire us with any paramount anxiety, or indeed with any anxiety, for the Constitution and the Union! And, alas, how unfitted for a part in this struggle are all they who yield themselves up to this untimely and comparatively low inspiration! I say not that it will be improper to revive this motto after the Rebels are conquered. But I do say that until then it should be buried and forgotten. For until then we have nothing to think of but the Rebellion, and nothing to do but to put it down.

A moberatic spirit against the present charter and present boundaries of a City is beginning to show itself. The loyal citizens do well to meet this spirit with a motto, and to cry: "*The charter and the boundaries!*" But would not such a motto be madness after the moberats had already applied the torch and were already at work to reduce the City to ashes? It would be—and as emphatic madness is this prating about the Constitution and the Union in this fearful hour, when the mightiest Rebellion the world ever saw has raised the question—not what will become of a Paper and of politics—but what will become of our wives and children. "*Death to the moberats!*" could be the only suitable motto in the one case, as "*Death to the Rebels*" is the only suitable one in the other.

Oh no! this is not, as it is still claimed to be by the designing and the deluded, "*a War to maintain the Constitution and restore the Union.*" In its beginning it may have been proper to call that the issue. But it is no longer so, now that the Rebellion has reached its present proportions, and is so full of peril to the very life of the nation.

In this connection I would rebuke the frequent question—whether we mean to subjugate the Southern States. Until the Rebellion is subdued we mean to do nothing but subdue it. After that will be soon enough to decide what to do after that. To decide it now would be but to embarrass us, and to get up another issue on which to divide us. For the present we are to see to it, that the South do not subjugate us.

6th. *This clamor for carrying on the War is only a Constitutional way should cease—for it springs neither from good sense nor from an enlightened and enlarged patriotism, and it is fraught with peril, if not indeed with ruin to our cause.*

It is not true that we are bound to carry on the war Constitutionally at all hazards. I know that the Rebels, who have kicked aside the Constitution, say that we are. This was the burden of Breckinridge's speeches in the Senate just before he left it to join the Rebel army. But to say that we are to receive the advice of the Rebels with caution, is not to treat them discourteously or ungratefully. Their professed regard for the Constitution and for our welfare through an incessantly scrupulous and minute observance of it is certainly not above reasonable suspicion.

I admit that I see no necessity for violating the Constitution in carrying on the War. But if I did I would not hesitate to have it violated. I totally deny that this nation or any other nation is to regard itself as tied up to a Paper in the prosecution of war. Never before was there a nation so insane as to maintain for one moment the idea that, in a life and death struggle, it was bound at whatever risk to take those steps and those only, which had been marked out for it in a time of peace and safety. What the salvation of the nation calls for is to be done, whether the Constitution does or does not provide for it. The person, who says otherwise, would be like to evince more concern to save the hat than the head of the drowning man. "All that a man hath will he give for his life!"—and all that a nation hath, Constitution included, should she be willing to give for her life. The country is more than the Constitution. Not for the sake of the Constitution may the country be hazarded;—but for the sake of the country the Constitution may be sacrificed. And I repeat that the putting down of the Rebels is more than both Constitution and country.

There is, my hearers, a better inheritance than a Constitution or even than a country, which we can leave to our successors. This better inheritance is the glorious and immortal fact, that we made more account of putting down an infernal Rebellion than we did of preserving our treasure or our life, our Constitution or our country. To resist high-handed and bloody crime at whatever hazard or expense to ourselves, and to be less concerned to escape from death than from deep and enduring disgrace—surely this will be more precious in the esteem of our children than anything we could have saved for them by failing of this fidelity and bravery, and going down to the low grounds of calculation and compromise. To be willing to fling away our all in withstanding the assaults of a demonized gang on the sacred edifice of free government—this is to make ourselves the greatest blessing to those who shall come after us; and this is to do more toward carrying upward and onward the human family than could be done by saving a thousand countries in which this sublime spirit of self-sacrifice is not found.

I said that I see no necessity for violating the Constitution in carrying on war. That Paper withholds no needed power. It provides that Congress may declare war and enact all laws "necessary and proper" to give effect to the declaration. Congress is, of course, the sole judge as to what laws are "necessary and proper." Surely here is power enough.

We must all stand by the Government, and do all we can to make strong its heart and hands. Ours is an intelligent Government, and it is honestly intent in putting down the Rebellion. Every Government falls into mistakes. Doubtless ours has fallen into some. But the Democrats complain too unqualifiedly and sweepingly of it. I admit that they are entirely right in denouncing the unnecessary seizure and imprisonment of citizens. Nevertheless there *are* instances of their necessary seizure and imprisonment: and moreover there are instances (I confess comparatively few) where there is not opportunity for the examination of the accused, either previous to or immediately after his arrest. But, Democrats, if you will bear in mind that this power to seize and imprison citizens is, although a very necessary one, a very odious one, you will see that Government is under a strong motive to exercise it sparingly, and only for the safety of the country. I am not a member of the Republican Party. Nevertheless I can trust our Republican Government at this point. I would, Democrats, that you also might be willing to trust it. Enlighten it, and remonstrate with it, as there may be occasion. But do not array yourselves against it. For the dear country's sake be on its side—its friend and not its foe.

Let me speak of an error, which not Democrats only but Republicans also are liable to fall into. Now a Fremont, now a Hunter, now a Fitz John Porter, and now a McClellan, comes under the censure of the Government. Perhaps in every instance the censure is unjust. But, Democrats and Republicans, if there be an instance in which you are entirely sure it is unjust, nevertheless do not add to the embarrassments of the Government and the perils of the country by making it an occasion for complimenting and glorifying the censured one. In this wise you will gather a party around him: and it will not fail to be a party against the Government. But the Government, so long as it has the armed South for a party against it, cannot afford to encounter any other party. I do not know but the Government fell into mistakes in regard to all these Generals. But I do know that whether it did or did not, the present is not the time to punish the mistakes of the Government. As much as we can now do is to punish the crimes of the Rebels. Let the friends of the Fremonts and McClellans be patient. Justice will be done to their favorites; and the less hurriedly the more perfectly.

I pass to the wrong which those Abolitionists commit, who condemn the President for not proclaiming freedom to all the slaves, and also to the wrong which those Democrats commit, who condemn him for proclaiming it to any. Now, the truth on the one hand is, that the President has no right to abolish Slavery except as Commander-in-Chief, and no right even in that capacity to abolish it any further or faster than the military necessities of the country call for. The truth on the other hand is, that he has the right to abolish any and all Slavery, the abolition of which is called for by such necessities. In his much criticised, much condemned, and much ridiculed Letter to Horace Greeley, the President laid down the true doctine in this case. If it would help us in the War to call to our side the slaves of South Carolina, then the President should call them. If it would not help us to call those of North Carolina, those he should not call. In nothing of all this has he aught to do with the morality of Slavery. I grant that if the slaves will not come, it is useless to call them: and I am aware that it is very frequently and confidently asserted that their love of their masters and mistresses is too great to permit them to come. If, however, they will come, then by all means they should be called—and this too even if they should, as it is said they would, prove too lazy to work where there are no whips to work under; and even if they should, as it is said they would, prove too cowardly to fight. For left where they are their toil sustains the Rebellion.

I claim not to know whether the slaves will come to our standard—nor whether, if they should come, they will either work or fight. But I do claim that, inasmuch as there is a chance, be it however small, that they will come, and a chance, be it however small, that they will work, and a chance, be it however small, that they will fight, the President's Proclamation of Freedom is justified. For what if it shall turn out that the slaves *are* able to tear themselves away from their dear masters and mistresses! What an immense advantage to our cause will that be; and even though they shall prove unable or unwilling to render us any service after coming to us! And then if it shall turn out that they are willing to work on our side, and to work as faithfully as did that comparative handful of escaped and deserted slaves who, instead of being, as was all along alleged, a charge upon our National Treasury, put into it, over and above wages and expenses, between five and six hundred thousand dollars—then will this immense advantage be doubled. And then a still greater advantage to our cause if they shall be willing to fight for it, and our officers and soldiers shall be so earnestly patriotic as to let them fight for it. For I know not why, if they shall be willing to fight for us, they shall not fight with as signal bravery and effectiveness as did the negroes in both of our wars with Great Britain. Whether our officers and soldiers will be so much in earnest to put down the Rebellion as to let the despised negroes help them put it down, remains to be seen. If *entirely* in earnest they would welcome the aid not only of negroes and Indians, but of even the devil himself.

I repeat that I know not whether the slaves will come to us, or whether if they do they will work or fight. They are called the most patient and forgiving of all the races. They will certainly prove that they are, if they can forget that monstrous and meanest crime of letting the thousands, who toiled on the Vicksburg cut-off, fall again into the hands of the vindictive slaveholders; and if they can also forget the innumerable instances in which slaves coming to our lines, some with very valuable news of the designs and movements of the enemy, and all with hearts and hands to help us, have with satanic malignity been returned to the fate from which they had fled; and if in a word they can forget our persistent ribaldry, loathing and murderous hate of a people, who have done not one wrong in return for the mountains of wrong under which we have buried them. It is true that even such a people may at last be goaded to revengeful and bloody insurrections. Not however if they can have a way of escape from their oppressors. The President's Proclamation is the safety-valve. One of my chief reasons for welcoming it was that it would probably prevent servile insurrections.

I said that the Proclamation is to be justified in the light of even the least favorable expectations from it. But should we realize from it all this, which I have been speculating is possible, then should we have cause to rejoice in it. Should we hear to-night that a Rebel Regiment has overcome a Rebel Southern black Regiment, would we not all swing our hats? Would not even the Democrats? It would indeed put to shame some of their oftenest-repeated and most confident predictions, and it would take from their harp its most available string. But, Democrats, you would be too patriotic and magnanimous to mind that—wouldn't you?

I spoke of the blacks coming to our side. Let me not be misunderstood. The abolition of Slavery will not send the Southern blacks to the North, but it will send the Northern blacks to the South. A general change, and, still more, masses of their race will attract them thither. They, who seek to make the white laborer of the North jealous of abolition, do so either very ignorantly or very disingenuously.

And there is still another complaint which I have to make. It is the injustice and insult to the President of which they are guilty, who charge him with turning the War into an abolition War. He solemnly declares that his sole end is to put down the Rebellion; and that whatever he does with Slavery is done but incidentally and but to that sole end. What if the President, having taken it into his head that one of the most effective things which could be done toward prostrating the Rebellion is to free the cotton from the tenacious grasp of the Confederate Government, should be multiplying endeavors to that end? Would it be fair to charge him with perverting the War into a War to free the cotton? I deliberately affirm that it would be quite as fair as to charge him with perverting it into a War to free the slave. Let us all be just to the President. To be unjust to him is not only to wrong him, but to wrong and perhaps ruin the country. Democrats! there are some who accuse you of opposing the President's Proclamation because you would pervert the War into a War for Slavery. Are you not indignant at the accusation? Surely, you should be. For nothing in all the history of man could be more revolting than such a perversion of a just War, and such a betrayal of a righteous cause. Great is the wickedness of a slaveholding people who make war for Slavery. But the wanton and unmitgated wickedness of a non-slaveholding people, who should join them, would be infinitely greater.

I must bring my Speech to a close. Do you wonder that I, so old and so radical an Abolitionist, have expressed in it no concern about Slavery? I could not express what I did not feel. Since the bombarding of Sumter I have felt no concern about Slavery—for I could not doubt that it was the effectual bombarding of Slavery. As the war has advanced I have been increasingly confident that the people would never consent to re-establish the cause of all this blood and horror and desolation. As I have seen the plowshare of war pass through Slavery, I have felt more and more that the time for the abomination to pass away had come. And now have we signs that the very earthquakes of war will soon be rending this mountain of oppression, and tossing its parts hither and thither beyond all possibility of restoration.

Moreover, Civilization is everywhere casting off Slavery: and there is reason to hope that even the South will become so far civilized by this War as no longer to desire Slavery. It is indeed sad to have to number War amongst the civilizing agents. Nevertheless so it is that whilst the nations are on their present low plane—a plane in the case of some of them not above the barbarism of slaveholding—it is hardly extravagant to say of them that: "without shedding of blood there is no" civilization. War is emphatically the worst of all remedies. But the nations are still too low and barbarous to try only the better ones.

Yes, the slave is soon to go free. Heaven's time for setting him free is at hand; and Earth and Hell cannot prevail against Heaven. He goes free by the shedding of blood. But it is the blood of his common oppressors North and South, instead of his own. Wondrous manifestations of the Divine hand! Wondrous retributions of the Divine justice!

But though I am sure that the innocent slave shall go free, I am not sure that the guilty nation shall live. God alone knows what penalty will be adequate to its enormous, continued and unrepented of crimes against His poor. Perhaps it is to be destroyed, and to be a warning, loud and long, against oppression. Nevertheless, though we are to be submissive to whatever may be in store for her, we are to labor zealously, wisely, and incessantly for her salvation.

My hearers, we will all stand by the Government—will we not? Although some of us are Democrats and some Republicans and some Abolitionists, we will nevertheless lock hands as Americans—will we not? We will all of us, notwithstanding our party divisions and party interests, generously and patriotically band ourselves together to crush this causeless and accursed Rebellion—will we not? Would that we might this night feel more deeply than ever that it is not by the Rebels that we can be conquered, but only by ourselves. Nothing is truer than that the life of the Rebellion is in disunion at the North. Nothing is truer than that it would find its death in union at the North.

Ere taking my seat let me remind you of our duty to stand by our Army—by the brave men who have gone out from among us to suffer every hardship and to face every peril in the high and holy work of suppressing the most nefarious of all conspiracies. But the way to stand by them is to stand by the Government they serve. To desert the Government is to desert them. Our soldiers bid us stand by the Government. They are afflicted that so many of us do not. They are indignant at the divisions by which we encourage the foe, and make him abler to drive back and slaughter our friends. Such heartlessness toward themselves as well as toward the country is very unlike that reward of sympathy, gratitude and love on which they counted when they went forth to fight her battles. Our slain soldiers, could they speak, would bid us stand by the Government. Our tens of thousands of broken families, weeping over those who went to the Army, never more to return from it, bid us stand by the Government. The enlightened friends of freedom and righteousness the earth over bid us stand by the Government. And, loud above all, comes down the voice out of Heaven: "Stand by the Government! Stand by the Government!!"

Was the Keokuk a Failure?

To the Editor of The N. Y. Tribune.

SIR: One of the greatest minds this planet has produced—a countryman of ours—on an occasion familiar to us all, commenced his greatest speech in the Senate of the United States, in the following words: "When the mariner has been tossed for many days, in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and, before we float further on the waves of this debate, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are." I have imitated this example, and avail myself of the "first pause in the storm" which has overtaken the Keokuk, to examine her bearings, and by a plain statement of facts, which, with your permission, I will lay before my countrymen, leave them to determine "how far the elements have driven her from her true course;" and, while I cannot hope for victory so complete as that with which the immortal Webster vanquished his adversaries, and triumphed over the enemies of the Republic, who were then sowing the seeds of this Rebellion, I still trust it will not be found entirely shorn of glory. I shall endeavor to show that in the short life of the vessel, she developed qualities which no other "iron-clad" hitherto built in this country possessed to the same degree, and if her armor was not proof against the artillery of the enemy, that she combined other elements of scarcely less importance, and which should, I think, in some measure shield her, from the harsh judgment a few unthinking minds have passed upon her.

In the first place the Keokuk was built for a *light-draft* vessel, to draw only a certain amount of water, which, when ready for action, was about nine feet aft and 8 feet forward. She was a small vessel, being about 159½ feet long over all, including ram and rudder.

She was designed to have speed, and she attained it, running out of New-York Harbor at the rate of 10 miles an hour. She was intended more particularly for intricate navigation, to ascend the Southern inlets and rivers; and to do this, it was necessary she should be manageable and obey her helm promptly, which she did.

She was designed to be seaworthy, and she proved herself eminently so. She was thoroughly ventilated, and without the use of artificial means, well lighted in her cabin and ward room, and her accommodations generally were as good as on any vessel in the service of the same tunnage.

She was intended to be shot-proof against ordnance in use in the naval service of the United States at the time she was designed, and I have it from the lips of her commander that he believed she would have proved so, but against such bolts and missiles as the Rebels threw, supplied them by our *neutral friends* across the water, she was not proof, nor were any of the other iron-clads engaged in the action, four out of seven of the Monitors being disabled, although not exposed—as is admitted on all sides—to so severe a fire. She took into action, amid the most terrific cannonading the world has ever seen, about 100 men, and brought them all out alive, and the most severely wounded—Ensign McIntosh—as brave and true an old salt as ever trod the deck of a ship, is, I learn to my great joy, in a fair way to recover.

The *apparent* thickness of armor on the sides of the Keokuk was 5¾ inches, put on in a peculiar manner, viz: Bars of iron, 4 inches wide and 1 inch thick, were placed edgeways over the skin of the ship, running fore and aft, 1 inch apart, and between them were placed strips of wood of the same dimensions; over this were laid two plates of iron, each ¾ of an inch thick, secured on the edges of the bars by 1¼ inch bolts running between them, and bars by 1¼ inch bolts running between them, and through the skin, and fastened by a nut on the inside of the vessel.

The *actual weight of metal* in armor on sides, as will be seen from this description, was 136 lbs. per superficial foot, equal to a *solid plate* of but 3¼ inches in thickness. On the turrets an additional ½-inch plate over the two ¾ths, increased the *apparent* thickness of armor to 5¾ inches, and the weight of metal to 150 lbs. per superficial foot, equal to a solid plate of 3¼ inches.

The question will naturally be asked, Why was not the vessel more heavily armored? Simply because a vessel of her dimensions would not support any more. Increase the size of the vessel and the armor may be increased in the same ratio. If vessels clad in *eleven inches of solid iron* were disabled and placed *hors du combat*, is it to be wondered at that a little vessel, carrying but about 3¼ inches of *solid metal*, could not stand the racket? To recapitulate:

The Keokuk proved to be sea-worthy.

The Keokuk proved to have speed.

The Keokuk proved to be perfectly manageable.

The Keokuk proved to be well lighted, naturally.

The Keokuk proved to be well ventilated without the use of artificial means.

The Keokuk proved to have great stability.

The Keokuk preserved the life of every man she took into action, although sustaining the heaviest fire of any vessel in the fleet.

The Keokuk was not proof against the missiles used by the enemy, nor were any of the other vessels engaged in the action.

No part of the machinery of the vessel was disabled or gave out.

One gentleman informs the public that if the Keokuk and Nahant had had an inner skin protecting those inside the turrets and pilot-houses against the flying of the bolts, that the casualties would have been less. He will be surprised to learn a fact, which he should have made himself acquainted with before displaying his sagacity to the prejudice of the constructor, viz: that in the Keokuk there was precisely this arrangement *covering every bolt*, and which doubtless contributed greatly to preserve the lives of those on board of her. Another gentleman says that "scientific officers" in the navy never had any confidence in the vessel. Possibly this gentleman imagines himself, and a few friends of his first born child, to constitute a sort of "reservoir" of all the scientific attainment in the service; but, as officers whom the nation most honors, and justly holds in the highest repute, have expressed to me, and to others, opinions quite the reverse of this, and have done so repeatedly, I am inclined to think this gentleman's acquaintance with the opinions of "scientific officers" is confined to those who depute *themselves* such, and to the circumscribed limits of the "clique" to which he evidently belongs.

This whole business of iron-clads is in its infancy, and we must expect occasional disaster, until experience has shown us where the weak points are, and how to strengthen them.

Now that portion of the life of a vessel which is passed in action is an exceedingly limited one, and sacrifices too great can be made, of creature comforts, of those immutable laws which govern and regulate health—light, air and exercise—to accomplish certain results.

The original "Monitor" lived but to see a single fight of short duration, the severity of which bore no comparison to that to which the "Keokuk" was subjected. In the "Keokuk" I attempted a compromise, keeping in view the points I have named, and have vanity enough to believe, that if the vessel had been twice her size, with a corresponding weight of armor, she would have passed through the fiery ordeal successfully.

But what I have lost in blighted hopes and disappointment, has been the nation's gain in one respect. If the Keokuk did nothing else she has added a bright star to that galaxy of naval heroes which this war has brought out, and in her commander, has shown us where we have another stout heart and skil ful hand, to pilot us through our troubles; and to the brave men under him, his officers and crew, have they not added fresh luster to the proverbial gallantry of our navy, and won for themselves a place in the hearts of their countrymen? Riddled though their ship was—hopeless as were the chances of success—with the shafts of the foe piercing them from every quarter, they stand manfully by amid the belching fire, and leave their post only when the signal to return is hoisted from the flagship, and the brave old Admiral sees with his experienced eye, that we are not yet strong enough, and that to continue the action would only jeopardize the remaining vessels, and postpone that day of retribution most surely coming. Well, she has gone down, pierced to the heart in her country's cause, and if her career has been short, it has not been inglorious.

I mourn her loss, for I had fashioned her, and watched her as she sprung into life, as a parent does his first born child. She carried with her the toil and care of many a weary day and night, and that she has not done better service is not because those connected with her did not labor most earnestly to this end.

I have stated my case, and leave it with entire confidence to the judgment of my countrymen. The question of "success or failure" will be by *them* decided. I am prepared to submit to the *people's* verdict, whatever it may be, but am not to be put down with the cry of failure, without at least measuring my strength with those who are raising it, and exulting over what they suppose to be my downfall.

Very truly yours, C. W. WHITNEY.

To the Women of the Republic.

When our leading journals, orators, and brave men from the battle-field complain that Northern women feel no enthusiasm in the war, the time has come for us to speak—to pledge ourselves loyal to Freedom and our Country.

Thus far there has been no united public expression from the women of the North as to the policy of the war. Here and there one has spoken, and written nobly. Many have vied with each other in acts of generosity and self-sacrifice for the sick and wounded in camp and hospital. But we have, as yet, no means of judging how and where the majority of Northern women stand.

If it be true that at this hour, the women of the South are more devoted to their cause than we to ours, the fact lies here. They see and feel the horrors of the war; the foe is at their firesides; while we, in peace and plenty, live and move as heretofore. There is an inspiration, too, in a definite purpose, be it good or bad. The women of the South know what their sons are fighting for. The women of the North do not. They appreciate the blessings of Slavery; we do not the blessings of Liberty. We have never yet realized the glory of those institutions in whose defense it is the high privilege of our sires and sons, this day, to bleed and die. They are aristocrats with a lower class, servile and obsequious, intrenched in feudal homes. We are aristocrats under protest, who must go abroad to indulge our tastes, and enjoy in foreign despotisms the courts and customs which the genius of a republic repudiates and condemns.

But, from the beginning of the Government, there have been women among us, who, with the mother of the immortal John Quincy Adams, have lamented the inconsistencies of our theory and practice, and demanded for ALL the people the exercise of those rights that belong to every citizen of a Republic.

The women of a nation mold its morals, religion, and politics. The Northern treason, now threatening to betray us to our foes, is hatched at our own firesides, where traitor snobs, returned from Europe and the South, out of time and tune with independence and equality, infuse into their sons the love of caste and class, of fame and family, wealth and ease, and baptize it all in the name of Republicanism and Christianity.

Let every woman understand that this war involves the same principles that have convulsed the nations of the earth from Pharaoh to Abraham Lincoln—Liberty or Slavery—Democracy or Aristocracy—Christianity or Barbarism—and choose, this day, whether our republican institutions shall be placed on an enduring basis, and an eternal peace secured to our children, or whether we shall leap back through generations of light and experience and meekly bow again to chains and slavery.

Shall Northern freemen yet stand silent lookers-on when through Topeka, St. Paul, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston and New-York, men and women, little boys and girls, chained in gangs, shall march to their own sad music, beneath a tyrant's lash? On our sacred soil shall we behold the auction block—babies sold by the pound, and beautiful women for the vilest purposes of lust; where parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters shall be torn from each other and sent East and West, North and South? Shall our free presses and free schools, our palace homes, colleges, churches and stately capitols all be leveled to the dust? Our household gods all desecrated, and our proud lips, ever taught to sing peans to Liberty, made to swear allegiance to the god of Slavery? Such degradation, and more than words can tell, shall yet be ours, if we gird not up our giant freemen now to crush this Rebellion, and root out forever the hateful principle of caste and class. Men who, in the light of the Nineteenth Century, believed that God made one race all booted and spurred, and another to be ridden; who would build up a government with Slavery for its corner-stone, cannot live on the same continent with a pure democracy.

To counsel grim-visaged war seems hard to come from woman's lips; but better far that the bones of our sires and sons whiten every Southern plain, that we do their rough work at home, than that Liberty, struck dumb in the Capital of our Republic, should plead no more for man. Every woman who appreciates the grand problem of national life, must say war, pestilence, famine, anything but an ignoble peace.

We are but co-workers now with the true ones of every age. The history of the past is but one long struggle upward to equality. All men, born slaves to ignorance, superstition, lust and fear, crept through centuries of darkness, discord and despair—now one race dominant then another—but is this ceaseless warring, ever wearing off their chains and the gross material surroundings of a mere animal existence, at last the sun of civilization and Christianity dawned on the soul of man, and the precious seed of the ages, garnered up in the Mayflower, was carried in the hollow of God's hand across the mighty waters and plan