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By the President of the Confederate States.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas a communication was addressed on the 6th day of July last, (1862), by Gen. Robert E. Lee, acting under the instruction of the Secretary of War of the Confederate States of America, to Gen. H. W. Halleck, General in Chief of the United States army, informing the latter that a report had reached this Government that Wm. B. Mumford, a citizen of the Confederate States, had been executed by the United States authorities at New Orleans, for having pulled down the United States flag in that city before its occupation by the forces of the United States, and calling for a statement of the facts, with a view to retaliation, if such an outrage had really been committed under sanction of the authorities of the United States:

And whereas, (no answer having been received to said letter,) another letter was, on the 2nd of August last, 1862, addressed by General Lee, under my instructions, to Gen. Halleck, renewing the inquiry in relation to said execution of the said Mumford, with the information that in the event of not receiving a reply within fifteen days, it would be assumed that the fact alleged was true and was sanctioned by the Government of the United States.

And whereas, an answer dated on the 7th August last, 1862, was addressed to Gen. Lee, by H. W. Halleck, the said General in Chief of the Armies of the United States, alleging sufficient cause for failure to make early reply to said letter of 6th July, asserting that "no authentic information had been received in relation to the execution of Mumford, but measures will be immediately taken to ascertain the facts of the alleged execution," and promising that Gen. Lee should be daily informed thereof:

And whereas, on the 29th November last, 1862, another letter was addressed under my instruction by Robert Ould, Confederate Agent for the exchange of prisoners under the cartel between the two Governments, to Lieut. Col. W. H. Ludlow, agent of the United States under said cartel, informing him that the explanations promised in the said letter of Gen. Halleck, of 7th August last, had not yet been received, and that if no answer was sent to the Government in fifteen days from the delivery of this last communication, it would be considered that an answer is declined:

And whereas, by letter dated on the 3d day of the present month of December, the said Lieut. Col. Ludlow apprised the said Robert Ould that the above recited communication of the 29th November had been received and forwarded to the Secretary of War of the United States:

And whereas, this last delay of fifteen days allowed for answer has elapsed and no answer has been received:

And whereas, in addition to the tacit admission resulting from the above refusal to answer, I have received evidence fully establishing the truth of the fact that the said Wm. B. Mumford, a citizen of this Confederacy, was actually and publicly executed in cold blood by hanging, after the occupation of the city of New Orleans by the forces under the command of General Benjamin F. Butler, when said Mumford was an unresisting and non-combatant captive, and for no offence even alleged to have been committed by him subsequent to the date of the capture of the said city:

And whereas, the silence of the Government of the United States and its maintaining of said Butler in high office under its authority for many months after his commission of an act that can be viewed in no other light than as a deliberate murder, as well as of numerous other outrages and atrocities hereafter to be mentioned, afford evidence only too conclusive that the said Government sanctions the conduct of said Butler, and is determined that he shall remain unpunished for his crimes.

Now, therefore, I, Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, and in their name, do pronounce and declare the said B. F. Butler to be a felon, deserving of capital punishment. I do order that he be no longer considered or treated simply as a public enemy of the Confederate States of America, but as an outlaw or common enemy of mankind, and that in the event of his capture, the officer in command of the capturing force do cause him to be immediately executed by hanging; and I do further order that no commissioned officer of the United

States taken captive, shall be released on parole before exchange until the said Butler shall have met with due punishment for his crimes.

And whereas the hostilities, waged against this Confederacy by the forces of the United States, under the command of B. F. Butler, have borne no resemblance to such warfare as is alone permissible by the rules of international law or the usages of civilization, but have been characterized by repeated atrocities and outrages, among the large number of which the following may be cited as examples:

Peaceful and aged citizens, unresisting captives and non-combatants have been confined at hard labour with balls and chains attached to their limbs, and are still so held in dungeons and fortresses. Others have been subjected to a like degrading punishment for selling medicines to the sick soldiers of the Southern Confederacy.

The soldiers of the United States have been invited and encouraged by general orders to insult and outrage the wives, the mothers and the sisters of our citizens.

Helpless women have been torn from their homes, and subjected to solitary confinement, some in fortresses and prisons, and one especially on an island of barren sand, under a tropical sun, have been fed with loathsome rations, that had been condemned as unfit for soldiers, and have been exposed to the vilest insults.

Prisoners of war who have surrendered to the naval forces of the United States on agreement that they should be released on parole, have been seized and kept in close confinement.

Repeated outrages have been sought or invented for plundering the inhabitants of the captured city by fines levied and exacted under threat of imprisoning recusants at hard labour with ball and chain.

The entire population of the city of New Orleans have been forced to elect between starvation by the confiscation of all their property, and taking an oath against conscience to bear allegiance to the invaders of their country.

Egress from the city has been refused to those whose fortitude withstood the test, even to lone and aged women and to helpless children, and after being ejected from their homes and robbed of their property they have been left to starve in the streets, or subsist on charity.

The slaves have been driven from the plantations in the neighborhood of New Orleans, till their owners would consent to share the crops with the Commanding General, his brother, Andrew J. Butler, and other officers; and when such consent had been extorted, the slaves have been restored to the plantations, and there compelled to work under the bayonets of the guards of United States soldiers.

Where this partnership was refused, armed expeditions have been sent to the plantations to rob them of everything that was susceptible of removal, and even slaves, too aged or infirm for work, have, in spite of their entreaties, been forced from the homes provided by the owners, and driven to wander helpless on the highway.

By a recent General Order (No 91) the entire property in that part of Louisiana lying west of the Mississippi river, has been sequestered for confiscation, and officers have been assigned to duty with orders to "gather up and collect the personal property and turn over to the proper officers upon their receipts, such of said property as may be required for the use of the United States army; to collect together all the other personal property and bring the same to New Orleans, and cause it to be sold at public auction to the highest bidder,"—an order which, if executed, condemns to punishment by starvation at least a quarter of a million of human beings, of all ages, sexes and conditions, and of which the execution, although forbidden to military officers by the orders of President Lincoln, is in accordance with the confiscation law of our enemies, which he has directed to be enforced through the agency of civil officials. And, finally, the African slaves have not only been excited to insurrection by every license and encouragement, but numbers of them have actually been armed for a servile war, a war in its nature far exceeding in horrors the most merciless atrocities of the savages:

And whereas, the officers under the command of the said Butler have been, in many instances, active and zealous agents in the commission of these crimes, and no instance is known of the refusal of any one of them to participate in the outrages above narrated.

And whereas, the President of the United States has, by public and official declaration, signified not only his approval of the effort to excite servile war within the Confederacy, but his intention to give aid and encouragement thereto, if these independent States shall continue to refuse submission to a foreign power after the first day of January next; and has thus made known that all appeals to the laws of nations, the dictates of reason and the instincts of humanity would be addressed in vain to our enemies, and that they can be deterred from the commission of these crimes only by the terms of just retribution;

Now, therefore, I, Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, and acting by their authority, appealing to the Divine Judge in attestation that their conduct is not guided by the passion of revenge, but that they reluctantly yield to the solemn duty of repressing, by necessary severity, crimes of which their citizens are the victims, do issue this my proclamation, and, by virtue of my authority as Commander in Chief of the armies of the Confederate States, do order

1st. That all commissioned officers in the command of said Benjamin F. Butler be declared not entitled to be considered as soldiers engaged in honourable warfare, but as robbers and criminals, deserving death; and that they and each of them be, whenever captured, reserved for execution.

2d. That the private soldiers and non-commissioned officers in the army of said Butler be considered as only the instruments used for the commission of the crimes perpetrated by his orders, and not as free agents; that they therefore be treated, when captured, as prisoners of war, with kindness and humanity, and be sent home on the usual parole, that they will in no manner aid or serve the United States in any capacity during the continuance of this war, unless duly exchanged.

3d. That all negro slaves captured in arms, be at once delivered over to the executive authorities of the respective States to which they belong, to be dealt with according to the laws of said States.

4th. That the like orders be executed in all cases with respect to all commissioned officers of the United States when found serving in company with armed slaves in insurrection against the authorities of the different States of this Confederacy.

In testimony whereof, I have signed these presents, and caused the seal of the Confederate States of America to be affixed thereto, at the city of Richmond, on this 23d day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two.

[Signed] JEFFERSON DAVIS,
By the President.

J. P. BENJAMIN,
Secretary of State.

Burnside's Defeat.

The Loss of the Yankee Army—Comments of the Press—Utter Despair of the North.

The Northern papers do not disguise their disappointment and mortification at the defeat of Burnside. The New York Herald says that "Sunday, the 14th December"—the day that news was received of Burnside's defeat—"will long be remembered as the gloomiest of all days in the history of the nation." Burnside's friends try to save him by saying that the forward movement at Fredericksburg was not undertaken by his own judgment, but was peremptorily ordered by the authorities at Washington. General Halleck had been on a visit to the army, and Burnside is in Washington, looking after his interests with the Government. The Yankees admit their severe loss in the battle. A correspondent of the Philadelphia Inquirer writes:

General Hooker's Division, although not prominently in the advance, yet most of the entire division was at some time engaged.—Those that were sent to the relief of General Sumner were subject to a loss in the aggregate of twenty eight hundred men, while the division under General Birney, who were sent to the relief of General Franklin, alone suffered the loss of near eleven hundred men.

The amount of our casualties are variously estimated from twelve to fifteen thousand.—The information received at headquarters gives the number killed and wounded between six and eight thousand—the missing to another four thousand—making our losses a trifle over eleven thousand. It cannot be ascertained definitely as to what are the losses of the rebels, but from those who visited the field, during the burying of the dead and bringing off the wounded, information was derived from the enemy with whom they conversed. We learn that, in that part of the field alone, their loss in killed and wounded is over four thousand, making no mention of their missing.

The defeat of Burnside had given a wide scope to the comments and strictures of the press in the North. The general tenor was one of despair and censure, and so universal that even the administration papers confess the hopelessness of an advance against Richmond. No attempt is made to disguise the extent of their disaster. The New York World, in a fit of deep melancholy, cries out, while commenting on the result of the battle:

It is a terrible spectacle. A ship, the grandest that ever sailed the tide of time, freighted with interests for the face passing all calculation and beyond all price, the marvel and the glory of the whole world—we say it is a terrible spectacle to see this peerless barque, in the hands of chattering idols and blind blundering imbeciles, driven straight upon the breakers and quick sands, while the crew, the stoutest and the most faithful that ever trod deck, are compelled to look passively on, and, in sheer helplessness, await the all-engulfing fate.

Don't call this extravagant language. It is not extravagant. It but feebly expresses the dreadful reality. Here we are reeling back from the third campaign upon Richmond.—Fifteen thousand of the grand army sacrificed at one swoop, and the rest escaping only by a hair's breadth, and all for what? For the same old accursed trio of imbeciles at Washington. [Lincoln, Halleck and Stanton.]—Those rebel heights, so murderous, might have been carried without a blow, had the pontoon bridges been delivered at the time promised by the imbeciles at Washington.—In the face of the stupendous work which the enemy was able to accomplish by reason of that failure, Burnside would have never made the attack, as he did, had he not in spite of his most pressing protests, been peremptorily ordered to cross that river, and storm those heights, then and there, by the men at Washington. That is the true record. Not all the

cunning nor all the impudence of White House flunkies can change that record one iota. Like the fated blunders that preceded it, it has gone unalterably into history.

Heaven help us! There seems to be no help in man. The cause is perishing. Hope after hope has vanished, till now the only prospect is the very blackness of despair.—But how can we adjure Heaven for help?—Was it not said by the wisest of Pagans that "there is a stupidity which baffles even the gods!" and is it not a proverb among Christians, too, that "God helps those only who help themselves?" What right have we to expect that even Infinite Mercy will stay the laws of the universe that we and ours may be snatched from the track to death? Is it not impious presumption to imagine that the Eternal Reason, which has ordained cause and effect, will abdicate to suit the folly that now governs us? Alas for our country! Given over, it would seem, to the most ignoble fate that ever befell a country—wrecked by imbeciles!

The World severely censures the conduct of the war, and pours hot shot into the Cabinet and the Washington authorities after the following fashion—

There stands his Secretary of War, an upstart in public life, with neither knowledge nor experience, yet full of pretensions and impatience, alike nuzzle-headed and premeditated, his movement baffling all calculation and conjecture, now pitching loyal men into Fort Lafayette and now running a muck of generals in the field, a blatherskite and a blunderer, a mischief-maker and marplot from the beginning. There stands the Secretary of the Navy, venerable in years, gentle at heart, mild in manners, admirably qualified to do the needful for a boarding school in

Murmuring streams, soft shades and springing flowers,

Lutes, laurels, seas of milk and ships of amber; but as for his capacity to do the needful in these dread times on the broad ocean—go read it in the flaming tracks of the Sumpter and the Alabama. There stands, too, the Secretary of the Treasury, up to his eyes in irredeemable paper, and yet without knack enough to furnish even green backs for the scant monthly pay of the soldiers, though the consequence be a violation of the public faith pledged them, the untold suffering of their families at home, and their own demoralization and desertion to a degree incalculably damaging to the national cause. There, too, stands the man who calls himself General in Chief, the President's chosen military manager and adviser, whose strategy is seen in his dispatching the Banks expedition to Texas, when every principle of common sense required it to bear on Richmond, whose business habits are illustrated in his forgetting the pontoons, though he had expressly promised them, and whose judgment is shown by his persistent order to storm Fredericksburg heights, in spite of the conclusive reasons of General Burnside against it.

The "World" after pronouncing the North on the brink of ruin, continues—

How can the country be saved with such men in charge of its destiny? Human reason hopes in vain for an answer. But is there any prospect of a change? How can it come? The President is blindly and obstinately confident in these men. Of public opinion he takes no heed. In fact he knows nothing of it as it really exists; for it is notorious that he reads as little of newspapers—which are the only true index of public opinion—as the child unborn. His notion of the popular feeling are made up mainly from the representations of the interested coteries about him, and the fugitive statements of the few visitors who can quiet his jesting tongue long enough to get his serious ear. Of course notions thus gained are mixed, crude and worthless.

What then? Must the nation surely perish? Is there no remedy against all this incapacity? We vouch for nothing. The case at best is deplorable.

Butler's Course from a Northern Point of View—A Yankee on Yankee.

It is surprising to see how bold and outspoken some of the Northern papers have become under their recent reverses. The tide of reaction has set in. Language which months ago would have consigned one to Fort Lafayette is now boldly proclaimed, and commands thousands of willing ears. The New York "World" denounces the Administration for continuing Butler in office, and shows him to be a disgrace to humanity.—Reviewing his course in New Orleans, the "World" says:

There are American journals so ignorant or so base as to praise the administration of General Butler at New Orleans. The fact is that he not only disgraces the Union cause—he disgraces civilization and humanity itself. He would be without apologists in Algiers.—He ought to be without apologists in America. Silence concerning his abuses of power and malfeasances in office, his brutality and the pecculations at which he winks, if he does not share their profit, might be tolerated by the consciences of those who, hopeless of moving the mind of Mr. Lincoln, were unwilling to really obstruct the Government, or even seem to encourage disloyalty. But when that silence is misconstrued into approbation, when presses actually praise General Butler, when presses exist which have the effrontery or the ignorance to represent the number of those who have taken an enforced oath of allegiance as the number of those whose hearts have been constrained to loyalty, then silence becomes a lie. The truth concerning this basest and most unprincipled man should then be told,

and his misconduct be denounced as it deserves, that the shame of the loyal and honest millions whose Government Mr. Lincoln has sent him to represent may at least be undeserved.

We do not mean to depreciate the sharpness of General Butler's pen or the cleverness of his cunning mind. Pettifoggery have found themselves surpassed in their own arts, and thieves could teach General Butler nothing which he did not know. He has been outwitted. So much at least may be said to his credit, but that is all. Another syllable in his praise beyond that is false.

He has disgraced the army, for the the army is honest; he has disgraced his Government, for his Government is yet great enough to be just; he has disgraced his country, for his name bars the scorn of foreign enemies and justifies the severity of foreign friends; he has dishonored the chief magistrate, by prescribing him to ministers of the Gospel as the subject of their compulsory prayers; he has dishonored the North by incarcerating every mean and sordid characteristic which, falsely, Southern passion has ascribed to Northern phlegm, by surrounding himself with men whose ill-gotten gains, making dishonesty and loyalty profitable, cause disloyal honesty to seem respectable by comparison; he has disgraced his sex for not even women have been exempt from his cruelty, but like men have been made to suffer as traitors for the self-respect of their intercourse with him as women; if it is possible he has disgraced himself, for the most subservient tool of southern men and obsequious leader of southern institutions has become their assiduous enemy, seeking a place for the heel of power where once he looked to lick the spittle of servility.

General Butler's whole career is known to very many loyal men at the North, who blush in silence and shame at the imbecility which tolerates him for an instant in power. The administration presses will act wisely not to praise him. They should be thankful if their own silence secures his immunity from public odium. Neither they nor Mr. Lincoln can secure him against the infamy of history.

The Currency of the North—Its Depreciation—An Appeal to Congress.

Under the effect of the recent reverses of the Yankee army, the currency of the North is rapidly depreciating. The New York Herald makes a strong appeal to Congress to do something to arrest it and to save the nation from bankruptcy. The Herald says—

It is expected—nay, demanded—by the country that the two great matters most deeply interesting at this critical moment to the nation, on which it may be said our welfare and success mainly depend, shall receive, if not exclusive, at least paramount and immediate attention. We need hardly say that the two great and most pressing subjects which now claim the immediate action of Congress are the currency and taxation. Let us hope that the terminable nigger question is now at last settled and disposed of, and that, having received all the attention possible in the President's Message, it will not be dragged into Congress, at least this session, to the exclusion of legitimate and necessary business.

Such are the two questions and matters of business which it behooves Congress to take up forthwith and to arrange and settle on a sound and honest basis. We say honest, emphatically, because there are in Congress men devoted to sectional, corporation and tract interests, who we fear would, if they were able, divert the action of Congress from popular and patriotic action, in view of the great interests of the great people, to special mercenary and dishonest action, in view of private interests and trading and corporation advantages.

Our observations and our fears apply chiefly to the currency question—a question which must be taken up and must be settled by Congress without delay; for it is certain, we cannot go on long as now; we cannot safely be left to drift at the mercy of chance, with the helm in the hand of wild speculation, and the vessel of State headed towards quicksands and breakers.

Having hinted to Congress its present duty and business, we will make a few brief and concise hints also in reference to the course and direction which its duty ought, we think, to pursue. What, we would ask, is our present position in reference to the currency?

We have before us the spectacle of two antagonistic powers engaged in one and the same business—issuing irredeemable paper money. One of these powers is Congress itself; the other power is a scattered, unconnected force of about a thousand banks and trading corporations. The issue of demand notes by the authority of Congress is, it is true, subject to limitation—the will of the majority in that body; also its notes issued are, if not redeemable in specie, at least convertible into Government securities. But the issues of the other power we have mentioned, now that the banks are relieved from the necessity of converting their bills into specie at the will of the holder, are absolutely without limitation. This alone and of itself is a great evil to the country—the unlimited issue of irredeemable, irresponsible paper money by more than twelve or fourteen hundred banks throughout the country. When to this great issue which there is nothing adequate to control, these all kinds of banks, solvent and insolvent, good and bad, honest and swindling, are all confounded together without distinctness, without any ready means of ascertaining which are genuine traders and which are wildcat swindlers—when to this evil of redundant, irredeemable issues is added over and above the issue of many millions of Treasury demand notes, the evil is doubly aggravated.

The country, in this deplorable situation, may be compared to some respectable gentleman attacked in the streets and knocked down by a