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Equal Rights Before the Law for all Men--Social Conditions will Regulate Themselves.

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Devoted to the interests of the FREEDMEN OF THE SOUTH and the establishment and maintenance of EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL MEN, regardless of class or color.

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The State Feeling at the South.
That the people of the United States may decide wisely whether the exclusive control of the late rebel States may be immediately and safely surrendered to the late rebel population of those States, it is essential to know the prevailing sentiment of that population. This cannot be too constantly and widely spread before the country. Let us look at it a little.

In Mississippi, an unpardoned rebel, General Humphreys, has just been elected Governor by the "Union" voters, and Governor Sharkey loses his popularity, because he favors giving the colored population the right to testify, and local candidates for the Legislature have been defeated upon the same ground. Of the general feeling in the State of Mississippi, General Slocum's order of August 24, very fully informs us. On that date he thought it extremely dangerous to the public peace to allow the arming of the lately rebel citizens as militia. They are, however, arming, and they refuse to organize under the United States flag. Meanwhile the state of things described by Gen. Slocum continues. The colored people are daily murdered and Union men maltreated, and nobody is punished or arrested.

In Louisiana the Democratic Convention resolves that the Government was made exclusively for white men, that rebels ought to be paid for their emancipated slaves, and that there should be a general amnesty and repeal of confiscation laws. It is not surprising, therefore, as we are told by a gentleman from Louisiana, who is neither "a radical" nor "a Jacobin," that the continuance of the national hold upon that State is absolutely essential to the public peace and personal safety of Union men. His statement is confirmed by the letter of a prominent citizen of New Orleans to a Western paper, that "no Union man, that is to say, no man approving the war for the salvation of the country, is safe in this State."

From Georgia our private information is of the same kind. "Withdraw your troops," said in our office within a few days the editor of a Union paper in that State, a man faithful through the war, "and we white Union men will swing within the next hour." Another Georgian informs us that he has been twice shot at for his known Unionism.

In Alabama, the reorganizing Convention refuses to submit the new Constitution for the approval of the people; and from a total population of 964,000 excludes 430,000 from any computation in the basis of representation.

In South Carolina, the ordinance of secession is simply repealed, leaving it lawful to renew it when the State chooses, and out of a total population of 730,000 there are 412,000 excluded from computation in the basis of representation.

From Alabama, a correspondent in Mobile, a native and life-long resident of the city, writes us:

"I know well who the few loyal men were here during the war, and how bitterly and relentlessly they were persecuted by the citizens and military--especially by the Provost Marshals, Major W. H. Ketchum and H. G. Humphreys. The secessionists now cry, 'Let us bury the past!' They send on delegates to Washington, and are received with favor; the leading men are coming back daily with their pardons--get very indignant with the military--request the President to order it from the country, and let the people govern themselves, and are preparing to commence their reign of terror once more. The reports about loyalty here are all humbug; I have only heard of two really loyal meetings in the State--one at Decatur, Alabama, on the 3d June, and one at this city on 6th June. The various offices here, even under the General Government, are full of bitter rebels, and they openly boast of their Confederate proclivities. If you attempt to sing any of the national airs you are shunned. Very few of the steamboats will carry the flag; the ladies will not walk under the head-quarters flag, but leave the sidewalk and walk in the street. In the street cars loyal men are openly denounced, which makes it very unpleasant for their families. In fact, the criterion of the Mobilians use in judging any one is--What did he do in the Confederate cause? and those who did most are the most thought of. The newspapers boldly say that those who did not go 'heart and soul' into the war should not be trusted in office now. This accounts for such men as C. C. Langdon being elected to the State Convention. Mr. L. made a celebrated 'Black Flag' speech in this city a few days before Spanish Fort was taken. The papers here refuse to publish any article showing up the disgraceful conduct of the rebel leaders here during the past four years. When the *Daily News* started here it contained loyal articles, but the editor soon saw that such a course would never do for a Mobile paper, and has lately been publishing such articles that Major-General K. Garrard threatened to suppress his pa-

per. Unfortunately, General Garrard was ordered away from this post, and the authorities now seem to encourage rather than rebuke such sentiments. You have no idea of the tyranny that has existed here. Every male from seventeen to fifty years old was permanently enrolled in the army, and on the slightest emergency everybody who could carry arms was forced into the trenches or to guard duty in the city."

It is unto such hands that General Slocum and the Democratic party are anxious that the Government of the United States should, within thirty days, resign the authority it now holds in the late rebel States. It seems to us that General Slocum and his new recruits have very little respect for the common sense of the American people. --*Harper's Weekly*.

Bounty to Colored Soldiers--Important Decision of the Attorney-General--Who are Entitled to Bounty--A Vexed Question Set at Rest.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Oct. 18, 1865.

J. M. Broadhead, Second Controller of the Treasury, has addressed to the Paymaster-General a communication embracing a very important decision of the Attorney-General, disposing of the matter of bounties to colored soldiers, which involves the disposition of an immense amount of money. The following is the communication:

"Sir: This office, on the 20th ultimo, submitted to the Secretary of the Treasury the views entertained here upon certain questions relating to the bounties to which colored soldiers heretofore employed in the service of the United States were entitled by law, and requested that the opinion of the Attorney-General might be obtained thereon. The Attorney-General, in a very able and elaborate opinion, concurs with this office, substantially affirming that colored soldiers, entering the military service, were in all cases to be treated as freemen at the date of their acceptance into the service, and that there was upon the statute books no law either forbidding their employment in the army, or with the exception of the brief period of 19 days, intervening between the passage of the act of June 15 and that of July 4, 1864, creating, on account of color, any distinction in the pay, allowances or bounty to which soldiers were entitled. From the most trustworthy information, it is believed that few if any colored volunteers enlisted during the interval of 19 days above alluded to, and the anomalous legislation of section 2, act of June 15, 1864, will, therefore, deprive few if any soldiers of bounty. The Attorney-General sums up his argument in the following conclusions:

1. That persons of color who may have acquired their freedom by the provisions of the act of July 17, 1862, and who were mustered into the military service prior to the 15th of June, 1864, are entitled to receive the bounty allowed by law for volunteers.
2. That persons of color who may have escaped from slavery after the passage of the act of July 17, 1862, and who may have been mustered into the military service before the 15th of June, 1864, and who were unclaimed by loyal owners at the time of their enlistment, are entitled to receive the bounty payable by law to volunteers.
3. That all persons of color emancipated by the President's proclamation of January 1, 1863, who, after the date of that proclamation, and before the 15th of June, 1864, enlisted and were mustered into the service as volunteers, are entitled to like bounty.
4. That all persons of color mustered into the service, after 15th June, 1864, are entitled to receive respectively, such sums in bounty as the President may have ordered in the different States, not exceeding \$100.
5. That all volunteers received into the service after July 4, 1864, are entitled to receive the same bounty for term of enlistment without regard to color.

It will be perceived that in these five points, which were in reply to specific questions from this office, the rights of colored soldiers who may not have been free on the 19th of April, 1861, and yet volunteered between that date and the passage of the act of July 17, 1862, are not embraced. The Attorney-General, however, says elsewhere in his opinion, in treating of the second section, act of June 15, 1864, which had been thought by some to have deprived colored soldiers of bounty, that "the letter of that provision does not affect the rights vested under the laws in force at the time of their enlistments, which, as has been seen, gave the same bounty to colored troops rightfully received into the service, as was accorded to white troops," and furthermore still, his opinion states unhesitatingly that enlistment in the Union army makes the slave *quo instanti* a freeman forever, entitling him to be placed on a footing with white volunteers. You are therefore respectfully requested to direct payments of bounties hereafter in conformity with the foregoing decision, allowing to colored soldiers wherever, and

except from 15th June to 4th July, 1864, whenever enlisted during the rebellion, the bounty provided for volunteers by laws existing at the time of such enlistment. J. M. BROADHEAD, Controller Paymaster General.

General Slocum at Vicksburg and Syracuse.

On the 24th of August of this year, General Slocum issued an elaborate order in the State of Mississippi, of which he was military commander. Governor Sharkey had invited the young men of the State to form militia companies, and the order of General Slocum countermanded it. In his speech the General says that he merely obeyed a command of the War Department. But he forgets that the very terms of his elaborate order show that it was not a "mere" obedience to superior commands; it was an elaborate and hearty and conclusive statement of reasons why such a course was unwise and perilous.

General Slocum says that those whom Governor Sharkey invited to arms are "that class of men who have as yet scarcely laid down the arms with which they have been opposing our Government." He adds:

"To permit the young men who have so distinguished themselves to be armed and organized independently of United States military officers on duty here, and to allow them to operate in counties now garrisoned by colored troops, filled, as many of these men are, not only with prejudice against those troops, and against the execution of orders relative to freedmen, but even against our government itself, would bring about a collision at once, and increase, in a tenfold degree the difficulties that now beset the people."

That there may be no misapprehension as to the exact condition of affairs in the State, of which, as military commander, he was thoroughly informed, Gen. Slocum continues:

"It is a remarkable fact that most of the outrages have been committed against Northern men, government couriers, and colored people. Southern citizens have been halted by these outlaws, but at once released and informed that they have been stopped by mistake; and these citizens have refused to give information as to the parties by whom they were halted, although frankly acknowledging that they knew them."

The General then says that Governor Sharkey agrees that "the people are unwilling to give information to the United States military authorities which will lead to the detection of these outlaws." Yet the Governor wished to arm those very people. General Slocum thereupon says: "A better plan will be to disarm all such citizens, and make it for their interest to aid those who have been sent here to restore order and preserve peace."

Here is a vivid and warning picture of the condition of affairs in the State of Mississippi, both as regards the spirit of the population and their treatment of the colored men who were the only considerable body of Unionists in the State. No correspondent has made, or could make, so strong an argument for the necessity of the maintenance of the United States armed authority in that department. Has that condition changed suddenly within six weeks? Because the Convention has met, does anybody imagine that the population are better affected toward the National Government? Yet on the 2d of October General Slocum, having in the meantime resigned his commission as an officer of the United States and become Horatio Seymour's candidate for Secretary of State in New York, says in Syracuse:

"I most heartily approve the removal of troops from that State of Mississippi, and I most earnestly hope that within thirty days every soldier now on duty there will be mustered out of service, and that all attempts to interfere with her local affairs will cease. Now that the State has adopted a Constitution which does not recognize slavery, I would confide to her the settlement of all questions likely to arise as to the means of supporting and controlling the freedmen."

Why is General Slocum ready on the 2d of October to do what on the 24th of August he solemnly said "would bring about a collision at once, and increase in a tenfold degree the difficulties that now beset the people?" Why is he willing to wink at outrages "against Northern men, Government couriers, and colored people?"

The reason is plain and painful. It is because General Slocum is now the candidate of John A. Green, of the *New York Daily News*, of every haughty unrepentant rebel in the unorganized States, and every one of these people whom he denounced as "outlaws" and "villains" on the 24th of August.

These are the men who built and supported the Chicago platform last year. They cried out for surrender to this rebellious spirit then. They demand the same surrender now. Do the people of New York trust this spirit and these men any more this year than the last? Does

it occur to General Slocum that he invites a doubt whether his patriotism is not mastered by his political ambition, when he deserts the Union men who shared his fidelity during the war and joins a party which seeks to put the late rebel States entirely into the hands of those whom he would not permit to be armed because he did not believe them to be truly loyal?

Intelligence the Basis of Suffrage--Mr. Jno. H. Reagan's Letter.

We have heretofore announced that Mr. Reagan, late Postmaster General of the Confederacy, had proclaimed himself in favor of impartial suffrage. We now give the more important portions of his address to the people of Texas. He proposes as follows:

"First, extending the privileges and protection of the laws over the negroes as they are over the whites, and allowing them to testify in the courts on the same conditions, leaving their testimony subject to the rules relating to its credibility, but not objecting to its admissibility. And in this you will conform with the wise current of modern legislation, and the tendency of judicial decisions in all enlightened countries.

"And, second, by fixing an intellectual and moral, and, if thought necessary, a property test for the admission of all persons to the exercise of the elective franchise, without reference to race or color, which would secure its intelligent exercise.

"My own view would be: 'First. That no person now entitled to the privilege of voting should be deprived of it because of any new test. I would recognize in this the difference between taking away a right not heretofore exercised, and the conferring of a right not heretofore exercised.

"Second. That to authorize the admission of persons hereafter to the exercise of the elective franchise, they should be first, third, citizens of the United States; fourth, should have resided in the State one year, and in the district, county, or precinct six months next preceding any election, at which they propose to vote; fifth, should be able to read in the English language understandingly; sixth, and must have paid taxes for the last year preceding for which such taxes were due and payable, subject to any disqualification for crime, of which the person may have been duly convicted, which may be prescribed by law."

Coming down to purely internal State affairs, Mr. Reagan recommends a revision of that system of frequent elections which, he thinks, has been carried to a vicious extreme, thereby producing great evils. His reasons for these opinions it is not necessary to recapitulate, since they have been often urged by others, and indeed suggest themselves naturally to any inquiring mind. The practical recommendations in this regard made by Mr. Reagan, are as follows:

"First. To lengthen all terms of office which are now two, to four years.

Second. To require all general elections, as far as practicable, to take place during the same year, and at the same time.

And, third, to provide: 1. That the State Treasurer, Comptroller, Attorney General, and Commissioner of the General Land Office, shall be appointed by the nomination of the Governor, and confirmation of the Senate, as the Secretary of the State now is. 2. That the Clerks of the District Courts should be appointed by the several Judges, as the Clerk of the Supreme Court is by the Judges of that Court. 3. That the County Courts should appoint their Clerks, and the Sheriffs, Coroners, Assessors and Collectors of Taxes, County Treasurers, County Surveyors, and the Constables for the several precincts of their counties. 4. That the Mayor and their Aldermen or Councilmen of all cities and towns should appoint their Clerks, Marshals, Treasurers, and other officers.

The following are among the closing paragraphs of the address:

"With these two lines of policy adopted, I think, notwithstanding all your recent misfortunes, you might look with hope and confidence to the future. The negroes will, it is hoped, gradually diffuse themselves among the greatly preponderating numbers of whites in the different States and Territories. Many of them will probably go to Mexico, and other countries, in search of social equality; and a few or none of their race will be added to their numbers by accessions from other countries; while the steady and rapid influx of great numbers of white races from other countries will gradually decrease the disproportion in numbers between them and the whites, and so render this new element in society and government innocuous, or at least powerless for evil, if they should be so inclined.

But from the general docility of their dispositions we may expect the most of them to be orderly, and many of them industrious and useful citizens. But to secure these desirable ends it must not be forgotten that it is an essential pre-

quisite to confer on them their reasonable and necessary rights; and to adopt a policy which will prevent them from becoming an element of political agitation and strife and danger.

And we must bury past animosities with those of our fellow-citizens with whom we have been at war, and cultivate with them feelings of mutual charity and fraternal good will. And it will be greatly to your advantage, in many ways which I cannot trespass on you to mention now, to hold out inducements to them and to emigrants from other countries, to come and settle among you, with their labor and skill and capital, to assist in the diffusion of employments, the increase of your population, and the development of your vast resources into new creations of wealth and power.

A Freedman to his Brethren.

We find the following in the *Savannah Republican*:

To the Editor of the *Savannah Republican*:
Sir: I read with much interest and satisfaction your timely advice to the freedmen, as well as the excellent speech of Gov. Marvin, of Florida, to the colored people of that State, and I have no doubt, sir, if they will follow the admonitions contained therein, they will accomplish something that will redound to their credit, and be a blessing to their posterity--also to silence the calumny of their enemies.

The cities are certainly not the places for the freedmen who have been in the habit of working on farms. But the question arises, are the freedmen always inclined to come to the cities from a dislike to work, or are they not often driven away from their homes to seek one somewhere else, and that, too, when the crops they have raised are just ready to be harvested? The latter seems to be the case in parts of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. Nor do I believe that the late slaveholders of Georgia are any better disposed toward the freedmen than those States mentioned above.

If, then, these are the facts, as accounts from all parts of the Southern country testify, it does seem to me that the local press should use strenuous efforts to convince the late slaveholders that they are partly the cause of the state of affairs that exist. Not only are the above a great source of the evils, but many lead their late slaves to believe that they are still under bonds, and that as soon as civil government is established they will be returned to slavery. Is it not to be wondered, then, that the state of affairs exist that you speak of? And not only so, but there are hundreds of persons, yea thousands, both in city and country, who hire these people for months and cheat them out of their wages.

Now, sir, it does appear, after all, that the late slaveholders have the remedy in their own hands, and if they will only use it judiciously, nothing will prevent "all going on as merrily as a marriage bell." Let them take the example set before them by Gov. Marvin, of Florida, and tell the people they are free forever to work for themselves, make contracts with them and keep them, or give them advantages upon the lands, and soon there will be a different state of things, and no necessity for emigrant associations to import from Northern cities a population that may give more trouble in various ways than the freedmen.

But if, on the other hand, they will persevere in persecuting the colored people generally, God, who has scourged America with war for her injustice to the black man, will also scourge the South with famine.

I remain yours, truly,
ONE OF THE SONS OF HAM.
Savannah, Oct. 6, 1865.

Senator Yates on Negro Suffrage.

As a Senator of the United States, certainly I could consider no State Government republican in form which was at variance with the fundamental principles of our republican institutions; which denied the equality of all men before the law; which set aside the principle that government justly exist by the consent of the governed, and that taxation and representation must go together. If I am wrong, the Government is wrong. And I am here to say that I could approve of no State government whose constitution or bill of rights does not deny, in express words, this right of a State to secede from the Union, and which does not provide that slavery shall be forever abolished and prohibited, so that not even a root, seed, or grease spot shall remain of this sum of all villainies, the accursed system which has been the fountain of all our troubles, and of that fratricidal and bloody war which has desolated the land. (Great cheering.) Again, it should be expressly provided that the leaders of the rebellion, who have held the offices, civil or military, under the Confederate Government, should be disfranchised, and forever debarred the right of honor and the right to hold any office of honor or profit under the Government of the United States. (Cheers.) Again, I would confer the right of suffrage upon all loyal

men. I will not, by any act of mine, open the portals of the American ballot-box to pardoned rebels, whose hands are stained with treason, and are dripping with the blood of our brave boys, and deny it to the poor colored man who has proven his heroic deeds. (Applause.) He has rallied round the flag--he has brought a stalwart arm and a courageous heart to his Government in the hour of its extremity and fearful need; and it would be the shame of the century and the age, if he is to be disfranchised, and left without a voice to such barbarous legislation as his rebel master would frame for him. (Cheers, and cries of "that's so.") Let me tell politicians that there is no half-way house in this matter, and the negro will surely be allowed the right of suffrage. (Cheers.)

The moment the Government decided that his aid was necessary to save the Government, and put arms into his hands, the question was settled, because to bear arms is the highest position of honor, and if he was good enough to fight in the ranks side by side with our brave boys in line, he is good enough to go to the polls and kill off the vote of a rebel or a copperhead. (Loud cheers.) If they are citizens in war, why not citizens in peace? They vote in many of the free States, and no harm has followed, and no complaint is made; why not in the rebel States, especially as they constitute the principal part of the loyal people of those States. If not permitted to vote, every rebel State will send disloyal men to Congress, ready and plotting to precipitate the nation into internecine war whenever the South, through Northern co-operation, might deem it safe to strike for their independence.

NEGRO WITNESSES.--The proclamation of Gov. Sharkey respecting the admissibility of negro testimony is a long step in the right direction, and goes a great way towards nullifying the infamous ordinances of the Mississippi Convention. The Freedmen's Bureau offered to transfer to the civil authorities of the State the right to try all cases in which the interests of freedmen were concerned, on condition that negroes should be allowed the same rights and privileges that are accorded to white men before the courts; "by which I understand," says the Governor, "that negroes shall be allowed to testify in cases where their interest is involved."

The *Jackson News* is furious at what it calls "this first advance against the rights and liberties of the white man." What! are the rights and liberties endangered by admitting negroes to the witness stand? Does the *News* mean "wallop their own niggers" without interference? To cheat them out of their labor; to kill them now and then, or score them in their live flesh, like pork? Does it mean the "right" of the white man to swear to anything he chooses against a negro, and the denial to the negro of the simple privilege of telling his own story? So far from being an infringement of anybody's just privileges, it seems to us that Gov. Sharkey's proclamation stops short of full justice. "The rights and privileges that are accorded to the white men before the courts," include the right to testify not only in cases touching their own interests, but in all cases whatsoever.

There is no more reason for excluding the testimony of a black witness in suits between white men than for rejecting the testimony of a white man in suits between negroes. The negroes have indeed acquired by this proclamation the right to sue and be sued, and protection in their persons and property, if there is any honesty in Mississippi juries; but until they have more than this they will not have been elevated to the status which naturally belongs to them as reasonable human beings. --*Chicago Republican*.

A FRIENDLY OFFER.--A gentleman, whom we will designate as Mr. A, formerly owned a negro man, who attended him faithfully during the war, followed him through the Pennsylvania campaign and continued to discharge his duties until some three days previous to the evacuation, when he was cut off by the Union troops, and they became separated. The negro, however, soon made his way to Richmond, where, having become a freedman, he established himself in the mercantile line. A short time ago, hearing that his former master was out of business, he sent word if he would come to Richmond he would give him a situation in his store. Mr. P. did not find it necessary to accept the offer, but he tells the story with a good deal of humor. --*Richmond Republic*.

A GOOD SCHOOL.--The *Galveston Bulletin* of a recent date says: "We learn that John H. Reagan, late Postmaster-General of the so-called Confederate States, has written a letter which will, no doubt, astonish some of his associates. Among other things he favors negro suffrage. Reagan has evidently been progressing while at Fort Warren, and it would not be a matter of regret if some other Southerners could enjoy a period of tuition there."