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SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1867.

Democracy as Expounded by Hon.
George H. Pendleton.

We have been somewhat interested in reading
a speech delivered recently in Saint Paul, Minn-
nesota, by Hon. George H. Pendleton. This
gentleman is, perhaps, as justly entitled to be
called a statesman as any of the other leaders
of the Democratic party. He is a man of more
breadth and candor than either of the Sey-
mours, of more common sense than Vallandig-
ham, of more honor than the Woods, and of
more patriotism and ability than the Clymers,
Reeds, and Blacks. He was the Democratic
nominee for Vice-President in 1864, and so
far as qualifications are concerned, was justly
entitled to the first place on the ticket. We
may therefore reasonably suppose that Mr.
Pendleton's defense of the Democracy is the
best of which the case is susceptible. His
speech at St. Paul had evidently been care-
fully prepared, and probably was intended to
strike the key-note of the contest of 1868 on
the Democratic side. Perhaps it is his own
bid for the Presidential nomination of his
party.

Of course we cannot, in the limits of an ordi-
nary newspaper article, thoroughly review a
lengthy and elaborate speech. We can only
dwell briefly on its leading thoughts.

Mr. Pendleton's first object seems to be to
bring out the positive side, so to speak, of the
Democratic faith. He begins by combating
the idea that the party is dead, and attempts
to show that it not only is not dead, but can-
not die so long as the principles of popular
government are held sacred by man. He also
strives to convey the impression that the prin-
ciples and aims of the Democratic party in this
country are identical in character with those
of the liberals in the Old World. Thus he
says:—

"The Democratic party dead!!! It can never
die so long as free government shall exist. The
active, vigorous being of the one is the essen-
tial condition of the existence of the other. So
long as the human heart aspires to ameliorate
the ills of life; so long as the human intellect
can trace cause and effect; so long as govern-
ment is confined to the collective wisdom and
will of the people, rather than to the unlimited
discretion, and irresistible power of one man, so
long will there be a party which seeks to in-
crease the liberty of the citizen and to diminish
the power of the government; to enlarge the
sphere of his active development, and to reduce
the restraints which are laid upon him; to gra-
tify his hope of liberty, and to make effective
his hatred of tyranny. There is such a party in
England to-day, and it wrests from government
a large reform in the matter of representation.
There is such a party in France to-day, and the
thunders of the Tribune cause sleepless nights
at the Tuilleries. There is such a party even in
Italy to-day, and the Car grant amnesty to
Polish patriots. There is such a party in Austria
to-day, and its leader exchanges every recogni-
tion of the right of the House of Hapsburg to
the throne of St. Stephen for a concession to the
rights of people of Hungary. There is such a
party in America to-day, and it insists upon a
rigid adherence to the provisions of our written
constitution, and to the primary elemental prin-
ciple of the equality of the States."

This extract is remarkable in several re-
spects:—First, it shows how the Democratic
leaders, despite their conservatism, feel the
influence of the spirit of the age. Not long
since it was the common boast of Democratic
leaders that they were the champions of
slavery. Slavery was upheld by them as a
divine institution—as the normal condition of
the African race. Four years ago the Demo-
cracy of this State made its canvass upon the
bold and unblushing avowal of its belief in
the moral rightfulness of the institution of
American slavery. Now, however, we find one
of the foremost leaders of the party in the
West using precisely such a strain of remarks
regarding his party as would be appropriate
in the lips of a Republican speaker, addressing
a Republican audience upon the cardinal doc-
trines of their faith. This is a great advance.
It shows how men yield to the unconscious
influence of events, and how, when the spirit
of progress is abroad in a nation, it penetrates
even to the darkest nooks and corners. We
have at last found a Democrat who extols
liberty, who has turned "freedom shrieker,"
and who has nothing to say in defense of
slavery. Let us be thankful for so much.

Secondly, this extract shows a remarkable
misappreciation of the respective positions of
parties in this country and in the Old World.
What are the Liberals of England laboring for?
The extension of the elective franchise to the
millions in that country who have hitherto
been denied its exercise. What are the Rep-
ublicans of the United States endeavoring to
do? Precisely the same thing—extend the
franchise to the millions in this country who
have hitherto been denied its exercise. What
are the arguments of the English conserva-
tives against the extension of the suffrage
there? Just the same as the arguments of
the American Democrats against the extension
of the suffrage here. Is it possible that this
phase of the case had not presented itself
to Mr. Pendleton? And what is there, let us
ask, in the record of the Democratic party of
this country, for the last twenty years, which
entitles it to claim relationship to the Liberals
of the Old World? Has it not been the per-
sistent champion of a system of tyranny and
oppression unknown even in the monarchies
of Europe? What single measure for the
amelioration of the condition of the oppressed
has this party espoused? Where are the
laurels of its victories in the cause of human
rights? Was the Fugitive Slave bill one?
Was the repeal of the Missouri Compromise
another? Was the Dred Scott decision a
third? Was the support of the slave-holders'
Rebellion a fourth? This is a strange record
for a party that claims affinity with the Repub-

licans of Europe. We know where John
Bright's sympathies were during the great
struggle between freedom and slavery in this
country; but where were George H. Pendleton's?
Notice, too, the almost ludicrous inconse-
quence of the closing paragraph, where the
function of the Democratic party in this
country is stated. After reciting what the liberals
are doing in England, France, Russia, and
Austria, he adds:—"There is such a party in
America to-day and it"—does what? Advan-
ces the extension of the suffrage like the
liberals in England? Believes in doc-
trines of liberty and equality like those who
in France "cause sleepless nights at the
Tuilleries"? By no means—it is not "such a party
as that. It insists upon a rigid adherence to
the provisions of our written Constitution, and
to the primary elemental principles of the
equality of the States!" O lame and impet-
ent conclusion! What is there of European
Liberalism or republicanism about this? The
bitter English Tory or French absolutist
might say as much. Adherence to the Consti-
tution means adherence to the Democratic in-
terpretation of it. And what is that interpre-
tation? Read it in the Dred Scott decision and
in the Fugitive Slave bill!

But, fourthly, Mr. Pendleton does not hold
up to this republican idea which he partially
adopts in the extract which we have quoted.
He falls from grace before he gets half-way
through with his speech. The chief indict-
ment that he brings against the Republi-
can party is its extension of the suffrage.
He abandons the entire basis of popular gov-
ernment, and defends the will of the minority.
Thus he declaims most vehemently against
the extension of the suffrage, because it will
place the political power of several of the
Southern States in the hands of the majority.

This he stigmatizes as "the degradation of
the Government to the level of these voters,
and the destruction of the value and purity of
the ballot by conferring it so lavishly on all
sides."

Here we have the precise argument, and
almost in the exact words, of the English con-
servatives in opposing the extension of the
suffrage there. It amounts simply to a denial
of the capacity of the people for self-govern-
ment. Yet this is the man who started out
with likening the Democratic party of this
country to the Liberals of the Old World!

There are some other points in this speech
that we should like to comment on, and had
intended to do so, but we have already ex-
ceeded our limits, and must defer any further
criticism to a future occasion.

Veto No. 12.

This message of the President of the United
States, transmitted to Congress yesterday, in
which he vetoes the Supplemental Reconstruc-
tion bill, is possessed of a dual nature: it is
not only vicious, but it is weak. We can
partially excuse an official document which
does not meet our views, provided the author
deals with his subject in a masterly manner.
We can admire, intellectually, the agency
of his sophism and the ability with which he
defends an indefensible position.

Thus we read with considerable pleasure
Attorney-General Stanbery's opinion, our
indignation at its deductions being modified
by our admiration of the subtlety with
which he sought to defeat, by argument, what
was plainly the intention of the law. But in
reading veto No. 12 we feel nothing but the
most unmitigated contempt: we feel contempt
for the document itself, and for the man who
could pen it. Its tone throughout is vicious
in the extreme. It is calculated to do great
damage to the cause of reconstruction. It can
produce nothing but evil. It is insolent, and
breathes a determination to resist the law. In
one place he says:—

"What I hold the Chief Executive authority
of the United States; whilst the obligation rests
upon me to see that all the laws are faithfully
executed, I can never willingly surrender that
trust, or the powers given for its execution; I
can never give my assent to any law which is
liable for the faithful execution of law at the
same time, surrender that trust and the
powers which accompany it, to any other ex-
ecutive officer, high or low, or to any number of
executive officers."

Which means clearly that if the law is
passed over his veto, he will refuse to
execute it; that he will decline to keep to
his oath of office to faithfully execute the laws;
and that, unless his approval is given to each
bill, he will consider it unconstitutional. In
fact, he assumes judicial as well as legislative
and executive functions. And while accusing
Congress of encroaching on the President, he
in reality is assuming the functions of the
Supreme Court. But while he says the
legislative is invading the executive, the
executive is really uniting in himself the
three departments of the Government. The
people are to decide whether it is safer for
"constitutional liberty" to have power "con-
centrated in 150 men or diffused among one."

The conclusion of the Message is the sublimity
of bathos. He says:—

"The remedy is, nevertheless, in their hands.
It is to be found in the ballot, and is a sure one
if not controlled by fraud and over-ruled by
arbitrary power, or from apathy on their part
too long delayed. With abiding confidence in
their patriotism, wisdom, and integrity, I am
still hopeful of the future, and that in the end
the rod of despotism will be broken, the armed
heel of power be lifted from the necks of the
people, and the principles of a violated Consti-
tution preserved."

He has faith in "their patriotism"—"their"
being the Southern people. He calls the ex-
tremes patriots, and denounces the rule of
Congress as "a rod of despotism," "the armed
heel of power," and "a violation of the Con-
stitution." Nowhere in the famous Western
tour was any speech he made so flagrantly
offensive to decency as is this carefully pre-
pared Message of the President of the United
States.

Not only, however, is the document vicious,
but it is weak to a surprising degree. Its ar-
guments are untenable. The most elementary
logic will show them all to be fallacious. Any
Constitutional text-book will exhibit their
mistakes to a diligent school-boy. He carps

over minor points. He seizes on quibbles and
magnifies them into enormous invasions of the
Constitution. It is purple in the extreme, and
utterly unworthy a Chief Magistrate. We
have to blush for the intelligence which would
seek to deceive the country by such a string
of fallacies. Thus, in one place, Mr. Johnson
says, speaking of the ratification of the amend-
ment abolishing slavery:—

"The last act on this subject was passed July
23, 1866, by which every one of these ten States
was arranged into districts and circuits, which
have been since organized by Congress, and
under their Legislatures upon at least two
amendments to the Constitution of the United
States, as States they have ratified one amend-
ment, which required the vote of twenty-seven
States of the thirty-six then composing the
Union, when the requisite twenty-seven votes
were given in favor of that amendment, seven
of which votes were given by seven of the ten
States. It was proclaimed to be a part of the
Constitution of the United States, and slavery was
declared no longer to exist within their jurisdic-
tion. It is any place subject to their jurisdiction."

"If these seven States were not legal States of
the Union, it follows, as an inevitable conse-
quence, that slavery yet exists. It does not
exist in these seven States, for they have abo-
lished it also in their own State Constitutions,
but Kentucky not having done so, it would
still remain in that State. But, in fact, if this
assumption that these States have no legal
State Governments be true, then the abolition
of slavery by these illegal governments binds
no one, and the power to abolish slavery, by
denying them the power to elect a legal State
Legislature, or to frame a constitution for any
purpose, even for such a purpose as the abolition
of slavery."

The absurdity of this is at once apparent.
If the ten Southern States were not "legal
States," then the assent of twenty-seven
States was unnecessary. If the ten Southern
States were no States, then there were but
twenty-six and not thirty-six States in the
Union, and three-fourths of twenty-six is
twenty; so that, instead of twenty-seven
assenting, only twenty were necessary, and
the law remains the same. If they were
States, then they have assented. If they were
not States, then whether they assented or dis-
sented was a matter of perfect indifference.

Any school-boy could see this, yet the Pres-
ident says that if they were not States, then it
would be impossible to get the assent of three-
fourths of thirty-six, because there were but
twenty-six bona fide States in the Union.
Taken all together, the President's veto is the
worst of any we have yet been afflicted with,
for it savors not only of threatened despotism,
but also of threatened idiocy.

The Press on the Veto.

We append the views of the leading jour-
nals of Philadelphia and New York on the
Veto Message of yesterday. The Press says:—

"In the ineffectual and practically unmean-
ing message of yesterday, one good column is
taken up in impressing upon any one who
reads it the deep and abiding conviction that
the military authority of the United States in
the ten Rebel States is paramount to all
others—a fact which all the country, Mr. Stan-
bery excepted, have known for some time.
Following this statement of a simple fact comes a
pitiful catch about illegal State Governments
to be carried on by Federal officers. This
catch is intended to lead the eye to no other
subject of the great subject in hand—recon-
struction—which is peace and prosperity for
the whole country, and is so unimportant,
that it is almost entirely lost in the long and
repetitious paragraphs, and a few concluding
reflections, which are commendable in that they
do not threaten violence to the Republic, but
do threaten the business of the country. From
first to last the President deals with points, and
never loses the great question of peace and
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