THE DAILY EVENING BULLETIN.—PHILADELPHIA, MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 1867.

RECONSTRUCTION.

Important Letter from General Pope.

The following letter was received by General Granton Sanders:

HEADQUARTERS THIRD MILITARY DISTRICT, GEORGIA, ALABAMA AND FLORIDA, ATLANTA, GA., July 24, 1867.—*General:* I have the honor to inclose herewith a newspaper containing a speech recently delivered in this city by B. H. Hill, of this State, late a Senator in the rebel Congress, and before the war a very leading Union man, was purchased by the President and in common with almost every prominent rebel, this is the man he makes of the chiefs of the Government. You can readily see from the speech itself the character of the man, and the representative of a large class, and the hopelessness of any satisfactory reconstruction of the Southern States while such men retain influence.

If the men who will obey the laws are not allowed to permit and encourage the widest latitude of speech and of the press in this District, I do not consider with the law and the public peace. I do not include among those who are prohibited to exercise this latitude of speech the civil officers of the Provisional State Governments already established by my orders from "using any influence whatever to deter or discourage people from taking an active part in reconstructing their State Governments under the Reconstruction acts." No such advice is made use of in the machinery of the existing State Governments, and it is not in the spirit of the Government.

So the anti-reconstruction party in the Government and I consider it dangerous to the peace of the country and of the United States should thoroughly understand the feelings and purposes of the military commanders of the South, in order that the country may know by the result of the coming elections precisely the amount of influence exercised by these men, and the kind and extent of legislation required to counteract its baleful effects.

In my opinion, no reconstruction can be satisfactory or at all reliable due to future results, unless these men are permitted to discuss openly and according to their nature, the issues presented. If they still retain influence enough with the masses of the whites at the South to enable them by active efforts to defeat reconstruction under the laws of Congress, it is better that the country should know it before than after the readmission of the Southern States into the Union. It would not be difficult to find in the violent speeches of such men abundant cause for arrest, trial, and reconstruction accomplished in this manner would be no index of the public sentiment, and would not last, or would fail, after a year or two, in a relapse of the people into the same condition from which the false leaders that would lead necessarily to a repudiation of the same constitutional amendments demanded the passage of the Reconstruction Acts.

It is better that the battle should be fought out now and openly. If the people of these States have the courage to follow these leaders, and withstand the influence of the secession party and of the political leaders who have always controlled them, who have led them into their present condition, and who are now leading them still deeper into misfortune, and if they prove able and willing to reconstruct their State Governments, upon the only true principles of Government, in defiance of their leaders, and against their open opposition, they will be good ground for hope that reconstruction will be satisfactory and permanent. If they cannot do this, it may well become a question whether reconstruction on any reasonable terms is possible so long as the more repentant and reactionary political leaders are suffered to remain in this country.

It is better that the country should know the truth on this subject now than to run the risk of learning hereafter that an irreparable mistake has been made in the attempt to carry out the Reconstruction Acts. I need scarcely repeat that reconstruction to be in the spirit of the acts of Congress and to be permanent must be the act of the people themselves. The former has been a great discussion. Congress has done wisely in enabling them to make this fight, by disfranchising the leading rebels and at least making it impossible for them to vote or hold office. Congress has done and still better to enforce their permanent allegiance from the country. Congress has done wisely in compelling them to bear if they were candidates themselves in thus greatly weakened and they necessarily lost the control of, and not appeal to personal interests, or personal ambition, they are thus left freer than they ever were before to choose their leaders and to follow those they think for themselves as they have not hitherto done.

So far from being willing to see the disfranchised classes relieved from political disabilities, I consider their disfranchisement one of the acts to be among their wisest and best considered provisions. I believe it to be no other good than to relieve the people from the incubus of the old political leaders, have nominated, and will inevitably nominate. It is not doubted that many worthy and new loyal men will be nominated, and are disfranchised by these clauses of the military bills, but such a result was unavoidably, and in such cases is easily remedied. It will no doubt be wise, at an early day, to relieve by name and of the disfranchised persons as have hitherto proved or shall prove their loyal to the Government in the next six months that they are worthy of it. While it was unwisdom. The time period, and would be disfranchised by provisions of law that concern all persons, the remedy is easy. To undertake the converse of this, that is, to give general amnesty and accept individuals by name, would certainly result in leaving large numbers enfranchised who ought not to be. Such impunity persons might decide the coming elections before their unfitness could be ascertained. I do not think it would be more than difficult to remedy the evil. I consider the method set forth in the reconstruction acts by the action of a majority of the two, and I can hardly understand how any man desiring to see the Union fairly and otherwise.

These disfranchised persons include gen rally the whole army of those who now hold or have, hitherto held, office. In my opinion, all these persons were active rebels, and are bitterly opposed to reconstruction under the acts of Congress; opposed in fact to any reconstruction whatever except that which would have them in precisely the same political condition as if there had been no rebellion and no war. Even such a reconstruction as this they would only accept as a necessity of the situation, with the purpose of renew in Congress, and perpetuate among themselves as nearly as possible the same condition which existed before the war. With these reactionists, dominant in the South, freedom of speech and of the press will not even exist in name.

The Union men, and even those who were secessionists, but have subsequently recognized under the late acts of Congress, would find no peace and no protection in these States.

The abolition of the freedmen would be worse than the first.

I need only point to this speech of Mr. Hill, his numerous letters, the letters of Governor Perry of South Carolina, of Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia, and many other men for sufficient evidence that I have not overstated the case.

These men are the representatives of a large and powerful element in our nation, and they have been in the habit of controlling the Southern Whites. By taking opposite sides of a political question they have in times past divided the Southern Whites on purely personal grounds, and have thus created the impression elsewhere that among the masses there was a political question upon which they were at least nearly one. United as they now are against reconstruction, it is wise to ascertain how far their influence can prevail with the people.

The disfranchising clauses of the acts of Congress put it out of the power of these men to be candidates for office. One great element of their strength is thus destroyed, and they are left to choose other leaders and vote for other candidates, have really a freedom of action which they never had before and find themselves under a necessity for thinking and acting for themselves. Before felt. Congress has given them this privilege, and imposes upon them the obligation to exercise it. It remains to be seen how they will use them. If they can win the battle against their former leaders after an open fight, all may be well in the future. If not, then not.

I do not at all agree in the opinion that there are not enough competent and loyal men to form the civil offices, who are not disfranchised. I have, I think, reason to know otherwise—but even admitting that it is so, it is better to have an incompetent but loyal man in office, than to have a rebel of whatever ability. In fact, the greater the ability the greater the danger of maladministration.

The questions at issue under these Acts of Congress are the most momentous ever presented to a people. The result for good or evil will affect all parts of the country with more or less force and will leave an impression upon our institutions which will long remain. It is now, under existing circumstances, in the hands of the people, by popular discussion, engendered by public excitement, and by the exercise of the elective franchise, to decide the question of the future destiny of our country. The people are thus left freer than they have been for years, to choose their own candidates, and are forced to think for themselves as they have not hitherto done.

So far from being willing to see the disfranchised classes relieved from political disabilities, I consider their disfranchisement one of the acts to be among their wisest and best considered provisions. I believe it to be no other good than to relieve the people from the incubus of the old political leaders, have nominated, and will inevitably nominate. It is not doubted that many worthy and new loyal men will be nominated, and are disfranchised by these clauses of the military bills, but such a result was unavoidably, and in such cases is easily remedied. It will no doubt be wise, at an early day, to relieve by name and of the disfranchised persons as have hitherto proved or shall prove their loyal to the Government in the next six months that they are worthy of it. While it was unwisdom. The time period, and would be disfranchised by provisions of law that concern all persons, the remedy is easy. To undertake the converse of this, that is, to give general amnesty and accept individuals by name, would certainly result in leaving large numbers enfranchised who ought not to be. Such impunity persons might decide the coming elections before their unfitness could be ascertained. I do not think it would be more than difficult to remedy the evil. I consider the method set forth in the reconstruction acts by the action of a majority of the two, and I can hardly understand how any man desiring to see the Union fairly and otherwise.

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