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PROTECTION OF FREEDMEN.

Actual Condition of the Rebel States.

SPEECH OF HON. CHARLES SUMNER.

(CONCLUDED FROM YESTERDAY.)

Here is a letter from a South Carolinian who served in the rebel army but who now sees the error of his ways:

"I am sorry to say Governor Orr's inaugural yesterday received no applause at all from the audience; its sentiments were too Dutch-lovingly for them. I am sorry also to say that the South Carolinians generally entertain, to a great extent, their old ideas and prejudices so disastrous of late to the State. One is almost compelled to think they humanity wish to bring upon themselves more and greater mortifications. Witness the vote given Hampton, who refused to be a candidate. What an unwise display of a factious and discontented spirit! Few seem willing to admit the simple proposition that all causes of ill feeling between the North and south have been settled by the arbitrament of the sword, and we must submit sincerely. They seek rather to keep alive the ill feeling that has made us unhappy for so many years, and that ill-advised disposition to embarrass the actions of the United States Government."

"If this War does not settle all issues, and settle them forever, it will be because the General Government fails to use the power it has obtained. I am as dear a lover of South Carolina as any man in it, and for that reason I wish to see peace, and harmony restored throughout its borders. But that can never be if the men who tried hardest to break up the Government are, immediately they find themselves unsuccessful with the sword, allowed to take seats in Congress and recommence the agitation with their tongues, and by their arguments and votes. Such inflammatory speeches were not made in 1860 than have been delivered during the last campaign. If examples are not needed, if leading men are not made to feel some ill effects from an unsuccessful attempt to revolutionize, then agitation will never cease, but will be kept up by ambitious and wicked men, friends who can hope to rise only in times of disorder or by operating upon and inflamming the passions of the multitude."

"To say the climax of this iniquity a body of men calling themselves the Legislature, but having small title to be considered a legal body, have undertaken to pass a black code, stigmatizing the two races, in defiance of every principle of equality. Here is a provision which fastens apprenticeship or serfdom in a new form upon the unhappy freedman:

"'Colored children between the ages mentioned (eighteen and twenty-one), who have neither parents nor guardians living in the district in which they are found, or whose parents are paupers, or unable to afford them a comfortable maintenance, or whose parents are not teaching them habits of industry and honesty, or are persons of notoriously bad character, are vagrants, or have been convicted of infamous offenses, and colored children, in all cases where they are in danger of moral contamination, may be bound as apprentices by the district judge or one of the magistrates, for the aforesaid term."

Under these words there is no colored minor in the State who is safe for one moment from a compulsory serfdom.

The lash is also prescribed as a means of enforcing contracts. The lash once more is resound.

The planters, at their public meetings, have given utterance to this same brutal spirit. Here is a series of resolutions where, after calling for the withdrawal of the troops of the troops of the United States, and after declaring themselves pledged to the existing state of things, and that it is their 'honest purpose to abide thereby,' they proceed as follows:

Resolved, That it inconsistent with the views of the authorities to remove the military, we express the opinion that the plan of the military *is to compel the freedmen* to contract with his former owner, when desired by the latter, is wise, prudent and absolutely necessary.

Resolved, That we, the planters of the district, pledge ourselves not to contract with any freedman unless he can produce a certificate of regular discharge from his former owner.

Resolved, That under no circumstances whatever, will we rent land to any freedman, nor will we permit them to live on our premises or employ them.

"This is the freedman, whose liberty the United States are bound to maintain, to be hunted over to compulsory serfdom, and under no circumstances is land to be rented to him. And yet these people announce that they accept the existing state of things and that it is their honest purpose to abide thereby! Of course they will accept a state of things which leaves them once more 'masters' of their former slaves. Of course they will abide by it. Do it our duty to teach them the duty and necessity of Equal Rights.

"From South Carolina pass to Georgia, and there is the same wretched story. The spirit of the State appears in the language of Mr. Stummons in the Convention:

"Let us repudiate only under the lash and the application of military power, and then, as soon as we get an independent sovereignty, restore to our equal rights and privileges in the Union, for it is immediately call another convention and resume the debt."

The testimony from various quarters shows the same spirit. A recent writer, of unimpeachable authority, now sitting as a reporter in our galleries, thus testifies:

"In the stage between Augusta and Milledgeville I rode with two gentlemen of considerable local weight and prominence, who were both anti-secessionists in 1860-61. They talked of the approaching convention, and of its probable action, in reëstablishing the State for Representatives. 'Well, Colonel,' said the younger, addressing a man of over forty years—'Well, Colonel, what will be our proper course when we are once more fully restored to the Union?' The answer came, after a moments consideration. 'We must strike hands with the Democratic party of the North and engage them as we always have.' There was a pause and we rattled down the hill, and then the question was repeated. 'That is just it, they were ready enough to give us control if we gave them magic ballot-boxes, and I reckon they have not changed very much yet.' There was then conversation on other matters, but half an hour later, after a mile or so of silence, the Colonel suddenly resumed, 'Yes, sir, our duty is plain; we shall be without weight now that slavery is gone, unless we do join hands with them. Andy Johnson will want a reelection, and the United Democratic party must take him up; it shall be a fair division—we want the power and they want the spoils.'"

And the same writer, in another letter, shows how rebels were honored in the Convention:

"'If he did—if it vote for anyone who did not go with the State,' said one of the delegates while the canvass for officers was going on, in accordance with which spirit the Secretary is a gentleman who was a Colonel in the rebel army, and the door-keeper a gentleman who lost an arm in the service."

Where such a spirit prevails the freedmen fare badly. In Georgia they are treated cruelly. Advertisements are as follows:

"The hatred toward the negro as a freeman is intense among the low and brutal, who are the vast majority. Murders, shootings, whippings, robbing, and brutal treatment of every kind are daily inflicted upon them, and I am sorry to say in most cases they can get no redress. They don't know where to complain or how to seek justice after they have been abused and cheated. The habitual deference toward the white man makes them fearful of his anger and revenge."

An official of the Government, after traversing Mississippi and Alabama, writes from Georgia, in a very recent letter, as follows:

"Every day the press of the south testifies to the outrages that are being perpetrated upon unoffending colored people by the State militia. These outrages are participating, first in the States of Alabama and Mississippi, and are of such a character as to demand most imperatively the interposition of the national executive. These men are rapidly inaugurating a condition of things—a feeling—among the freedmen that will, if not checked, ultimate in insurrection. The freedmen are peaceable and inoffensive; yet if the whites continue to make it all their lives are worth to go through the country, as free people have a right to do, they will good them to that point at which submission and patience cease to be a virtue.

"I call your attention to this matter after reading and hearing from the most authentic sources, officers and others, for weeks, of the continuance of the militia robbing the colored people of their property—arms—shooting them in the public highways if they refuse to halt when so commanded, and lodging them in jail if found from home without passes, and, as a matter of simple justice to an unoffending and down trodden people, that you use your influence to induce the President to issue order or proclamation forbidding such wicked and unlawful proceedings; and, if he deem it prudent, forbidding the organization of the State militia. The only military force needed in the south is more regular and volunteer troops to keep in proper subjection those lately in rebellion, and to teach them to treat the freed people in a manner becoming a civilized community."

Another witness, himself a Georgian, with ample opportunities of information, thus testifies:

"I have personal and friendly relations with many leading men of this section. I had before the war. I have met many of them in New York and Washington within the past few months, and have, as a citizen of the south had frequent conversations with them upon our future and the means that should be employed to begin it auspiciously. These interviews have been free and open in interchange of opinion, and I must believe that I had laid before me the intentions of those who meet and will again assume the leadership here. It they are not so honored, their opinions will show how they would lead had they the power.

"Among those were four Ex-Governors of three different states, who had received pardons from President Johnson. Our conversation naturally and necessarily turned to the future of the emancipated negroes. Their present and present condition was discussed, and their chances as well as my own, were of course considered, and everything that could bear upon their future was canvassed. The course to be pursued by the Legislature of the reorganized States, and the laws to be enacted, in order to obtain the fulfillment of contracts with the freedmen employed, occupied no small portion of consideration. In this way I had full opportunity to learn the opinions of those who have been and will be again looked up to as the leaders and directors of Southern opinion and sentiment.

"The inability of all races not the least singular thing, especially regarding the status of the freedmen and their rights hereafter. If judicial chicanery can avail, those rights will be but nominal, and they will remain be they have been, isolated and apart; free in name, but slaves in fact."

"It seems that in Georgia there is a body of men known as 'regulators,' who are thus described by a correspondent of that journal which has for years been whitewashed the enormities of slavery, the New York *Freedom*:

"Springing naturally out of this disordered state of affairs is an organization of regulators, so called. The numbers include many ex-Confederate cavaliers of the country, and their mission is to visit summary justice upon any offenders against the public peace. It is needless to say their attention is largely directed to maintaining quiet and submission among the blacks. The shooting or striking up of some colored man is no longer a matter of rare occurrence as it excite [illegible] common an occurrence as to excite [illegible]

[illegible] Mississippi, the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the Congress of the United States, some years, are [illegible] their places [illegible] places.

Here are grave words, which open in startling vista the tragedy of the future of the South and the people of North. [illegible]

And now the provided Legislature [illegible] gaged in fashioning the infamous black code. But I do not dwell on this, as it has been already exposed by my colleague.

From Mississippi pass to Louisiana, where scarcely the beginning under the wave of returning rebels inspired from Washington [illegible] ists are mentioned in their safety. The story is so familiar that I content myself with a glimpse. Here is the testimony of a responsible person:

"During the campaign I made a tour through the northern portion of the State where I have resided for many years and have a large acquaintance among the people, and was surprised to find the spirit of the people more hostile to the government than at the breaking out of the war. This is especially the case with the leaders, who assented to me in private conversation that they were more impressed with the truth of secession than they ever were; that the war against the United States was a just one; that they would not support any man for office who did not participate in that war and join their voice for the Southern people to submit to support the present policy in opposition to the Republican party of the North. They say that the whole war was an aggression on the part of the Government. The existing feeling is that every house in their power to destroy the government.

"A prominent member of the Legislature conversed in his presence in a short time before the election, and he was a strong anti-secessionist, but now is more than ever a hater of the Union and the Government, and intended to use all in his power to destroy it. This man is a leading member of the Legislature, which, in the House at least, is composed of more than eighty-twelfths who entertain the same feeling, and are now legislating for the loyal citizens of this State.

"There are several respectable men now in this city who are refugees from their homes in the interior of the State, being recently expelled on account of their Union sentiments."

And here—private letter from an interior town of Louisiana, written by a lady to a lady in New Orleans, and communicated to me:

"The poor colored people are in a constant state of alarm. There is a Mrs. [illegible] in this place, who keeps 18 colored children, but the inhabitants, I suppose, not liking their having the advantages of education, expressed their disapproval by shooting at her recently. At one time she was nursing a sick lady when a shot passed over her shoulder. No wonder the poor creatures are afraid. The parties of course all in office here are rebels. The teacher, who is a poor white, became so much alarmed for her safety, that she petitioned the officers to allow the troops to remain a few days longer. But I fear the troops on her the old being removed, the scenes were enacted before, and it is only on her account that they remained so long as they did."

Enough of this. Nor is this all. The pretended Legislature is spitting, like such ladies elsewhere, against the freedmen. But I forbear to quote from this elaborate production. And yet how can I fail to denounce, with all my energy and my entire nature, the most vindictive attempts to oppress the freedman, to despoil him of his rights, and to multiply the great act of emancipation by disenfranchisement? What nullification in our history is comparable with this mad attempt! The difference between a revenue law and the great statute of freedom is as wide as the space between earth and heaven.

Where such things are done, there can be of course, no security. The spirit of the Rebellion is not yet dead, but still lives, and, in abandoning the State and finding in exile that safety which is denied them at home. The fire, which burned so long and so fiercely in the souls of rebels, and they are thrust out from the enjoyment of its folds. Hard fate—almost without a parallel in history. For myself, I know nothing more touching than the exile of Hyde Park, who, for his loyalty and loving freedom, is compelled to yield to a triumphant rebel.

In Texas there seems to be more hope than anywhere, because a sincerely loyal people have been restored to power. A recent letter from a loyal Texan thus cries out:

"Why can not the people of the United States consider, with us, the beginning under the sway