

Franklin Repository. Wednesday, June 28, 1865. NEGRO SUFFRAGE. Several correspondents have addressed us recently on the question of universal enfranchisement, without distinction of color. We have not discussed the question hitherto because we could see no solution of the issue, and even now we cannot pretend to define a policy and its probable results. We have noticed much discussion of the question in public journals, and have read impassioned speeches in behalf of extending the right of suffrage to the negro; but no one has yet pointed out the way by which the desired result can be readily attained.

emancipated slave, let us not be unmindful of the cause of his pitiable deficiency. It is chargeable to the predominance of race rather than to the victim of slavery. It is our duty, our social, political and business obligation, that has plunged and held him remorselessly in mental darkness, and when the crime thereof has just avenged itself in a most fearful baptism of blood, it becomes not to stand aside and perpetuate his enslavement in another form because we have denied him the fitness for citizenship. Our first duty to the freedmen is to enlighten, encourage and strengthen them in their new state; and the problem of their citizenship will in time solve itself lawfully and justly. That they will become citizens or practically slaves, or extinct as a race in the United States, we regard as inevitable. They cannot remain as they are now. They will progress or retrograde—increase under enlightened and liberal laws, or degrade and diminish under the despotism of caste, as the States may be just or unjust; and the solution of the great question we do not pretend to foresee.

so let them remain. Let them live to wander through the land they have stained with gore from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, homeless and citizenless, as monuments of the mingled power and justice and magnanimity of the great Republic of the World. Gen. Lee was the child of favor under this government. He was educated, promoted and honored by it; and he left the headquarters of the commander-in-chief to draw his sword against the Republic. We do not know that his military career is stained by any immediate act of cruelty at variance with the laws of war; but he was the trusted chief of the rebel cause. No campaign was undertaken without his consent. No policy touching the war was adopted without his sanction. His counsel was potential in the very temple of treason's power; and he must at least share the guilt of the starvation of prisoners—the crowning crime of treason's fulness of crime, unless he shall show that he protested against such monstrous barbarity in vain. As yet no evidence has been produced to relieve him of this damning charge, and until his skirts are cleared, the government can exercise no clemency whatever in his case. If he shall satisfy the unprejudiced judgment that he labored fruitlessly to make the rebel government humane, it will relieve him of a fearful blot that now stains his reputation; but even then we should protest in the name of a Nation that only saved its existence by his overthrow, and in the name of the thousands of gallant soldiers he has slain, against his restoration to citizenship. Such mercy would be a crime: Every consideration of justice forbids it, and the future safety of the Republic demands that its discomfited but deadly foe shall henceforth have no voice in directing its destiny.

Congress after a contest of great bitterness, but he never took his seat, preferring to remain on the bench, which he adorned by his great legal attainments and blameless integrity. In 1833 he was elected U. S. Senator, in which position he served until President Jackson appointed him Minister to Russia. He continued abroad as Minister until 1843, and in February, 1844, was appointed Secretary of War by President Tyler. He had also been elected to Congress again in the fall of 1843, but served only a few weeks until he entered the Tyler cabinet. After the expiration of Tyler's administration he remained in private life until 1855, when, much against his will, he was nominated for the State Senate, and elected by reason of a schism between the Republicans and Americans. At the age of 76 he entered the State Senate, after having served in both branches of Congress as Foreign Minister, as Cabinet Officer, and both State and Federal Judge, and he commanded an unbounded measure of respect from men of all parties. Ever genial, most fascinating in conversation, and singularly graceful in manners, he was not only beloved but venerated by all around him. His most notable effort in the Senate was his leading off with Brewer, Randall, Steele and one or two other Democratic Senators in favor of the sale of the State Canals to the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad Company—a measure against which there was much prejudice at the time, but which has been more than vindicated now as one of the most beneficial legislative movements of the last quarter of a century. He lived to see the full fruition of the measure by the completion of the Erie road from the seaboard to the Lakes. He was a consistent but liberal Democrat, and was always highly respected by his political opponents. He was twice married—his second wife, who still survives him, being a sister of the late Vice President Dallas. He was a most accomplished scholar, an earnest and forcible writer, an eloquent orator, and was a true type of God's noblest work. Few men die so widely lamented as William Wilkins.

to, am a Southern man; have owned slaves, bought slaves, but never sold one. You and I understand this better; we know our friends are mistaken, [here the President rose; up and continued emphatically,] and I tell you that I don't want you to have the control of these negro votes against the vote of this poor white man. I repeat our friends here are mistaken, as you and I know as to where the control of that negro vote would fall. When they come to talk about the elective franchise, I say let each State judge for itself. I am for free government; for emancipation; and I am for emancipating the white man as well as the black man.

Jefferson Davis, it is now understood to be settled, will be tried by a civil tribunal, and probably by the U. S. District Court for the Maryland District, Chief-Justice Chase presiding. We do not yet learn whether he is to be tried for treason only, or for other offenses also. Cooper Gibbs, in command of the post at Andersonville, is in Washington on parole. Captain Henry Wirz, who had control of that terrible prison pen, is also there in confinement, awaiting his trial for murdering our prisoners. A Judge Advocate has already been assigned, and is now preparing the testimony.

Col. Mosby, the notorious guerrilla chief, has been paroled by the military authorities at Lynchburg. Gen. Sheridan is busy preparing to go to Texas. Gen. Merritt is moving with a cavalry force over Banks' attempted route, via Red river and Shreveport. Gen. Granger and Weitzel have gone into the Lone Star State by way of the coast, entering at Galveston and Brazos. Gen. Crozer has the chief command. It is said the War Department has finally acceded to Gov. Curtin's views, and issued an order directing that enlisted men of Veteran Reserve Corps who, if they had remained in the volunteer regiments from which they were transferred, would now be entitled to discharge, will all be mustered out, except those who voluntarily wish to remain in the Veteran Corps.

Small the leaders be pardoned? Robert E. Lee, late commander-in-chief of the rebel armies, and Alexander H. Stephens, late Vice President of the so-called Confederate government, have filed applications with President Johnson for special pardon. There are doubtless scores of similar applications from rebels of lesser note, who have held important positions under the government before the war, and under the Davis usurpation during the war. Ex-United States Senators and Congressmen, ex-Governors, and ex-Army officers of all grades, seem to have flooded the Departments of Washington with petitions for their restoration to all the rights of citizenship.