

Democrat and Sentinel.

THE BLESSINGS OF GOVERNMENT, LIKE THE DEWS OF HEAVEN, SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED ALIKE, UPON THE HIGH AND THE LOW, THE RICH AND THE POOR.

NEW SERIES.

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LETTER FROM
EMERSON ETHERIDGE,
Clerk of the House of Representatives, to the Citizens of Memphis, Tennessee.

Mr. Etheridge, Clerk of the House of Representatives, and for several terms member of Congress from Tennessee, being invited to join in a public celebration of the anniversary of the surrender of Memphis to the Federal arms, writes the following able and interesting letter. Its just sarcasm upon the rebel's broken vows and maladministration of office is very striking. Mr. Etheridge was made the Clerk of the Southern House of Representatives in July, 1861. He had labored hard to keep Tennessee in the Union, and, in 1862, visited his State, where he was instrumental in bringing hundreds into the Union army, and persuading thousands to take the oath of allegiance.

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 18, 1863.

SIR: I have just received your note of the 7th inst., inviting me, in behalf of the Washington Union Club, of Memphis, to join in a public celebration of the anniversary of the surrender of that city to the Federal arms. You also speak of my past efforts to induce the people of West Tennessee to consent peacefully to "the restoration of the national authority throughout the South."

If I believed that by meeting you on the occasion referred to, I could be of service to a single honest, law-abiding citizen, or to the Republic, I would not only contribute, to the least extent, in ending the war and restoring the blessings of peace under the Constitution, I would certainly attend. But I have no such faith in myself, and therefore I shall not go.

In your letter you express the opinion that by a "direct personal appeal" I might "encourage the loyal and reclaim the disloyal." I confess my astonishment at such a statement; and I can attribute this opinion of yours to nothing but a failure on your part to comprehend the masterly policy of our great and good President and the wise statesmen who aided him in shaping and directing the civil policy of the Government. When you have fully studied and understood the great purposes of our most God-fearing and law-abiding President; when you are more familiar with the profound military strategy, which, as "Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States," he is now displaying; and when you further remember the astonishing success we have had in reclaiming our "misguided countrymen," I shall be amazed if you continue to believe it necessary to "encourage the loyal" and "reclaim the disloyal." Why encourage the loyal? Is it possible they need encouragement in Memphis, where, for nearly a year, you have been inside the Federal lines? Where every night tattoo is substituted for "Hush! my baby don't you cry," and at twelve "Hail Columbia" awakens the people to a consciousness of the great security which is afforded to the property of the loyal people in Memphis and all the country round that political Jordan?

How can you or I "encourage the loyal" when our matchless President, our noble Congress, his sage counselors and his peerless military subordinates, have already done and promised all which wisdom can suggest, which our sacred Constitution authorizes, and which the Christian religion tolerates and approves? There remains nothing for us to do, un-

less it is to obey our incomparable President in all his wise measures to conquer a glorious peace. True, we have among us croakers and Copperheads—silly, brainless men—who are so unwise and unpatriotic as to question the wisdom of our indefatigable President. If you have any such in Memphis, you should denounce them as in sympathy with the rebels; you should send them to their friends "down South," or to the Dry Tortugas, which is understood by many to be a place where everybody is tortured with thirst for rilled whiskey, and not a drop can be obtained. No good Union man will complain of the conduct of the wise men who direct our public affairs. They should be taught to remember that *scandalum magnum* was formerly a high crime—it is a most heinous offense now—and nothing saves such copper-colored wretches but the Christian charity of our most pious President.

At your proposed meeting you should so arrange matters as to secure a list of all who refuse to attend or omit to render a suitable apology, and you should adopt resolutions of the most "loyal" kind. Allow me to suggest that the committee on resolutions be selected from contractors and office-holders. I particularly suggest one Cooper, who has recently been appointed assessor for the large, rich and populous district of West Tennessee. He was originally from New York. True, he was never in West Tennessee until sent from this city on his official errand, but he no doubt knows by intuition the true value of goods and chattels, lands and tenements, etc., of a people he never knew, and in a country in which he never lived. But he is so loyal—so much so that I doubt not he is better fitted for the office than any one of the native born sons, brothers, or fathers of the thousands of soldiers, which, before the 22d of last September, West Tennessee had furnished the Federal army. Let the committee initiate the "Loyal Leagues" of Baltimore and resolve that you not only approve all the present wise and patriotic administration thus done, but that you will sustain and uphold it in everything it may hereafter do. Let the committee make an elaborate report, accompanied, with resolutions denouncing all who find fault with our most excellent President. For instance, the last Congress (in July, 1862), passed a law to confiscate the property of certain rebels. That Congress, though a very wise body, did not possess as much aggregate wisdom as our great and good President. In proof of this we need but refer to the fact that the Congress aforesaid provided that under this law, trial should precede conviction and forfeiture, and that guilt should be proven, not presumed. Worse still, it offered an amnesty to repentant rebels; it mercifully gave them sixty days in which to accept it, and provided further that our most noble President might suspend for a period the operations of this law as our armies advanced southward, so as to afford all an opportunity to accept pardon. Worse still, this law actually applied to no one but the rebels. And it is astonishing that it applied to everywhere, North and South; in Springfield, Illinois, as well as Springfield, Tennessee. But worse still; it did not wantonly effect the rights or property of Union men, women and children, or lunatics, in any section of the country.

That Congress, strange as it may seem, did not perceive that the way to end the rebellion and restore affectionate relations between the sections was to place the Union men, women, and children, and the insane upon a perfect footing of equality with the vilest traitors in the land!—That Congress believed that the crime of refusing obedience to the usurpation of Jeff Davis & Co., in Mississippi, Arkansas, North Carolina, and elsewhere, amid the terrors of a military despotism, did not merit the same or worse punishment than that they had denounced against fitted and official traitors! That Congress spared the women and children also shielded from harm the Union men who still adhered to the national symbol of protection! What weakness! But Congress had adjourned. What was to be done? Thank heaven, our sagacious President was found equal to the occasion.

You will perceive that on the first of January last, under this so-called confiscation law, the slaves of every rebel in the United States who had not accepted the amnesty therein provided were *de jure* free. But how were we to end this rebellion if the Union men, women and children in the so-called Confederate States, were left in undisturbed possession of all their legal and constitutional rights? If this policy were adopted, the rebels might have become angry with these monuments of Federal mercy, and

in that event the spared monuments aforesaid might cling more closely to the Federal flag. This division among the people might cause a still more unhappy state of affairs down in Dixie; our friends there might have to bear additional indignities. As before remarked, our merciful and considerate President was found equal to the crisis. In a long conversation with some of the inspired apostles from the saintly city of Chicago—a place where Onderdonk and other worldly amusements are unknown—the President candidly confessed that he was endeavoring (he did not state the means) to ascertain the will of the Lord upon this difficult question; that so soon as he learned the Divine pleasure he would do the will of the Master who sent him. The revelation came, doubtless, "by due course of mail," it amounted to this: that in portions of Virginia and Louisiana, in Delaware, in Maryland, in Kentucky, in Tennessee and Missouri, it was lawful for traitors who had accepted the amnesty provided by the confiscation law, and all other persons, to hold slaves; but that in the tide-water regions of Virginia, and in that part of Louisiana which had not been consecrated to slavery by the military occupation of Gen. Butler, as also in North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas and Texas, it should no longer be lawful for the Union men, women, and children to hold their African fellow-citizens to service or labor. And yet there are those of the "Copperhead persuasion" who profess not to see the wisdom of this great master-stroke of our most noble and exalted President. Sir, did it not immediately divide the South and unite the North? Were not our camps forthwith crowded with countless myriads of bold and ardent recruits? Have not "our American brethren of African descent" crowded by thousands into our ranks, inspiring our soldiers with a wild enthusiasm, and pondering night vocal with the songs of enfranchised Dinahs and muling and punking Samboes? And have not our arms been victorious everywhere since the dawn of the negro millennium of 1863?

I know that men like Gen. M. Brayman, who commands in your vicinity (at Bolivar Tenn.) are guilty of Absurdities of speech, which affords the enemies of our sagacious President excuses for complaint and criticism. For instance, on the 4th of last March that officer, then in command at Bolivar, wrote as follows in regard to the Proclamation of Freedom, with which our illustrious and far-seeing President greeted the advent of the new year: "The loyal man is equally helpless with the disloyal—in fact more so; for the rebel takes his slaves South, or hires them in the army in which he himself serves, while the loyal man flees to our camps beyond reclamation. Under this process the rebel holds his slaves by carrying them into a State in which they are declared, free, while the law-abiding citizen loses his by retaining them in a State where it is lawful to hold them. As it is now, the loyalty and good conduct of these men avail them nothing."

In speaking of the elevating effects of this system upon our armies and the negroes, Gen. Brayman shocks our sensibilities by the use of such language as this: "Their expense to the Government is enormous. It requires soldiers to guard them. They sicken and die in crowded and filthy barracks. They become debased and demoralized. They debate and demoralize the army."

Now among the resolutions you will adopt at the Memphis meeting there should by all means, be one censuring Gen. Brayman for the use of language so insulting to "our fellow-citizens of African descent," and so justly calculated to ingenerate the slave-owners in Tennessee who have so stubbornly refused to join the rebels.

Why, sir, this license of speech must be suppressed. What right have men who do not support the present wise and efficient administration to criticize its policy or the consequences of it? Within the last few days I have heard persons in this city—in this capital which bears the sacred name of Washington, and which for the present is the home of our illustrious chief magistrate—draw seemingly invidious distinctions between the fate of Jesse D. Bright, of Indiana, and that of John M. Botts, of Virginia.—How my blood "boiled with pious indignation" when, a few days ago, I heard a certain individual of the straightest sect of Copperheads discourses thus: "Jesse D. Bright, of Indiana, was expelled from the Senate of the United States last year charged with treasonable practices. He then owned a farm and negroes in Ken-

tucky—still owns them. He accepted the amnesty provided in the so-called confiscation law which passed Congress last July. He is now proposing to accompany his family on a pleasure trip to Europe, leaving his large properties in Indiana and his slaves in Kentucky under the protection of the law. John M. Botts is just out of 'Libby,' or some other Confederate prison, where he was incarcerated for his devotion to the Union and his undying hostility to the so-called Southern Confederacy. Ten days ago his slaves were enticed within the lines of our armies in Virginia. Mr. Botts demanded that they be surrendered or returned, and received for answer, direct from Washington, that he had no right to them—that our wise and law-abiding President set them free.

I confess that when I heard this long and complaining rigmarole I was indignant at this person's stupidity. He could not see the wisdom of this wise policy of our most noble executive. He was almost incorrigible as James I. Peigru, of South Carolina, who, when he read the grand proclamation of the most illustrious successor of Washington, took the oath of allegiance to the Confederate government, and offered his private fortune to the rebels to aid them in making war upon the armies of the sublimest man of modern times; of Nelson, of Tennessee, who, with his sons in rebel captivity, published an appeal to the people of that State to take up arms against our freedom-loving President, of Houston, Henry, and others, who immediately went over to the rebel cause. Away with all such men. A good Union man loves his country *per se*. He cares nothing for liberty or prosperity, fame or fortune, considerations or contracts, office or opinion. The true test is simply this: Who is the greatest, wisest and best of mankind? Who is the first natural military genius of the world? Who doeth all things wisely and well? Who should be elected President as long as he will accept the office? If to all these inquiries the respondent answers with a firm, unflinching voice, *Abraham Lincoln, Esq.*, he may be set down as a good Union man, fit to join a "Loyal League," receive a contract accept a commission of office, and *to vote*. But if, like Crittenden of Kentucky, he is ever talking about the Constitution and such worn-out themes, he ought not to be trusted for a moment.

A Union man must have an abundance of *faith*—faith in the saving grace of our exalted President—faith that he will yet prove the political Moses to lead our armies across the Rappahannock—faith that under his leadership, could he be induced to take the field, the mighty hosts of rebellion would flee from Marye's hill and drown themselves, like, "possessed" swine in the adjacent stream.

How is recruiting now in West Tennessee? Last summer only a few thousand enlisted in our ranks, but very few, I believe, in Memphis. You are so amply protected within the lines that you quite forgot, I fear, the sorrows of those who had not yet had an opportunity of greeting the flag which brings certain security to loyal men, women and children; such inevitable protection to property, including such trifling articles as negroes and cotton bales. Hurry up the volunteers. Give the lie to those who intimated that Tennesseans will not go into the Gulf States to fight for their brethren of African descent. True, most of our citizens have sons, daughters, sisters, fathers, or brothers there, but they ought never to have settled so far South. Besides, when you have secured freedom to our African-fellow-citizens south of us, you may possibly have the honor of taking part in carrying a same boon to a similar class in Tennessee and Kentucky. I doubt our noble President will in due time adopt suitable means to ascertain the will of the Lord in this behalf. Indeed it seems to have been made known already to some of the lesser lights. Last week a grand Convention of the loyal women of America assembled in the city of New York. Each delegate had conceived—an idea; and, under the inspiration of the great occasion, they have commanded our magnificent President to proclaim freedom throughout all the ends of the earth. I doubt not, at the proper time, he will so proclaim; and the twenty thousand troops which his excellency Governor Andrew Johnson was recently authorized to recruit in Tennessee will soon be ready for the good work of giving practical freedom to our enslaved fellow countrymen, male and female, of African descent.—When that time comes Memphis will be a lovely city. Its walks and its promenades will be illuminated by the smiling faces and brilliant eyes of the graceful and accomplished sons and daughters of

Lincoln and Liberty; of Darkness and Dabomey. True our State Constitution and laws, like those of Illinois and other loyal States, will not permit free negroes to come within our State, nor enfranchised slaves to remain there; but from military necessity, or, as a high official expresses it, "from the *ex necessitate rei* of the thing," they will be permitted to remain. The plan recently adopted in South Carolina of selling them the lands of the rebels might be adopted, and thereby Memphis might become "a variegated city." Our white and colored brethren and sisters might thus furnish an example of that "freedom and fraternity" which so many Northern spinsters sincerely regard as the only means of compromising the present unfortunate distinction of color.

You should by all means pass a resolution in favor of giving such rebel farms and town lots as are not needed for our colored brethren to our Christian friends of the North who desire to live among their colored friends particularly to that numerous and respectable class who think that both races will be improved by a cross of the Anglo-Saxon upon the pure Guinea. "When this cruel war is over" how our psalm singing brethren from the Church of the Puritans would enjoy a Confederate farm on Big Black, Red River, the Arkansas or Ponchartrain. When the rebels and disarmed how neck and lowly, docile and penitent they will be, while beholding our Northern brothers occupying their mansions and illustrating the beauties of General Bank's apprentice system. With what impunity General Butler would ride from his plantation on Moon Lake to his ranch on Deer Creek! Then would be made manifest the absurdity of those Copperhead croakers who foolishly insist that while military power can put down a rebellion, moral power alone can eradicate its consequences and keep it down. It is true, they cite the example of Venedice, which in area, is only about one fortieth part of France. There, we admit, the peasantry believed their religion was endangered, and history records that they defeated six or seven of the best appointed armies which the French republic, in that warlike age, could hurl against them. It is also true that afterwards, that when Carnot was made Minister of War, he quieted the people by assuring them that they should be indemnified in their religious faith. These mischievous fault-finders, to give further force to their insidious assaults upon our worthy President, point also to Poland, in which the fires of rebellion are ever burning; but they forget that the Czar of all the Russias is in all respects inferior to our noble President, and is wholly ignorant or the true means of quieting a disaffected people. It never occurred to the aforesaid Czar that to quell a rebellion effectually the cause must be removed. Had he studied the history of rebellion in this country he would have discovered that we always ascertained the cause, the evil, the sin which gave a pretext to the insurgents. For example: During the administration of General Washington a portion of the people of Pennsylvania got up a rebellion about whisky. It was crushed out by "coercion," but the sagacious statesmen of that day determined to strike at the cause. The result is that the people of that noble Commonwealth have ever since eschewed whisky and turned their attention to contracts. Nothing is now known in that State of whisky, and though Mr. Buchanan used to recite some traditional stories of "Old Rye," to the junior members of his cabinet, it is well known that the sight of a bottle of pure Monongahela was as repulsive to his nature as ice-water to a mad dog. Subsequently, while General Jackson was President, the people of South Carolina revolted at taxation because some demagogue called it high tariff, and asserted that the monster "stole money from their unconscious pockets." The rebellion, however, was "subjugated" by the military power of the Government, and the cause—taxation—of course, abolished. No tax gatherers have been known since in South Carolina. At a later day, during the administration of John Tyler, of the firm of "Tippicanoe and Tyler too," some unwashed Democrats in Rhode Island formed a grand insurrection against the sovereignty of that large and populous State. The Army and Navy of the United States, by hearty co-operation with the "loyalists" of that day, soon overthrew the insurgents. Their provisional governor—Thomas W. Dorr—was captured, denied the right of a "belligerent," and sent to the penitentiary.

The Democratic party, the cause, was abolished, as all subsequent elections have shown, throughout the United States,

since when no speck of rebellion has been known within the vast limits of that loyal State. The rebellion in Utah, which occurred during the reign of the Old Public Functionary, is too recent to be forgotten. The cause is no doubt fresh in the memory of every maiden lady in the loyal States. The republican instincts of our people would not tolerate a monopoly in heaven's "last best gift to man." General Albert Sidney Johnston was sent to Utah with instructions to conquer the conjugal spirit of Brigham.

The Mormon war ended gloriously to our arms. The cause was removed.—Harems are now unknown among the latter day saints, and Brigham, like some lone bird without a mate, "refuses to be comforted." In Europe, protracted and sanguinary civil wars have often resulted from the differences of opinions in regard to the true mode of construing the Bible, and especially concerning the operations of the Holy Ghost. They have failed to abolish the one or deny the other; the result is that a few countries in Europe maintain the quiet which usually "prevails" along the Rappahannock.

It should not be overlooked that our people were very ignorant or they would never have been deceived by the treasonable enemies, North and South, of our noble President.

It was falsely charged that he and his party friends did not desire to suppress the rebellion without first subverting the rights of the States; freeing all the slaves and elevating them to political equality with the whites. Our people, being of course very ignorant, believed all these false, scandalous, and malicious statements; and among the resolutions you will adopt at your meeting, there should be one thanking his excellency, our most approved President, for the effectual means he has adopted to give strength and moral power to the Union men and women of the South, while at the same time he has shown how wickedly false and libelous were the allegations of Southern traitors and Northern Copperheads that he intended to use the army and navy to abolish slavery. The Union men of the South will ever gratefully cherish the name and memory of one who, by a scrupulous regard for his official and other pledges, and his manly adherence to the Chicago platform, has vindicated the truth of all the pledges which from time to time are made on his behalf; and the traitors and Copperheads who thus falsely charged our great and good President with designing to subvert the institutions of the Southern States, must henceforth hold their faces in shame.

You must by all means fail to adopt, with wild acclamation, mingled with a few "bully hallojohs," a resolution severely denunciatory of those who criticize our military operations, or show impatience at the tardy movements of our armies in South Carolina and Virginia. Such criticism gives the rebels "aid and comfort," and, though it may not be felony without benefit of clergy, is, nevertheless, what Mr. Polk stigmatizes as "moral treason;" a crime which our noble President and other Whigs of that day were compelled to "dry up" during the war with Mexico.

Our present military disorder is but "harmony when understood." We are abundantly able to beat the rebels whenever we try. At present we have them completely surrounded—crowded into a small circumference of not more than six thousand miles. Our armies are guarding the outposts of this contracted line and everywhere during the pantlanian butternuts to "pierce the centre," and the rigged wretches "take the dare." We have forces at Galveston, New Orleans, Pensacola, Hilton Head, Newbern, Norfolk (all is quiet on the Blackwater), Fortress Monroe, and the Rappahannock, at Baltimore, along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, in Western Virginia, in Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Fort Smith, and at Vicksburg, in the very heart of the rebellion. How long can the rebellion exist when thus circumscribed? In addition to all this, Adjt. General Thomas, a native of "my Maryle d," and who last year was charged by the malignant tongue of slander with being a secessionist and a traitor—following where such noble men as Butler, Brady, Dickinson and other old friends of Breckinridge dare to lead—is now in the southwest organizing the loyal blacks, who, it is understood, are impatient to be led against the barbarous hords of Lee and Beauregard. Northern philosophers, women and divines, who regard the African as the best normal representative of the human race, and those who have seen the sturdy mastiff quail before the perfume of the skunk, do not believe the delicate nerves of the rebels

(Continued on Fourth Page.)