

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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SPEECH OF MR. C. L. VALLANDIGHAM, At Syracuse on Thursday, August 15th 1864.

[From the New York World.]

The Hanover square stand, which was the principal meeting, was presided over by Hon. Wm. I. Hough, of Onondaga, a gentleman who was a member of Congress when Mr. Lincoln was there. Mr. Vallandigham was the first speaker.—After the applause succeeding his introduction was stilled, he spoke as follows:

GENTLEMEN OF NEW YORK: Had I regard on this occasion for whatever of reputation, I may have required as a public speaker, I would not have been here to-day. Having declined your original invitation, your special messenger found me at home, with as little expectation of being with you as I have of being present at the future coronation of the Prince of Wales. But he presented so powerful a case that I felt that I would be doing not only injustice to myself, but, perhaps, under the circumstances of the case, injury to the great cause if I further declined. He came on, too, with a writ, not yet obsolete among Democrats—a *habeas corpus*—and he has produced my body here to-day. [Applause.] But I come without sensitiveness upon the question of a mere personal reputation as a speaker, and I appear only among you to speak the words of truth and soberness boldly and plainly, as elsewhere, and upon other occasions and in other assemblages. I have been accustomed to speak. I am not here to parade before you any private grievance. I am not with you to speak of ought that I may have done or suffered in the cause—all these sink into insignificance in comparison with the great interests which have brought us together in such a mass to-day. Allow me, however, merely one word of personal allusion. In the beginning of this war it was the custom of a great number of Democrats, as it was with the entire mass of the Administration party, to denounce the views, which from the beginning, I entertained upon the question of the war, to misrepresent and malign me personally, until, I believe, at that time, I can safely say that I was the best abused and the worst hated, and the most execrated man in America. [Laughter.] When, subsequently, time, to which I appealed, began to reverse the unjust judgment, it still continued the custom of some of the Democratic party, as still it is with all the Republican party, occasionally to indulge in harsh and offensive remarks, and still more frequently to speak in disparaging language of the views which were attributed to me; and even now, when in the progress of this four years of the war, time has vindicated almost to the utmost extent whatsoever opinions I may have expressed, or prophecies I may have uttered in the beginning, it is still the fashion of some to express dissent from what they are pleased to call the peculiar views of Mr. Vallandigham. However it may have been at first, I tell you to-day, men of New York, that my views are no longer peculiar, but most general among the people. What they have been from the first moment of the war, and are at this hour, you shall hear and judge for yourselves; and I trust that men who claim to belong to a party of which I have been a member from my earliest boyhood, will lay aside that apologetic language, and either be silent or frankly confess that in advocating a cessation of hostilities and a convention of states they have advanced to the very platform which I occupied from the first. One word further to all whom it may concern. [Laughter.] It is not the purpose, as I have been advised, and now know, of this convention to sow the seeds of dissent and ill-feeling in the Democratic ranks. ["Good," Applause.] It is no part of my mission here to-day. A delegate unanimously chosen by my own congressional district to represent them in Chicago, I should be not only false to the instincts of my own nature, but, what is more important, false to the great interests of my country, if I gave any helping hand to any such object. [Applause.] Neither shall I be present at that convention at Chicago except for the purpose, along with sound doctrine and the nomination of a sound candidate, to do the utmost in my power to promote good feeling and harmony among the Democrats and conservatives, if you please, of this country. [Great applause.] Let all apprehension on that subject be at once dismissed. Men of New York, there is now but one question before the country—the

question of war or peace—every other is involved in that one question. I assume that it is the desire of every sound minded, right-hearted Democrat, and Republican, too, and all who love their country, that first her liberties should be made secure, and then her material prosperity promoted. These are the two grand objects—They, among the ranks of the people who have no contracts, who hold no offices, and who from party habitude or other causes, are of the Republican party, I assume honestly, did believe once that these objects were to be secured by war. Some among the Democratic party in the beginning, now a vast majority of it, believe that this great purpose can be obtained only through peace. They who believed that war was the proper instrumentality, having the power both in the executive, in the Senate and in the House and being supported at first by a vast majority—almost unanimously I may say—by a vast majority of the people, determined that the experiment should be tried by war. The honest among them expected to restore the union of these states, as a part of securing permanent political liberty and promoting the material prosperity of the land. We who thought otherwise were obliged to submit. For one, I did submit. Had I the power in the beginning there should not have been any war; not one drop of blood should have been shed; no march of hostile armies should have taken place; no hostile cannon should have sounded in the ears of the people of this land; and the effusion of blood which has stained it from one end to the other would have been spared. That mighty public debt, now near four thousand millions of dollars, would not have weighed down as a burden to you and your children; taxation would have been unknown, except in the old fashioned way of our fathers, but little felt; none of the calamities which have made this country a land of mourning would have visited this people. But, as I have said, they who have insisted that the great objects of statesmanship were to be secured by war, being in power, made war, I submitted. The President has now for four years had all the men and all the money that he demanded: there never has been an example from the beginning of the world where a people, with such unanimity sent forth their sons to battle, with such submission abided by and acquiesced in all that was demanded of them in property, in zeal, in effort, to further this war. Nothing has been wanting that the constitutional power has conferred upon the executive or Congress could give; nothing has been wanting that the most audacious usurpation on the face of the globe could take from this country, to make this war successful. Men they have had to the number of over two millions, money or credit to the amount of over four thousand millions; a paper currency poured forth from the manufacturing establishment in the treasury at Washington has been scattered all over this land. What else could have been secured? What that was demanded has been withheld? And now, under these most favorable circumstances, I ask you what has been the result of this grand experiment? You have had four years of war; battles more in number than the three greatest conquerors of the earth have fought in any five years of their military career; blood poured out like water; treasury expended without limit. What is the result to-day? Is your Union restored? ["No, no, no." Is a single state brought back by fighting; has the Constitution been maintained; have your liberties been made secure?—["Usurped, no, no, no." Constitutional guarantees been observed; have you had trial by jury; have you had a free press; did you have free assemblies by the people some time ago? ["We have to-day." Did you have arrest by due process of law? ["No, no, no." Did your citizens sit down under their own vine and fig trees with none to make them afraid? ["No! No!"] How is it in the material prosperity of the land? What is your currency to-day? ["Shipplasters." Your greenback dollar is worth thirty-seven or thirty-eight cents to-day, tested by the only standard of value, the constitutional currency of this country and the uniform currency of the world. ["That's more than Lincoln is worth." Laughter.] It is depreciating every day. Two months ago it was worth a hundred per cent. more than it is to-day, and in two months it will be worth a hundred per cent. less than it is to-day. The violation of the laws of commerce, trade, and currency is bringing with it the inevitable punishment which has followed in all lands, from the great scheme of John Law in France, in the eighteenth century, down to 1809, when the Austrian government issued its paper

money; and ruin is impending upon this country; and now, in the fourth year of the war, what better prospect is there of a successful issue? Braver men than our soldiers never drew the breath of life. [Applause.] Under different leadership, and with a cause which in their hearts they felt was the cause of the country—and when they volunteered three years ago they did feel it to be so—they might have been victorious over any set of men less brave or equally brave with themselves. What trial by arms that failed in '61 is more likely to be successful now! At the end of '62 what had been accomplished? Was any State restored? Had love for the Union of our fathers been beaten into the hearts of any man or woman, or child, in the South? In '63 how was it again? We began the campaign under auspicious circumstances. The army was more powerful than at any previous time. Success had crowned our armies at Vicksburg, Port Hudson, Gettysburg. The country believed that this great rebellion was finally and completely to be crushed. How completely you believed this at the time, I know. When from Niagara, after my return from that visit South which I owe to the courtesy of Mr. Lincoln, I announced what I knew to be true, that the South was in better condition than to make good their inexorable purpose to resist our armies, it was denounced, of course, by men who supported the administration, as treason, and regarded as the consummation of folly by thousands and tens of thousands of men of my own party. What have you to say after the experience of another year? Look at the result. With an army still more augmented by the levies of 1862 and 1863, and the winter of 1864; men who were supposed to be the most capable placed at the head of the army, and what was called the scattering policy was abandoned—let the record of blood answer what has been the result. From the 4th day of May, when from the Rapidan General Grant advanced in the Wilderness, and General Sherman advanced, to this hour, what have we gained? After the reckless effusion of blood, expenditure of money to the amount of five millions a day, has Richmond been captured, has Petersburg fallen? The final hope of success—the mining process—has been tried in vain. Even Petersburg, a town not half as large as Syracuse, still bids defiance to the federal armies. Yet an immense army went forth, as highly disciplined as any that ever trod the earth, under a general supposed to be the most capable man in the federal service, remarkable for his tenacity of purpose, and reckless of the expenditure of life to secure a given object. Forward he marched; he reached Richmond; he went beyond Richmond; but Richmond itself is General Lee's army; to-day it is unbroken, stronger than it was on the 4th of May last. How is it with General Sherman? The object of his march was Atlanta. After three months of wearisome marching, and terrible fighting, and with the loss of some eighty thousand men, he has reached Atlanta only to sit down as General Grant has been obliged to do in front of Petersburg. Not a foot of Mississippi is ours, except a few miles around Vicksburg and Natchez; none of Louisiana, except about New Orleans. The whole Red river country was lost by the failure of General Banks' expedition. Arkansas, with slight exception is again in the hands of the confederates. They have regained in the rear more than we have obtained by the onward march of General Sherman's army. These are stern facts, that demand that the people should consider together and ask whether the experiment of war has not failed. It is not only their interest, but their bounden duty as citizens, as Christian men, to reckon whether there be not some other mode of securing the great purpose of maintaining our liberties, of supporting the Constitution and of reconstructing the Union of these States. I am for holding on still for these great objects. I am for attempting by the instrumentalities of peace compromise to accomplish that which four years of terrible warfare has failed to effect. [Applause.] The results of your experiment are before us; now let us try ours. Have I only conjecture and theory to offer in defense of that mode which from the beginning to-day I insisted was the only one by which our difficulties could be adjusted? Let us see. How was this government made in the beginning? At the mouth of the cannon, the edge of the sword, the point of the bayonet? Did Washington and Franklin and that other Sherman—the old revolutionary Sherman—and the patriots of the times that tried men's souls, meet together in Philadelphia by single combat in the old Hall of Independence, and sword in hand attempt to make a

Constitution? ["No!"] How then? In peaceable assembly, each State, having secured its independence, met there under that old bell, where we had declared the independence that was at the price of blood made ours; there, in debate, with pen, ink, and paper, they made our Constitution. There was no smell of gunpowder there; there were no scars there, except those that had been won on the battle field of the Revolution. By free speech, coming from the hearts of freemen; by the arts of sound statesmanship and not war, were the foundations laid deep and firm and the superstructure reared which has become the admiration and envy of the earth.—Proud, stately, and massive, column after column rose in gorgeous architecture, and for seventy-three years we prospered as a people. How? By civil war? ["No."] Yet we had our differences. The Union was more than once threatened. In 1820 we had the Missouri question; but civil war was averted by compromise. Again, the fall spirit of abolitionism rose, that dark, foul, dismal, pointing spirit, which has overshadowed this land for thirty years past, rose as a horrid specter! grinding and gnashing. A party found it, and the land was threatened by a sectional organization. In 1850, on the question of the Wilmot proviso, the troubles between the North and South had almost culminated in civil war. How was it settled? By calling out seventy-five thousand militia for three months; by commanding the Southern States to disperse in thirty days; by commanding an onward to Richmond. No, Henry Clay yet lived, Daniel Webster survived. Cass was there, Douglas (loud applause) was there, and by compromise again calamity was averted. Who voted against compromise in 1850, when Mr. Clay was offering up the last remnant of his life a sacrifice on the altar of his country.—Sumner was there and voted against it, Chase was there and rejected it—the very leaders and founders of that party which has been in power for the last few years to the ruin of the country. Had they been in the majority then, fourteen years ago, this civil war would have begun. We might, indeed, have been in the midst of it yet; but it would have been eleven years earlier in its commencement. It was by conciliation and compromise that these calamities were turned aside, as by these means, the government had been founded in the beginning. The result of these wise counsels and this profound statesmanship was that we prospered as no other people ever did prosper. From thirteen States, we became thirty-four, from three millions we became thirty-one millions, from an obscure and insignificant government and flag we became the mightiest republic on the globe. Prosperity and plenty were ours. No people were ever so blessed. And yet we proved ourselves thankless by casting these blessings from us. It is that for which He has visited us with this terrible scourge. It so happened that after the men of the revolution had passed away; when the founders of our government had died; when the men who made the compromise of 1850 passed to their last home, a new generation obtained power; and when the same difficulties arose, growing out of the question of slavery, instead of compromise, instead of conciliation, instead of the arts of peace and the counsels of harmony, they resolved that there should be war, that through coercion the States dissatisfied and discontented should be forced back into the Union; and men who did still live, and men who had taken the places of those who had passed away, sought, four years ago, to avert this calamity. When first I addressed a New-York audience, in the month of November, 1860, it was to advocate the election of the Union ticket in the State of New York—the real Union ticket—the ticket made up of men who were willing to try, if it were possible, even at that late day, to prevent the electoral vote of the State of New York from being cast for Abraham Lincoln. I was a Union man at that time, as I have been at every hour since. [Great applause.] Had the vote of your State then been cast against Abraham Lincoln, you never would have had this civil war. ["That's so."] But you were persuaded to your hurt—to the ruin of your country—to choose him as your President, and put in power the party of which he was the recognized head. You placed him there knowing that he had avowed that the republic could not endure part slave and part free. The election produced the natural consequences which the Democratic party and the Whig party had proclaimed would be the result. Then it was when Congress assembled in the month of December, 1860, that still the true men of the country, the

Democrats, Americans, and Old Line Whigs, united together with all zeal and earnestness of purpose, inspired by patriotism, and labored day and night through compromise to prevent civil war. The Crittenden propositions were introduced, bearing healing upon their wings. They were rejected, and by whom? Not one Republican Senator voted for them; not one Republican representative voted for them. Every man of the Democratic party in the House and in the Senate, every man of the American party, every man that remained of the old Whig party cast his vote—my own was included—in favor of those propositions which would have prevented civil war. And these men now exclaim, with cheek blanched and eye distended, in the language of one of old, "Out damned spot," and it will not out. I hold to the faith that in the Republican form of government it is impossible by the force of arms to keep the people united. The capital fault of this war is, in the beginning, that it was a violation of the very principles upon which this government was organized. But, if we hold with others that it might have been constitutional in the beginning as it was holy in its object, we must admit that it has been perverted, and that it is not now a war for the restoration of the Union, the maintenance of the Constitution, or one that can bring back peace and prosperity to the land. The utter failure of the experiment of coercion, the breaking down now more recently of the currency, the accumulation of this enormous debt, and the aggregation of a vast taxation as a burden upon the people of this land—all these things are beginning, from one end of the country to the other, to open the eyes of the people, and the cry goes up, let me tell you, men of New York, for a cessation of hostilities; throughout the Middle States and in the New England States that cry is echoed. Your presence here to-day, a vast multitude, gives the same testimony. I have been one who, from the beginning, have believed that by conciliation the broken Union could be reconstructed. I was one of those who cling to it to the last extremity, and I am ready this day, and as long as the feeblest glimmer of hope remains, to exhaust every instrumentality that human statesmanship can devise to bring about that Union. [Great applause.] But I believe as God is my judge, that that only hope is in immediate cessation of hostilities. Stop fighting. Did men ever agree when they were at blows? Was there ever a treaty of peace signed amid the roar of cannon? Was ever a vexatious litigation settled when the parties were in the midst of the trial, with passions roused and bitterness and prejudice excited? ["No." Was ever peace restored in the household, between man and wife when the husband resorted to the coercive power of blows? [Voice—"I don't know. I never tried it."] Not in America. Then what is our duty? What is your prospect if you do? Five hundred thousand more. Will the rebellion be crushed in '65? You have been told it would be crushed in sixty days, since the commencement of the war. What guarantee of success have you in the next campaign? If General Grant's and General Sherman's armies of brave and disciplined men have been unsuccessful, what guarantee is there that the 500,000 new men will accomplish more? The records show that two millions of men have gone forth. Where are they? Not until the last day of account will their fate be known. ["They are in the grave."] If the war continues we shall soon suffer all the calamities of a ruined and broken down currency. There is but one mode possible to secure peace and compromise. A convention is soon to meet at Chicago for the purpose of nominating an opponent to Abraham Lincoln. We propose to place before the people a candidate who shall possess the requisites which inspire the people with confidence—statesmanship, experience, devotion to the Constitution, attachment to the Union and a love of liberty. [Applause.] We propose, in harmony and good feeling, without dissension, there to assemble and upon consultation agree upon him who shall best combine all these qualities. I do expect that he will be committed to the policy of a suspension of hostilities and a convention of the States. ["Good."] That is the platform which it is my purpose to support, and which is the design of a vast majority of the delegates of the Northwestern States to insist upon in that convention. As for men we care little. We have no special choice, so far as I know, public sentiment has settled on no one man. We propose to come together as patriots, in the spirit of our fathers,

[CONTINUED ON FOURTH PAGE.]