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BY FRED'K L. BAKER.

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Sermon by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

"And, behold, there was a man which had
his hand withered. And they asked him,
saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath
days? that they might accuse him. And he
said unto them, What man shall there be
among you, that shall have a sheep, and if
it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he
not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much
then is a man better than a sheep? Where-
fore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath
days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth
thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and
it was restored whole, like as the other.
Then the Pharisees went out, and held a
council against him, how they might destroy
him."—Matt. xii., 10—14.

Or how much more worth to-day is a
nation than a single man. This young
nation, planted with wonderful providences,
grew with celerity and vigor to a
surprising manhood; but its right
hand was withered. The right arm of
any nation is that which holds justice
and liberty. Both had shrivelled in
our nation, under the paralysis of slave-
ry. In his own mysterious way, God
had appeared for our relief, and the
command was to this people, Stretch
forth thine hand. The nation obeyed
with a sword in its hand, and now, not
a sheep but a man, and not one man
but millions, are in the pit of war. To
save the nation is good work for Sunday
and sanctuary. A Sunday too religious
for patriotism, a church too sacred to
be used for the rescue of wretched men,
religious men so devout as to be neither
just nor humane, are not Christian.
They are Jewish. They are not even
Jewish according to the nobler teach-
ings of the prophets of that illustrious
people; but of that degenerate day
when men bound burdens on their fol-
low-men, which they would not touch
themselves with their little finger; when
they devoured the houses of the poor,
but made long prayers, robbed with long
phylacteries, and tithed mint, anise, and
cummin, and omitted the weightier mat-
ters of the law—justice and judgment.
Such men, trained to superstition, could
not break the Sabbath; but they cruci-
fied the Savior. And there be men in
our day that are ashamed to have intro-
duced upon the Sabbath day a patriotic
subject; but they tolerate with the ut-
most complacency the crucifixion of
millions of their fellowmen.

Our nation has come to a decisive
hour. Two roads lie just before us—
the one bright with justice, with right-
eous law, with benign government, with
industry, with prosperity, and with uni-
versal renown: the other lurid with
corrupt passions, with conflicts ever re-
newing and never ending, with principles
subverted but never abandoned, with
national integrity shattered, and a future
of shame and world-wide derision.
There never was a time when men
were called to a decision under such cir-
cumstances of solemnity and of impor-
tance.

The first canvass that I remember was
that of 1840. The nation was then con-
vulsed. But as I look upon the actual
interests at stake, they were not to be
mentioned with those that are at stake
now.

Call to mind the exceeding fervor and
zeal and energy of 1856. They were
real and important issues that were
brought before the community then;
and yet the question was only as to
whether the territories should be cursed
with slavery, and the nation be respon-
sible for its extension.

Now, the question is not of this pol-
icy or of that policy; it is not a question
of commercial interest, it is not a ques-
tion of tariffs: the question is, Shall
the nation itself exist; or shall it be rent
asunder? This is the one question that

absorbs all others—Nationality, or no
nationality.

At all times a citizen's vote is a high
duty; but when the destinies of one's
country, and the cause of government
itself, and of popular liberty are to be
determined, nothing can be more august
or more solemn than the vote. All the
votes of your life-time have not meant
so much as that single one which you
will cast in the approaching November.

It is my duty to set before you some
considerations that should influence a
Christian man. In the first place, I
shall consider some of the motives that
are proper and some that are improper,
to actuate Christian voters.

Let me, in the first place, rule out
improper considerations.

I. We are not at liberty in this mat-
ter to be either indifferent or ignorant.
When great duties rest upon us, indiffer-
ence is a sin; when those duties involve
the welfare of others, indifference is a
crime; and when the crime reaches to
the life of one's government and country,
indifference is a treason. And that man,
in such an hour as this, that counts his
political duty to be a matter of indiffer-
ence, is guilty of sin, and crime, and
treason. You are not at liberty to say,
"I do not care." You are bound to care.

You have no right to live under these
skies, and under this government, and
not care. Nor is ignorance less a sin.
No man may go wrong, and plead, "I
did not know better." You are bound
to know. God has placed you under a
government which requires of every citi-
zen an intelligence of political duty.

To be ignorant of the proper mode of
performance is to betray your solemn
trust. Ignorant citizens betray their
country. For that ignorance is volun-
tary. If you plead business, pleasure,
or disgust, it is not the less criminal.

You need not be ignorant. Reading is
free—without money and without price.
It is proffered to you, and urged upon
you. We are willing to leave the issues
of this day and this year to intelli-
gence; and we appeal from your pas-
sions to your understandings. Read,
ponder, decide in the fear of God and
in the love of man, and we will take the
consequences.

2. You must not anymore settle this
great duty by any secret or avowed
prejudice, by any impatience of temper,
or by any grudge. You must not settle
your course because you like or dis-
like men. We have a preference of men;
but there are times when principles are
at stake, and men become comparative-
ly insignificant, and derive all their im-
portance from the fact that they rep-
resent those principles. And you cannot,
as our government is constituted, set
them aside without setting aside what
they represent. You have no right be-
cause you have been injured, or because
your friends have been injured, to take
an oblique course, or to refuse any ac-
tivity. It is no time for personal feelings
to dictate a patriot's duty. It is for
thirty millions of men that you are act-
ing. That should make every man's
conscience as free from bias as that of
an honest judge on the bench; and
every man that votes in the approaching
month should vote as though he sat on
a bench, and was sworn to justice—for
his ballot is judicial. Lay aside grudges,
and slights, and angers, and go with
clean hands and Christian honor to your
imperative duty. There never was a
man, that had any experience of public
affairs, that was not obliged to submit
to what seemed to him indignities. Public
men, or men engaged in public
matters, must bear what they suppose
to be injuries, partialities, and injusti-
ces; and all the names that have be-
come illustrious in our history have
been obliged to go to their patriot's
duty through hardships and personal
wrongs. And it is an evidence of their
nobleness that they disdained to avenge
them. One illustrious name is in our
history that bore the brunt of wrongs—
Washington. I think you have heard
of him. He despised such things, and
brushed them from him daily as he did
the dust from his coat; and his name
will never die. Another man there was
that was wronged; and, taking counsel
of his hatred, he sought to betray his
country into the hands of its oppressors;
and the name of Arnold shall rot.
Choose which example you will ob-
serve.

3. Nor have men a right to settle
the question before them on economic
grounds. That is to say, you have no
right to determine your duty from con-
siderations of profit or loss, of conveni-
ence or inconvenience. The price of
flour, I know, is high, and of coal, and
of cloth, and of butter; but I did not

know before that the price-current was
a patriot's constitution, and that he
measured his duty by whether that went
up or down. I know how, when it is
stated to you, you scorn the idea of se-
lecting or pursuing your duty as a citi-
zen from a consideration so mercenary
as this; and yet, thousands of men say,
"Times are so hard, we must have a
change of some sort: I cannot stand
this." You cannot stand fifty cents a
pound for butter; but you can stand
betraying your country! You want to
get smaller prices; but you would get,
not smaller, but larger prices, if the ideas
you advocate were to prevail. Thou-
sands, inconsiderate and uninstructed,
are tempted to say, "We must have re-
lief." Yes, you must have relief; but
it is quite an important question wheth-
er you will have it at the hands of the
devil; or at the hands of God.

When Paul, and those in the ship
with him, having been cast about on the
deep till they were worn out with hard-
ship, drew near the land, the sailors,
making believe something else, let down
the boat, and attempted to make their
escape, leaving the ship's crew and pas-
sengers to perish; and the apostle de-
clared, "Except these abide in the ship,
ye cannot be saved." The boat itself
would have been swamped, and the sail-
ors would have perished; and for lack
of the sailors to manage the ship the
crew would have perished. All would
have gone to the bottom together.

There are some men in the ship of
state that are fools enough to jump over-
board to verify their declaration, "Any
change is better than this."

4. Nor has any man a right to take
his line of duty from considerations aris-
ing from weariness and impatience.
Neither of these considerations is manly
or patriotic or Christian. I hear Christ
saying to every one, "What, could ye
not watch with me one hour?" For
four years we have borne the storm, and
we have almost weathered it; and is
this the time, when the clouds are grow-
ing thin, when the blue is beginning to
shine out, when fair weather is just be-
yond, for men to give up to weariness,
to discouragement? You may have
suffered, you may have been tried; but
is not the integrity of this great nation,
and the glorious future that awaits it,
worth all that you have suffered? And
by-and-by, when the clarion sounds; by
and-by, when the unsevered banner is
lifted up in every state; by-and-by,
when once more this government is re-
cognized, and stands in all its majesty
and freedom, will not you rejoice that
you were counted worthy to suffer some-
thing for the sake of so great a consum-
mation? Cast not away, therefore, the
confidence which ye have. There is
great reward in patience.

You pour dishonor, should you now
turn back from your confidence and your
faith, upon every one who was incited
to go into the army. We hear an ar-
mistice proposed for disgraceful pur-
poses—for the sake of an unrighteous peace.
Now, my soul abhors those men that
will dishonor the grave of every soldier
that has fallen in the conflict, and that
will make every man that is lame here-
after ashamed of his crippled condition;
and I honor those men that propose to
hold the government up, and maintain
this conflict until this nation is victori-
ous over rebellion and secession and
slavery, so that every man that has died
shall have in his grave a memorial of
honor for those that survive him, and so
that every man that limps shall carry
his wounds as more honorable than
epaulets and stars, and medals, as marks
of heroism in the noblest cause that can
embark man's enthusiasm. [Applause.]

Let your hearts clap, if you please,
and not until you come to that point
where the stones would cry out if silence
were kept do you clap. I know you
could have held in a little longer.

On the other hand, the following are
a few obvious rules and principles which
should guide your decisions and your
actions in determining what your duty
is. You are soon to cast that vote
which has in it the decision of ages.

1. You should act politically for the
safety and integrity of the whole nation,
and not for any temporary convenience
of any part of it. Does not this approve
itself to your judgement? You are to
determine what side you shall take, and
what vote you shall cast, with reference
to the welfare of the whole country in
all periods of time, and not with refer-
ence to the excitement, the clamor, or
the party interests of any section.

2. You should embrace, and apply
those great and settled principles on
which our laws were first founded, and
by which they have thriven. You are

not at liberty to follow your whims or
caprices. You are bound to take sides.
You are bound to guide yourselves by
some canons. And I ask, Are there
any canons that can determine a man's
duty in this regard which are wiser, and
nobler and more sensible than those
principles on which national law, insti-
tution, and government were founded?
When you have found them, follow them,
and apply them. We must go back to
Revolutionary ideas; to those truths by
which our fathers combatted the throne,
and laid the foundations of this govern-
ment. Whatever conforms to those
principles must be preserved at all haz-
ards; whatever is destructive of those
principles must be overcome at all haz-
ards. It is the work of principle; then
to which you are called.

3. Your conduct should be deter-
mined in harmony with the best tenden-
cies of the age in which you live. That is
but saying that you should move in co-
incidence with God's providence. You
are bound to know the signs of the
times. When God is calling Russia to
march in the direction of larger liberty
and better civilization; when God in
calling the Central nations of Europe,
and the Western nations of Europe, to
enlarge the sphere of the common
people, to inspire intelligence among
them, and to make them more dignified;
yea, when God is turning the very isles
of the ocean, and the continents where
the heathen dwell, in the same great
course, it is a shame for you, the chil-
dren of Christian parents, and reared in
a civilized country, to have your face in
the other direction, and to go toward
circumscription of human liberty, to-
ward degradation, oppression, and tyr-
anny. You are bound to go with the an-
alogies of God's providence in the world,
and not against them.

4. You must be supremely guided by
Christian ethics; by that justice and
that humanity of the Gospel of Christ
which has wrought revolution, and refor-
mation, and civilization in every ignor-
ant and oppressed nation of Europe.

Can any man object to such a view as
this? Are not these simple and essen-
tial canons by which men should regu-
late their judgement and their actions?

Let us apply them, then, to the two
platforms and the two platforms which
are before the country.

If we ask, in the first place, What is
the Chicago Platform? I can tell you
in one word what it is. It is expressed
in the single sentence, *We are out, and
we are determined to be in.* There is
not a principle in it deeper than that—
not one. Not one word is there in it
against rebellion; not one hearty word
against secession; not one earnest word
against national dismemberment; not
one word against slavery, the sovereign
cause and source of all our woes. For
all that it says, you would never know
that there was a doctrine of human
rights, or that that doctrine was in per-
il. If I had entered the councils where
Wickliffe, and Bramlett, and Wood, and
Vallandigham, and Long, and Seymour
conferred, and were manufacturing the
Platform on which they were to place
their candidates, and had said to them,
"Gentlemen, let me propose to you some
principles that shall shape your con-
duct; you are bound to be guided by
the original principles of human rights,
which were the foundation of our gov-
ernment, and to act in harmony with the
philanthropic and progressive tenden-
cies of the age, of God's providence,
of the law of Christ, and of the Golden
Rule," do you believe those saints would
have consented to be governed by those
principles? [Laughter.] What must
be the fact, when you involuntarily
laugh at the very question? Or, if I
had gone into the street where the
crowd were cheering the most infamous
sentiments of disunion, treason, and
Northern revolution against the govern-
ment, and said to them, "Gentlemen,
you must determine your political ac-
tion, and lay the platform of your party,
upon the old principles of the natural
rights of men, the rights of liberty and
the pursuit of happiness, you must con-
form it to Christian ethics," do you not
believe that they would have cried out,
like their progenitors of old, "Away
with him! away with him!"

On the other hand, can any man doubt,
if he turns to the platform that was laid
down at Baltimore, that it was the real
and legitimate successor of the old De-
claration of Independence, of the old
colonial doctrines of the men that fash-
ioned our institutions, and that were our
political and patriotic fathers, as well as
our fathers by blood?

Take those two platforms and read
them. Look at the base negotiations of

the one, and the absolute, perpendicular,
bright, shining statements of the other.

See how the one lifts itself up so high
that the very light of God's sun shines
in glory on its head, declaring men's
rights, emancipation, government, na-
tionality, and the maintenance of war
till law shall be established; while the
other sneaks out of every such declara-
tion, and only declares against the gov-
ernment, against the army, and against
everything but a treacherous peace.

The one is in sympathy with all that is
patriotic in the North; the other is in
sympathy with all that is rebellious in
the South. The one is so glorious that
to sit on it and obey the dictates of
manhood is to be enthroned higher than
any king on earth; the other is so low
that to sit on that dooms a man to be
claimed by all Southern villains, and
the devil that inspired every one of
them.

Let us, then, next, make a statement
more at large of the questions at issue.
Having laid before you some considera-
tions which should guide your spirits,
let me say that this is a struggle for na-
tional life—for one government, as op-
posed to a disruption of the Union, and
a division of its contents. Disguise it
as you may, this is the issue. The parties
inevitably take opposite sides. You
go for national life and unity, or you
go against them. You cannot help your-
selves. There is something higher than
human volition. There is a nature of
things, a logic of events, a compulsory
current; and if you go in one direction,
you go for national life and national in-
tegrity, whereas, if you go in the other
direction, you go for governmental dis-
solution. A man may take a car at
Boston, and say, "I am going to New
York," and yet, if the car that he takes
is bound to Portland and Bangor, though
he may say, "I think I am going to
New York; I am sure I am," he will
go to Portland, and not to New York.
And if a man takes the cars toward dis-
union and secession and slavery, he may
say, "I am patriotic, and I am a friend
to the government," but he is an enemy
to the government, and is wanting in
patriotism, notwithstanding. I know
not to what extent you may deceive
yourselves; but I know, and every clear-
sighted man knows, where you will land.

You are bound to take the right train,
and you are bound to have sense enough
to find out which is the right train.
Now, are you prepared deliberately to
plunge this great nation into the abyss
of conflicting notions? Are you willing
from any grudge, from any idea of econ-
omy, from any weariness of the struggle,
from any motive whatever, to take this
great and glorious nation and rent it
asunder, and cast its fragments into
that future where there will be turmoil
ever-beginning and never-ending?

And now I say to every young man
that shall cast the first vote in his life-
time, God signals your entrance upon
political life by an opportunity that does
not occur once in a thousand years to
man or nation. Your first vote will be
one of those votes that will decide
whether this nation is to be a nation
fair and proportioned and victorious, or
whether it shall be like a vast rod of
iron shattered into a thousand fragments.

It is no small thing to be permitted,
so small a power as a vote, to determine
such a question as that. But it is not a
small power. Men with votes in their
hand are more powerful than Louis Na-
poleon on the throne.

I could ask nothing better than, stand-
ing in my dying hour in the very pres-
ence of my God, who gave me life, and
in the very front of that day that is to
determine eternal life, to be permitted
to deposit the vote which it is your
privilege and mine to cast at the ensu-
ing election for the preservation of this
Government. I would fear nothing, if
I were to go to the other world directly
from the casting of that ballot, putting
into it all my Christian hope for this
nation, and all my love for it. Beyond
all peradventure, methinks I could rise
and confront my Judge as well from the
fulfillment of this duty of the hour and
of the age, as from the performance of
any other Christian act. Make this a
day-of-judgement matter, every one of
you. It is not a time for party heat, in
the sense of passion; it is not a time
for partisan zeal. It is a time for men
to be men; it is a time for citizens to
be patriotic; it is a time for Christian
principles and Christian motives to ac-
tuate every man. See where govern-
ment goes, see where order goes, see
where liberty goes, see where justice
goes, and be found there. But, if you
will not be found there, oh, do not let
your patriarchs and leaders be such in-

maculate men as Fernando Wood and
Vallandigham, eminent for patriotic
service, uncorrupt men, virtuous men,
liberal-minded men, disinterested men!

The men that animated the work of con-
structing the Opposition Platform—are
these the men that you will entrust with
the destinies and liberties of your coun-
try? Was Judas the one to whom the
sacred things of the disciple band should
have been entrusted? He carried the
bag, and it was the inspiration of the
bag that led him to betray his Master;
and the men that animated the councils
of the Opposition are men whose history
in the main has not been such as to
lead you to entrust either the bag or
the Constitution to their care and keep-
ing.

I am firm in the faith that God means
better things for us than that we should
be swallowed up in the whale's belly for
three or four days. I believe that God
means for us in these threatening aus-
pices only that trial of our faith which
shall vindicate it, and bring us out more
victorious than ever yet we have been
in all this struggle. And then again
shall be seen that which took place on
the formation of the present Govern-
ment. For I read that, when Boston
was beleaguered, when her ports were
shut, and when the armies were gather-
ing in New England, from that very
ground where the battle now rages con-
voys of provisions were sent. Virginia,
to feed the mouths of patriotic citizens,
from beyond the Blue Ridge, and from
the Shenandoah Valley, poured forth
corn and meat. It went to Fredericks-
burg, and thence it was conveyed to
Boston, to supply the wants of the strug-
gling people there. Virginia, when the
National Government was being found-
ed, stood by its defenders in their trial.
From that region that is now laid waste
and over which the storm of war rages
with its greatest fury, the patriots of
the East derived needed sustenance.
And the time will come when we shall
send back corn for their mouths, and oil
and wine for their wounds; and the
voice of Liberty shall be heard in all
that State of noble ancestry. And when
the cannon has done its roar, and there
is no more rattling of musketry, and the
old torn flag shall be rolled up and laid
away as a memorial of honor, and the
new flag shall once more float over
Richmond, and Charleston, and Savan-
nah, and Mobile, and in every degener-
ate State, and slavery shall be destroy-
ed, and every cause of oppression shall
be removed, and every cause of home-
genity shall be established, then we
will enjoy a tranquillity such as has never
been experienced in this land.

I shall speak on the Blue Ridge yet,
and in Alabama, and in Georgia, as
never could I with safety for my life.
Slavery, that great red dragon, stood
and said, "You shall not open your
mouth here." But slavery shall die,
and free men shall speak in the South,
and I mean to be one of them. And
you and I will yet see this nation dis-
enthralled and lifted into grandeur that
will put to shame our enemies and hat-
ers, and will rejoice those that love
liberty, and human rights, and the cause
of God.

And when that day shall come, do not
hang your head, and say, "I was cajoled
to vote the wrong way." When that
day shall come, let it be yours to gather
your children about you and say, "God
gave me the privilege of voting for this
consummation." If you go on the plat-
form that looks toward the establish-
ment of our institutions, and the main-
tenance of the Union in all its integrity,
you will be proud of it, and your chil-
dren will be proud of it; but if you go
on the other platform, let me tell you,
you will be so ashamed of it—if you are
capable of shame—that you will not
dare to look your fellow-citizens in the
face, and your children will be so
ashamed of it that they will lie to con-
ceal it. Be wise in time. Foresee
which way right is going; foresee
which way justice and liberty and safe-
ty are going; and go that way, and God
will go with you, and shield you, and
honor you, and at last take you where
the film shall be wiped away from your
eyes, where mistakes shall be no more
possible, and where all the good of both
sides shall be gathered, while the wick-
ed are cast off and destroyed.

A housemaid in the country,
boasting of her industrious habits, said
that on a certain occasion she arose at
four, made a fire, put on the kettle, pre-
pared breakfast, and made all the beds,
before a single soul was up in the
house.