

its mighty pulsations. It is for this reason that, long before the convention met, the popular instinct had plainly indicated you as its candidate, and the convention therefore merely recorded the popular will. Your character and career prove your unswerving fidelity to the cardinal principles of American liberty and of the American Constitution. In the name of that liberty and Constitution, sir, we earnestly request your acceptance of this nomination, reverently commending our beloved country and you, its Chief Magistrate, with all its brave sons who, on sea and land, are faithfully defending the good old American cause of equal rights, to the blessing of Almighty God.

In accepting the nomination the President observed the same wise rule of brevity which he had followed four years before. He made but one specific reference to any subject of discussion. While he accepted the resolution in regard to the supplanting of republican government upon the Western continent, he gave the convention and the country distinctly to understand that he stood by the action already adopted by himself and the Secretary of State.

There might be misunderstanding [he said] were I not to say that the position of the Government in relation to the action of France in Mexico, as assumed through the State Department and indorsed by the convention among the measures and acts of the Executive, will be faithfully maintained so long as the state of facts shall leave that position pertinent and applicable.

THE WADE-DAVIS MANIFESTO.

In his message to Congress of the 8th of December, 1863, Mr. Lincoln gave expression to his ideas on the subject of reconstruction more fully and clearly than ever before. He appended to that message a proclamation of the same date guaranteeing a full pardon to all who had been implicated in the rebellion, with certain specified exceptions, on the condition of taking and maintaining an oath to support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder; to abide by and support all acts of Congress and proclamations of the President made during the rebellion with reference to slaves, so long and so far as not repealed, modified, or held void by Congress or by decision of the Supreme Court. The exceptions to this general amnesty were of those who, having held places of honor and trust under the Government of the United States, had betrayed this trust and entered the service of the Confederacy, and of those who had been guilty of treatment of colored troops not justified by the laws of war. The proclamation further promised that when in any of the States in rebellion a number of citizens equal to one-tenth of the voters in the year 1860 should



HENRY WINTER DAVIS.
(AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY POLLOCK.)

reestablish a State government republican in form, and not contravening the oath above mentioned, that such should be recognized as the true government of the State, and should receive the benefits of the constitutional provision that "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and, on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence." The President also engaged by this proclamation not to object to any provision which might be adopted by such State governments in relation to the freed people of the States which should recognize and declare their permanent freedom and provide for their education, "and which may yet be consistent, as a temporary arrangement, with their present condition as a laboring, landless, and homeless class." He suggested that in reconstructing the loyal State governments, the names, the boundaries, the subdivisions, the constitutions, and the general codes of laws of the States should be preserved. He stated distinctly that his proclamation had no reference to States where the loyal State governments had all the while been maintained; he took care to make it clear that the respective Houses, and not the Executive, had the constitutional power to decide whether members sent to Congress from any State should be admitted to seats; and he concluded by saying:

This proclamation is intended to present the people of the States wherein the national authority has been suspended, and loyal State governments have been subverted, a mode in and by which the national authority and loyal State governments may be reestablished within said States, or in any of them. And while the mode presented is the

best the Executive can suggest, with his present impressions, it must not be understood that no other possible mode would be acceptable.¹

The message contained an unusually forcible and luminous expression of the principles embraced in the proclamation. The President referred to the dark and doubtful days which followed the announcement of the policy of emancipation and of the employment of black soldiers; the gradual justification of those acts by the successes which the national arms had since achieved; of the change of the public spirit of the border States in favor of emancipation; the enlistment of black soldiers, and their efficient and creditable behavior in arms; the absence of any tendency to servile insurrection or to violence and cruelty among the negroes; the sensible improvement in the public opinion of Europe and of America. He then explained the purpose and spirit of his proclamation. Nothing had been attempted beyond what was amply justified by the Constitution; the form of an oath had been given, but no man was coerced to take it; the Constitution authorized the Executive to grant or withhold a pardon at his own absolute discretion, and this includes the power to grant on terms, as is fully established by judicial authority. He therefore referred to the provision of the Constitution guaranteeing to the States a republican form of government as providing precisely for the case now under treatment; where the element within a State favorable to republican government in the Union might "be too feeble for an opposite and hostile element external to or even within the State."

An attempt [said the President] to guaranty and protect a revived State government, constructed in whole or in preponderating part from the very element against whose hostility and violence it is to be protected, is simply absurd. There must be a test by which to separate the opposing elements, so as to build only from the sound; and that test is a sufficiently liberal one which accepts as sound whoever will make a sworn recantation of his former unsoundness.

In justification of his requiring in the oath of amnesty a submission to and support of the antislavery laws and proclamations, he said:

Those laws and proclamations were enacted and put forth for the purpose of aiding in the suppression of the rebellion. To give them their fullest effects, there had to be a pledge for their maintenance.

¹ In some instances this proclamation was misunderstood by generals and commanders of departments, so that prisoners of war were allowed on their voluntary application to take the amnesty oath. This was not the President's intention, and would have led to serious embarrassment in the matter of the exchange of prisoners.

He therefore, on the 26th of March, 1864, issued a supplementary proclamation declaring that the pro-

clamation applied only to those persons who, being yet at large and free from any arrest, confinement, or duress, should voluntarily come forward and take the said oath with the purpose of restoring peace and establishing the national authority; and that persons excluded from the amnesty offered in the proclamation might apply to the President for clemency, like all other offenders, and that their application would receive due consideration.

The President called attention to the fact that this part of the oath is subject to the modifying and abrogating power of legislation and supreme judicial decision; that the whole purpose and spirit of the proclamation is permissive and not mandatory.

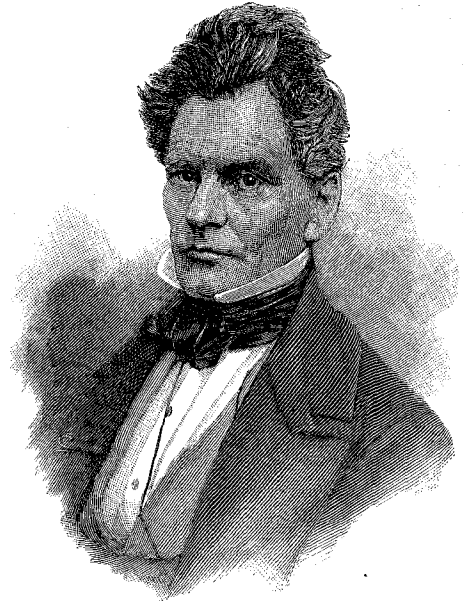
The proposed acquiescence [he said] of the National Executive in any reasonable temporary State arrangement for the freed people is made with the view of possibly modifying the confusion and destitution which must at best attend all classes by a total revolution of labor throughout whole States. It is hoped that the already deeply afflicted people in those States may be somewhat more ready to give up the cause of their affliction if, to this extent, this vital matter be left to themselves, while no power of the National Executive to prevent an abuse is abridged by the proposition.

He had taken the utmost pains to avoid the danger of committal on points which could be more safely left to further developments. "Saying that on certain terms certain classes will be pardoned with rights restored, it is not said that other classes or other terms will never be included; saying that reconstruction will be accepted if presented in a specified way, it is not said it will never be accepted in any other way." The President expressed his profound congratulation at the movement towards emancipation by the several States, and urged once more upon Congress the importance of aiding these steps to the great consummation.

It is rare that so important a state paper has been received with such unanimous tokens of enthusiastic adhesion. However the leading Republicans in Congress may have been led later in the session to differ with the President, there was apparently no voice of discord raised on the day the message was read to both Houses. For a moment all factions in Congress seemed to be of one mind. One who spent the morning on the floor of Congress wrote on the same day: "Men acted as though the millennium had come. Chandler

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was delighted, Sumner was joyous, apparently forgetting for the moment his doctrine of State suicide,¹ while at the other political pole Dixon and Reverdy Johnson said the message was highly satisfactory."² Henry Wilson said to the President's secretary: "He has struck another great blow. Tell him for me, God bless him." The effect was similar in the House of Representatives. Mr. Boutwell, who represented the extreme antislavery element of New England, said: "It is a very able and shrewd paper. It has great points of popularity, and it is right." Lovejoy, the leading abolitionist of the West, seemed to see on the mountain the feet of one bringing good tidings. "I shall live," he said, "to see slavery ended in America." Garfield gave his unreserved approval; Kellogg of Michigan went shouting about the lobby: "The President is the only man. There is none like him in the world. He sees more widely and more clearly than any of us." Mr. Henry T. Blow, the radical member from St. Louis (who six months later was denouncing Mr. Lincoln as a traitor to freedom), said: "God bless old Abe! I am one of the radicals who have always believed in him." Mr. Greeley, who was on the floor of the House, went so far as to say the message was "devilish good." The Executive Mansion was filled all day by a rush of congressmen, congratulating the President and assuring him of their support in his wise and humane policy. The conservatives and radicals vied with each other in claiming that the message represented their own views of the crisis. Mr. Judd of Illinois said to the President: "The opinion of people who read your message to-day is, that on that platform two of your ministers must walk the plank—Blair and Bates." To which the President answered: "Both of these men acquiesced in it without objection; the only member of the Cabinet who objected was Mr. Chase." For a moment the most prejudiced Democrats found little to say against the message; they called it "very ingenious and cunning, admirably calculated to deceive." This reception of the message was extremely pleasing to the President. A solution of the most important problem of the time which conservatives like Dixon and Reverdy Johnson thoroughly approved, and to which Mr. Sumner made no objection, was of course a source of profound gratification. He took it as a proof of what he had often said, that there was no essential contest between loyal men on this subject if they would consider it reasonably. He said in conversation on the 10th of December: "The only



BENJAMIN F. WADE.
(FROM A DAGUERRETYPE.)

question is, Who constitute the State? When that is decided, the solution of subsequent questions is easy."³ He wrote in his original draft of the message that he considered "the discussion as to whether a State had been at any time out of the Union as vain and profitless. We know they were, we trust they shall be, in the Union. It does not greatly matter whether in the meantime they shall be considered to have been in or out." But afterwards, considering that the Constitution empowered him to grant protection to States "in the Union," he saw that it would not answer to admit that the States had at any time been out of it; he erased that sentence as possibly suggestive of evil. He preferred, he said, "to stand firmly based on the Constitution rather than to work in the air." He was specially gratified by reports which came to him of the adhesion of the Missourians in Congress to his view.

I know [he said] these radical men have in them the stuff which must save the state and on which we must mainly rely. They are absolutely incorrosive by the virus of secession. It cannot touch or taint them; while the conservatives, in casting about for votes to carry through their plans, are attempting to affiliate with those whose record is not clear. If one side must be crushed out and the other cherished, there cannot be any doubt which side we must choose as fuller of hope for the future; but just there [he continued] is where their wrong begins. They insist that I shall hold and treat Governor Gamble and his supporters, men appointed by the loyal people of Missouri as representatives of Missouri loyalty, and who have done their whole duty in the war faithfully and promptly, who when they have disagreed with me have been silent and

¹ See resolutions introduced in Senate Feb. 11, 1862.

² J. H., Diary.

³ J. H., Diary.

kept about the good work — that I shall treat these men as copperheads and enemies of the Government. This is simply monstrous.

For the first few days there was no hint of any hostile feeling in Congress. There was, in fact, no just reason why the legislative body should regard its prerogative as invaded. The President had not only kept clearly within his constitutional powers, but his action had been expressly authorized by Congress. The act of July 17, 1862, had provided that the President might thereafter at any time, by proclamation, extend pardon and amnesty to persons participating in the rebellion, "with such exceptions and on such conditions as he might deem expedient for the public welfare." Of course a general amnesty required general conditions; and the most important of these was one which should provide for the protection of the freedmen who had been liberated by the war.

It soon enough appeared, however, that the millennium had not arrived; that in a Congress composed of men of such positive convictions and vehement character there were many who would not submit permanently to the leadership of any man, least of all to that of one so gentle, so reasonable, so devoid of malice as the President. Mr. Henry Winter Davis at once moved that that part of the message relating to reconstruction should be referred to a special committee, of which he was made chairman, and on the 15th of February he reported "a bill to guarantee to certain States whose governments have been usurped or overthrown a republican form of government." Mr. Davis was a man of too much integrity and elevation of character to allow the imputation that his action on public matters was dictated entirely by personal feeling or prejudice; but at the same time it cannot be denied that he maintained towards the President from beginning to end of his administration an attitude of consistent hostility. This was a source of chagrin and disappointment to Mr. Lincoln. He came to Washington with a high opinion of the ability and the character of Mr. Davis, and expected to maintain with him relations of intimate friendship. He was cousin to one of the President's closest friends in Illinois, Judge David Davis, and his attitude in the Congress which preceded the rebellion was such as to arouse in the mind of Mr. Lincoln the highest admiration and regard. But the selection of Mr. Blair of Maryland as a member of the Cabinet estranged the sympathies of Mr. Davis and his friends, and the breach thus made between him and the Administration was never healed, though the President did all in his power to heal it. In the spring of 1863 Mr. Davis, assuming that the President might be inclined to favor unduly the conservative candidate in the election for

the next Congress, sought an interview with him, the result of which the President placed in writing in a letter dated March 18:

There will be in the new House of Representatives, as there were in the old, some members openly opposing the war, some supporting it unconditionally, and some supporting it with "buts" and "ifs" and "ands." They will divide on the organization of the House — on the election of a speaker. As you ask my opinion, I give it, that the supporters of the war should send no man to Congress who will not pledge himself to go into caucus with the unconditional supporters of the war, and to abide the action of such caucus and vote for the person therein nominated for speaker. Let the friends of the Government first save the Government, and then administer it to their own liking.

Mr. Davis answered:

Your favor of the 18th is all that could be desired, and will greatly aid us in bringing our friends to a conclusion such as the interests of the country require.

In spite of all the efforts which the President made to be on friendly terms with Mr. Davis, the difference between them constantly widened. Mr. Davis grew continually more confirmed in his attitude of hostility to every proposition of the President. He became one of the most severe and least generous critics of the Administration in Congress. He came at last to consider the President as unworthy of even respectful treatment; and Mr. Seward, in the midst of his energetic and aggressive campaign against European unfriendliness, was continually attacked by him as a truckler to foreign powers and little less than a traitor to his country. The President, however, was a man so persistently and incorrigibly just, that even in the face of this provocation he never lost his high opinion of Mr. Davis's ability nor his confidence in his inherent good intentions. He refused, in spite of the solicitations of most of his personal friends in Maryland, to discriminate against the faction headed by Mr. Davis in making appointments to office in that State; and when, during an important campaign, a deputation of prominent supporters of the Administration in Maryland came to Washington to denounce Mr. Davis for his outspoken hostility to the President, saying that such a course, if it continued unchecked, would lose Mr. Lincoln the electoral vote of the State, he replied:

I understood that Mr. Davis is doing all in his power to secure the success of the emancipation ticket in Maryland. If he does this, I care nothing about the electoral vote.

In the preamble to his bill Mr. Davis expressed, with his habitual boldness and lucidity, his fundamental thesis that the rebellious States were out of the Union.

Whereas [he said], the so-called Confederate States are a public enemy, waging an unjust war, whose injustice is so glaring that they have no right to claim the mitigation of the extreme rights of war which are accorded by modern usage to an enemy who has the right to consider the war a just one; and,

Whereas, none of the States which, by a regularly recorded majority of its citizens, have joined the so-called Southern Confederacy can be considered and treated as entitled to be represented in Congress or to take any part in the political government of the Union.

This seemed to Congress too trenchant a solution of a constitutional knot which was puzzling the best minds of the commonwealth, and the preamble was rejected; but the spirit of it breathed in every section of the bill. Mr. Davis's design was to put a stop to the work which the President had already begun in Tennessee and Louisiana, and to prevent the extension of that policy to other Southern States. The bill authorized the appointment of a provisional governor in each of the States in rebellion, and provided that, after the military resistance to the United States should have been suppressed and the people sufficiently returned to their obedience to the Constitution and laws, the white male citizens of the State should be enrolled, and when a majority of them should have taken the oath of allegiance the loyal people of the State should be entitled to elect delegates to a convention to reestablish a State government. The convention was required to insert in the constitution three provisions: First, to prevent prominent civil or military officers of the Confederates to vote for or to be members of the legislature or governor; second, that involuntary servitude is forever prohibited, and the freedom of all persons guaranteed in said States; third, no debt, State or Confederate, created by or under the sanction of the usurping power shall be recognized or paid by the State. Upon the adoption of the constitution by the convention, and its ratification by the electors of the State, the provisional government shall so certify to the President, who, after obtaining the assent of Congress, shall by proclamation recognize the government so established, and none other, as the constitutional government of the State; and from the date of such recognition, and not before, congressmen and Presidential electors may be elected in such State. Pending the reorganization, the provisional governor shall enforce the laws of the Union and of the State before rebellion. Another section of the bill emancipated all slaves in those States, with their posterity, and made it the duty of the United States courts to discharge them on habeas corpus if restrained of their liberty on pretense of any claim to service or

labor as slaves, and to inflict a penalty of fine or imprisonment upon the persons claiming them. Another section declared any person hereafter holding any important office, civil or military, in the rebel service not to be a citizen of the United States.

This bill was supported by Mr. Davis in a speech of extraordinary energy. Without hesitation he declared it a test and standard of antislavery orthodoxy; he asserted boldly that Congress, and Congress alone, had the power to revive the reign of law in all that territory which through rebellion had put itself outside of the law. "Until," he said, "Congress recognizes a State government organized under its auspices, there is no government in the rebel States except the authority of Congress." The duty is imposed on Congress to administer civil government until the people shall, under its guidance, submit to the Constitution of the United States, and, under the laws which it shall impose and on the conditions Congress may require, reorganize a republican government for themselves and Congress shall recognize that government. He declared there was no indication which came from the South, from the darkness of that bottomless pit, that there was a willingness to accept any terms that even the Democrats were willing to offer; he believed that no beginning of legal and orderly government could be made till military opposition was absolutely annihilated; that there were only three ways of bringing about a reorganization of civil governments. One was to remove the cause of the war by an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, prohibiting slavery everywhere within its limits: that, he said, "goes to the root of the matter, and should consecrate the nation's triumph"; but this measure he thought involved infinite difficulty and delay. Though it met his hearty approval, it was not a remedy for the evils to be dealt with. The next plan he considered was that of the President's amnesty proclamation. This he denounced as utterly lacking in all the guarantees required:

If, in any manner [he said], by the toleration of martial law, lately proclaimed the fundamental law, under the dictation of any military authority, or under the prescriptions of a provost-marshal, something in the form of a government shall be presented, represented to rest on the votes of one-tenth of the population, the President will recognize that, provided it does not contravene the proclamation of freedom and the laws of Congress.

Having dismissed both of these plans with brief censure, he then made a powerful plea for the bill he had reported. He called upon Congress to take the responsibility of saying:

In the face of those who clamor for speedy recognition of governments tolerating slavery, that the

safety of the people of the United States is the supreme law; that their will is the supreme rule of law, and that we are authorized to pronounce their will on this subject; take the responsibility to say that we will revise the judgments of our ancestors; that we have experience written in blood which they had not; that we find now, what they darkly doubted, that slavery is really, radically inconsistent with the permanence of republican governments, and that being charged by the supreme law of the land on our conscience and judgment to guarantee, that is, to continue, maintain, and enforce, if it exists, to institute and restore when overthrown, republican governments throughout the broad limits of the Republic, we will weed out every element of their policy which we think incompatible with its permanence and endurance.

The bill was extensively debated. It was not opposed to any extent by the Republicans of the House; the Democrats were left to make a purely partisan opposition to it. The President declined to exercise any influence on the debate, and the bill was passed by a vote of seventy-four to sixty-six. It was called up in the Senate by Mr. Wade of Ohio, who, in supporting it, followed very much the same line of argument as that adopted by Mr. Davis in the House. Mr. B. Gratz Brown of Missouri, believing that as the session was drawing near its close there was no time to discuss a measure of such transcendent importance, offered an amendment simply forbidding the States in insurrection to cast any vote for electors of President or Vice-President of the United States, or to elect members of Congress until the insurrection in such State was suppressed or abandoned, and its inhabitants had returned to their obedience to the Government of the United States; such returning to obedience being declared by proclamation of the President, issued by virtue of an act of Congress hereafter to be passed authorizing the same. The amendment of Mr. Brown was adopted by a bare majority, seventeen voting in favor of it and sixteen against it. Mr. Sumner tried to have the Proclamation of Emancipation adopted and enacted as a statute of the United States, but this proposition was lost by a considerable majority. The House declined to concur in the amendment of the Senate and asked for a committee of conference, in which the Senate receded from its amendment and the bill went to the President for his approval in the closing moments of the session.

Congress was to adjourn at noon on the Fourth of July; the President was in his room at the Capitol signing bills, which were laid before him as they were brought from the two Houses. When this important bill was placed before him he laid it aside and went on with the other work of the moment. Several prominent members entered in a state of intense anxiety over the fate of the bill. Mr. Sumner and Mr. Bout-

well, while their nervousness was evident, refrained from any comment. Mr. Chandler, who was unabashed in any mortal presence, roundly asked the President if he intended to sign the bill.¹ The President replied: "This bill has been placed before me a few moments before Congress adjourns. It is a matter of too much importance to be swallowed in that way." "If it is vetoed," cried Mr. Chandler, "it will damage us fearfully in the North-west. The important point is that one prohibiting slavery in the reconstructed States." Mr. Lincoln said: "That is the point on which I doubt the authority of Congress to act." "It is no more than you have done yourself," said the senator. The President answered: "I conceive that I may in an emergency do things on military grounds which cannot be done constitutionally by Congress." Mr. Chandler, expressing his deep chagrin, went out, and the President, addressing the members of the Cabinet who were seated with him, said: "I do not see how any of us now can deny and contradict what we have always said, that Congress has no constitutional power over slavery in the States." Mr. Fessenden expressed his entire agreement with this view.

I have even had my doubts [he said] as to the constitutional efficacy of your own decree of emancipation, in such cases where it has not been carried into effect by the actual advance of the army.

The President said:

This bill and the position of these gentlemen seem to me, in asserting that the insurrectionary States are no longer in the Union, to make the fatal admission that States, whenever they please, may of their own motion dissolve their connection with the Union. Now we cannot survive that admission, I am convinced. If that be true, I am not President; these gentlemen are not Congress. I have laboriously endeavored to avoid that question ever since it first began to be mooted, and thus to avoid confusion and disturbance in our own councils. It was to obviate this question that I earnestly favored the movement for an amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery, which passed the Senate and failed in the House. I thought it much better, if it were possible, to restore the Union without the necessity of a violent quarrel among its friends as to whether certain States have been in or out of the Union during the war—a merely metaphysical question, and one unnecessary to be forced into discussion.

Although every member of the Cabinet agreed with the President, when, a few minutes later, he entered his carriage to go home, he foresaw the importance of the step he had resolved to take and its possibly disastrous consequences to himself. When some one said to him that the threats made by the extreme radicals had no foundation, and that people

¹ J. H., Diary.

would not bolt their ticket on a question of metaphysics, he answered: "If they choose to make a point upon this, I do not doubt that they can do harm. They have never been friendly to me. At all events, I must keep some consciousness of being somewhere near right. I must keep some standard or principle fixed within myself."

After the fullest deliberation the President remained by his first impression that the bill was too rigid and too restrictive in its provisions to accomplish the work desired. He had all his life hated formulas in government, and he believed that the will of an intelligent people, acting freely under democratic institutions, could best give shape to the special machinery under which it was to be governed; and, in the wide variety of circumstances and conditions prevailing throughout the South, he held it unwise for either Congress or himself to prescribe any fixed and formal method by which the several States should resume their practical legal relations with the Union. Thinking in this way, and feeling himself unable to accept the bill of Congress as the last word of reconstruction, and yet unwilling to reject whatever of practical good might be accomplished by it, he resolved, a few days after Congress had adjourned, to remit the matter to the people themselves and to allow them their choice of all the methods proposed of returning to their allegiance. He issued, on the 8th of July, a proclamation giving a copy of the bill of Congress, reciting the circumstances under which it was passed, and going on to say:

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known that while I am—as I was in December last, when by proclamation I propounded a plan of restoration—unprepared by a formal approval of this bill to be inflexibly committed to any single plan of restoration, and while I am also unprepared to declare that the free State constitutions and governments, already adopted and installed in Arkansas and Louisiana, shall be set aside and held for naught, thereby repelling and discouraging the loyal citizens who have set up the same as to further effort, or to declare a constitutional competency in Congress to abolish slavery in the States, but am at the same time sincerely hoping and expecting that a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery throughout the nation may be adopted, nevertheless, I am fully satisfied with the system for restoration contained in the bill as one very proper for the loyal people of any State choosing to adopt it; and that I am, and at all times shall be, prepared to give the executive aid and assistance to any such people, so soon as military resistance to the United States shall have been suppressed in any such State, and the people thereof shall have sufficiently returned to their obedience to the Constitution and the laws of the United States, in which cases military governors will be appointed, with directions to proceed according to the bill.

The refusal of the President to sign the reconstruction bill caused a great effervescence at the adjournment of Congress. Mr. Chase, who had resigned from the Cabinet, made this entry in his diary:

The President pocketed the great bill providing for the reorganization of the rebel States as loyal States. He did not venture to veto, and so put it in his pocket. It was a condemnation of his amnesty proclamation and of his general policy of reconstruction, rejecting the idea of possible reconstruction with slavery, which neither the President nor his chief advisers have, in my opinion, abandoned.

This entry, made by Mr. Chase in the bitterness of his anger, places the basest construction upon the President's action; but this sentiment was shared by not a few of those who claimed the title of extreme radicals in Congress. Mr. Sumner reported a feeling of intense indignation against the President. Two days later the ex-Secretary gleefully reported, on the authority of Senator Pomeroy, that there was great dissatisfaction with Mr. Lincoln, which had been much exasperated by the pocketing of the reconstruction bill.

When Mr. Lincoln, disregarding precedents, and acting on his lifelong rule of taking the people into his confidence, issued his proclamation of the 8th of July, it was received by each division of the loyal people of the country as might have been expected. The great mass of Republican voters, who cared little for the metaphysics of the case, accepted his proclamation, as they had accepted that issued six months before, as the wisest and most practicable method of handling the question; but among those already hostile to the President, and those whose devotion to the cause of freedom was so ardent as to make them look upon him as lukewarm, the exasperation which was already excited increased. The indignation of Mr. Davis and Mr. Wade at seeing their work of the last session thus brought to nothing could not be restrained. Mr. Davis prepared, and both of them signed and published on the 5th of August, a manifesto, the most vigorous in attack that was ever directed against the President from his own party during his term. The grim beginning of this document, which is addressed "To the Supporters of the Government," is in these terms:

We have read without surprise, but not without indignation, the proclamation of the President of the 8th of July, 1864. The supporters of the Administration are responsible to the country for its conduct; and it is their right and duty to check the encroachments of the Executive on the authority of Congress, and to require it to confine itself to its proper sphere.

The paper went on to narrate the history of the reconstruction bill, and to claim that its treatment indicated a persistent though un-

avowed purpose of the President to defeat the will of the people by the Executive perversion of the Constitution. They insinuated that only the lowest personal motives could have dictated this action :

The President [they said], by preventing this bill from becoming a law, holds the electoral votes of the rebel States at the dictation of his personal ambition. . . . If electors for President be allowed to be chosen in either of those States, a sinister light will be cast on the motives which induced the President to "hold for naught" the will of Congress rather than his governments in Louisiana and Arkansas.

They ridiculed the President's earnestly expressed hope that the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery might be adopted :

We curiously inquire on what his expectation rests, after the vote of the House of Representatives at the recent session and in the face of the political complexion of more than enough of the States to prevent the possibility of its adoption within any reasonable time; and why he did not indulge his sincere hopes with so large an installment of the blessing as his approval of the bill would have secured?

When we consider that only a few months elapsed before this beneficent amendment was adopted, we can form some idea of the comparative political sagacity of Mr. Lincoln and his critics. The fact that the President gave the bill of Congress his approval as a very proper plan for the loyal people of any States choosing to adopt it seemed to infuriate the authors of the bill: they say, "A more studied outrage on the legislative authority of the people has never been perpetrated." At the close of a long review of the President's proclamation, in which every sentence came in for its share of censure or of ridicule, this manifesto concluded :

Such are the fruits of this rash and fatal act of the President—a blow at the friends of his Administration, at the rights of humanity, and at the principles of republican government. The President has greatly presumed on the forbearance which the supporters of his Administration have so long practiced, in view of the arduous conflict in which we are engaged, and the reckless ferocity of our political opponents. But he must understand that our support is of a cause and not of a man; that the authority of Congress is paramount and must be respected; that the whole body of the Union men of Congress will not submit to be impeached by him of rash and unconstitutional legislation; and if he wishes our support he must confine himself to his executive duties—to obey and to execute, not make the laws—to suppress by arms armed rebellion, and leave political reorganization to Congress. If the supporters of the Government fail to insist on this they become responsible for the usurpations which they fail to rebuke, and are justly liable to the indignation of the people whose rights and

security, committed to their keeping, they sacrifice. Let them consider the remedy of these usurpations, and, having found it, fearlessly execute it.

HORACE GREELEY'S PEACE MISSION.

NOT least among the troubles and the vexations of the summer of 1864 was the constant criticism of sincere Republicans who were impatient at what they considered the slow progress of the war, and irritated at the deliberation with which Mr. Lincoln weighed every important act before decision. Besides this, a feeling of discouragement had taken possession of some of the more excitable spirits, which induced them to give ready hospitality to any suggestions of peace. Foremost among these was Horace Greeley, who in personal interviews, in private letters, and in the columns of the "Tribune" repeatedly placed before the President, with that vigor of expression in which he was unrivaled, the complaints and the discontents of a considerable body of devoted, if not altogether reasonable, Union men. The attitude of benevolent criticism which he was known to sustain towards the Administration naturally drew around him a certain number of adventurers and busybodies, who fluttered between the two great parties, and were glad to occupy the attention of prominent men on either side with schemes whose only real object was some slight gain or questionable notoriety for themselves. A person who called himself "William Cornell Jewett of Colorado" had gained some sort of intimacy with Mr. Greeley by alleging relations with eminent Northern and Southern statesmen. He was one of those newspaper laughing-stocks who come gradually to be known and talked about. He wrote interminable letters of advice to Mr. Lincoln and to Jefferson Davis, which were never read nor answered, but which, printed with humorous comment in the "New York Herald," were taken seriously by the indiscriminating, and even quoted and discussed in the London papers. He wrote to Mr. Greeley in the early part of July from Niagara Falls, and appears to have convinced the latter that he was an authorized intermediary from the Confederate authorities to make propositions for peace. He wrote that he had just left George N. Sanders of Kentucky on the Canada side.

I am authorized to state to you [he continued], for our use only, not the public, that two ambassadors of Davis & Co. are now in Canada with full and complete powers for a peace, and Mr. Sanders requests that you come on immediately to me at Cataract House to have a private interview; or, if you will send the President's protection for him and two friends, they will come and meet you. He says the