

ship, to rational, instituted civil liberty, and to universal Christian brotherhood.

Reverently, piously, in hopeful patriotism, we spread this banner on the sky, as of old the bow was planted on the cloud, and with solemn fervor beseech God to look upon it and make it the memorial of an everlasting covenant and decree that never again on this fair land shall a deluge of blood prevail.

Why need any eye turn from this spectacle? Are there not associations which, overleaping the recent past, carry us back to times when over North and South this flag was honored alike by all? In all our colonial days we were one, in the long Revolutionary struggle, and in the scores of prosperous years succeeding. When the passage of the Stamp Act in 1765 aroused the colonies, it was Gadsden of South Carolina that cried with prescient enthusiasm: "We stand on the broad common ground of those natural rights that we all feel and know as men. There ought to be no New England man, no New Yorker, known on this continent, but all of us," said he, "Americans!" That was the voice of South Carolina. That shall be the voice of South Carolina. Faint is the echo; but it is coming. We now hear it sighing sadly through the pines; but it shall yet break upon the shore—no North, no West, no South, but one United States of America.

There is scarcely a man born in the South who has lifted his hand against this banner but had a father who would have died for it. Is memory dead? Is there no historic pride? Has a fatal fury struck blindness or hate into eyes that used to look kindly toward each other; that read the same Bible; that hung over the same historic pages of our national glory; that studied the same constitution?

Let this uplifting bring back all of the past that was good, but leave in darkness all that was bad.

It was never before so wholly unspotted; so clear of all wrong; so purely and simply the sign of justice and liberty. Did I say that we brought back the same banner that you bore away, noble and heroic sir? It is not the same. It is more and better than it was. The land is free from slavery since that banner fell.

When God would prepare Moses for emancipation he overthrew his first steps and drove him for forty years to brood in the wilderness. When our flag came down, four years it lay brooding in darkness. It cried to the Lord, "Wherefore am I deposed?" Then arose before it a vision of its sin. It had strengthened the strong and forgotten the weak. It proclaimed liberty, but trod upon slaves.

In that seclusion it dedicated itself to liberty. Behold, to-day it fulfils its vows. When it went down four million people had no flag. To-day it rises and four million people cry out, "Behold our flag!" Hark! they murmur. It is the gospel that they recite in sacred words: "It is a gospel to the poor, it heals our broken hearts, it preaches deliverance to captives, it gives sight to the blind, it sets at liberty them that are bruised." Rise up, then, glorious gospel banner and roll out these messages of God. Tell the air that not a spot now sullies thy whiteness. Thy red is not the blush of shame, but the flush of joy. Tell the dews that wash thee that thou art pure as they. Say to the night that thy stars lead toward the morning; and to the morning that a brighter day arises with healing in its wings. And then, oh! glorious flag, bid the sun pour light on all thy folds with double brightness whilst thou art bearing around and round the world the solemn joy—a race set free! a nation redeemed!

The mighty hand of government, made strong in war by the favor of the God of Battles, spreads wide to-day the ban-



ner of liberty that went down in darkness, that arose in light; and there it streams, like the sun above it, neither parcelled out nor monopolized, but flooding the air with light for all mankind. Ye scattered and broken, ye wounded and dying, bitten by the fiery serpents of oppression everywhere in all the world, look upon this sign, lifted up, and live! And ye homeless and houseless slaves, look and ye are free! At length you too have part and lot in this glorious ensign that broods with impartial love over small and great, the poor and the strong, the bond and the free.

In this solemn hour let us pray for the quick coming of reconciliation and happiness under this common flag!

But we must build again from the foundations in all these now free southern States. No cheap exhortations "to forgetfulness of the past, to restore all things as they were," will do. God does not stretch out his hand, as he has for four dreadful years, that men may easily forget the might of his terrible acts. Restore things as they were? What! the alienations and jealousies, the discords and contentions, and the causes of them? No. In that solemn sacrifice on which a nation has offered up for its sins so many precious victims, loved and lamented, let our sins and mistakes be consumed utterly and forever.

No, never again shall things be restored as before the war. It is written in God's decree, "Old things are passed away." That new earth in which dwelleth righteousness draws near.

Things as they were! Who has an omnipotent hand to restore a million dead, slain in battle, or wasted by sickness, or dying of grief, broken-hearted? Who has omniscience to search for the scattered ones? Who shall restore the lost to broken families? Who shall bring back the squandered treasure, the years of industry wasted, and convince you that

four years of guilty rebellion and cruel war are no more than dirt upon the hand, which a moment's washing removes and leaves the hand clean as before? Such a war reaches down to the very vitals of society.

Emerging from such a prolonged rebellion, he is blind who tells you that the State, by a mere amnesty and benevolence of government, can be put again, by a simple decree, in its old place. It would not be honest, it would not be kind or fraternal, for me to pretend that Southern revolution against the Union has not reacted and wrought revolution in the southern States themselves, and inaugurated a new dispensation.

Society here is like a broken loom, and the piece which rebellion put in, and was weaving, has been cut and every thread broken. You must put in new warp and new woof, and weaving anew as the fabric slowly unwinds, we shall see in it no Gorgon figures, no hideous grotesques of the old barbarism, but the figures of liberty, vines, and golden grains, framing in the heads of Justice, Love, and Liberty!

The august convention of 1787 framed the constitution with this memorable preamble:

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain this constitution for the United States of America."

Again, in the awful convention of war the people of the United States, for the very ends just recited, have debated, settled, and ordained certain fundamental truths which must henceforth be accepted and obeyed. Nor is any State or any individual wise who shall disregard them. They are to civil



affairs what the natural laws are to health,—indispensable conditions of peace and happiness.

What are the ordinances given by the people, speaking out of fire and darkness of war, with authority inspired by that same God who gave the law from Sinai amid thunders and trumpet voices?

1. That these United States shall be one and indivisible.
2. That States have not absolute sovereignty and have no right to dismember the republic.
3. That universal liberty is indispensable to republican government, and that slavery shall be utterly and forever abolished!

Such are the results of war. These are the best fruits of the war. They are worth all they have cost. They are foundations of peace. They will secure benefits to all nations as well as to ours.

Our highest wisdom and duty is to accept the facts as the decrees of God. We are exhorted to forget all that has happened. Yes, the wrath, the conflict, the cruelty, but not those overruling decrees of God which this war has pronounced. As solemnly as on Mount Sinai, God says, "Remember! Remember! Hear it to-day." Under this sun, under that bright child of the sun, our banner, with the eyes of this nation and of the world upon us, we repeat the syllables of God's providence and recite the solemn decrees: No more disunion! No more secession! No more slavery!

Why did this civil war begin? We do not wonder that European statesmen failed to comprehend this conflict, and that foreign philanthropists were shocked at a murderous war that seemed to have had no moral origin, but, like the brutal fights of beasts of prey, to have sprung from ferocious animalism. This great nation,—filling all profitable lati-

tudes, cradled between two oceans, with inexhaustible resources, with riches increasing in an unparalleled ratio by agriculture, by manufactures, by commerce, with schools and churches, with books and newspapers thick as leaves in our own forests, with institutions sprung from the people and peculiarly adapted to their genius; a nation not sluggish but active, used to excitement, practical in political wisdom, and accustomed to self-government, and all its vast outlying parts held together by a federal government mild in temper, gentle in administration, and beneficent in results,—seemed to have been formed for peace.

All at once, in this hemisphere of happiness and hope, there came drooping clouds with fiery bolts full of death and desolation. At a cannon-shot upon this fort, the nation, as if it had been a trained army lying on its arms awaiting a signal, rose up and began a war of defence which, for awfulness, rises into the first rank of eminence. The front of battle, going with the sun, was twelve hundred miles long; and the depth, measured along a meridian, was a thousand miles. In this vast area more than two million men, first and last, for four years, have, in skirmish, fight, and battle, met in more than a thousand conflicts; while a coast and river line not less than four thousand miles in length has swarmed with fleets freighted with artillery. The very industry of the country seemed to have been touched by some infernal wand, and, with sudden wheel, changed its front from peace to war. The anvils of the land beat like drums. As out of the ooze emerge monsters, so from our mines and foundries uprose new and strange iron-clad machines of war.

And so, in a nation of peaceful habits, without external provocation, there arose such a storm of war as blackened the whole horizon and hemisphere. What wonder that for-



aign observers stood amazed at this fanatical fury that seemed without divine guidance and inspired wholly with infernal frenzy?

The explosion was sudden, but the train had long been laid. We must consider the condition of Southern society if we would understand the mystery of this iniquity. Society in the South resolves itself into three divisions, more sharply distinguished than in any other part of the nation. At the base is the laboring class, made up of slaves. Next is the middle class, made up of traders, small farmers, and poor men. The lower edge of this class touches the slave and the upper edge reaches up to the third and ruling class. This class was a small minority in numbers, but in practical ability they had centred in their hands the whole government of the South and had mainly governed the country.

Upon this polished, cultured, exceedingly capable, and wholly unprincipled class rests the whole burden of this war. Forced up by the bottom-heat of slavery, the ruling class in all the disloyal States arrogated to themselves a superiority not compatible with republican equality or with just morals. They claimed a right of pre-eminence. An evil prophet arose who trained these wild and luxuriant shoots of ambition to the shapely form of a political philosophy.

By its re-agents they precipitated labor to the bottom of society and left at the top what they thought to be a clarified fluid. In their political economy labor was to be owned by capital. In their theory of government a few were to rule the many. They boldly avowed, not the fact alone that under all forms of government the few rule the many, but their right and duty to do so. Set free from the necessity of labor, they conceived a contempt for those who felt its wholesome regimen. Believing themselves foreordained to supremacy,

they regarded the popular vote, when it failed to register their wishes, as an intrusion and a nuisance. They were born in a garden, and popular liberty, like freshets over-swelling their banks, covered their dainty walks and flowers with the slime and mud of democratic votes.

When with shrewd observation they saw the growth of the popular element in the northern States, they instinctively took in the inevitable events. It must be controlled or cut off from a nation governed by gentlemen! Their power to control that popular element became less every decade; and they prepared secretly and earnestly, with wide conference and mutual connivance, to separate the South from the North.

We are to distinguish between the pretended and the real causes of this war.

To inflame and unite the great middle class of the South who had no interest in separation and no business with war, they alleged grievances that never existed and employed arguments which they, better than all other men, knew to be specious and false. Slavery itself was cared for only as an instrument of power or of excitement. They had unalterably fixed their eyes upon empire, and all was good which would secure that, and bad which hindered it.

Thus the ruling class of the South,—an aristocracy as intense, proud, and inflexible as ever existed; not limited either by customs or institutions; not recognized and adjusted in the regular order of society, playing a reciprocal part in its machinery, but secret, disowning its own existence, baptized with the ostentatious name of democracy; obsequious to the people for the sake of governing them; this nameless, lurking aristocracy, that ran in the blood of society like a rash not yet come to the skin; this political tapeworm that produced nothing but lay coiled in the body, feeding on its nutriment, and



holding the whole structure to be but a servant set up to nourish it,—this aristocracy of the plantation with firm and deliberate resolve brought on the war that they might cut the land in two, and clearing themselves from incorrigible free society, set up a sterner, statelier empire where slaves worked that gentlemen might live at ease. Nor can there be any doubt that though, at first, they meant to erect the form of republican government this was but a device; a step necessary to the securing of that power by which they should be able to change the whole economy of society.

That they never dreamed of such a war we may well believe. That they would have accepted it, though twice as bloody, if only thus they could rule, none can doubt that knows the temper of these worst men of modern society. But they miscalculated. They understood the people of the South; but they were totally incapable of understanding the character of the great working classes of the loyal States. That industry which is the foundation of independence, and so of equity, they stigmatized as stupid drudgery or as mean avarice. That general intelligence and independence of thought which schools for the common people and newspapers breed they reviled as the incitement of unsettled zeal running easily into fanaticism.

They more thoroughly misunderstood the profound sentiment of loyalty and the deep love of country which pervaded the common people. If those who knew them best had never suspected the depth and power of that loyalty and love which threw them into an agony of grief when the flag was here humbled, how should they conceive of it who were wholly disjoined from them in sympathy? The whole land rose up, you remember, when the flag came down, as if inspired unconsciously by the breath of the Almighty and the power of

Omnipotence. It was as when one pierces the banks of the Mississippi for a rivulet and the whole raging stream plunges through with headlong course. There they calculated and miscalculated.

And more than all, they miscalculated the bravery of men who have been trained under law; who are civilized and hate personal brawls; who are so protected by society as to have dismissed all thought of self-defence; the whole force of whose life is turned to peaceful pursuits. These arrogant conspirators against government, with Chinese vanity, believed that they could blow away the self-respecting citizens as chaff from the battle-field. Few of them are left alive to ponder their mistake.

Here, then, are the roots of this civil war. It was not a quarrel of wild beasts; it was an inflection of the strife of ages between power and right, between ambition and equity. An armed band of pestilent conspirators sought the nation's life. Her children rose up and fought at every door and room and hall to thrust out the murderers and save the house and household. It was not legitimately a war between the common people of the North and South. The war was set on by the ruling class, the aristocratic conspirators, of the South. They suborned the common people with lies, with sophistries, with cruel deceits and slanders, to fight for secret objects which they abhorred and against interests as dear to them as their own lives.

I charge the whole guilt of this war upon the ambitious, educated, plotting political leaders of the South. They have shed this ocean of blood. They have desolated the South. They have poured poverty through all her towns and cities. They have bewildered the imagination of the people with phantasms and led them to believe that they were fighting for