

every step of his career the most generous recognition of his services and abilities. He knew and was glad that the march of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand Greeks, which had been the inspiration of armies for over two thousand years, would be replaced, for the next two thousand, by the resistless tramp of Sherman and his army.

Grant was always famous among his soldiers for the rare quality of courage in the presence of danger. But the country is indebted to him for a higher faculty, which met and averted a peril of the gravest character.

One of the most extraordinary and singular men who ever filled a great place was Andrew Johnson. He was a human paradox of conflicting qualities, great and small, generous and mean, bigoted and broad, patriotic and partisan. He loved his country with a passionate devotion, but would have destroyed it to rebuild it upon his own model. Born a "poor white," hating with the intensity of wounded pride the better and dominant class, in a delirium of revenge and vindictiveness he shouted, "Treason is odious and must be punished," and by drumhead court-martial or summary process at law would have executed every one of the Confederate generals and left behind a vendetta to disturb the peace of uncounted generations.

Between their execution and this madman appears the calm and conquering force of General Grant, with the declaration: "My parole is the honor of the nation." When, swinging to the other extreme, and in the exercise of doubtful power, the President would have reversed the results of the war by reorganizing a government upon the lines which he thought best, he was again met by this same determined purpose, exclaiming: "My bayonets will again be the salvation of the nation."

General Grant will live in history as the greatest soldier of his time, but it will never be claimed for him that he was the best of Presidents. No man, however remarkable his endowments, could fill that position with supreme ability unless trained and educated for the task. He said to a well-known publicist in the last days of his second term: "You have criticised severely my administration in your newspaper; in some cases you were right, in others wrong. I ask this of you, in fairness and justice, that in summing up the results of my presidency you will only say that General Grant, having had no preparation for civil office, performed its duties conscientiously and according to the best of his ability."

The times of Reconstruction presented problems which required the highest qualities of statesmanship and business. In the unfamiliarity with the business of a great commercial nation General Grant did not, however, differ much from most of the men who have been successful or defeated candidates for the presidency of the United States. It is a notable fact that though we are the only purely industrial nation in the world, we have never selected our rulers from among the great business men of the country. And the conditions and prejudices of success present insuperable obstacles to such a choice.

Yet Grant's administration will live in history for two acts of supreme importance. When the delirium of fiat money would have involved the nation in bankruptcy, his great name and fame alone served to win the victory for honest money and to save the credit and prosperity of the Republic. He, the first soldier of his time, gave the seal of his great authority to the settlement of international disputes by arbitration.