The Political Duties of Christians.

A

REPORT,

ADOPTED AT THE SPRING MEETING

OF THE

SOUTH MIDDLESEX CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES,

APRIL 18, 1848.

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Extract from Minutes of Conference.

"The Report on the Political Duties of Christians was read and accepted. After an animated and protracted discussion it was adopted and ordered to be printed."

SAMUEL HUNT, Scribe.

Note.—The Appendix has been inserted on the responsibility of the Committee of Publication. Of course the Conference are not responsible for it.
REPORT.

At the last meeting of Conference, a Committee was appointed to take into consideration the following motion, adopted at that time:

"In view of the political subserviency of Christians to party and mere political demagogues, as especially evinced in the history of the Mexican War:

"Moved, That this Conference appoint a Committee to report at next meeting any measures, that seem to be advisable, to enable Christians to regain their appropriate influence as citizens."

Two points are particularly brought to view in this action of Conference. 1. The declared fact, that Christians have proved themselves too subservient to the behests of mere party dictation, even to a guilty disregard of the dictates of Truth and Duty. 2. The inquiry, how that subserviency can be prevented, and they be made to assert their rights and occupy their appropriate position. Both points are of the greatest practical importance, and should receive at our hands the most careful and candid scrutiny. The distinguishing characteristic of the American Citizen are, his right of suffrage, and, of consequence, the responsibility for its proper use. If, for any cause whatever, for personal quiet, party prejudice, or political considerations, he fails to employ his power aright and as the principles of his religious profession demand, then the fact should be made to appear—the reason of that fact—while, if possible, the way should be pointed out by which he may be emancipated from his guilty and
degrading thraldom. In our present examination, we propose to touch upon points, as suggested by this threefold division.

I.—As evidence of the fact, that Christians have been thus wickedly subservient to the mere behests of party discipline, we refer to what has become painfully and historically true, that, in all the essential elements of legislation, they have exerted little or no moral power upon the political action of our government or the respective parties to which they have belonged. We can, indeed, devote but a single paragraph or two to what would require a volume for a full examination.

We assert, then, with the most entire and painful confidence, that no more practically infidel have been the governments of Europe, for the last fifty years, than has been our own. We may be called unpatriotic for the assertion, but with the scroll of our history unrolled before us, we can come to no other conclusion. A simple allusion to some of the leading facts of our governmental policy is all we have space for.

First and fundamentally wrong has been our legislation upon the subject of Slavery. Commencing with a lie in our right hand—that man could hold property in man—and incorporating the spirit of oppression with the very Constitution that proclaims its own design to be, “to promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty,” we have never returned to the path of integrity and simple honesty. As political expediency was then deemed paramount to the claims of Right and Humanity, so has it ever been considered since. As the Slave Power has urged its exorbitant demands for the strengthening and per-
petuating of this terrible institution, the nation has done little more than accede and do its dreadful bidding. We have abrogated the right of trial by jury, in the case of the suspected runaway, be he black or white; made the "Louisiana Purchase," at the cost of fifteen millions of dollars and without the sanction of the Constitution, that we might have territory from which Slave States might be carved at leisure; by the "Missouri Compromise," we extended the same blighting curse over millions of fertile acres in the great Valley of the West; expended forty millions of dollars in the "Florida War," to reclaim the trembling fugitive from oppression, and break up his retreat among the everglades and friendly Seminoles; by the Annexation of Texas, in plain violation of treaty stipulations and the provisions of the Constitution, new territory has been added, equal in extent to two hundred such States as Massachusetts, "calculated and designed by the open declaration of its friends to uphold the interests of Slavery, extend its influence, and secure its permanent duration,"* and leading to the present Mexican War, which has already cost its one hundred millions of dollars, and consigned to their graves at least thirty thousand of our fellow-men. Nor is the end yet. For the alternative is still before us, of its continuance, with all its cost of blood and treasure, or the reception of a Treaty that shall bring in territory, equal in extent to the original thirteen States of our nation, in which Slavery must be permitted, or a struggle ensue that, by its probable violence, will endanger the integrity of the Union.

In pursuance of the same unworthy purpose, and prompted by the same spirit of evil, the nation stands

* J. C. Calhoun.
before the civilized world guilty of the inexpressibly mean and cruel crime of forcibly despoiling a weak and defenceless people of their lands, the imprisonment of their religious teachers, the Christian missionaries of our churches, and finally compelling them to remove from the homes and the graves of their fathers, to a distant wilderness, in order that their lands might be distributed among the Slaveholders of Georgia and Alabama. And, at this present moment, while all the leading governments of Christendom have united in a combination for the suppression of the Slave Trade, the United States of America stands alone, in the blackness of her infamy, refusing to enter into that combination. Indeed, to use the strong language of John Quincy Adams: The preservation, propagation and perpetuation of Slavery [has been] the vital and animating spirit of the national government. Of the fifty-nine years of our government, Slaveholders have occupied the Presidential chair forty-nine years, while Non-Slaveholders have been honored with that high office, by this liberty-loving people, but twelve years and one month.

In relation to the Sabbath the same disregard of right and the principles of Christian morality are to be seen. The mail has always been transported on the Sabbath by United States' authority, while Cabinet councils and Legislative sittings, during the hours of holy time, have been, by no means, of infrequent occurrence.

In a word, in all the substantial features of the legislation of our government for the last half century, there could hardly have been less recognition of God and the claims of His religion. We are aware of the broadness of this assertion. Nor should
we have ventured upon its utterance had we not been prepared to challenge its successful contradiction. The proposition is true, and cannot be gainsaid.

II.—The question now arises: Why is it thus? Why do evangelical Christians exert so little influence upon the politics of the nation? Why, in the estimate of politicians, of the policy of measures or the availability of men, do they so seldom, if ever, take into account the conscience of the nation, as an element of influence, to be both feared and consulted?

Negatively we may say, that it is not from the want of power. Had they been disposed, they might have exerted a paramount influence upon the governmental policy of the nation. Upon the subject of Slavery the Rev. Albert Barnes has recorded this language as an expression of his opinions: "There is no power out of the church that could sustain Slavery an hour, if it were not sustained in it. Not a blow need be struck. Not an unkind word need be uttered. No man's motive need be impugned; no man's proper rights invaded. All that is needful is, for each Christian man and for every Christian church, to stand up in the sacred majesty of such a solemn testimony; to free themselves from all connection with the evil, and utter a calm and deliberate voice to the world, and the work will be done." This opinion has been called in question and its correctness doubted. It must be done however by those, it seems to us, who have never duly estimated the sources of power possessed by professing Christians of the nation. They have the strength of numbers. There are estimated to be in the evangelical churches of our country 3,000,000 members. Of these, there are
500,000 who are voters. If now two or three hundred thousand Slaveholders have been able, against right and humanity, to control the action of our government, should not twice that number of professing Christians, when acting for them, make this influence felt? It is plain that they must. No political party can spare 500,000 votes, or half that number, and hope to succeed. Had the Christians of the nation but used the power they possessed, as the Slaveholders have used theirs, they could, to any desirable extent, have controlled the action of the government. Besides, the sources of moral influence and power are great. The evangelical sects have nearly all the colleges and other seminaries of learning, of the land, under their control; nearly every chair, of instruction and authority, being filled by those professing godliness. They have compiled nearly all the school books and have a far more than equal share in the management of our common schools. Then, they have all the power of religion, so far as it acts purely and legitimately, on their side. They have 30,000 ministers, who have access to the ear and conscience of the nation a hundred times a year. And there is a Religious Press, with its weekly, monthly and quarterly issues, scattered broad-cast over the land, entering our Christian families, conducted with much ability and thus capable of exerting a tremendous influence in favor of those positions which are deemed worthy of its advocacy. Standing at such avenues of influence, who can gainsay our position that the Christians of our land have had the power to exert a paramount influence on the politics of the nation?

In speaking however more positively, we would note, as one of the causes of this unhappy result, an
erroneous conception of the nature and extent of our social responsibility. The individual who first spoke of "organic sins," gave, if not utterance to a truth, at least "a local habitation and a name" to a deep and widely diffused sentiment in the community. The undoubted truth, that no one can escape, with impunity, as an individual, from the sins, with their consequences, which he commits as a citizen, is far from being admitted by the American people. Of course few have ever felt the responsibility that inheres to political relations and conduct; while the great mass have seemed to adopt the principle, that there is a kind of moral alchemy in a political organization which can abstract from acts, in themselves wrong, their moral turpitude and make them blameless in doing, as a government or party, what, as individuals, they would have looked upon with the utmost horror. Thus, many a good man has supported an administration that drove hundreds and thousands of families from the homes of their fathers to a far distant and trackless wilderness, who would have revolted at the very thought of driving a poor and feeble man from his patrimonial homestead, merely because he had the power. And many have adhered to their party organizations for political advantages, although the price of such adherence was well understood to be a silent consent to all the abominations and oppression of Slavery and the Domestic Slave Trade, who would have cut off their right hand before they would have been individually guilty of the excessive meanness and cruelty of breaking up a weak and defenceless family, and selling the father and husband from the wife and mother, and both from the children of their humble but devoted affection.
But, if the action is wrong in the one case why not in the other? And are these men free from responsibility and guilt because they have fallen in with the current notions of the times? That there is wrong in despoiling the poor Cherokee of his lands, and the African of his freedom and domestic comforts, all will admit. At whose door lies the responsibility? The State? The Party? What is the State or the Party but the aggregation of individuals? And what are national acts or party acts but the aggregated acts of the individuals that compose the nation or make up the party? Wrong is wrong, whether committed by an individual, party or nation. Shall we not so decide? Or is the nation going back to the infidel philosophy of Hobbes or Mandeville, to contend that virtue and right are but subjects of legislative enactment, and that moral obligation follows only the behests of courts and the decrees of governments? Men may disagree as to the nature of virtue, so far as to differ on the questions; “whether an action is right because God commands it or God commands it because it is right;” or, “whether a thing is right because it will promote the greatest good or because it agrees with the fitness of things;” and yet, is there not a general agreement among the thinking men of this age, that morality is paramount to all civil law? Do not all admit that “undiscovered theft” is wrong, although it might have been legalized by Spartan laws; and that the exposure of the aged and infirm is a sin against God, although sanctioned by the almost universal practice and sentiment of India? How then can Christian men—who have professedly taken God’s law as their rule of action, that law whose ruling element is love, and which requires of us, that, whether
we eat or drink or whatever we do to do it all to the glory of God—persuade themselves that they are conforming to the spirit of their profession, when, by their votes and party support, they place the sword of power in the hands of men guilty of acts thus repugnant to the voice of humanity or scripture. Georgia could never have pursued her high-handed measures against the Cherokees, had not the then existing national administration supported her in it, and connived at the infamous outrage. Nor could that administration ever had the power, had it not received the votes of men who had professed the religion of universal love. The terrible scenes of the Domestic Slave Trade, so full of anguish and wrong, could never be enacted, only as the inhuman monsters who fatten on the spoils of this infernal traffic, have the authority of the General Government, and are assured that the “bayonets of the North” are ready at their bidding, to quell the first show of resistance on the part of their deeply injured victims. We know it may be said that all this is but in accordance with the solemn guaranties of the Constitution.

Nor will we urge, in answer, the assertion of the civil law, that no man can be bound by a wicked contract, or of the holy law of Revelation, that we ought to obey God rather than man. We will admit that it is all constitutional. What then? The Constitution is not like the laws of the Medes and Persians. It provides for its own amendment; and yet, no such amendment has ever been proposed. No administration has ever come into power which has made such a proposition a part of its political creed. The whole country has been convulsed, from centre to circumference, upon questions of Tariff or Free Trade, Bank
or Sub-Treasury; and yet the question has never been entertained, by the leading parties of the land, of introducing into their respective creeds the principle of opposition to Slavery, in relation to its farther extension, much less to its ultimate extinction. Recently, cases of "resolved" resistance have appeared here and there, in the free States, but, by the leading influences, they have been regarded as mere factious attempts to disturb the internal harmony of the respective parties in which they have appeared. And in truth they do conflict with what has been the settled policy of both, to keep quiet on the subject of Slavery; and, for the sake of retaining their Southern wings, by common consent, to yield to any demand, however exorbitant, however humiliating, and however wicked. And yet the half a million of professedly Christian voters have been distributed between these parties, and they have not only stood by, consenting to this recklessness of principle, but, by their countenance and votes, have added that strength, without which neither party could have maintained its position a year. Could they have so acted, had they regarded themselves as really responsible for their political conduct as for their personal? Did they assent to the assertion of President Wayland, that "a Christian must ask about a political as well as about any other act, the question, Is it right or wrong? And by the answer to that question must he be guided; that, to prefer our own interests, or the interests of party, to that of our country, is treason against that country, and sin against God;" could they have acted so completely without reference to the moral character of the partizan conduct they were instrumental in sustaining. We are fully aware of the standing reply to all this; that by so doing men are
choosing the least of two evils—by raising the obnoxious candidate or party to power they are pursuing the only effectual method of preventing a candidate or party still more exceptionable. Granted: but does it follow that they are right in making this choice? Have those who make this plea ever borne it in mind, that if good here, it would justify a support for any set of men and measures, however vile and disastrous, providing another set still more vile and dangerous could be presented for their suffrages? If this principle be correct, then the Hindoo child is justified for leaving his sick and infirm parent to perish, inasmuch as he has outlived his comfort and usefulness, and it will be the least of two evils to die now, than to live in pain and discomfort for a score of years longer.

The respectable vender of ardent spirits is not so far from the truth, when he urges as a reason for his continuance in the traffic, that it is better for him to do it, under proper restrictions, than for one less respectable and scrupulous to occupy his place. But is it so? Who admits the soundness of such reasoning? Have we no fixed principles in morals? Has virtue nothing distinct and permanent about it? Is utility—and that of the loosest and most intangible kind, as every man happens to think on his own individual responsibility—to be the standard of right action? The generation that has banished Paley from its seminaries of learning, on account of his loose notions of virtue, would do well to review its reasoning before it thus limits its social responsibility.

We are not unaware of the practical difficulties that environ this subject. We know that it may not always be easy to decide when "the least of two evils" becomes too great to be chosen. And yet we feel con-
fident that the Conference needs no argument to admit that it does, when there is an element of wrong implied or incorporated in that evil, the least though it may be. It is never permitted to do evil, that good may come. Indeed, it is the glory of our religion, that it affords us certain fixed principles, adherence to which is not only always right, but always safe—principles by which, when fairly apprehended, we may confidently abide, and leave results with God. It may require patience, candor, wisdom, grace, always to understand and apply those principles; and yet, when fairly understood, there never need be doubt about their application. While the world, like the ancient mariner, creeps timidly along the shore of a short-sighted policy, never daring to lose sight of the headlands of human expediency, it is the Christian's proud prerogative to launch boldly out upon the ocean of life's experience, calm in his serene confidence, that so long as he keeps his eye upon the Compass and Chart of God's Eternal Truth, his interests and the interests of the cause he loves are safe.

Another cause of the little moral power of the church is found in the very prevalent abuse of the spiritual character of true piety. Christians have generally regarded their political relations and rights as beyond the range of their religious duties. They have acquiesced in the confident assertion of the world that Religion is too pure and sacred for the political arena. As a general rule, they have stood aloof from the primary arrangements of their respective parties, absented themselves from the caucus and convention, and submitted, in the votes they cast, to the dictation of self-constituted leaders who make politics a trade, and who look upon the spoils of
office as the reward of their labor. Ministers have generally acquiesced in the sentiment of the community, that party politics, however much of moral principle may be involved in them, should never be alluded to in the pulpit. The same inexorable censorship has demanded a similar acquiescence from the Religious Press, and pronounced all such topics as taboo, although they may be questions on which depend the dearest interests of Humanity or Religion. The Slave has rent the heavens with his cries of agony, as he pointed to the bloody scourge and fetter of his bondage — his family circle invaded by the lust of one and broken up by the avarice of another — to his mind enveloped in pagan darkness; and, in tones of earnest exhortation, implored us to remember him in his bonds, as if bound with him, and take from his cruel master the power which the laws, that we make and can unmake, have placed in his hands to do him this great wrong. The poor Indian, torn from the home of his fathers, has asked us if there was no way in which he could be protected from the cold-hearted rapacity of his spoiler. We heard these appeals — they have gone to the heart — we have made them the subjects of special prayer — but the question of relief has been unfortunately entangled in the meshes of party politics, and with them it has been deemed inexpedient to interfere. With the power in their hands to stay the terrible work of oppression and destruction, Christians — with noble exceptions it is true — have not used that power for such a purpose. Humanity and Christian benevolence have both plead in the most melting tones for their deliverance, but the church has feared to enter the lists of party warfare, lest her sacred garments should
be soiled by the contact, and Religion should be dishonored by the unseemly encounter. Sincerely engaged in the work of promoting the spiritual welfare of the soul, she has felt that this would be departing from her legitimate sphere. Her ministry and religious press have, as a general thing, remained silent — her members have been absorbed in the political parties, who, for political considerations, have consented to these wrongs and outrages; so that while less than 200,000 voting Slaveholders have governed the country by shrewdly using their political power for wrong and oppression, she, with three times that number of voting members, has been little more than a dead letter in the government, merely because she has failed to use the power she possessed.

In all this we believe her to have been radically mistaken. It is a sad abuse of her spiritual character to deem it inconsistent to enter the lists of conflict with the most embittered of her foes and the foes of humanity. At least so do we interpret the Word of God; and such a conclusion do we reach, as we contemplate the examples of prophet and apostle; and of the Great Master himself. True, our religion is a Religion of Faith; and, being primarily spiritual, it can exhibit a vigorous and symmetrical development, only as the heart is kept right with God. And yet we cannot overlook the equally inspired truth that faith, without works, is dead; that Religion requires of its believers to do justly, and love mercy, as well as to walk humbly with their God; to visit the widows and fatherless in their afflictions, as well as to keep themselves unspotted from the world. We remember, too, that it was in no other way that God's covenant people could fast acceptably, than as they loosed the bands
of wickedness, undid the heavy burdens, let the oppressed go free, broke every yoke, dealt bread to the hungry, brought home the outcast, and covered the naked. Nor can we forget the example of Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich—who went about doing good, and who even so shaped his miracles, wrought to attest the divinity of his character and mission, as to relieve the distresses of some child of sorrow and pour the balm of consolation into some wounded heart. And the great apostle, although his whole soul was burning with an unquenchable ardor for the spiritual healing and salvation of his fellow sinners, was ever active in ministering to the poor saints who lacked the creature comforts of their more favored brethren. With such examples from such sources, we cannot resist the conviction, that, while the primary design of the gospel is to cultivate the heart and save the soul, a secondary and by no means unimportant object is to promote the present well-being of the world. Aye, more; we believe that God has so adapted the economy of grace to the circumstances in which we are placed, that the surest and only legitimate method of doing good to our own hearts is, as we have opportunity, to do good unto all men; that no devotions, however fervent or protracted—no reading of the Bible or religious books—no meditation upon sacred topics—can make amends for a neglect of ministering to the necessities of the suffering, the destitute and benighted around us.

If this is so, then the position is incontrovertible, that it is a Christian duty to employ whatever of ability we possess, pecuniary, social, or political, for
those who stand in need of our offices of kindness, and who can be relieved by us. If we have wealth, and a neighbor is destitute, we are bound to supply his wants. If he is sick, and we are near at hand, we are bound to repair to his relief, and minister to his comfort. Is he falsely accused, and we are in possession of evidence that will prove his innocence, does any one doubt that it would be a Christian duty to appear before the Court and give in that testimony? And should we refuse, from a love of quiet, interest, or a pretended desire to cultivate spirituality of heart, would the truly wise excuse us? If then we have political power which will save a fellow man from perpetual bondage and pagan darkness, how can we be guiltless if we do not use it for that purpose? At least, can we be right in permitting the wicked and unprincipled partisan leader to decide for us how we shall use the power thus placed in our hands? Most Christians regard it both a duty and a privilege to vote. But political discussions, and the action of the caucus and the convention, generally decide the character of the legislation which will be adopted by the successful party. Why then should not Christians engage in those discussions, and attend those conventions? If it be said that the associations and companionships of the political arena breathe too much of intrigue and corruption for the Christian to enter them without being tainted, we reply, 1st., So much more necessary is it that Christians should be there to purify that atmosphere. 2d., There is no more intrigue and corruption in the caucus than at the polls—no more in the political world than in the social and commercial world in which Christians move and transact their daily business. If we would
not, in these secular relations, keep company with the fornicators, covetous, extortioners and idolaters of this world, then, as the apostle said to the Corinthian Christians, we must needs go out of the world. The Master himself ate with publicans and sinners, with a far less imperative necessity for so doing, as it now appears to us, than there exists for Christians mingling in the political world. Is there no danger of our forgetting the lesson he thus taught by his own divine example? Is it said again, that Christ and his apostles did not interfere with the political concerns of the nation under whose government they lived? This may be, for the very good reason that they were in no wise responsible for the character of the government, and in no circumstances to have their wishes regarded, had they made them known. They were viewed either with contempt or jealousy, as the filth and offscouring of all things, or as opposed to the then dominant religion of the realm. What could they do to lighten the load of oppression that weighed thus heavily on the poor slaves of their times? How much would Nero have heeded the most eloquent and earnest remonstrances of Paul? They would probably have hastened the martyrdom of his noble prisoner in bonds. Here the circumstances are materially changed. *Every American citizen is a king; and every voter is a ruler, who is required to be just, ruling in the fear of God.* Indeed so far as we can read the rule of duty, the obligation is resting on every Christian voter as much to consult the dictates of justice and mercy in casting his vote, as on the kings and princes of monarchical governments to use their power, under the influence of similar principles. And no more responsible was Nero, for his cruelties,
than are American voters for the cruelties committed by the government of this nation, at least, so far as they have clothed that government with the necessary power, by the votes they have given or have not withheld. With this view of the subject before us we fail to see the force of the argument, which some draw from the non-interference of Christ and his apostles with the blood-stained tyranny of Rome, why American citizens, under a Republic, should not interfere with the affairs of the government they help to support, and of which they form a constituent part.

Is not our position then sustained? Shall we not deem that an abuse of the spiritual character of true piety, when Christians stand aloof from an active participation in the political affairs of the nation, because of any alleged incompatibility between it and the sacredness of their holy calling? Grant, indeed, as it is sometimes asserted, that those Christians who have entered actively into the strife and struggle of political life have suffered in their religious experience, and become less spiritual and consistent. Have there not been obvious reasons for such a result? They have done it not so much to serve their Master as to promote their own selfish interests,—not so much to glorify God as themselves,—not so much to contend with the enemies of truth and righteousness as with partizan opponents in the ignoble conflicts of personal ambition. They have sought distinction not so much by attempting to purify the stream of political life and direct it into the channels of Truth and Integrity as by falling in with the current already formed, and receiving its force and direction from worldly men, acting from the maxims of a purely worldly policy. Is it strange that such men, acting from such motives,
should receive damage to their souls? But is there any ground for such apprehension in the case of those who enter the political arena from merely religious motives? — who go to the convention as they would go to the prayer-meeting, — to the polls as to the monthly concert, not to serve themselves, but their fellow-men — not to gain worldly honor for man, but to get glory to God? Suppose they do come in contact with wicked men, — so did Jesus Christ through his whole mission on earth. Suppose they are compelled to witness intrigue and meet with violence, — so did Paul and Silas, all the early Christians, and the whole company of martyrs, in all ages of the Church. Did their spirituality suffer from such contact or violence? It is not the place the Christian occupies, but his spirit and purpose in being there, that does him either good or harm. The ascetic of the middle ages in his cell, “alone with God and angels,” became a fanatic, while the Reformers of Germany, the Covenanters of Scotland, and the Puritans of England, in stern and sanguinary conflict with the enemies of Truth, gained a vigor and maturity of religious character which Christians now seldom attain. And is it a fanciful or groundless assumption of ours when we say, that if Christians would make their politics a help instead of an injury to their piety, they must infuse more of the latter into the former; and not be afraid to carry their religion into the caucus of their party and to the polls of the nation?

Naturally resulting from the abovementioned causes or elements of influence is another, and the last we shall notice. We refer to the failure of Christians to make their influence felt in their respective parties. In a government like ours, in which majorities must
rule, it is obvious that there must be parties. They must not only be expected and endured, but depended upon. While the same reasons that obtain for their existence at all, render it necessary that there should be but two; at least, as a general rule. And such, with a few unimportant exceptions, has been the history of parties in this country; so that to the one or the other of the two great leading parties of the nation have the Christians of our churches belonged; and had they but exerted their legitimate influence there, they would have brought an element of incalculable value to their respective organizations.

Now, it is in the successful party that are originated and perfected those measures which decide the character of the legislation of the government. Although parties are unknown to the Constitution, such a result is inevitable. The long debates, that consume the time and use up the energies of Congress, confessedly exert very little influence there, and are regarded as of little value, only as they act indirectly on the people themselves. They change no votes, they promote no good cause, nor can they avert any "foredoomed conclusion" that may have been adopted as an article of the party creed. One day's debate in the Baltimore Convention of 1844, exerted more influence and fixed more irreversibly the legislation and history of our government for the last three years, than all the debates in Congress upon the Annexation of Texas and Mexican War from that day to this. The moment it was resolved to make the former a party question, the thing was settled, so far as the party was concerned, or the government, if that party should prove successful. We refer to it now, as a historical fact, and not for the purpose of expressing an opinion. It illus-
trates, however, very forcibly, the principle to which we would call attention. If such are the facts in the case, then, it becomes an inevitable deduction, that if the good men of the nation would exert a healthful influence upon the policy of the government, they must do it mainly in the respective parties to which they belong.

There are two ways in which we may make our influence felt here. 1. By attending the caucus and convention, and there, by vote and argument, contending for those men and measures which the interests of truth and virtue require. 2. By distinctly promulgating those principles which we deem of essential importance, and which must be regarded by those parties who would count on our support. As these are vital points, they may require a moment's farther consideration. In relation, therefore, to the caucus and convention, it is most evident, if what has been said be true, that here is the place to exert most successfully and efficiently the right kind of influence in favor of the right kind of measures. Here measures are in their forming state, and, of course, are dependent upon the kind of influence exerted for the exact shape they shall assume. Here the vote and voice of a good man must, other things being equal, be as efficient as those of the bad man. A change of a very few votes in the Baltimore Convention would have changed the entire character of their action — presented different men and measures to the support of the party — at least warded off the annexation of Texas, and saved the country from the cost and guilt of the Mexican War. Ought not then good men to aim to be where one vote would exert more influence than ten thousand votes at the polls? Nor should we, in our estimate,
forget the power of the committee room. Each of the great parties have their standing committees, for the Nation, State, County, and Town. To these committees are entrusted the responsible task of taking a survey of the ground and marking out the work for the party to do and sanction by their votes, in the ballot-box. Of course, their opinions and plans are of great weight with the party. If good men are there, and will exert their power in the right direction, their efforts will not be without their influence in behalf of truth and right.

But all efforts may fail of securing the right kind of men and measures for the adoption and nomination of the party. Good men have one resource left. They can withhold their votes, and cast them for other and opposing candidates. Votes are the sinews of party warfare, the only material of ultimate party strength. Politicians are always careful to pursue that course which will endanger the fewest votes. It is an element of strength in a party for a body or class of men to declare certain principles, on the adoption of which alone their votes can be counted on. The South has always understood this principle, and, by adhering to it, in the language of Mr. Adams, "a knot of Slaveholders give law and prescribe the policy of the country." Had the friends of Religion, the Sabbath, Temperance, and Freedom, been as decided, their wishes would have been more implicitly consulted, inasmuch as they have had right and conscience on their side, and could have commanded twice the number of votes. But they have never done it; and, of course, as their opinions or wishes did not control their votes, they have been disregarded. Here then we say we find the prevailing cause for the little in-
fluence which Christians have exerted on the policy of the government. They have failed to use their power in the parties to which they have belonged. They have not only left the primary arrangements of the party to the violent and unprincipled managers, who have no other aim than party ascendency and personal aggrandizement, and no rule of action but a mere selfish expedience; but they have failed to indicate any principles or line of policy which must be regarded, if their party support would be secured. And so we have been compelled to witness the humiliating spectacle, at least once a year, of the good men of New England—the members, officers, and ministers of Christian churches—marching up to the polls to "support the regular nominations," although made by irresponsible leaders, who neither fear God nor regard man, and who have as little respect for the Bible as for the Koran.

III.—But what then shall be done? We have pointed out the evils over which we have so much reason to mourn; how shall they be removed? We have described the malady; who shall prescribe the remedy? If what has been said be admitted, it would seem that the train of remark, in which we have indulged, has at least indirectly supplied the appropriate answer to the inquiry. Have Christians been as subservient, as we have intimated, to the mere dictates of unprincipled demagogues and partizan leaders? Has the policy of our government been as infidel as we have asserted? These facts, well comprehended, it would seem, would break the chain which politicians have thrown around the good men of the land, and emancipate them from their degrading thraldom. Has there been, as we have stated, an erroneous concep-
tion of the nature and extent of our social responsibility? Then most surely is it an object, that every good man should have at heart—especially those whose duty and prerogative it is to teach the people knowledge, either through the Press or from the sacred Desk—to have this matter set in a clear and legitimate attitude before the Christian mind of the nation; nor should good men any longer be left to hide themselves behind any rampart of "organic" wrong, as a shield from the responsibility of doing as members of a party or nation what they would not for any consideration do as individuals. And then again, is it true, as we have stated, that much of the evil over which we mourn has resulted from an abuse of the spiritual character of true piety? Then how manifest is it, that that abuse should continue no longer, and evangelical Christianity should be rid of the unfounded imputation of inculcating a "faith without works"—of seeking to secure spirituality of heart without a corresponding morality of life—of tithing the anise, mint and cummin of a speculative theology and at the same time neglecting the weightier matters of the law, judgment and mercy. It was Christianity, boasting of its pure doctrine and saving faith and yet guilty of the grossest injustice and wrong, that gave Voltaire and his school of French Infidelity their most effective weapons against the truth. Christians of this day should take warning and learn wisdom from that drama of darkness and blood. And we are not sure that this does not indicate the peculiar work of our day—to disabuse the Christian mind of a prevalent mistake, and show to all that the religion we preach is literally what it was originally announced to be, "on earth peace and good will to
men"—that the spiritual and the moral are so closely united that the former cannot be successfully cultivated without a faithful exhibition of the latter. And yet once more; is it because Christians have failed of making their influence felt, in their parties, that we have witnessed the impotence of the church in relation to the politics of the country? Then is no conclusion more obvious than that Christians should not longer prove recreant to the trust imposed upon them as citizens of the Republic through the party organizations to which they belong. In a word, the thing which the exigencies of the case seem to demand is to enlighten the minds, quicken the consciences and thus rectify the conduct of the Christians of the land in relation to their political duties. Or to express the same idea more summarily, and in a proposition still more elementary, the great work before us is to rectify public opinion upon the subject of Christian duty in politics. No great advance can be made until this is done; until the common people shall hear gladly the words of truth upon the subject of their political duties and dangers. Help cannot come from those, whom, by a misnomer, we call "Leaders." They have no faith in the wisdom and integrity of the people—whatever they may say to the contrary—and will never forsake the beaten track to political preferment for the sake of any new issues, at least of a moral character,—issues that shall depend for their success upon any change of public sentiment they may hope to secure. They are quick to detect the sentiment, whenever it may be secured by other influences, and they have a wonderful facility in accommodating themselves to it. They seldom create public sentiment; they do but use and represent it. They
more nearly resemble the hangers-on of the camp, who are in at the spoils, after the battle is fought, than those who have led their hosts on to victory. Help must come from the people themselves, and our great work is to be done then. They must be made to apprehend those great principles of practical religion and social responsibility, to which we have referred, in their specific application to their rights and duties as citizens of a free Republic.

The Pulpit must reassert its independence, and boldly declare those truths that the practical relations of the people demand. No longer should it bow to the senseless and wicked clamor of the unprincipled demagogue, and timidly submit to the impudent demand, that, because a question has become involved with the politics of the day, it should therefore be excluded from the sacred desk. Nor should its discussion be confined to vague generalities and admitted truisms, assent to which demands no correspondence of action, but be so expressed — guided by heavenly wisdom — that the hearer shall go from the house of God to the caucus or the polls, well instructed in all that is essential to right action there. We would have "politics preached" so far, and no farther, than is necessary for a purpose like this.

Then again the Religious Press has become a most important engine of moral influence in Christendom. Entering our families as it does upon its quarterly, monthly, and weekly visits, it acts in the two-fold capacity of mentor to instruct by its precepts, and companion to persuade by its friendly intimacy. To be prepared for this responsible position, it should be free and independent. Its attachment to truth and the best interests of man should be far more apparent
than its anxiety to save its southern subscribers or conciliate the favor of metropolitan cliques. What is true and right? should be their inquiry, more than—What is expedient? There is a mass of facts upon the subject of Slavery and the relation of the North to it—upon the subject of the political management of our government—that should be brought to light and spread before the readers of our religious journals. And such an exposé should be entered upon without fear or favor. But to have such a Press, it must be sustained. Editors and publishers feel constrained to provide such a paper as shall be supported. They must bring such wares to market as will sell. If the minions of oppression and the parasites of power are quick to detect and prompt to visit, with remonstrance and withdrawal of patronage, anything that conflicts with their feelings and interests, while the friends of freedom and principle are slow to recognize any recreancy to what they deem true and right, then the favor of the former will be conciliated and the wishes of the latter will be disregarded, and severer strokes will be applied to the reformer than to those who need to be reformed. When Reform shall be found as unyielding as Conservatism, and the friends of righteousness shall be as jealous of its honor and claims as the supporters of the abuses of the day are of them, then it will no longer be true, that all the concessions must be made to the latter and the "rejected articles" chiefly returned to the former. The remedy is with the people. Let them make the demand and bestow their patronage on those most deserving, and we shall have the religious press of the nation in their true position, and leading in the van of all true reform and practical godliness.
And still again, there must be concert of action. There are scattered elements of feeling to be found in all the Northern States, upon the subject we have now been considering, that is now hidden for the want of mode or opportunity of development. There are many who are chagrined and pained at the ignoble attitude in which the American church presents itself, in its relation to the civil government, sighing over the desolations that meet their eye on every side, and looking with longing eyes for deliverance. But they know not where to go or what to do. Equally disgusted with the rabid ultraism on the one hand, that is eager to pull down and which is impotent to build up; and on the other that purblind conservatism, in Church and State, that clings with dogged obstinacy to things as they are, with all their abuses and elements of wrong, they are looking for a more excellent way in which they can make effective their impatience of wrong and their earnest desire of right. For such there should be conference of opinion and concert of action. The subject of our political relations and duties should therefore find a theatre of full and fair discussion in our religious bodies — in our Associations and Conferences — our Presbyteries, Synods, and Assemblies. On the same ground of every other religious duty, it should be entertained in good faith, and receive that candid examination its merits and importance demand. And, what is more important still, there should be Conventions—religious conventions—for the specific purpose of entertaining and deciding upon the civil duties of Christian Citizens. Indeed, in our apprehension, Christians will never take their true position, until as men — not as sects, not as a Christian party in politics, but as men — they meet
together to discuss, as a matter of weighty importance, their relation and their duty to the State.

This, then, is the remedy we propose. Let the Pulpit be true to its trust. Let the Religious Press—the quarterly, monthly, and weekly journals—make the subject of the Christian’s civil duties, in all their various bearings and relations, a prominent topic of candid and able discussion. Let Christians, in their collective capacity, entertain, discuss, and adjudicate the same subjects with a similar spirit and for a similar purpose.

Especially at this moment are there special reasons why Christians should assume their true position and make their influence felt in the politics of the nation. It is a general admission, that we have reached an important era in the history of our country. The strange events of the past few years—the Annexation of Texas—the Mexican War—and the recent Treaty by which so large a portion of territory is to be added to our nation—territory that is to extend the area of freedom or bondage—all these events are giving an entirely new phase to the aspect of our political affairs. This, I believe, is admitted by men of all parties. “The old issues,” said Mr. Giddings, in a recent speech, in Congress,—“between the parties, are lost sight of; they are in fact forgotten. Who now speaks of a protective tariff? Who in this Hall attempts to illustrate its benefits to the free labor of the North? Or who complains of its burdens upon the slave labor of the South? Who now occupies time on the subject of harbor or river improvements? We have no funds for such purposes. . . . No one alludes to a Bank of the United States; and no one complains of a Sub-Treasury; and the division of the funds arising from
the sale of the public lands is not now spoken of. These issues are laid aside. The old organizations are, in a degree, broken up, ... the old lines of demarcation have become obscure and uncertain, and new political associations are gradually forming.” Such testimony from politicians themselves, should not be disregarded by us. The problem now is: In the new combinations to be formed, what shall be the basis on which they shall rest? And who shall decide their shape and purpose? The great question to be decided, probably, by the next presidential contest is now before the country: Shall that vast territory we are about to wrest from Mexico be cursed by Slavery or consecrated to Freedom? Can it be, that the five hundred thousand professedly Christian voters of the nation shall tacitly and quietly leave that great question to be settled by trading politicians, who make personal aggrandizement their end, and subserviency to Southern dictation the essential means for its accomplishment? And shall the questions of future wars and future annexations be left to the decision of the same reckless hands? Already Yucatan is knocking at our doors, and there are no very obscure intimations of the annexation of Cuba, while mention is made of the New Republic of Sierra Madre, as making preparations for admission to our already almost illimitable domain. Shall it be left to the same influences to settle these questions that decided the Annexation of Texas and the Mexican War? or will the Christians of our churches rise, in the majesty of their might, absolve themselves from such base and wicked subservience, and strike for Freedom — freedom for themselves — freedom for the oppressed — and freedom for the cause of Truth and Right.
APPENDIX.

"The benefits of the Constitution of the United States, were the restoration of credit and reputation, to the country — the revival of commerce, navigation, and ship building — the acquisition of the means of discharging the debts of the Revolution, and the protection and encouragement of the infant and drooping manufactures of the country. All this, however, as is now well ascertained, was insufficient to propitiate the rulers of the Southern States to the adoption of the Constitution. What they specially wanted was protection. Protection from the powerful and savage tribes of Indians within their borders, and who were harrassing them with the most terrible of wars — and protection from their own negroes — protection from their insurrections — protection from their escape — protection even to the trade by which they were brought into this country — protection, shall I not blush to say, protection to the very bondage by which they were held. Yes! it cannot be denied — the slave-holding lords of the South presribed, as a condition of their assent to the Constitution, three special provisions to secure the perpetuity of their dominion over their slaves. The first was the immunity for twenty years of preserving the African slave-trade; the second was the stipulation to surrender fugitive slaves — an engagement positively prohibited by the laws of God, delivered from Sinai; and thirdly, the exaction, fatal to the principles of popular representation, of a representation for slaves — for articles of merchandise, under the name of persons.

"Its operation upon the government of the nation is, to establish an artificial majority in the slave representation over that of the free people, in the American Congress, and thereby to make the PRESERVATION, PROPAGATION, AND PERPETUATION OF SLAVERY THE VITAL, AND
ANIMATING SPIRIT OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT."

"In the Articles of Confederation, there was no guaranty for the property of the slaveholder — no double representation of him in the Federal councils — no power of taxation — no stipulation for the recovery of fugitive slaves. But when the powers of government came to be delegated to the Union, the South — that is, South Carolina and Georgia — refused their subscription to the parchment, till it should be saturated with the infection of slavery, which no fumigation could purify, no quarantine could extinguish. The freemen of the North gave way, and the deadly venom of slavery was infused into the Constitution of freedom. Its first consequence has been to invert the first principle of Democracy, that the will of the majority shall rule the land. By means of the double representation, the minority command the whole, and a KNOT OF SLAVEHOLDERS GIVE THE LAW AND PRESCRIBE THE POLICY OF THE COUNTRY." — John Quincy Adams.

"And here I may add, that, in a free government like our own, this manly avowal of our adherence to right, and our opposition to evil, would commonly render a resort to other measures comparatively needless. The good men among us — and under this term I mean to include all men of virtuous sentiments, whether they profess themselves the disciples of Christ or not — have it perfectly in their power, by the calm and decided expression of their moral convictions, to direct the destinies of this nation. There never has existed, and there never can exist, either an administration or a political party, that would dare to trifle with the uttered sentiments of the men of principle in the United States. Were such an act done but once, there would be small temptation to repeat the insult. If you ask me why it is, then, that public wrongs are so frequently done, and the doers of them held scathless, I answer, it is because those sentiments are not uttered. There exists among us a fear of avowing our moral sentiments upon political questions, which seems to me as servile as it is unaccountable. It envelopes society like a poisoned atmosphere. It is invisible and intangible, but every virtuous sentiment that breathes it grows torpid, loses consciousness, gasps feebly, and dies. To this re-
sult every man contributes who withholds the expression of his honest indignation on every occasion of public wrong-doing.

"But the mere expression of our moral sentiments, by no means discharges us from the responsibility which rests upon us as Christian citizens. Our sentiments are worthless, not to say savoring of hypocrisy, unless they lead us to correspondent action. When we believe an act to be wrong, we have no more right to appoint a man to office, who, as we believe, will perform it, than we have to perform it ourselves. For such a man we cannot, with a good conscience, vote. By refusing to vote for such a man, we in part deliver ourselves from the guilt of wrong-doing. But we must go farther. We must not merely have no part in wrong-doing, we must see to it that wrong be not done. We must use all innocent constitutional means to secure the doing of right. We must choose men to represent us whom we believe to be governed by moral principle, who will act in the fear of God, and who will love right and justice and mercy better than personal aggrandizement or political power. By this I do not mean that we should limit our selection to any religious sect, or to the professors of any form of belief. Far from it. All that I claim is that we shall choose men who will represent the moral, as well as the political sentiments of this nation. A virtuous man has certainly a right to demand that his moral feelings be not outraged by the public agent whom he appoints. If we sternly enforce this demand, we ourselves shall be innocent, and the republic will be safe."

"To all this I know it will be answered, there are never more than two political parties, and though with neither can a good man harmonize, yet he must unite with either the one or the other, lest his influence be altogether thrown away. He must therefore become a party to much that is wrong, that thus he may accomplish a probable good. To this objection our reply must be brief. It declares it to be our duty to do wrong for the sake of attaining a purpose, or, in the words of the Apostle, 'to do evil that good may come.' This is its simple and obvious meaning, and we leave it to the condemnation of the Apostle. But besides all this, when we urge such a plea we seem to forget that there is a power in truth and rectitude, which wise men would be wiser, did they duly appreciate. Let the moral principle of this country only find an utterance, and party or-
ganizations would quail before its rebuke. How often have we seen a combination, insignificant in point of numbers, breaking loose from the trammels of party, and uniting in the support of a single principle, hold the balance of power between contending parties, and wield the destinies of either at its will. Let virtuous men then unite on the ground of universal moral principle, and the tyranny of party will be crushed. Were the virtuous men of this country to carry their moral sentiments into practice, and act alone rather than participate in the doing of wrong, all parties would from necessity submit to their authority, and the acts of the nation would become a true exponent of the moral character of our people.

"And unless we do this, it is both folly and injustice to complain of the magistracy which we have set over us. We have no reason to expect in a legislator a higher degree of virtue than we possess ourselves. It is ungenerous to blame him for being a selfish partisan when we ourselves have set him the example. It is unreasonable to expect him to sacrifice office, emolument and influence for principle, while we dare not act from principle when we have none of these to lose. It is shameful to ask him to forsake his party for right, when we ourselves, if he obeyed our wishes, would be the first to abandon him. If we expect moral independence in our representatives, we must show them that we possess it ourselves. If we ask them to peril their political influence for right, we must at least show them that the moral principle of their constituents will sustain them in well-doing.

"We see then, that this whole discussion tends to one very simple practical conclusion. A virtuous man is bound to carry his principles into practice in all the relations of life. He can no more do wrong in company than alone, and be guiltless. If he be a true man, he must love right and justice and mercy, better than political party, or personal popularity. If he fear God, he must obey God rather than man, and this fear must govern his conduct universally. In this matter every man must begin not with his neighbor, but himself, and if he wish our country to be reformed, let him begin the work immediately. Let us all then lay these things solemnly to heart, and may God grant us grace to carry them into practice."—Pres. Wayland's Sermon on The Duty of Obedience to the Civil Magistrate.
"The capitalists of the South—not the free white people, but the capitalists—the comparatively few owners and venders of slaves, who are of the aristocracy there, and who therefore think themselves the people—have set up a demand that not Texas alone, but all the regions beyond, shall be converted by act of Congress into a market for slaves. Thus shall the price of human flesh be kept up in the shambles of Norfolk and Richmond. Thus South Carolina and the seaboard of Georgia, now that they begin to suffer from the exhaustion of their soil, and from all the impoverishment so infallibly, though slowly produced by their semi-barbarous organization of society, shall feel themselves rich again for a season, in the increased price of negroes. * * * Congress must do this for them, and must do it by the votes of men deputed from the free labor states, and representing the sturdy masses of our free laboring population. Thus shall slaveholding states be established to maintain for ages to come the ascendency which the slavery power has so long had in all the departments of the federal government. And now the question is, Shall the demand thus made by Southern capitalists and Southern politicians be conceded? We must meet that question. It cannot be got rid of. * * *

"Look at the nature of the question. Look at it as a question of public safety. It is the question whether to the elements of disaffection and disturbance already existing in those provinces—whether to a population of half-tamed Indians, and long emancipated negroes, and conquered Spanish Creoles, on whom the boon of American citizenship has been in a measure forced, and whose revengeful spirits burn with a religious hate of Yankee domination, we shall attempt to add that no less combustible element—a population of negro slaves. It is the question whether upon that frontier, separated from Mexico by no natural barriers, we will place a population from which runaway slaves will be constantly escaping to freedom upon Mexican soil—fugitives whom no treaty requires the Mexicans to surrender, whom the law of nature and of natural sympathies requires them rather to protect, and whom the masters will therefore pursue in array of arms, shooting them down if they resist, and bringing them back in chains. It is the question whether we will bring upon ourselves the certainty of constant bloodshed on that distant frontier, and of speedy and perpetual war.
"Look at it as a question of political economy. It is the question whether we shall put these new acquisitions of ours to such a use as shall most augment the great aggregate of our national wealth, and the rewards of the national industry. It is the question whether the population that is to spread over the hills and mountain plains of that vast and wild interior, and that will fill those sheltered nooks and narrow vales into which the soft west wind blows from the Pacific, shall be a pastoral and farming population, free, industrious, and civilized, requiring for their consumption, in an indefinite supply, the cotton and sugar of the South, the manufactured products of the North, and the golden harvests of the West, and paying for all they consume in the products of their industry; or a slave producing people, requiring for their consumption almost nothing of the products of other portions of the Union, and contributing to the internal commerce of the nation nothing, or almost nothing, but slaves born in the invigorating air of the far inland mountains, to be consumed by toil in torrid canefields and pestilential savannas around the gulf of Mexico.

"Look at it as a question of national dignity and reputation. It is the question whether the arms and resources of the American people have been employed, their blood poured out on fields of battle, and their treasure lavished, to force on conquered and reluctant provinces, that disgraceful barbarism, that scoff and hissing of the civilized world, the institution of negro slavery.

"Look at it as a moral question—a question of right and wrong in legislation. The question is not, what is expedient in order to our getting along for the present with an exacting and unscrupulous aristocracy, threatening to dissolve the Union if they cannot have their way?—but, what is right—how shall we get along under the government of God, with his eternal and omnipotent justice? The question is not, what is destiny? but what is right? Right, O atheist, is greater and more awful than destiny. Do right, and let destiny care for itself.

"Reader, as you are an American freeman, responsible to God for the trust devolved upon you, see that you do not overlook the importance of this question. The question is one of a grandeur so manifest, that in the view of any rightminded man, it makes all other pending questions of our national politics insignificant. Who shall be president—who shall be senator—
who shall be judge—questions like these are of no moment, save in their relation to the question of the crisis. Questions about the tariff and the treasury may be postponed; but this question stands before us in its august greatness, and it will not down at our bidding. It will be answered. He who would sacrifice such a question to any temporary, personal, or party interests, wrongs his own moral nature, and betrays the great cause of universal humanity."—New Englander for April.

To these extracts we would add the following fact and inquiries:—

At a recent Convention of one of the leading parties in this State, for the choice of a delegate to the National Convention for the selection of a presidential candidate, there were present but about a third of the number that had a right to be present. The successful candidate received but one vote more than a majority, and two votes more than the number of delegates that were present from the two cities in the district, himself being a member of one of those cities. And, judging from the usual custom in the choice of that one third, in the town caucuses, not more than one tenth—probably much less—of the regular voters of the party were present. If now, when the South is straining every nerve to secure a candidate that shall be true to its interests, that Delegate should prove subservient to its infamous schemes and those of the trading politicians of the North, can the Christian voters of that district be regarded as guiltless in the matter? Have they, in any true sense of the term, met the crisis now upon us? And on the day of election can they consistently urge it to be a duty to vote for their party candidate, "as the least of two evils," when they have put forth no effort to prevent the selection of such a candidate?

THE WAY THE SOUTH CONTROLS THE COUNTRY.—The following is cut from a recent number of a Richmond paper, a leading journal of one of the great National Parties:

"The pledge given by the Virginia Convention, to support the nominee of the National Convention, is, as all such pledges have been heretofore considered, predicated upon the very reasonable assumption, that the individuals who may be nominated, will not be hostile to the rights of the South."

On the above, a Pennsylvania paper makes the following judicious remarks:
The Democrats of the South have used precisely the same language.
This, then, is the position of both parties at the South: they will support the nominees of their National Conventions, only upon condition that they are thorough pro-slavery men.

The parties at the North impose no such conditions — they impose no conditions whatever. They say they will support any man who is nominated. If he should be hostile to northern rights, it makes no odds to them.

Herein lies the difference between the two sections. The South will not support any one hostile to its interests; the North will. The South sacrifices party to principle; the North sacrifices principle to party. The South inquires, Is he true to Slavery? — the North inquires, Is he true to our party? Hence, the South is always the workman, and the North the tool. Hence, the South is ever victorious, and the North abased."

The People's League. — By recent arrivals from Europe, we are apprised of the formation, in England, of the "People's League," headed by such men as Mr. Hume, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and Lord Stuart, &c., &c. Its leading objects and prospects of success are thus set forth by the London Times:

"For these reasons there appears to us nothing ill-timed, but rather the contrary, in the new move just made by what we may call, without offence, the Radical party. Fifty members of the Lower House, usually distinguished by their extreme views, have come forward to solicit "a more cordial understanding and co-operation among such members of Parliament as are favorable to the extension of the suffrage, an equitable arrangement of taxation, a reduction of expenditure, and the general advance of reform principles throughout England and Ireland." A meeting has been held, the above objects have been adopted in the form of a resolution, and a chairman, deputy-chairman, and secretary appointed. Here, then, is a nucleus and groundwork of a permanent organization, while the names are a sufficient pledge that definite objects will be proposed and prosecuted with vigor and perseverance. Self-preservation and political existence dictated such a step. Without organization or policy, the Reformers in Parliament were dwindling down to a merely obstructive faction. Week after week they only appeared as a miserable minority, protesting against a vote or tax, or an increase of power in the Executive, as if they had nothing better to recommend than that nothing should be done. No party, however, can subsist on negatives. Nature abhors a vacuum, and when people find their leaders do not know what to be at, they will quickly fall off to those who are more prepared for action."

Would not something tantamount to this be well calculated for us, in the present exigencies of our country, where the people have vastly more power and greater responsibilities? A movement has already been made in one of the western cities, which promises great good, if it can be extensively and vigorously followed up; enlarged somewhat, perhaps, in its scope and purpose. It is a simple Pledge; the signers of which agree to vote for no man, for President or Vice President, who will not avow himself opposed to the farther extension of slavery.