

The Test of Unionism.

The following able article, from the pen of H. Fauntleroy, Esq., now a resident of this place, and late of Nashville, was written on the 16th of April last, for the Banner of that city, and was put in type, but withdrawn and returned to the author on account of the excitement and terrorism that forbade its publication. At the request of many of his friends, we give it to the public as a sample of the writer's bold and courageous advocacy, at the peril of his safety, of the cause of the Union, uncompromising devotion to which induced him to leave the State upon its treasonable defection:

The bombardment and surrender of Fort Sumter, according to our intelligence from Charleston, have inaugurated an actual state of civil war within the sacred borders of our beloved country. It was doubtless the policy of the General Government to evacuate the Fort, if allowed to do so with honor; but the unreasonable requirement of the Southern authorities that it should be surrendered unconditionally, made it imperative on the former to yield only to unavoidable necessity and the force of circumstances. As a selected point of national defense, as well for the security of the whole interior of the country, as for the coast, and for the particular State where located, it should not have been abandoned to a hostile force, except upon terms that would meet the sanction of the whole nation.

The utmost forbearance had been practiced—not a gun had been fired from the fort—the work of erecting hostile batteries and of resistless investment had been allowed to go on quietly, so that as a military achievement, the capture of barely seventy isolated men, reluctant to make any efficient defense and to shed blood, by over seven thousand men, permitted to make every advantageous preparation for the attack, affords but little honor and eclat to be boasted of in the annals of Southern Chivalry. As there were no very serious casualties reported, this movement is important only, as terminating the suspense of the country, and presenting a question for the approval or condemnation of the American people. The die is now cast, and the fell issues of war are upon us. The lines of distinct demarcation between the true loyal friends of our National Union, and those who have espoused the pernicious maxims of secession, or who, poised upon a mere point of policy, are wafted away by every breath of mistaken interest or empty popular clamor, these lines will now be drawn. Upon which side will these lines leave the people of

Tennessee and the Border Slave States? We have repudiated in our elections and Conventions so far as they have been held, this secession movement, as subversive of all popular and Constitutional Government. Tennessee in February last, voted by an overwhelming majority, that there were no existing evils to warrant even the holding of a Convention for the purpose of deliberation. Was that vote—has the whole action of the Border Slave States been deceptive and hypocritical toward the General Government? Did we remain in the Union for the purpose of tying the Government foot and hand, to restrain it in any attempt to assert its legitimate authority, and thus enable the disaffected States to perfect their schemes of disunion, with the purpose of ultimately following what we seemingly condemned? Can such a charge of shameful damning treachery as this be brought against us?—No, no, in God's name, no. Were it true, the world might well make up its verdict, that our Republican institutions rested upon foundations so rotten, that they were being blown up by the spontaneous fires of corruption—that the ideas and sentiments of our people were so steeped in perfidy that suffrage was a mockery at virtue, the public voice a lie, and that the hand of despotism alone could hold the masses to any legitimate ends of government. No, it is not true. We were sincere and voted our convictions. What then has occurred since to place us on a side antagonistic to our former votes and principles? Has the charge of the Disunionists, that the Republican party, in the possession of the Government, meant ultimately to extirpate slavery in the slave States, been proven to be well founded and an actuality justifying disruption? Congress passed a resolution by a vote of 106 to 4, that they had no such purpose. Only four votes could be found in the whole House of Representatives to support this unreasonable charge. Amendments to our Constitution, guaranteeing slavery in the slave States perpetually, passed Congress by over a two-thirds vote, and, even without any further action by the States, stand a national pledge against any interference; but when adopted by three-fourths of the States, becomes a part of that sacred instrument. Is not this point settled then beyond any doubt or cavil, and, as a cause of future mistrust or apprehension, effectually removed?

Then, is there any new phase of the Territorial question to occasion new alarm, and cause a change in our positions? Surely, none but what should, on the contrary, quiet all fears of Southern minds of exclusion from equal occupancy, or any denial of what they may regard as their constitutional rights and privileges. We have never contended for more than equality of rights in the Territories. We have declared that we would be satisfied with a division of them

upon the Hae of the Missouri Compromise, and yet the last Congress, in framing territorial bills for the three new Territories, Nevada, Dacotah and Colorado, all lying north of that line, imposed no restriction upon slave property, and made no attempt to incorporate the Wilmot Proviso that we quietly submitted to in the Oregon bill of Mr. Polk's Administration. There was no denial of a free and equal occupation of these Territories with the North, as was persistently charged to be the unalterable policy of the Republican party. The whole territory owned by us, both north and south of the Missouri line, if I am not mistaken, now lies open for Southern emigration, with slave property, as freely as for the North. The Territory of New Mexico, embracing all of our possessions between the States and California, south of the line, was, by a slavery clause in the act of organization, more especially opened to settlement from the slave States. Ought not this to satisfy us? Can we reasonably ask any exclusive privileges? The Republican party have not pressed any policy, in reference to the Territories, inimical to the South, and, in the opinion of Mr. Douglas, the South has all that she ever demanded.

Is the Fugitive Slave Law less vigorously enforced now than heretofore, so as to give us new cause of offence and grievance? We have just read accounts of the arrest of five fugitive slaves at Chicago, and of their restitution to their owners. So energetically are Mr. Lincoln's Marshals fulfilling his pledges for the faithful execution of that law, that there is a perfect stampede among the escaped negroes in the Northern States to get to Canada, lest they be apprehended and remanded to the South. The truth is, that this law has been enforced to an extent in the Northern States that has elicited expressions of astonishment from the English press, which declares that a law, so repugnant to the feelings of a people, among whom it is to operate, as the American Fugitive Slave Law, could not be enforced anywhere on the globe, except in America. Are we so blind to our own security as to break with this people, who, against the strong prejudices of education and instincts of nature, thus fulfil their constitutional obligations to us? Release them from these obligations—make them your enemies, and open a way as broad as five great States for the exodus of your slave population! What preposterous folly and madness that would be. And for what—why do this? We have seen that there is no new policy; no legislation, no grievance to warrant a change in our relation to our Government. Our slave interests, the bone of contention, are invested with infinitely greater security now than at any former period, on account of a better understanding of many mooted points of controversy between the North and the South. Why, then, should

we now be called upon to hold a grand saturnalia around the form of prostrate Liberty—to desecrate the sacred altars of our country—tear down and trample upon our Nation's flag—recant our former principles of patriotism—offer up the sacred glories of our Union, with all the hopes and prospects of our children and their children, as one vast, appalling hecatomb to the once detested spirit of Secession, and defy now what was once a spectre of horror to our imaginations? We are to do this in order to unite our destinies with some of our sister States who, if there ever was any danger to our common interests in slavery, ruthlessly abandoned us to that danger—who had no sympathy with our geographical position, that exposes us to infinite losses in case of a disruption—who refused to consult with us, and disregarded our protests, and now, enconced behind us as a barrier between them and the dreaded danger, are waging war against our Government, and giving us taunts as "Submissionists" for the protection we are affording them—who have trampled our Constitution under foot for alleged reasons wholly insufficient, unsanctioned and disapproved of by us. Can we enter into a new bond with people who have broken faith with us, and whose Constitution provides for its own destruction at any moment, and who may, on the slightest pretext, and in fulfillment of their loose theories, secede from us to-morrow?—Shall we at all submit to be dragged out of the Union—9,000,000 succumb to the dictation of 4,000,000; the mountain go to Mahomet? Sift this latter number of population—take from it the 2,000,000 of slaves, the white women and children and the Union men, and you would not have 800,000 remaining. Is it reasonable and right that the destinies of this great nation should hang upon the caprices and be the sport of any 800,000 misguided men?

This secession movement in no way commends itself to the sober-minded, conservative men of the country. Its incipency was founded in usurpation and disfranchisement of the masses of the people. It ignored the poor man and the working man, and set up a slave oligarchy that dictated a government in which the masses had no voice. I trust in God that such proceedings, so violative of the genius of American liberty, and so pregnant of evil as precedents for despotism, will never be sanctioned by such of the slave States as still hold sacred the teachings of the American Revolution, and the principles of our Republican Union.

But you may reply, that those States to which I am appealing, were opposed to coercion and so declared. So they did, but if they, at the same time, avowed sentiments of devotion to the Union, as a mere cloak, and meant to connive at Secession, their action was treacherous. If they meant by coercion that our Government must be

stripped of all authority and humiliated, then they were inconsistent, and their resolutions against coercion were disguised ordinances of Secession, for they effectually broke up the Government. I did not thus interpret these resolutions. I supposed they emanated from humane and peaceful sentiments, not at all committing us to support all the intemperate acts that our misguided neighbors might commit. We held up the olive branch of peace, counselling moderation and forbearance on the part of our Government, while we expostulated with our erring brethren. We were the arbiters of the right. Is Secession any more right now than at the beginning? Certainly less so, for its policy is altogether coercive. It coerces its own people, and stifles all remonstrance. Our Government has attempted no invasion, carefully avoided all collision, and peacefully carried the mails in all the seceded States, and yet coercion was employed against it—Fort Sumter bombarded and forced to capitulate—the whole action of the Southern Confederacy is hostile and aggressive toward our Government. Is there any reason why we should countenance and uphold coercion against us, against our Government, while we would not bear to its employment to maintain our own honor, and the integrity of the Nation?

You may urge that our trade is with the Seceded States, and unless we go with them, it will be interrupted and our interests ruined. Let us examine this argument of interest. We do not sell them our cotton, our tobacco, our pig iron. We do sell them negroes, mules and provisions, because we can raise them cheaper than they can, and we will always sell these to them from necessity, and upon their own maxim, that "they will buy where they can buy cheap-

tain us as an important commercial point, while Louisville, on the upper border, would be entirely unsupported. So far as the mercantile trade of Nashville is affected this season, must be attributed mainly to the failure of the Southern crops. Secession has incidentally affected our business by greatly embarrassing the monetary affairs of the country. Here, then, is a simple problem for your reflection. If a partial, and what we had all hoped would be a temporary, division of the country has reduced real estate over one-half, and negro property fully one-half in value, what would be the direful consequence of a general disruption of the nation? Undoubtedly hopeless bankruptcy to every interest in the land. Our true interests, then, point to the restoration of the Union as our only hope of preservation. We must not join the Secession movement and give it successful permanence. The seceded States deserted us; we must leave them to the consequences of their own folly. Their isolation for one year, with a fearful accumulation of expense and indebtedness, will make them glad again to take shelter in the Union. The damage will be inevitably great to us all, but then there will be some termination to it. Join them and we will be the sufferers by losses of negro property, and the Southern trade diverted from us, and this order of things will be perpetual.

This subject is so immense in its scope and wide-spread ramifications that a writer becomes bewildered with the multitude of thoughts, and has great difficulty in compressing in one general article a satisfactory treatment of the many points involved. I will close, then, by counselling the Union and Conservative men of the country to stand steadfast and firm to your former professions, and your plighted allegiance to your country. Keep Tennessee and Kentucky true to the long line of precedents, the sanctions of experience, and the memories that call up the proud glories that range along our nation's course, back to the time when the great, wise and devoted Washington committed the liberty he had won to the keeping of his people. Stand firm to the Union, as the palladium of that sacred trust. We may counsel our Government to deal as tenderly as possible with this perplexing Southern embroglio, but we must know no swerving from our duty in the day of trial. We must prove ourselves men worthy the example of our fathers, and emulating their disinterested and patriotic ardor, hesitate not to "pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honors" to the union of these States and the perpetuity of our government.

H. F.
Nashville, Tenn., April 16, 1861.

est." We have been selling goods and merchandise to them, but cut off the importing points of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and direct the trade to Charleston, Savannah, Mobile and New Orleans, could you hope to bring goods up the country to Nashville and Louisville, and then sell them back to the people of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi? In the present course of trade we bring goods as far as our commercial points and sell them below us. The present course of trade is from the East to the West and South, and passes through the upper Slave States to the extensive section below them.—Change the direction so that the current must flow upward, and the narrow district north of Nashville would not main-