

## CHAPTER X - "THE BLACK TERROR"

The surrender of Lee and his army was not actually the end of the war. The army of General Johnstone and some smaller Confederate forces were still in being; but their suppression seemed clearly only a matter of time, and all men's eyes were already turned to the problem of reconstruction, and on no man did the urgency of that problem press more ominously than on the President.

Slavery was dead. This was already admitted in the South as well as in the North. Had the Confederacy, by some miracle, achieved its independence during the last year of the war, it is extremely unlikely that Slavery would have endured within its borders. This was the publicly expressed opinion of Jefferson Davis even before the adoption of Lee's policy of recruiting slaves and liberating them on enlistment had completed the work which the Emancipation Proclamation of Lincoln had begun. Before the war was over, Missouri, where the Slavery problem was a comparatively small affair, and Maryland, which had always had a good record for humanity and justice in the treatment of its slave population, had declared themselves Free States. The new Governments organized under Lincoln's superintendence in the conquered parts of the Confederacy had followed suit. It was a comparatively easy matter to carry the celebrated Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution declaring Slavery illegal throughout the Union.

But, as no one knew better than the President, the abolition of Slavery was a very different thing from the solution of the Negro problem. Six years before his election he had used of the problem of Slavery in the South these remarkable words: "I surely will not blame them (the Southerners) for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power was given I should not know what to do as to the existing institution." The words now came back upon him with an awful weight which he fully appreciated. All earthly power was given--direct personal power to a degree perhaps unparalleled in history--and he had to find out what to do.

His own belief appears always to have been that the only permanent solution of the problem was Jefferson's. He did not believe that black and white races would permanently live side by side on a footing of equality, and he loathed with all the loathing of a Kentuckian the thought of racial amalgamation. In his proposal to the Border States he had suggested repatriation in Africa, and he now began to develop a similar project on a larger scale.

But the urgent problem of the reconstruction of the Union could not wait for the

completion of so immense a task. The seceding States must be got into their proper relation with the Federal Government as quickly as possible, and Lincoln had clear ideas as to how this should be done. The reconstructed Government of Louisiana which he organized was a working model of what he proposed to do throughout the South. All citizens of the State who were prepared to take the oath of allegiance to the Federal Government were to be invited to elect a convention and frame a constitution. They were required to annul the ordinances of Secession, to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, and to repudiate the Confederate Debt. The Executive would then recognize the State as already restored to its proper place within the Union, with the full rights of internal self-government which the Constitution guaranteed. The freedmen were of course not citizens, and could, as such, take no part in these proceedings; but Lincoln recommended, without attempting to dictate, that the franchise should be extended to "the very intelligent and those who have fought for us during the war."

Such was Lincoln's policy of reconstruction. He was anxious to get as much as possible of that policy in working order before Congress should meet. His foresight was justified, for as soon as Congress met the policy was challenged by the Radical wing of the Republican Party, whose spokesman was Senator Sumner of Massachusetts.

Charles Sumner has already been mentioned in these pages. The time has come when something like a portrait of him must be attempted. He was of a type which exists in all countries, but for which America has found the exact and irreplaceable name. He was a "high-brow." The phrase hardly needs explanation; it corresponds somewhat to what the French mean by *intellectuel*, but with an additional touch of moral priggishness which exactly suits Sumner. It does not, of course, imply that a man can think. Sumner was conspicuous even among politicians for his ineptitude in this respect. But it implies a pose of superiority both as regards culture and as regards what a man of that kind calls "idealism" which makes such an one peculiarly offensive to his fellow-men. "The Senator so conducts himself," said Fessenden, a Republican, and to a great extent an ally, "that he has no friends." He had a peculiar command of the language of insult and vituperation that was all the more infuriating because obviously the product not of sudden temper, but of careful and scholarly preparation. In all matters requiring practical action he was handicapped by an incapacity for understanding men; in matters requiring mental lucidity by an incapacity for following a line of consecutive thought.

The thesis of which Sumner appeared as the champion was about as silly as ever a thesis could be. It was that the United States were bound by the doctrine set out in the Declaration of Independence to extend the Franchise indiscriminately

to the Negroes.

Had Sumner had any sense it might have occurred to him that the author of the Declaration of Independence might be presumed to have some knowledge of its meaning and content. Did Thomas Jefferson think that his doctrines involved Negro Suffrage? So far from desiring that Negroes should vote with white men, he did not believe that they could even live in the same free community. Yet since Sumner's absurd fallacy has a certain historical importance through the influence it exerted on Northern opinion, it may be well to point out where it lay.

The Declaration of Independence lays down three general principles fundamental to Democracy. One is that all men are equal in respect of their natural rights. The second is that the safeguarding of men's natural rights is the object of government. The third that the basis of government is contractual--its "just powers" being derived from the consent of the governed to an implied contract.

The application of the first of these principles to the Negro is plain enough. Whatever else he was, the Negro was a man, and, as such, had an equal title with other men to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. But neither Jefferson nor any other sane thinker ever included the electoral suffrage among the natural rights of men. Voting is part of the machinery of government in particular States. It is, in such communities, an acquired right depending according to the philosophy of the Declaration of Independence on an implied contract.

Now if such a contract did really underlie American, as all human society, nothing can be more certain than that the Negro had neither part nor lot in it. When Douglas pretended that the black race was not included in the expression "all men" he was talking sophistry, but when he said that the American Republic had been made "by white men for white men" he was stating, as Lincoln readily acknowledged, an indisputable historical fact. The Negro was a man and had the natural rights of a man; but he could have no claim to the special privileges of an American citizen because he was not and never had been an American citizen. He had not come to America as a citizen; no one would ever have dreamed of bringing him or even admitting him if it had been supposed that he was to be a citizen. He was brought and admitted as a slave. The fact that the servile relationship was condemned by the democratic creed could not make the actual relationship of the two races something wholly other than what it plainly was. A parallel might be found in the case of a man who, having entered into an intrigue with a woman, wholly animal and mercenary in its character, comes under the influence of a philosophy which condemns such a connection as sinful. He is bound to put an end to the connection. He is bound to act justly and humanely towards the woman. But no sane moralist would maintain that he was bound to

marry the woman--that is, to treat the illicit relationship as if it were a wholly different lawful relationship such as it was never intended to be and never could have been.

Such was the plain sense and logic of the situation. To drive such sense into Sumner's lofty but wooden head would have been an impossible enterprise, but the mass of Northerners could almost certainly have been persuaded to a rational policy if a sudden and tragic catastrophe had not altered at a critical moment the whole complexion of public affairs.

Lincoln made his last public speech on April 11, 1865, mainly in defence of his Reconstruction policy as exemplified in the test case of Louisiana. On the following Good Friday he summoned his last Cabinet, at which his ideas on the subject were still further developed. That Cabinet meeting has an additional interest as presenting us with one of the best authenticated of those curious happenings which we may attribute to coincidence or to something deeper, according to our predilections. It is authenticated by the amplest testimony that Lincoln told his Cabinet that he expected that that day would bring some important piece of public news--he thought it might be the surrender of Johnstone and the last of the Confederate armies--and that he gave as a reason the fact that he had had a certain dream, which had come to him on the night before Gettysburg and on the eve of almost every other decisive event in the history of the war. Certain it is that Johnstone did not surrender that day, but before midnight an event of far graver and more fatal purport had changed the destiny of the nation. Abraham Lincoln was dead.

A conspiracy against his life and that of the Northern leaders had been formed by a group of exasperated and fanatical Southerners who met at the house of a Mrs. Suratt in the neighbourhood of Washington. One of the conspirators was to kill Seward, who was confined to his bed by illness, but on whom an unsuccessful attempt was made. Another, it is believed, was instructed to remove Grant, but the general unexpectedly left Washington, and no direct threat was offered to him. The task of making away with the President was assigned to John Wilkes Booth, a dissolute and crack-brained actor. Lincoln and his wife were present that night at a gala performance of a popular English comedy called "Our American Cousin." Booth obtained access to the Presidential box and shot his victim behind the ear, causing instant loss of consciousness, which was followed within a few hours by death. The assassin leapt from the box on to the stage shouting: "Sic semper Tyrannis!" and, though he broke his leg in the process, succeeded, presumably by the aid of a confederate among the theatre officials, in getting away. He was later hunted down, took refuge in a bar, which was set on fire, and was shot in attempting to escape.

The murder of Lincoln was the work of a handful of crazy fools. Already the South, in spite of its natural prejudices, was beginning to understand that he was its best friend. Yet on the South the retribution was to fall. It is curious to recall the words which Lincoln himself had used in repudiating on behalf of the Republican Party the folly of old John Brown, words which are curiously apposite to his own fate and its consequences.

"That affair, in its philosophy," he had said, "corresponds to the many attempts related in history at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon and John Brown's attempt at Harper's Ferry were, in their philosophy, precisely the same. The eagerness to cast blame on Old England in the one case and on New England in the other does not disprove the sameness of the two things." It may be added that the "philosophy" of Booth was also "precisely the same" as that of Orsini and Brown, and that the "eagerness to cast blame" on the conquered South was equally unjustifiable and equally inevitable.

The anger of the North was terrible, and was intensified by the recollection of the late President's pleas for lenity and a forgetfulness of the past. "This is their reply to magnanimity!" was the almost universal cry. The wild idea that the responsible heads of the Confederacy were privy to the deed found a wide credence which would have been impossible in cooler blood. The justifiable but unrestrained indignation which Booth's crime provoked must be counted as the first of the factors which made possible the tragic blunders of the Reconstruction.

Another factor was the personality of the new President. Andrew Johnson occupied a position in some ways analogous to that of Tyler a generation earlier. He had been chosen Vice-President as a concession to the War Democrats and to the Unionists of the Border States whose support had been thought necessary to defeat McClellan. With the Northern Republicans who now composed the great majority of Congress he had no political affinity whatever. Yet at the beginning of his term of office he was more popular with the Radicals than Lincoln had ever been. He seemed to share to the full the violence of the popular mood. His declaration that as murder was a crime, so treason was a crime, and "must be made odious," was welcomed with enthusiasm by the very men who afterwards impeached him. Nor, when we blame these men for trafficking with perjurers and digging up tainted and worthless evidence for the purpose of sustaining against him the preposterous charge of complicity in the murder of his predecessor, must we forget that he himself, without any evidence at all, had under his own hand

and seal brought the same monstrous accusation against Jefferson Davis. Davis, when apprehended, met the affront with a cutting reply. "There is one man at least who knows this accusation to be false--the man who makes it. Whatever else Andrew Johnson knows, he knows that I preferred Mr. Lincoln to him."

It was true. Between Johnson and the chiefs of the Confederacy there was a bitterness greater than could be found in the heart of any Northerner. To him they were the seducers who had caught his beloved South in a net of disloyalty and disaster. To them he was a traitor who had sold himself to the Yankee oppressor. A social quarrel intensified the political one. Johnson, who had been a tailor by trade, was the one political representative of the "poor whites" of the South. He knew that the great slave-owning squires despised him, and he hated them in return. It was only when the issues cut deeper that it became apparent that, while he would gladly have hanged Jeff Davis and all his Cabinet on a sufficient number of sour apple trees (and perhaps he was the one man in the United States who really wanted to do so), he was none the less a Southerner to the backbone; it was only when the Negro question was raised that the Northern men began to realize, what any Southerner or man acquainted with the South could have told them, that the attitude of the "poor white" towards the Negro was a thousand times more hostile than that of the slave-owner.

Unfortunately, by the same token, the new President had not, as Lincoln would have had, the ear of the North.

Had Lincoln lived he would have approached the task of persuading the North to support his policy with many advantages which his successor necessarily lacked. He would have had the full prestige of the undoubted Elect of the People--so important to an American President, especially in a conflict with Congress. He would have had the added prestige of the ruler under whose administration the Rebellion had been crushed and the Union successfully restored. But he would also have had an instinctive understanding of the temper of the Northern masses and a thorough knowledge of the gradations of opinion and temper among the Northern politicians.

Johnson had none of these qualifications, while his faults of temper were a serious hindrance to the success of his policy. He was perhaps the purest lover of his country among all the survivors of Lincoln: the fact that told so heavily against his success, that he had no party, that he broke with one political connection in opposing Secession and with another in opposing Congressional Reconstruction, is itself a sign of the integrity and consistency of his patriotism. Also he was on the right side. History, seeing how cruelly he was maligned and how abominably he was treated, owes him these acknowledgments. But he was

not a prudent or a tactful man. Too much importance need not be attached to the charge of intemperate drinking, which is probably true but not particularly serious. If Johnson had got drunk every night of his life he would only have done what some of the greatest and most successful statesmen in history had done before him. But there was an intemperance of character about the man which was more disastrous in its consequences than a few superfluous whiskies could have been. He was easily drawn into acrimonious personal disputes, and when under their influence would push a quarrel to all lengths with men with whom it was most important in the public interest that he should work harmoniously.

For the extremists, of whom Sumner was a type, were still a minority even among the Republican politicians; nor was Northern opinion, even after the murder of Lincoln, yet prepared to support their policy. There did, however, exist in the minds of quite fair-minded Northerners, in and out of Congress, certain not entirely unreasonable doubts, which it should have been the President's task--as it would certainly have been Lincoln's--to remove by reason and persuasion. He seems to have failed to see that he had to do this; and certainly he altogether failed to do it.

The fears of such men were twofold. They feared that the "rebel" States, if restored immediately to freedom of action and to the full enjoyment of their old privileges, would use these advantages for the purpose of preparing a new secession at some more favourable opportunity. And they feared that the emancipated Negro would not be safe under a Government which his old masters controlled.

It may safely be said that both fears were groundless, though they were both fears which a reasonable man quite intelligibly entertains. Naturally, the South was sore; no community likes having to admit defeat. Also, no doubt, the majority of Southerners would have refused to admit that they were in the wrong in the contest which was now closed; indeed, it was by pressing this peculiarly tactless question that Sumner and his friends procured most of their evidence of the persistence of "disloyalty" in the South. On the other hand, two facts already enforced in these pages have to be remembered. The first is that the Confederacy was not in the full sense a nation. Its defenders felt their defeat as men feel the downfall of a political cause to which they are attached, not quite as men feel the conquest of their country by foreigners. The second is that from the first there had been many who, while admitting the right of secession--and therefore, by implication, the justice of the Southern cause--had yet doubted its expediency. It is surely not unnatural to suppose that the disastrous issue of the experiment had brought a great many round to this point of view. No doubt there was still a residue--perhaps a large residue--of quite impenitent "rebels" who were prepared

to renew the battle if they saw a good chance, but the conditions under which the new Southern Governments had come into existence offered sufficient security against such men controlling them. Irreconcilables of that type would not have taken the oath of allegiance, would not have repealed the Ordinances of Secession or repudiated the Confederate Debt, and, if they had no great objection to abolishing Slavery, would probably have made it a point of honour not to do it at Northern dictation. What those who were now asking for re-admission to their ancient rights in the Union had already done or were prepared to do was sufficient evidence that moderation and an accessible temper were predominant in their counsels.

The other fear was even more groundless. There might in the South be a certain bitterness against the Northerner; there was none at all against the Negro. Why should there be? During the late troubles the Negro had deserved very well of the South. At a time when practically every active male of the white population was in the fighting line, when a slave insurrection might have brought ruin and disaster on every Southern home, not a slave had risen. The great majority of the race had gone on working faithfully, though the ordinary means of coercion were almost necessarily in abeyance. Even when the Northern armies came among them, proclaiming their emancipation, many of them continued to perform their ordinary duties and to protect the property and secrets of their masters. Years afterwards the late Dr. Booker Washington could boast that there was no known case of one of his race betraying a trust. All this was publicly acknowledged by leading Southerners and one-time supporters of Slavery like Alexander Stephens, who pressed the claims of the Negro to fair and even generous treatment at the hands of the Southern whites. It is certain that these in the main meant well of the black race. It is equally certain that, difficult as the problem was, they were more capable of dealing with it than were alien theorizers from the North, who had hardly seen a Negro save, perhaps, as a waiter at an hotel.

It is a notable fact that the soldiers who conquered the South were at this time practically unanimous in support of a policy of reconciliation and confidence. Sherman, to whom Johnstone surrendered a few days after Lincoln's death, wished to offer terms for the surrender of all the Southern forces which would have guaranteed to the seceding States the full restoration of internal self-government. Grant sent to the President a reassuring report as to the temper of the South which Sumner compared to the "whitewashing message of Franklin Pierce" in regard to Kansas.

Yet it would be absurd to deny that the cleavage between North and South, inevitable after a prolonged Civil War, required time to heal. One event might indeed have ended it almost at once, and that event almost occurred. A foreign



menace threatening something valued by both sections would have done more than a dozen Acts of Congress or Amendments to the Constitution. There were many to whom this had always appeared the most hopeful remedy for the sectionable trouble. Among them was Seward, who, having been Lincoln's Secretary of State, now held the same post under Johnson. While secession was still little more than a threat he had proposed to Lincoln the deliberate fomentation of a dispute with some foreign power--he did not appear to mind which. It is thought by some that, after the war, he took up and pressed the Alabama claims with the same notion. That quarrel, however, would hardly have met the case. The ex-Confederates could not be expected to throw themselves with enthusiasm into a war with England to punish her for providing them with a navy. It was otherwise with the trouble which had been brewing in Mexico.

Napoleon III. had taken advantage of the Civil War to violate in a very specific fashion the essential principle of the Monroe Doctrine. He had interfered in one of the innumerable Mexican revolutions and taken advantage of it to place on the throne an emperor of his own choice, Maximilian, a cadet of the Hapsburg family, and to support his nominee by French bayonets. Here was a challenge which the South was even more interested in taking up than the North, and, if it had been persisted in, it is quite thinkable that an army under the joint leadership of Grant and Lee and made up of those who had learnt to respect each other on a hundred fields from Bull Run to Spottsylvania might have erased all bitter memories by a common campaign on behalf of the liberties of the continent. But Louis Napoleon was no fool; and in this matter he acted perhaps with more regard to prudence than to honour. He withdrew the French troops, leaving Maximilian to his fate, which he promptly met at the hands of his own subjects.

The sectional quarrel remained unappeased, and the quarrel between the President and Congress began. Congress was not yet Radical, but it was already decidedly, though still respectfully, opposed to Johnson's policy. While only a few of its members had yet made up their minds as to what ought to be done about Reconstruction, the great majority had a strong professional bias which made them feel that the doing or not doing of it should be in their hands and not in those of the Executive. It was by taking advantage of this prevailing sentiment that the Radicals, though still a minority, contrived to get the leadership more and more into their own hands.

Of the Radicals Sumner was the spokesman most conspicuous in the public eye. But not from him came either the driving force or the direction which ultimately gave them the control of national policy.

Left to himself, Sumner could never have imposed the iron oppression from which

it took the South a life-and-death wrestle of ten years to shake itself free. At the worst he would have been capable of imposing a few paper pedantries, such as his foolish Civil Rights Bill, which would have been torn up before their ink was dry. The will and intelligence which dictated the Reconstruction belonged to a very different man, a man entitled to a place not with puzzle-headed pedants or coat-turning professionals but with the great tyrants of history.

Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania was in almost every respect the opposite of his ally, Charles Sumner of Massachusetts. Sumner, empty of most things, was especially empty of humour. Stevens had abundance of humour of a somewhat fierce but very real kind. Some of his caustic strokes are as good as anything recorded of Talleyrand: notably his reply to an apologist of Johnson who urged in the President's defence that he was "a selfmade man." "I am delighted to hear it," said Stevens grimly; "it relieves the Creator of a terrible responsibility." With this rather savage wit went courage which could face the most enormous of tests; like Rabelais, like Danton, he could jest with death when death was touching him on the shoulder. In public life he was not so much careless of what he considered conventions as defiantly happy in challenging them. It gave him keen delight to outrage at once the racial sentiments of the South and the Puritanism of the North by compelling the politicians whom he dominated and despised to pay public court to his mulatto mistress.

The inspiring motive of this man was hatred of the South. It seems probable that this sentiment had its origin in a genuine and honourable detestation of Slavery.

As a practising lawyer in Pennsylvania he had at an earlier period taken a prominent part in defending fugitive slaves. But by the time that he stood forward as the chief opponent of the Presidential policy of conciliation, Slavery had ceased to exist; yet his passion against the former slave-owners seemed rather to increase than to diminish. I think it certain, though I cannot produce here all the evidence that appears to me to support such a conclusion, that it was the negative rather than the positive aspect of his policy that attracted him most. Sumner might dream of the wondrous future in store for the Negro race--of whose qualities and needs he knew literally nothing--under Bostonian tutelage. But I am sure that for Stevens the vision dearest to his heart was rather that of the proud Southern aristocracy compelled to plead for mercy on its knees at the tribunal of its hereditary bondsmen.

Stevens was a great party leader. Not such a leader as Jefferson or Jackson had been: a man who sums up and expresses the will of masses of men. Nor yet such a leader as later times have accustomed us to; a man who by bribery or intrigue induces his fellow-professionals to support him. He was one of those who rule by

personal dominance. His courage has already been remarked; and he knew how much fearlessness can achieve in a profession where most men are peculiarly cowardly. It was he who forced the issue between the President and Congress and obtained at a stroke a sort of captaincy in the struggle by moving in the House of Representatives that the consideration of Reconstruction by Congress would precede any consideration of the President's message asking for the admission of the representatives of the reorganized States.

By a combination of forceful bullying and skilful strategy Stevens compelled the House of Representatives to accept his leadership in this matter, but the action of Congress on other questions during these early months of the contest shows how far it still was from accepting his policy. The plan of Reconstruction which the majority now favoured is to be found outlined in the Fourteenth Constitutional Amendment which, at about this time, it recommended for adoption by the States.

The provisions of this amendment were threefold. One, for which a precedent had been afforded by the President's own action, declared that the public debt incurred by the Federal Government should never be repudiated, and also that no State should pay or accept responsibility for any debt incurred for the purpose of waging war against the Federation. Another, probably unwise from the point of view of far-sighted statesmanship but more or less in line with the President's policy, provided for the exclusion from office of all who, having sworn allegiance to the Constitution of the United States, had given aid to a rebellion against its Government. The third, which was really the crucial one, provided a settlement of the franchise question which cannot be regarded as extreme or unreasonable. It will be remembered that the original Constitutional Compromise had provided for the inclusion, in calculating the representation of a State, of all "free persons" and of three-fifths of the "other persons"--that is, of the slaves. By freeing the slaves the representation to which the South was entitled was automatically increased by the odd two-fifths of their number, and this seemed to Northerners unreasonable, unless the freedmen were at the same time enfranchised. Congress decided to recommend that the representation of the South should be greater or less according to the extent to which the Negro population were admitted to the franchise or excluded from it. This clause was re-cast more than once in order to satisfy a fantastic scruple of Sumner's concerning the indecency of mentioning the fact that some people were black and others white, a scruple which he continued to enforce with his customary appeals to the Declaration of Independence, until even his ally Stevens lost all patience with him. But in itself it was not, perhaps, a bad solution of the difficulty. Had it been allowed to stand and work without further interference it is quite likely that many Southern States would have been induced by the prospect of larger representation to admit in

course of time such Negroes as seemed capable of understanding the meaning of citizenship in the European sense. Such, at any rate, was the opinion of General Lee, as expressed in his evidence before the Reconstruction Committee.

The South was hostile to the proposed settlement mainly on account of the second provision. It resented the proposed exclusion of its leaders. The sentiment was an honourable and chivalrous one, and was well expressed by Georgia in her protest against the detention of Jefferson Davis: "If he is guilty so are we." But the rejection of the Amendment by the Southern States had a bad effect in the North. It may be convenient here to remark that Davis was never tried. He was brought up and admitted to bail (which the incalculable Greeley found for him), and the case against him was not further pressed. In comparison with almost every other Government that has crushed an insurrection, the Government of the United States deserves high credit for its magnanimity in dealing with the leaders of the Secession. Yet the course actually pursued, more in ignorance than in malice so far as the majority were concerned, probably caused more suffering and bitterness among the vanquished than a hundred executions.

For the Radicals were more and more gaining control of Congress, now openly at war with the Executive. The President had been using his veto freely, and, as many even of his own supporters thought, imprudently. The Republicans were eager to obtain the two-thirds majority in both Houses necessary to carry measures over his veto, and to get it even the meticulous Sumner was ready to stoop to some pretty discreditable manoeuvres. The President had taken the field against Congress and made some rather violent stump speeches, which were generally thought unworthy of the dignity of the Chief Magistracy. Meanwhile alleged "Southern outrages" against Negroes were vigorously exploited by the Radicals, whose propaganda was helped by a racial riot in New Orleans, the responsibility for which it is not easy to determine, but the victims of which were mostly persons of colour. The net result was that the new Congress, elected in 1866, not only gave the necessary two-thirds majority, but was more Radical in its complexion and more strictly controlled by the Republican machine than the old had been.

The effect was soon apparent. A Reconstruction Bill was passed by the House and sent up to the Senate. It provided for the military government of the conquered States until they should be reorganized, but was silent in regard to the conditions of their re-admission. The Republican caucus met to consider amendments, and Sumner moved that in the new Constitutions there should be no exclusion from voting on account of colour. This was carried against the strong protest of John Sherman, the brother of the general and a distinguished Republican Senator. But when the Senate met, even he submitted to the decision of the caucus, and the

Amendment Bill was carried by the normal Republican majority. Johnson vetoed it, and it was carried by both Houses over his veto. The Radicals had now achieved their main object. Congress was committed to indiscriminate Negro Suffrage, and the President against it; the controversy was narrowed down to that issue. From that moment they had the game in their hands.

The impeachment of Johnson may be regarded as an interlude. The main mover in the matter was Stevens. The main instrument Ben Butler--a man disgraced alike in war and peace, the vilest figure in the politics of that time. It was he who, when in command at New Orleans (after braver men had captured it), issued the infamous order which virtually threatened Southern women who showed disrespect for the Federal uniform with rape--an order which, to the honour of the Northern soldiers, was never carried out. He was recalled from his command, but his great political "influence" saved him from the public disgrace which should have been his portion. Perhaps no man, however high his character, can mix long in the business of politics and keep his hands quite clean. The leniency with which Butler was treated on this occasion must always remain an almost solitary stain upon the memory of Abraham Lincoln. On the memory of Benjamin Butler stains hardly show. At a later stage of the war Butler showed such abject cowardice that Grant begged that if his political importance required that he should have some military command he should be placed somewhere where there was no fighting. This time Butler saved himself by blackmailing his commanding officer. At the conclusion of peace the man went back to politics, a trade for which his temperament was better fitted; and it was he who was chosen as the chief impugner of the conduct and honour of Andrew Johnson!

The immediate cause of the Impeachment was the dismissal of Stanton, which Congress considered, wrongly as it would appear, a violation of an Act which, after the quarrel became an open one, they had framed for the express purpose of limiting his prerogative in this direction. In his quarrel with Stanton the President seems to have had a good case, but he was probably unwise to pursue it, and certainly unwise to allow it to involve him in a public quarrel with Grant, the one man whose prestige in the North might have saved the President's policy. The quarrel threw Grant, who was already ambitious of the Presidency, into the hands of the Republicans, and from that moment he ceased to count as a factor making for peace and conciliation.

Johnson was acquitted, two or three honest Republican Senators declaring in his favour, and so depriving the prosecution of the two-thirds majority. Each Senator gave a separate opinion in writing. These documents are of great historical interest; Sumner's especially--which is of inordinate length and intensely characteristic--should be studied by anyone who thinks that in these pages I

have given an unfair idea of his character.

In the meantime far more important work was being done in the establishment of Negro rule in the South. State after State was "reconstructed" under the terms of the Act which had been passed over the President's veto. In every case as many white men as possible were disfranchised on one pretext or another as "disloyal." In every case the whole Negro population was enfranchised. Throughout practically the whole area of what had been the Confederate States the position of the races was reversed.

So far, in discussing the Slavery Question and all the issues which arose out of it, I have left one factor out of account--the attitude of the slaves themselves. I have done so deliberately because up to the point which we have now reached that attitude had no effect on history. The slaves had no share in the Abolition movement or in the formation of the Republican Party. Even from John Brown's Raid they held aloof. The President's proclamation which freed them, the Acts of Congress which now gave them supreme power throughout the South, were not of their making or inspiration. In politics the negro was still an unknown factor.

There can be little doubt that under Slavery the relations of the two races were for the most part kindly and free from rancour, that the master was generally humane and the slave faithful. Had it not been so, indeed, the effect of the transfer of power to the freedmen must have been much more horrible than it actually was. On the other hand, it is certain that when some Southern apologists said that the slaves did not want their freedom they were wrong. Dr. Booker Washington, himself a slave till his sixth or seventh year, has given us a picture of the vague but very real longing which was at the back of their minds which bears the stamp of truth. It is confirmed by their strange and picturesque hymnology, in which the passionate desire to be "free," though generally apparently invoked in connection with a future life, is none the less indicative of their temper, and in their preoccupation with those parts of the Old Testament--the history of the Exodus, for instance--which appeared applicable to their own condition. Yet it is clear that they had but the vaguest idea of what "freedom" implied. Of what "citizenship" implied they had, of course, no idea at all.

It is very far from my purpose to write contemptuously of the Negroes. There is something very beautiful about a love of freedom wholly independent of experience and deriving solely from the just instinct of the human soul as to what is its due. And if, as some Southerners said, the Negro understood by freedom mainly that he need not work, there was a truth behind his idea, for the right to be idle if and when you choose without reason given or permission sought is really what makes the essential difference between freedom and slavery. But it is

quite another thing when we come to a complex national and historical product like American citizenship. Of all that great European past, without the memory of which the word "Republic" has no meaning, the Negro knew nothing: with it he had no link. A barbaric version of the more barbaric parts of the Bible supplied him with his only record of human society.

Yet Negro Suffrage, though a monstrous anomaly, might have done comparatively little practical mischief if the Negro and his white neighbour had been left alone to find their respective levels. The Negro might have found a certain picturesque novelty in the amusement of voting; the white American might have continued to control the practical operation of Government. But it was no part of the policy of those now in power at Washington to leave either black or white alone. "Loyal" Governments were to be formed in the South; and to this end political adventurers from the North--"carpet-baggers," as they were called--went down into the conquered South to organize the Negro vote. A certain number of disreputable Southerners, known as "scallywags," eagerly took a hand in the game for the sake of the spoils. So of course did the smarter and more ambitious of the freedmen. And under the control of this ill-omened trinity of Carpet-Bagger, Scallywag, and Negro adventurer grew up a series of Governments the like of which the sun has hardly looked upon before or since.

The Negro is hardly to be blamed for his share in the ghastly business. The whole machinery of politics was new to him, new and delightful as a toy, new and even more delightful as a means of personal enrichment. That it had or was intended to have any other purpose probably hardly crossed his mind. His point of view--a very natural one, after all--was well expressed by the aged freedman who was found chuckling over a pile of dollar bills, the reward of some corrupt vote, and, when questioned, observed: "Wal, it's de fifth time I's been bo't and sold, but, 'fo de Lord, it's de fust I eber got de money!" Under administrations conducted in this spirit the whole South was given up to plunder. The looting went on persistently and on a scale almost unthinkable. The public debts reached amazing figures, while Negro legislators voted each other wads of public money as a kind of parlour game, amid peals of hearty African laughter.

Meanwhile the Governments presided over by Negroes, or white courtiers of the Negro and defended by the bayonets of an armed black militia, gave no protection to the persons or property of the whites.

Daily insults were offered to what was now the subject race. The streets of the proud city of Charleston, where ten years before on that fatal November morning the Palmetto flag had been raised as the signal of Secession, were paraded by mobs of dusky freedmen singing: "De bottom rail's on top now, and we's g'wine to

keep it dar!" It says much for the essential kindness of the African race that in the lawless condition of affairs there were no massacres and deliberate cruelties were rare. On the other hand, the animal nature of the Negro was strong, and outrages on white women became appallingly frequent and were perpetrated with complete impunity. Every white family had to live in something like a constant state of siege.

It was not to be expected that ordinary men of European origin would long bear such government. And those on whom it was imposed were no ordinary men. They were men whose manhood had been tried by four awful years of the supreme test, men such as had charged with Pickett up the bloody ridge at Gettysburg, and disputed with the soldiers of Grant every inch of tangled quagmire in the Wilderness. They found a remedy.

Suddenly, as at a word, there appeared in every part of the downtrodden country bands of mysterious horsemen. They rode by night, wearing long white garments with hoods that hid their faces, and to the terror-stricken Negroes who encountered them they declared themselves--not without symbolic truth--the ghosts of the great armies that had died in defence of the Confederacy. But superstitious terrors were not the only ones that they employed.

The mighty secret society called the Ku-Klux-Klan was justified by the only thing that can justify secret societies--gross tyranny and the denial of plain human rights. The method they employed was the method so often employed by oppressed peoples and rarely without success--the method by which the Irish peasantry recovered their land. It was to put fear into the heart of the oppressor. Prominent men, both black and white, who were identified with the evils which afflicted the State, were warned generally by a message signed "K.K.K." to make themselves scarce. If they neglected the warning they generally met a sudden and bloody end. At the same time the Klan unofficially tried and executed those criminals whom the official Government refused to suppress. These executions had under the circumstances a clear moral justification. Unfortunately it had the effect of familiarizing the people with the irregular execution of Negroes, and so paved the way for those "lynchings" for which, since the proper authorities are obviously able and willing to deal adequately with such crimes, no such defence can be set up.

Both sides appealed to Grant, who had been elected President on the expiration of Johnson's term in 1868.

Had he been still the Grant of Appomattox and of the healing message to which reference has already been made, no man would have been better fitted to



mediate between the sections and to cover with his protection those who had surrendered to his sword. But Grant was now a mere tool in the hands of the Republican politicians, and those politicians were determined that the atrocious system should be maintained. They had not even the excuse of fanaticism. Stevens was dead; he had lived just long enough to see his policy established, not long enough to see it imperilled. Sumner still lived, but he had quarrelled with Grant and lost much of his influence. The men who surrounded the President cared

little enough for the Negro. Their resolution to support African rule in the South depended merely upon the calculation that so long as it endured the reign of the Republican party and consequently their own professional interests were safe. A special Act of Congress was passed to put down the Ku-Klux-Klan, and the victorious army of the Union was again sent South to carry it into execution. But this time it found an enemy more invulnerable than Lee had been--invulnerable because invisible. The whole white population was in the conspiracy and kept its secrets. The army met with no overt resistance with which it could deal, but the silent terrorism went on. The trade of "Carpet-bagger" became too dangerous. The ambitious Negro was made to feel that the price to be paid for his privileges was a high one. Silently State after State was wrested from Negro rule.

Later the Ku-Klux-Klan--for such is ever the peril of Secret Societies and the great argument against them when not demanded by imperative necessity--began to abuse its power. Reputable people dropped out of it, and traitors were found in its ranks. About 1872 it disappeared. But its work was done. In the great majority of the Southern States the voting power of the Negro was practically eliminated. Negroid Governments survived in three only--South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. For these the end came four years later.

The professional politicians of the North, whose motive for supporting the indefensible régime established by the Reconstruction Act has already been noted, used, of course, the "atrocities" of the Ku-Klux-Klan as electioneering material in the North. "Waving the bloody shirt," it was called. But the North was getting tired of it, and was beginning to see that the condition of things in the conquered States was a national disgrace. A Democratic House of Representatives had been chosen, and it looked as if the Democrats would carry the next Presidential election. In fact they did carry it. But fraudulent returns were sent in by the three remaining Negro Governments, and these gave the Republicans a majority of one in the Electoral College. A Commission of Enquiry was demanded and appointed, but it was packed by the Republicans and showed itself as little scrupulous as the scoundrels who administered the "reconstructed" States. Affecting a sudden zeal for State Rights, it declared itself incompetent to inquire

into the circumstances under which the returns were made. It accepted them on the word of the State authorities and declared Hayes, the Republican candidate, elected.

It was a gross scandal, but it put an end to a grosser one. Some believe that there was a bargain whereby the election of Hayes should be acquiesced in peaceably on condition that the Negro Governments were not further supported. It is equally possible that Hayes felt his moral position too weak to continue a policy of oppression in the South. At any rate, that policy was not continued. Federal support was withdrawn from the remaining Negro Governments, and they fell without a blow. The second rebellion of the South had succeeded where the first had failed. Eleven years after Lee had surrendered to Grant at Appomattox, Grant's successor in the Presidency surrendered to the ghost of Lee.

Negro rule was at an end. But the Negro remained, and the problem which his existence presented was, and is, to-day, further from solution than when Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. The signs of the Black Terror are still visible everywhere in the South. They are visible in the political solidarity of those Southern States--and only of those States--which underwent the hideous ordeal, what American politicians call "the solid South." All white men, whatever their opinions, must vote together, lest by their division the Negro should again creep in and regain his supremacy. They are visible in those strict laws of segregation which show how much wider is the gulf between the races than it was under Slavery--when the children of the white slave-owner, in Lincoln's words, "romped freely with the little negroes." They are visible above all in acts of unnatural cruelty committed from time to time against members of the dreaded race. These things are inexplicable to those who do not know the story of the ordeal which the South endured, and cannot guess at the secret panic with which white men contemplate the thought of its return.

Well might Jefferson tremble for his country. The bill which the first slave-traders ran up is not yet paid. Their dreadful legacy remains and may remain for generations to come a baffling and tormenting problem to every American who has a better head than Sumner's and a better heart than Legree's.