

The future prospects of the American People

The future, to say no more, looks dark. In round numbers, say we have a population of 30 millions. 20 millions are now writhing in mad fanaticism, debauchery & national ruin; 10 millions are living in despondency, wretchedness, want, & even starvation. A five years' cruel, savage, unprecedented war has revolutionized - destroyed the government, pampered, with the spoils of plunder, a greedy, blood-thirsty, unprincipled few, demoralized, & intoxicated & debauched their associates, & paralyzed & ruined those who have fallen under the laws of their displeasure. Vice & crime of every hue is the rule & not the exception, in one section of the nation; while destitution, misery & want prevail in another section. For five years the productive forces of one section were turned into the destroyers of property in the other, while the productive forces of the latter were necessarily made the consumers of their substance at home in the endeavor to defend their own homes & firesides from robbery & destruction. The result of the war transformed four millions of producers into idle paupers & vagrants; left thousands upon thousands of hitherto prosperous & happy women & children, husbandless, fatherless, homeless & helpless. An inflated currency flooded the country, finding its way chiefly into the pockets of sharpers unprincipled traders & stock-jobbers. The inflated currency gave fabulous prices to the necessaries of life. A deplorable drought among the sufferers of the South, placed the necessaries for subsistence still farther from their reach. The tax gatherers of a self constituted government forced



from these destitute sufferers what little of money they might chance to have - & with which hunger & starvation could have been arrested for a little while longer. Thousands upon thousands are this day upon the point of actual starvation in Alabama, Georgia & the Carolinas - women & children & disabled men; while their neighbors at the North are living in inglorious ease & settling in extravagant luxury. And this in our lightened & Christian America!

The country at large is over-traded & under-worked. You need not look beyond your own section for proof of this. Look around you. Count the consumers, & then count the producers; which preponderates? Are there more tilling the soil than those who are not? You can see for yourselves. The necessities of life are becoming higher & higher in price. Money is being drained from the many to the few. Taxation is becoming more & more onerous. Vice & immorality are becoming more & more predominant. Ruin is stalking abroad.

But what of the future? Taxation & extortion must be increased to sustain the towering credit of the nation, with its fabulous debt hanging over it. A general & sweeping confiscation must be brought forward to prop it in its fall. A financial crash nationally & individually must ensue. Anarchy & military despotism will prevail. Society will be revolutionized & demoralized. Distrust will be universal among the people. Espionage will be



instituted by those in power. Public murders will be enacted under claim of legal executions. Secret assassinations will be common. And this once prosperous, fair & happy land will be converted into a worse than Pandemonium.

What is the duty of the people of our section in view of all this. They must be industrious. Let them labor with their hands. Practice frugality & economy. Let them not strive for display in the trappings of gaudy attire. Let them practice sobriety & a fraternal feeling. Let virtue, integrity & morality characterize their whole conduct. The youth must be educated. Not superficially & partially, but solidly & fully. No nation of educated people can ever be made the slaves of tyrants. The hope—the salvation of our people, individually & nationally is in the intelligence of the youth of the country, who will soon be men & women, & actors upon the public stage. While the opposite section of the nation are sinking to degradation in vice & crime, intoxicated & urged on by their past & present successes in all that is unwholesome, & trusting in a kind Providence, except our manhood & womanhood, for all that is good & noble, for that is arduous & virtuous, for wisdom intelligence & a high order of worth & excellence. We can do it. We can



be men of usefulness, men of worth. We can be  
a nation of puritans. Then let us exert ourselves  
& be so. In taking leave of my much esteemed  
teacher & of my fellow-students—perhaps for the last  
time, I have voluntarily pledged myself to the former  
& entreat the latter to follow the course here  
indicated with all fidelity & perseverance, that  
we may come off more than conquerors in  
the end.