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1863

Loyalty and Disloyalty

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Recommended Citation

author, Unknown, "Loyalty and Disloyalty" (1863). *Pamphlet Collection*. 93.
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LOYALTY and DISLOYALTY.

Much indignation is, we are told, feigned or felt in certain quarters, and especially by the distinguished biographer, diplomatist, and politician, who writes for the editorial columns of the *Evening Journal*, that an association should have been formed in this city to disseminate and maintain loyal feeling, and discourage and rebuke disloyalty by all proper efforts in public and private. Is this because disloyalty is not, in the opinion of the *Journal* and its editors, a vice and danger? Or, because Philadelphia is so peculiarly fortunate at this period of insurrection and revolt, of Southern rebels and Northern sympathizers, as to have no disloyal men within her borders?

The former proposition will hardly be maintained, as yet, even by the *Journal*; the latter would be good news, indeed, to all loyal ears, if it were not, unhappily, too good to be true. The articles to which we have referred strive to convey the idea that Democracy has been confounded with disloyalty; that a party line has been drawn, and one portion of society arrayed against the other. In support of this assertion, the *Journal* speaks of "the discreditable conduct of one of our banks, in turning out its solicitor because he is a Democrat—a bank, too, which has prospered on Democratic favor, and will, ere long, be begging for Democratic patronage." Does not the *Journal* know that if one Democrat was turned out, he was replaced by another, and that the removal cannot, therefore, have been caused by party politics, or the wish to assail men on party grounds?

The fidelity of the great mass of the Democracy to their country ought to be known to the *Evening Journal*, by the best of all proofs, the difficulty which has been experienced in turning them aside from the path of duty, and overcoming their attachment to the national cause. But, while the masses are, or wish to be, sound—while the hearts of some of their leaders beat as strongly for the Union as of old, there are others who are false to every principle that can save the nation in the present crisis—who are eager to complete the work of disorganization which the South has begun, and destroy what remains of the fabric of our national greatness. These men seek to sow dissension and distrust in every quarter—to persuade each part of the country that it will be abandoned by the rest—to separate and distract all, until the whole shall fall an easy prey into the hands of the Southern oligarchy. The West is told that

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unless she takes the initiative in desertion, she will herself be abandoned by the Middle States, and her way barred to the Atlantic; while the Middle States are elsewhere in their turn assured that the West will leave them and make her own bargain for the Mississippi. *The Press* of Monday contains a letter from the pen of Mr. F. W. Hughes, professedly intended to warn his fellow-citizens here that they cannot keep the West without prostrating themselves at the feet of the South, and excluding New England from the Union if she will not join in the humiliation; but really meant to inspire jealousy between East, West, and North, in order that secession may at last triumph over the Union and Constitution.

Peace with the rebellion—peace at any price first—the disorganization of the North next—and, finally, their own triumph—is the programme of these conspirators; and they are ready to do and submit to anything to attain their object. The worse that peace is, the harder its conditions, the greater the shame, the better it will suit the end in view, by rendering the condition of the people here so intolerable, that they will be ready to adopt the views and submit to the designs of Mr. Hughes and his associates.

For, unhappily, Mr. Hughes is not the only laborer in this scheme of treason, which, though not yet able and ready to strike, is sufficiently bold and audacious to proclaim its expectation that the hour will soon arrive when the stars and stripes shall be replaced by the flag of the Confederates, the American nation become a thing of the past, and its place be filled by a multitude of States struggling with each other for empire or existence, making sordid compacts to-day which will be broken to-morrow, and all hastening on the downward path that leads through anarchy and intestine war to military despotism.

The proofs of this do not consist only in the letter of Mr. Hughes, or the attempt which he made, two years ago, to induce the Democratic party to assist in breaking up the Union. They lie all around, and he must be blind, or resolutely determined to close his eyes, who does not see them. No one among them, perhaps, is more striking, or fraught with more past and prospective evil, than the resolution prepared by Mr. William B. Reed, and adopted at his instance and that of other politicians of the same school, at the Democratic meeting held on January 17th, 1861, to neutralize the effect of one which had been convened, without distinction of party, a short time before, to sustain Major Anderson in the course which he had adopted of placing his command within the walls of Fort Sumpter.

This resolution was, to use Mr. Reed's own language, "adopted with enthusiastic unanimity," and is as follows:

Resolved, That in the deliberate judgement of the Democracy of Philadelphia, and, so far as we know it, of Pennsylvania, the dissolution of the Union by the separation of the whole South—a result we shall most sincerely deplore—may release this Commonwealth from the bonds which now connect it with the Confederacy, and would authorize and require its citizens, through a Convention to be assembled for that purpose, to determine with whom their lot shall be cast: whether with the North and East, whose fanaticism has precipitated

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this misery upon us, or with our brethren of the South, whose wrongs we feel as our own, or whether Pennsylvania shall stand by herself, ready, when occasion offers, to bind together the broken Union, and resume her place of loyalty and devotion.

This extraordinary doctrine, that the secession of the South would put an end to the Union here, free Pennsylvania from her allegiance to the United States, and authorize her citizens to side with the alien Government established by Jefferson Davis, and against the glorious Constitution framed and bequeathed by Washington, Hamilton, and Madison, was indignantly repudiated not long afterwards by the great body of the Democracy, at the memorable uprising of all parties which followed the capture of Fort Sumpter, and showed how little politicians, who have outlived their hearts, can judge of the effect which great events will produce on the hearts of others. But though rejected by the people, it was never disavowed or retracted by its authors. It still lay as an anchor to windward, a proof, if the South should in the end be triumphant, that they had always been true to its cause, and were entitled to receive from its hands those rewards which are most coveted by such political martyrs.

Accordingly, no sooner did the National Star begin to lose its ascendancy in the disasters of last summer, than this ill-omened resolution was dragged from the oblivion to which it had willingly been consigned by all good citizens. Its disorganizing doctrines were avowed and defended in a so-called "Vindication," and the people of this Commonwealth again impliedly told that all national obligation was at an end, and the people of each State free to choose between the United States and the "Confederacy." What that choice should be was not left to conjecture. The Confederates were described as our injured brethren, whose wrongs were our own; those arrayed in support of the National Government as fanatics engaged in an unjust war, who had brought all this misery to our doors. Is it possible to conceive of anything more insidious, more seditious, more disloyal, than such a "Vindication" of disloyalty, in the midst of the struggle which the American people are now making for their existence as a nation?

To understand this fully, we must remember that the Confederate Government is not only revolutionary, but alien; that its avowed purpose is to establish a new and distinct nation, which, when recognized as Mr. Reed would have it, will be as foreign to ourselves and our children as France or England. It will deal with us as selfishly and harshly as if it was not of the same race and language; will, as it does now, confound all Northern men in one common epithet of contempt and execration, as "Yankees," and know no distinction between the farmers of Pennsylvania, and the merchants and manufacturers of New England. Yet at the outset, while the South was, according to the author of the "Vindication," still hesitating, before blood had been shed or any irrevocable step taken, she was encouraged to go on by the assurance that this Commonwealth was ready to join her in the path of revolution; and this encouragement is now more or less covertly reproduced and repeated at the height of the struggle, and when the fate of the nation, perhaps for centuries, is trembling in the balance. The example of Mr. Fox is cited in the "Vindication"

to show that a war may be censured as unjust or inexpedient without a violation of the duty which we owe to our country. No one can dispute this proposition; but did that great orator ever seek to inflame one section of his country against another while engaged in a struggle with a common foe? Did he ever try to induce Scotland or Yorkshire to cast its lot with revolutionary or imperial France, or intimate that if the legions of Napoleon crossed the channel, they would find friends and adherents in Liverpool and London?

Would the English people have suffered such invidious comparisons, as those which have recently appeared in the *Evening Journal*, to be drawn between their own Government and that of France, for the purpose of aiding the latter in the work of conquest? Some of the persons, who are now loudest in vindicating the *Journal*, were vehement three years since against the Mayor of this city, for not preventing Mr. Curtis from lecturing on a literary subject, because he was suspected of being an Abolitionist, and interposing the shield of the law between him and the mob. Does the freedom of the press lie nearest to the heart of these people, or the desire to subvert the freest Government that exists upon the earth? Can anything be more painful than the spectacle of a great nation, compelled by the excesses of its own citizens, to choose between the dangers inseparable from restraining the freedom of speech, and the still greater dangers to liberty and independence resulting from its license?

Arguments deduced from considerations of national honor, and addressed to patriotism, can have but little weight with men who think seriously of turning their backs on New England, on Bunker Hill, and Lexington, to clasp the hands yet stained with the blood of the New England men and Pennsylvanians, who fell at Antietam and Fredericksburg. But the scheme of Mr. Hughes is not less contrary to practical good sense, than to morals and right feeling. The lakes, the great canals and rail roads, leading from the Northwest to the seaboard, are in the hands of New York and Pennsylvania, and with them the keys of the Union. Not one-fifth part of the exports of the Western States finds its way to the Gulf of Mexico; the rest takes the direct route to Europe, over the eastern lines of communication. Much as the West desires and values the Mississippi, she would, if compelled to choose between the friendship of the Middle States and that of the Southwest, prefer the former as in every sense the more beneficial. While the men of New York and Pennsylvania remain true to the Union, we may feel sure that the Western men will not leave it. Besides, no calculation can be safe, even in a commercial point of view, which fails to take account of moral and intellectual influences. Trade requires security; to be placed upon a basis free from sudden and violent changes. An indispensable prerequisite to our forming a stable union with the South, is that the South should confess itself insincere in all that it has said and done during the last three years and consent to unite with us. We shall in vain sue for their favor, if they see in our suppliant and humble attitude, fresh occasion for the display of the ingratitude and arrogance with which they broke all connection with their best friends at the North. But even if this difficulty were overcome by allowing the Confederacy to dictate its own terms, and inducing

the majority of the people here to accept them, the breach would only be salved over, not healed; there would still remain a powerful minority, ready on the first reflux of popular opinion to swell again into a majority, and disown the bargain into which the country had temporarily been betrayed.

The voters of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio would still be the same men who elected Mr. Lincoln by an overwhelming majority in answer to the course of intimidation and fraud pursued in Kansas. To leave the comparatively firm ground on which we now stand, and destroy the Government of the United States, under which we have so long prospered, in the hope of constructing a better one under such auspices, and out of such incongruous materials, would be the wildest and most impracticable of all speculations, and do as much discredit to the heads of those who engaged in it as their hearts. Such safety as there is for us—and it will be our own fault if it is anything else than entire—must be sought in drawing the ties that bind us together, which had been relaxed in the sunshine of prosperity, closer as the storm increases, and remembering that every star that still shines in our flag is more valuable for the absence of those which we have lost.

That disloyalty exists, and surrounds us like a miasma, vitiating the purer air, is only too true, and it is not less sure that if the war which we are now waging for the restoration of the Union as it was, shall prove unsuccessful, we shall be plunged into another for the defence of the Union as it now is. Let no man imagine that if commissioners from Washington and Richmond, were to meet on the banks of the Rappahannock, and arrange terms of separation, giving us all that we still hold, Maryland, Western Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, and New Orleans, the pains of war—taxation, conscription, uncertainty for the future, would be over, and the blessings of peace at hand.

They might perhaps, indeed, be ours, if we were like other and more fortunate countries, of which we read—like England, France, or Russia, where the idea of partition or dismemberment could not be suggested by the worst and most desperate revolutionist, during the wildest period of faction, without accumulating a cloud of odium around his head, and exposing him to destruction at the hands of his own followers. We should, it may be said, be great in territory, powerful in arms, abounding in resources, after the South was gone; while the right to descend the Mississippi might be secured by material guarantees, or its loss compensated by the railroads, lakes, and canals; leading directly from the West, through the Atlantic States, to the great marts of Europe. But Mr. Hughes and his coadjutors will not suffer this to be, will not allow us to look forward to repose and unity, even if we take their advice and recognize the Confederacy. They look at the Constitution and read in it Secession, the right to exclude States, and of States to depart at pleasure, and are unable to perceive that there is a moral obligation, where our country is in question, prior and paramount to positive law.

The terrible lesson of the last few years is, that whatever constitutions or their interpreters may say about the right to break up a nation at pleasure, there is a natural law which cannot be disregarded with impunity, that will, like all natural laws, avenge its violated authority on all who will not understand

and obey its mandate. Better might a parent turn his child out of doors, or a child refuse shelter or maintenance to a parent, because no statute had enjoined the duty or forbidden the crime, and hope to avoid the results that flow from wrong, than a people expect to find happiness and safety in the course which these men advise; for men may escape the temporal consequences of guilt by death, while nations always survive long enough to feel the retribution due to their own misconduct. Thus far the North has avoided the sin of the South, has refused to admit the mischievous doctrine that a people, one in race and in language, substantially one in religious faith, separated by no natural line of demarcation, can dismember their country without a violation of natural and moral right, even if they violated no legal obligation. So far, too, the North has escaped the greater part of the suffering, which the South has had to endure, has been tranquil, prosperous, united, and save in the loss of its children who have fallen while fighting for its cause, free from all the worst evils of war.

If it perseveres to the end in the path of honor and duty; if the fire in which it is now glowing, and the blood shed in common on so many battle-fields, shall weld and harden the Northern States indissolubly into one people, then the war will be, in the truest sense, successful, even if we fail in regaining the whole South. It is not the extent of territory that makes the true greatness of a nation; it is united and harmonious councils, a common sentiment of duty, that submission of each and every part to the will of the whole, by which law displaces violence, and order grows out of confusion. But if we become, when the war is at an end, what the doctrines of Mr. Calhoun and his disciples would make us, a mosaic of fragments, a country to which no man can wisely give his affections, because no man can tell how soon it may be resolved into its constituent elements by the magic wand of an ordinance of secession; if our first and highest thought, our sole bond of union is to be the consideration by what route each section can best reach a market, or where it can most advantageously sell its wares; if this is to be from time to time determined by conventions, called and voting under those influences of force and fraud, which are even now arising like exhalations from the ground at the voice of faction; if the choice of to-day can be recalled to-morrow, at the prompting of popular caprice or political ambition; if, in short, the tie which should bind the members of a nation as indissolubly together as those of a family, is to be exchanged for a series of alliances, such as Mr. Hughes proposes, discord and confusion will take the place of the tranquility that has prevailed hitherto, and help must be sought from above, for there would be little here below. Civil war would probably follow, and a state of suffering ensue, far greater than that which we have seen at the South, because the struggle would be, not between different sections, but from county to county, from township to township, perhaps from street to street.

If Schuylkill, Lehigh, Berks, or Montgomery, could indeed be brought to sanction an ordinance declaring that the Union that now binds us together is destroyed, the outrage would, we may feel sure, be resisted by Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, and Allegheny. The city of New York might be arrayed at

the same time against the State by a renewal of the conspiracy which is known to have existed in the spring of 1861. Confederate troops might be called in on one side, those of New England on the other, and the whole result in a contest fought out with the characteristic obstinacy of the Anglo-Saxon, of which no man now living would see the end. The thirty-years' war afford a memorable instance, among many others, of how long civil strife may endure when the contest is not confined to individuals, and lies between organized and warring States. Now, as then, the South is arrayed against the North; and if the fires of religious bigotry are wanting, their place is supplied by ideas equally potent for good and ill—the hatred of race, the sense of the violated rights of man, the attachment for prescriptive right, and the belief that the country cannot be preserved unless prescription is broken down, each appealing to, and finding a response in, the strongest instincts of human nature.

Our only escape from these and the other dangers by which we are menaced, consists in refusing to listen to the counsels of those who would persuade us that secession and disorganization are remedies for the evils which Secession has caused, in remembering that the Union which we have is as priceless as the Union which we have lost, and more necessary to our safety, because the surrounding perils are greater, and in feeling sure that no section can be false to the common cause without ruin to itself, and perhaps to all the others. Jefferson Davis has received the plaudits of Mr. Gladstone for making the scattered States of the South into a great nation. Let us not suffer the nation which was confided to our care by our fathers, and which it is our duty to hand down to our children, to be broken up at the bidding of local jealousy and selfish ambition. Here, at the North, among those who have been true to their country and its flag, can the American people alone be found. The Confederates have forfeited their claim to the name of Americans by taking up arms, not as rebels merely, for rebellion may mean reform and amelioration, but for the dismemberment and destruction of the land that gave them birth. The soil on which they stand is ours—the heritage of the nation—but they themselves have become, as far as in them lies, a foreign people.

Our destiny is in our own hands, in the use which we make of the opportunities within our grasp—not with Georgia, South Carolina, or Alabama. We have not yet sunk so low that we must necessarily perish, unless we can force or persuade the South to retrace their steps and live with us as part of the same nation. That twenty millions of people, inhabiting a territory five times as large as that of France, should depend for prosperity and greatness on the course pursued by an extraneous and hostile population, would, if it were true, be an instance unparalleled in history, of imbecility and weakness. The real injury inflicted on us by the rebellion does not arise from parting with the mixed, disloyal, and half-civilized population of whites and negroes, that inhabit the greater part of the South, nor even in the loss of territory, which, in our abundance, we could well spare; but from the establishment of a foreign power on our borders, and the opportunity given to men like Mr. Hughes to imitate Southern example, and teach disunion here. Our duty is, therefore, not only plain, but, if we are true to ourselves, within our power to accomplish.

The war must be prosecuted with vigor until we are victors in the contest, and able to dictate the terms on which it shall terminate. But we must, at the same time, use every means to strengthen the ties which bind the Northern States together, and establish our nationality on too firm a basis to be uprooted by faction, or shaken by disaster. We shall then be secure against the worst evils, those from within, and have little to fear from the utmost efforts of the foe without. For this purpose the concurrence of men of all parties is requisite; the country cannot be saved unless Democrats and Republicans unite for its preservation. The existence of parties is inherent in, perhaps essential to, free government, and we cannot reasonably expect the Democratic party to give up its political organization, and come forward as adherents of a Republican Administration. But we may ask, and the country has a right to require, that their opposition shall not exceed those limits which are consistent with the safety and existence of the nation, and shall not be guided and controlled by men whose chief aim is to sow the seeds of discord and disorganization, and destroy that Union of the loyal States, in one Government, which is our only safeguard against anarchy and civil war.

RINGWALT & BROWN, Printers, 111 and 113 South Fourth Street.