

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF THE CIVIL WAR.

We all know, that the professed purpose of the war party was to preserve and restore the Union over all the States. But the disclosures made above by Colonel Baldwin of the aims of the head of that party, are sufficient to prove that the real purpose was far other than the pretense:—to enlarge and perpetuate the power of his faction. This had just seized the reins of Federal power by an accident, being in fact but a minority of the American people. This people had condemned it to a righteous exclusion from power for forty years. Its leaders were weary, envious and angry with their long waiting, and hungry for the power and the spoils of office. These cunning men were fully conscious that their tenure of power, won by luck and artifice, would be precarious and brief. The old party of Federal usurpation and centralization had dubbed itself, by a strong misnomer, the Whig party. The people, at ten presidential elections, or congressional issues, had rejected their project. At length, despairing of victory by its old tactics, it had thrown itself into the arms of the later born and despicable party of the Abolitionists, who had at last succeeded in their purpose of raising, in numerous States, their designed tempest of fanaticism. Thus the older and larger party gave itself away to the younger, smaller, and more indecent one; and by this traffic the two had won in November, 1860, an apparent success, so far as to make its leader a minority President. The manipulators well knew their danger from “the sober second thought” of the American people. It was but too probable that the elements of justice and conservatism, unfortunately divided in 1860, would reunite in 1864 to restore the Constitution. Hence, “had they great wrath,” because they knew their time was short. They knew that something more must be done to inflame the contest between fanaticism and conservatism, or their glorying would be short.

The hasty secession of South Carolina and the six Gulf States, although justified by the avowed revolutionary section-

alism of the new party in power, gave them their coveted opportunity. The conspirators said to each other: "Now we have our game. We will inflame fanaticism and sectional enmities by the cry of Union and Rebellion, and thus precipitate a war between the States. *Inter armor silent leges.* Our war will be short; for we believe these Southern slavocrats much more boastful than valiant; and, chiefly, we will paralyze their resistance by lighting the fires of servile insurrection, plunder, arson, rape and murder in their rear. But this short war will suffice for us, to centralize Federal power, overthrow the Constitution, fix our high tariffs and plutocratic fiscal system upon the country and secure for ourselves an indefinite tenure of power and riches." Such were precisely the counsels by which such leaders as Senator Pomeroy, Mr. Thaddeus Stevens, Governors Morton, Curtin, Andrews, etc., hectorred the ignorant and vacillating chief of their party into war, against the advice of real Union men North and South, and especially against the views of his own Premier, William H. Seward. This man, while the most unscrupulous of traffickers, and the chief architect of the new faction, knew well, as did all statesmen and constitutional lawyers, that the Constitution gave the Federal Government, the creature of the Federated States, no right to coerce the seceded States, its own sovereigns and creators. He was older than his supplanters in his own faction, and however unscrupulous, was too much imbued with the precedents, principles and feelings of the older and better days, to bring himself at once to the atrocity of kindling a war between the States; hence, Mr. Seward had adopted the smoother and wiser policy. He had induced his chief to make an ambiguous deliverance in his inaugural, March 4, 1861. He believed that he would be able so to direct the plans of his presidential tool as to make him adhere to the pacific policy. But he was mistaken. The more forward and heady conspirators gathered in Washington, wrested his tool out of his hand, and turned it against him.

These new advisers were aware that a Federal executive had no more constitutional or legal right of his own motion to attack a seceded State, than the poorest constable in the most obscure township. But they were in too much haste to wait for the semblance of authority from a congressional force bill, un-

authorized and flimsy as such a semblance would be. Nor did they feel certain that even their rump Congress would be persuaded to enact a war against sovereign States no longer in the Federation, nor represented in their body, nor subject to their jurisdiction. The Senators and Representatives of seven States would be absent; but those of the great Union-loving Border States, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri and Arkansas, would be present. Such a rump Congress might indeed include a number of the admirers of Andrew Jackson, but they would be too just and clear sighted to claim the precedent of his force bill of 1833 against South Carolina, even though they did not regard it, as true history will, as the mere expression of a tyrannical temper and of personal hatreds in that famous renegade to the principles of the party which elected him. For that force bill was directed against a State which claimed to be still in the Union, while nullifying within her own borders an unjust Federal law. It was wholly another thing for the Federal Government to declare war against seven seceded States, no longer under their authority, but withdrawn from it by sovereign acts more formal and legal than those which had made them parties to the Union. Therefore the conspirators saw that a war must be precipitated without the semblance of law, and against law and the Constitution. By what expedient? By that of an audacious and gigantic lie! They knew that in fact every step and act of self-defense taken by the seceded States had been an act of formal, legal statehood executed by constitutional authorities, the same, to-wit, which had first made those States members of the Federal Union. But they would impudently discard this great fact and call those actions illegal riots, the doings of insurrectionary individuals assembled against the law. They would rely upon the hot arrogance of triumphant fanaticism and the revival of passions which they themselves had "set on fire of hell," to overlook this essential difference. Thus they would seemingly bring this terrible usurpation of their President under the scope of his authority to enforce laws and suppress illegal violence. So he was made to begin his famous war proclamation of April, 1861, which made the most dreadful strife of modern times, with a stupendous false-

hood. On that foul foundation rest all the subsequent crimes of coercion and reconstruction.

That this war was made, not to preserve a constitutional Union, but solely to promote the aims of a faction, is confirmed by these further facts. Its purpose was clearly betrayed by the final reply of Mr. Lincoln to Colonel Baldwin's noble appeal for conciliation: "What, then, will become of my tariff?" He might as well have said out aloud, that he was making this war, not to preserve a Union, but to enforce his projected high tariff. Next, every thoughtful man, North and South, friend or foe of the Union, knew perfectly well that the Montgomery Confederacy of seven States must be short lived if it remained alone without the border States. If I may borrow a new term of finance, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to "freeze out" this weak association. By giving them a useless independence, making them feel the inconveniences of separation, and holding peaceably and steadily before them the benefits and protection of the old, just constitutional Union. So Mr. Seward knew; and on this belief his policy was founded. So the Virginian statesman and ardent lover of the Union, Alexander H. Stewart, assured Mr. Lincoln. So Colonel Baldwin; so ex-Governor Morehead, of Kentucky. My point is then, that the seven seceded States could have been brought back with certainty by pacific means. For the Union, no war was needed. It was made solely in the interest of the Jacobin party.

Secessionists and Union men alike knew that the Montgomery Confederacy could not stand, without the accession of the great border States. But the latter were still firm friends of the Union. They judged, like the secessionists, that the abolition and free-soil movement was sectional, mischievous, insulting, and perilous; but they had calmly resolved not to make it a *casus belli*, wicked as it was. They had distinctly refused to go out of the Union on that issue. They pledged themselves to support Mr. Lincoln loyally and legally, though not the President of their choice, and to conciliate the seceded States provided the crime of coercion was foreborne. But they assured Mr. Lincoln that this usurpation and crime would infallibly drive them, though reluctant, into the secession camp. This made it perfectly plain that peace meant a restored Union, while war meant disunion. But the Jacobins needed a war for