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THE PATRIOT.

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The President's Message.

Followed by the Senate and House of Representatives.

The continued disorganization of the Union to which the President has so often called the attention of Congress, is yet a subject of profound and patriotic concern. We may, however, find some relief from that anxiety in the reflection that the painful political situation, although before us, is not new in the experience of nations.

Political science—perhaps as highly perfected in our own time and country as in any other—has not yet disclosed any means by which civil wars can be absolutely prevented. An enlightened constitution of free government, may diminish their frequency and mitigate their severity by directing all its proceedings in accordance with its fundamental law. When a civil war has been brought to a close it is manifestly the first interest and duty of the state to restore the injuries which the war has inflicted—and to secure the benefit of the lessons it teaches as fully and as speedily as possible.

This duty was upon the termination of the rebellion promptly accepted—not only by the Executive department—but by the insurrectionary States themselves, and restoration in the first moment of peace, was believed to be easy and certain as it was indisputable.

The expectations, however, then so reasonably and confidently entertained, were disappointed by legislation from which I felt constrained by my obligations to the Constitution to withhold my assent.

It is, therefore, a source of profound regret that in complying with the obligations imposed upon the President by the Constitution, to give to Congress from time to time information of the state of the Union, I am unable to communicate any definite adjustment, satisfactory to the American people, of the questions which since the close of the rebellion, have agitated the public mind.

On the contrary, I am compelled to declare that at this time there is no Union as our fathers understood the term, and as they meant it to be understood by us—the Union which they established can exist only where all the States are represented in both Houses of Congress; where one State is as free as another to regulate its internal concerns according to its own will; and where the laws of the central government, strictly confined to matters of national jurisdiction, apply with equal force to all the people of every section.

That such is not the present state of the Union, is a melancholy fact, and we all must acknowledge that the restoration of the States to their proper legal relations with the Federal government and with one another, according to the terms of the original compact, would be the greatest temporal blessing which God, in his kindness, could bestow upon this nation.

In discharging my imperative duty to consider whether or not it is impossible to do so, I am constrained to conclude that the Union as the Constitution are inseparable, and as one is preserved, and if one is destroyed both must perish together.

The destruction of the Constitution will be followed by other and still greater calamities. It was ordained not only to govern our people, but to preserve the peace, domestic tranquility, and the safety of the Union, and to secure the enjoyment of the rights and liberties of our people.

It is not a question of individual or class, or sectional interest, much less of party predominance, but of duty, of high and sacred duty, which we are all sworn to perform. If we cannot support the Constitution with the cheerful assent of those who love and believe in it, we must give it up at least the fidelity of public servants, who accept under solemn obligations and commands which they dare not disregard.

The constitutional duty is not the only one which requires the States to be restored. There is another consideration, which, though of minor importance, is yet of great weight.

On the 22d day of July, 1861, Congress declared by an almost unanimous vote of both Houses, that the war should be conducted solely for the purpose of preserving the Union, and maintaining the supremacy of the Federal Constitution and laws, without impairing the equality, equality, and rights of the States, or of individuals, and that if it was done the war should cease. I do not say that this declaration is personally binding on those who joined in making it, any more than individual members of Congress are personally bound to pay a public debt created under a law for which they voted. But it was a solemn, public, official pledge of the national honor, and I cannot imagine upon what grounds the repudiation of it is to be justified, if it is remembered that this promise was not made to rebels only. Thousands of true men in the South were drawn to our standards by it, and hundreds of thousands in the North gave their lives in the belief that it would be carried out. It was made on the day after the first great battle of the war had been fought and lost. All patriotic and intelligent men then saw the necessity of giving such an assurance, and believed that without it the war would end in disaster to our cause. Having given that assurance in the extremity of our peril, the violation of it now, in the day of our power, would be a rending of that good faith which holds the moral world together. Our country would cease to have any claim upon the confidence of men. It would make the war not only a failure but a brand.

Being sincerely convinced that these views are correct, I would be unfaithful to my duty if I did not recommend the repeal of the acts of Congress which place the Southern States under the domination of military officers. If calm reflection shall satisfy a majority of your honorable bodies that the acts referred to are not only a violation of the national faith, but in direct conflict with the Constitution, I dare not permit myself to doubt that you will immediately strike them from the statute book.

To demonstrate the unconstitutional character of these acts, I need no more than refer to their general provisions. It must be seen once that they are not authorized to dictate what alteration shall be made in the Constitutions of the several States. To control the election of State Legislators and State officers, and members of Congress and electors of President and Vice President, by arbitrarily declaring who shall vote, and who shall be excluded from that privilege; to dissolve State Legislatures or prevent them from assembling; to dismiss Judges and other civil functionaries of the State and appoint others without regard to State law; to organize and operate all the political machinery of the States; to regulate the local affairs according to the mere will of strange and irresponsible agents sent among them for that purpose,—these are powers not granted to the Federal government, or to any one of its branches.

Not being granted, we violate the Constitution in the face of a positive interdiction for the Constitution forbids us to do what ever it does not affirmatively authorize—either by express words or by clear implication. If the authority we desire to use does not come to us through the Constitution, we can exercise it only by usurpation, and usurpation is the most dangerous of political crimes. By that crime the enemies of free government in all ages have worked out their designs against public liberty and private right. It leads, directly and immediately, to the establishment of absolute rule, for undelimited power is always unlimited and unrestrained. The acts of Congress in question are not only objectionable for their assumption of ungranted power, but many of their provisions are in conflict with the direct provisions of the Constitution. The Constitution commands that a republican form of government shall be guaranteed to all the States; that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, arrested without a judicial warrant, or punished without a fair trial before an impartial jury; that the privilege of habeas corpus shall not be denied in time of peace, and that no bill of attainder shall be pushed even against a single individual. Yet the system of measures established by these acts of Congress does totally subvert and destroy the form as well as the substance of Republican government in the ten States to which they apply. It binds them hard and fast in absolute slavery and subject them to the most oppressive and hostile power unlimited and more likely to be abused than any other now known among civilized men.

It tramples down all those rights in which the essence of liberty consists, and which a free government is always most careful to protect. It denies the habeas corpus and the trial by jury. Personal freedom, property, and life, as assailed by the passion, the prejudice, or the caprice of the ruler have no security whatever. It has the effect of a bill of attainder or a bill of pains and penalties not upon a few individuals, but upon whole masses, including the millions who inhabit the subject States and even their unborn children. These wrongs being expressly forbidden by the Constitution, and inflicted upon a portion of our people no matter how they may have come within our jurisdiction, and no matter whether they live in States, Territories or districts.

I have no desire to save from the proper and just consequences of their great crime, those who engaged in rebellion against the government, but as a mode of punishment the measures under consideration are the most unreasonable that could be invented. Many of those people are perfectly innocent. Many kept their fidelity to the Union untainted to the last. Many were incapable of any legal offense. A large proportion even of the persons able to bear arms, were forced into rebellion against their will, and of those who are guilty with their own consent, the degrees of guilt are as various as the shades of their character and temper.

But these acts of Congress confound them altogether in one common doom. Indiscriminate vengeance upon classes, sects and parties, or upon whole communities for offenses committed by a portion of them against the governments to which they made obedience, was common in the barbarous ages of the world, but Christianity and civilization have made such progress, that recourse to a punishment so cruel and unjust would meet with the condemnation of all unprejudiced and right-minded men. The primitive justice of this age, and especially of this country, does not consist in stripping whole States of their liberties, and reducing all their people, without distinction, to the condition of slavery. It deals separately with each individual, confines itself to the forms of law, and vindicates its own purity by an impartial examination of every case before a competent judicial tribunal.

If this does not satisfy all our desires with regard to Southern rebels, let us console ourselves by reflecting that a free Constitution, triumphant in war, and unbroken in peace, is worth far more to us and our children than the gratification of any present feeling. I am aware it is assumed this system of government for the Southern States is not to be perpetual. It is true, this military government is to be only provisional, but it is through this temporary evil that a greater evil is to be made perpetual. If the guarantees of the Constitution can be broken provisionally, to serve a temporary purpose, and in a part only of the country, we can destroy them everywhere and for all time. Arbitrary measures often change, but they generally change for the worse. It is the curse of despotism that it has no halting place. The untempered exercise of its power brings no sense of security to its subjects, for they can never know what more they will be called to endure when its red hand is armed to plague them again. Nor is it possible to conjecture how or where power unrestrained by law may seek its victims. The States that are still free may be enslaved at any moment. For if the Constitution does not protect all, it protects none.

It is manifestly and avowedly the object of these laws to confer upon negroes the privileges of voting and to disfranchise such a number of white citizens as will give the former a clear majority at all elections in the Southern States. This to the minds of some persons is so important that a violation of the Constitution is justified as a means of bringing it about. The morality is always false which excuses a wrong because it proposes to accomplish a desirable end. We are not permitted to do evil that good may come. But in this case the evil itself is as well as the means. The subjugation of the States to negro domination would be worse than the military despotism under which they are now suffering. It was believed beforehand that the people would endure any amount of military oppression for any length of time rather than degrade themselves by subjection to the negro race. Therefore they have been left without a choice. Negro suffrage was established by act of Congress, and the military officers were commanded to superintend the process of clothing the negro race with the political privileges torn from white men.

demands, is to degrade it and finally destroy its power. For it may be safely assumed that no political truth is better established than that such indiscriminate and all-embracing extension of popular suffrage must end at last in its overthrow and destruction.

I repeat the expression of my willingness to join in any plan within the scope of our constitutional condition, which promises to better the condition of the negro in the South, by encouraging them in industry, enlightening their minds, improving their morals, and giving protection to all their just rights as freemen, but the transfer of our political inheritance to them, would, in my opinion, be an abandonment of a duty which we owe alike to the memory of our fathers and the rights of our children.

The plan of putting the Southern States wholly and the general government partially into the hands of negroes is proposed at a time peculiarly inopportune. The foundations of society have been broken up, justice, re-established, public credit maintained, and order brought out of confusion. To accomplish these ends would require all the wisdom and virtue of the great men who formed our institutions originally. I confidently believe that their descendants will be equal to the arduous task before them, but it is worse than madness to expect that negroes will perform it for us; certainly we ought not to ask their assistance until we despair of our own competency. The great difference between the two races in physical, mental and moral characteristics will persist in an amalgamation or fusion of them together in one homogeneous mass. If the inferior obtains the ascendancy over the other it will govern with reference only to its own interests, for it will recognize no common interest, and create such a tyranny as this continent has never yet witnessed. Already the negroes are influenced by promises of confiscation and plunder. They are taught to regard as an enemy every white man who has any respect for the rights of his own race. If this continues it must become worse and worse until all order will be subverted, all industry cease, and the fair fields of the South grow up into a wilderness.

The peculiar qualities which should characterize any people who are fit to decide upon the management of public affairs for a great State have seldom been combined. It is the glory of white men to know that they have had these qualities in sufficient measure to build upon this continent a great political fabric, and to preserve its stability for more than ninety years, while in every other part of the world all similar experiments have failed. But if anything can be proved by known facts, it is that reason upon evidence is not abandoned, it is not acknowledged that in the progress of nations negroes have shown less capacity for government than any other race of people. No independent government of one race has ever been successful in their hands. On the contrary, wherever they have been left to their own devices, they have shown a constant tendency to relapse into barbarism. In the Southern States, however, Congress has undertaken to confer upon them the privilege of the ballot. Just released from slavery, it may be doubted whether as a class they know more than their ancestors how to organize and regulate civil society. Indeed it is admitted that the blacks of the South are not only ignorant of the rights of property, but so utterly ignorant of public affairs that their voting can consist in nothing more than carrying a ballot to the place where they are directed to deposit it.

I need not remind you that the exercise of the elective franchise is the highest attribute of an American citizen, and that when guided by virtue, intelligence, patriotism, and a proper appreciation of our free institutions it constitutes the true basis of a democratic form of government in which the sovereign power is lodged in the body of the people. A trust artificially created, not for its own sake, but solely as a means of promoting the general welfare; its influence for good must necessarily depend upon the elevated character and true allegiance of the elector. It ought, therefore, to be reposed in none except those who are fitted morally to administer it well; for if conferred upon persons who do not justly estimate its value and who are indifferent as to its results, it will only serve as a means of placing power in the hands of the unprincipled and ambitious, and must eventually in the complete destruction of that liberty of which it should be the most powerful conservator.

I have, therefore, heretofore urged upon your attention the great danger to be apprehended from an untimely extension of the elective franchise to any new class in our country, especially when the large majority of that class in wielding the power placed in their hands, cannot be expected correctly to comprehend the duties and responsibilities which pertain to suffrage. Yesterday, as it were, four millions of persons were held in a condition of slavery that had existed for generations. To-day they are freemen, and are assumed by law to be citizens. It cannot be presumed from their previous condition of servitude that, as a class, they are as well informed as to the nature of our government as the intelligent freeman who makes our land the home of his choice. In the case of the latter, neither a residence of five years and the knowledge of our institutions which it gives, nor an abatement to the principles of the Constitution, are the only conditions upon which he is admitted to citizenship. He must, in addition, a good moral character, and thus give reasonable ground for the belief that he will be faithful to the obligations which he assumes as a citizen of the Republic. Where a people, the source of all political power, speak by their suffrages through the instrumentality of the ballot box, it must be carefully guarded against the control of those who are corrupt in principle and enemies of free institutions. For it can only become a corrupt political and social system a safe conductor of healthy popular sentiment when kept free from demoralizing influences. Controlled through fraud and usurpation by the designing, anarchy and despotism must inevitably follow. In the hands of the patriotic and worthy, our government will be preserved upon the principles of the Constitution inherited from our fathers.

It follows, therefore, that in admitting to the ballot box a new class of voters not qualified for the exercise of the elective franchise, we weaken our system of government, instead of adding to its strength and durability.

I yield to no one in attachment to that rule of general suffrage which distinguishes our policy as a nation. But there is a limit, wisely observed hitherto, which makes the ballot a privilege and a trust, and which requires of some classes a trust suitable for probation and preparation.—To give it indiscriminately to a new class, wholly unprepared by previous habits and opportunities to perform the trust which it

tribunal whose members are not liable to separate constituent bodies, and who may hear its accusation wither at discretion. The Senate is absolutely bound to the known standard of decision applicable in such a case.

Its judgment cannot be anticipated, for it is not governed by any rule. The law does not define what shall be deemed good cause for removal. It is impossible even to conjecture what may or may not be so considered by the Senate. The nature of the subject forbids clear proof. If the charges be incapable, what evidence will support it? Fidelity to the Constitution may be understood or misunderstood in a thousand different ways, and by violent partisans in violent many times over, should be considered meritorious. If the officer be accused of dishonesty, how shall it be made out? Will it be inferred from facts unconnected with public duty, from private story, or from general reputation, or must the President avail the commission of an actual misdemeanor in office? Shall he, in the meantime, risk the character and interest of the nation in the hands of men to whom he cannot give his confidence? Must he forbear his complaint until the mischief is done and cannot be prevented? If his zeal in the public service should impel him to anticipate the overt act, must he move at the peril of being tried himself for the offense of slandering his subordinate?

In the present circumstances of the country some one must be held responsible for official delinquency of every kind. It is extremely difficult to say where that responsibility should be thrown, if it be not left where it has been placed by the Constitution.

But all just men will admit that the President ought to be entirely relieved from such responsibility if he cannot meet it by reason of restrictions placed by law upon his action. The unrestricted power of removal from office is a very great one to be trusted even to a magistrate chosen by the general suffrage of the whole people and accountable directly to them for his acts. It is undoubtedly liable to abuse, and at some periods of our history perhaps has been abused.

If it be thought desirable and constitutional that it should be so limited as to make the President merely a common reformer against other public agents, he should at least be permitted to act in that capacity before some tribunal independent of party politics, ready to investigate the merits of every case, furnished with the means of taking evidence, and bound to decide according to established rules. This would guarantee the safety of the accuser when he acts in good faith, and at the same time secure the rights of the other party.

I speak, of course, with all proper respect for the present Senate; but it does not seem to me that any legislative body can be so constituted as to insure its fitness for these functions. It is not the theory of this government that public officers are the property of those that hold them. They are given merely as a trust for the public benefit, sometimes for a fixed period, sometimes during good behavior, but generally they are liable to be terminated at the pleasure of the appointing power, which represents the collective majesty, and speaks the will of the people. The forced retention in office of a single dishonest person may work great injury to the public interests. The danger to the public service comes not from the power to remove, but from the power to appoint. Therefore it was that the framers of the Constitution left the power of removal unrestricted, while they gave the Senate the right to reject all appointments, which in its opinion were not fit to be made. A little reflection on this subject will probably satisfy all who have the good of the country at heart, that our best course is to take the path marked out by the founders of the republic, and obey the rules made sacred by the observance of our great predecessors. The present condition of our finances and circulating medium is one to which your early consideration is invited.

The proportion which the currency of any country should bear to the whole value of the annual production circulated by its means is a question upon which no legal economist have not agreed. Nor can it be controlled by legislation, but must be left to the irrevocable laws which everywhere regulate commerce and trade. The circulating medium will ever irresistibly flow to those points where it is in greatest demand. The law of demand and supply is as unerring as that which regulates the tides of the ocean, and indeed currency, like the tides, has its ebbs and flows throughout the commercial world. At the beginning of the rebellion the bank-note circulation of the country amounted to not more than two hundred millions of dollars. I now the circulation of national bank notes and those known as legal tenders is nearly seven hundred millions.

While it is urged by some that this amount should be increased, others contend that a decided reduction is absolutely essential to the best interests of the country. In view of these diverse opinions it may be well to ascertain the real value of our paper issues when compared with a metallic or convertible currency. For this purpose let us inquire how much gold and silver could be purchased by the seven hundred millions of paper money now in circulation. Probably not more than half the amount of the latter, showing that when our paper currency is compared with gold and silver its commercial value is compressed into three hundred and fifty millions. This striking fact makes it the obvious duty of the government, as early as may be consistent with the principles of sound political economy, to take such measures as will enable the holder of its notes and those of the national banks to convert them without loss into specie or its equivalent. A reduction of our paper circulating medium need not necessarily follow. This, however, would depend upon the law of demand and supply, though it should be borne in mind that by making legal tender and bank notes convertible into coin or its equivalent, their present specie value in the hands of their holders would be enhanced one hundred per cent. Legislation for the accomplishment of a

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demands, is to degrade it and finally destroy its power. For it may be safely assumed that no political truth is better established than that such indiscriminate and all-embracing extension of popular suffrage must end at last in its overthrow and destruction.

I repeat the expression of my willingness to join in any plan within the scope of our constitutional condition, which promises to better the condition of the negro in the South, by encouraging them in industry, enlightening their minds, improving their morals, and giving protection to all their just rights as freemen, but the transfer of our political inheritance to them, would, in my opinion, be an abandonment of a duty which we owe alike to the memory of our fathers and the rights of our children.

The plan of putting the Southern States wholly and the general government partially into the hands of negroes is proposed at a time peculiarly inopportune. The foundations of society have been broken up, justice, re-established, public credit maintained, and order brought out of confusion. To accomplish these ends would require all the wisdom and virtue of the great men who formed our institutions originally. I confidently believe that their descendants will be equal to the arduous task before them, but it is worse than madness to expect that negroes will perform it for us; certainly we ought not to ask their assistance until we despair of our own competency. The great difference between the two races in physical, mental and moral characteristics will persist in an amalgamation or fusion of them together in one homogeneous mass. If the inferior obtains the ascendancy over the other it will govern with reference only to its own interests, for it will recognize no common interest, and create such a tyranny as this continent has never yet witnessed. Already the negroes are influenced by promises of confiscation and plunder. They are taught to regard as an enemy every white man who has any respect for the rights of his own race. If this continues it must become worse and worse until all order will be subverted, all industry cease, and the fair fields of the South grow up into a wilderness.

The peculiar qualities which should characterize any people who are fit to decide upon the management of public affairs for a great State have seldom been combined. It is the glory of white men to know that they have had these qualities in sufficient measure to build upon this continent a great political fabric, and to preserve its stability for more than ninety years, while in every other part of the world all similar experiments have failed. But if anything can be proved by known facts, it is that reason upon evidence is not abandoned, it is not acknowledged that in the progress of nations negroes have shown less capacity for government than any other race of people. No independent government of one race has ever been successful in their hands. On the contrary, wherever they have been left to their own devices, they have shown a constant tendency to relapse into barbarism. In the Southern States, however, Congress has undertaken to confer upon them the privilege of the ballot. Just released from slavery, it may be doubted whether as a class they know more than their ancestors how to organize and regulate civil society. Indeed it is admitted that the blacks of the South are not only ignorant of the rights of property, but so utterly ignorant of public affairs that their voting can consist in nothing more than carrying a ballot to the place where they are directed to deposit it.

I need not remind you that the exercise of the elective franchise is the highest attribute of an American citizen, and that when guided by virtue, intelligence, patriotism, and a proper appreciation of our free institutions it constitutes the true basis of a democratic form of government in which the sovereign power is lodged in the body of the people. A trust artificially created, not for its own sake, but solely as a means of promoting the general welfare; its influence for good must necessarily depend upon the elevated character and true allegiance of the elector. It ought, therefore, to be reposed in none except those who are fitted morally to administer it well; for if conferred upon persons who do not justly estimate its value and who are indifferent as to its results, it will only serve as a means of placing power in the hands of the unprincipled and ambitious, and must eventually in the complete destruction of that liberty of which it should be the most powerful conservator.

I have, therefore, heretofore urged upon your attention the great danger to be apprehended from an untimely extension of the elective franchise to any new class in our country, especially when the large majority of that class in wielding the power placed in their hands, cannot be expected correctly to comprehend the duties and responsibilities which pertain to suffrage. Yesterday, as it were, four millions of persons were held in a condition of slavery that had existed for generations. To-day they are freemen, and are assumed by law to be citizens. It cannot be presumed from their previous condition of servitude that, as a class, they are as well informed as to the nature of our government as the intelligent freeman who makes our land the home of his choice. In the case of the latter, neither a residence of five years and the knowledge of our institutions which it gives, nor an abatement to the principles of the Constitution, are the only conditions upon which he is admitted to citizenship. He must, in addition, a good moral character, and thus give reasonable ground for the belief that he will be faithful to the obligations which he assumes as a citizen of the Republic. Where a people, the source of all political power, speak by their suffrages through the instrumentality of the ballot box, it must be carefully guarded against the control of those who are corrupt in principle and enemies of free institutions. For it can only become a corrupt political and social system a safe conductor of healthy popular sentiment when kept free from demoralizing influences. Controlled through fraud and usurpation by the designing, anarchy and despotism must inevitably follow. In the hands of the patriotic and worthy, our government will be preserved upon the principles of the Constitution inherited from our fathers.

It follows, therefore, that in admitting to the ballot box a new class of voters not qualified for the exercise of the elective franchise, we weaken our system of government, instead of adding to its strength and durability.

I yield to no one in attachment to that rule of general suffrage which distinguishes our policy as a nation. But there is a limit, wisely observed hitherto, which makes the ballot a privilege and a trust, and which requires of some classes a trust suitable for probation and preparation.—To give it indiscriminately to a new class, wholly unprepared by previous habits and opportunities to perform the trust which it

tribunal whose members are not liable to separate constituent bodies, and who may hear its accusation wither at discretion. The Senate is absolutely bound to the known standard of decision applicable in such a case.

Its judgment cannot be anticipated, for it is not governed by any rule. The law does not define what shall be deemed good cause for removal. It is impossible even to conjecture what may or may not be so considered by the Senate. The nature of the subject forbids clear proof. If the charges be incapable, what evidence will support it? Fidelity to the Constitution may be understood or misunderstood in a thousand different ways, and by violent partisans in violent many times over, should be considered meritorious. If the officer be accused of dishonesty, how shall it be made out? Will it be inferred from facts unconnected with public duty, from private story, or from general reputation, or must the President avail the commission of an actual misdemeanor in office? Shall he, in the meantime, risk the character and interest of the nation in the hands of men to whom he cannot give his confidence? Must he forbear his complaint until the mischief is done and cannot be prevented? If his zeal in the public service should impel him to anticipate the overt act, must he move at the peril of being tried himself for the offense of slandering his subordinate?

In the present circumstances of the country some one must be held responsible for official delinquency of every kind. It is extremely difficult to say where that responsibility should be thrown, if it be not left where it has been placed by the Constitution.

But all just men will admit that the President ought to be entirely relieved from such responsibility if he cannot meet it by reason of restrictions placed by law upon his action. The unrestricted power of removal from office is a very great one to be trusted even to a magistrate chosen by the general suffrage of the whole people and accountable directly to them for his acts. It is undoubtedly liable to abuse, and at some periods of our history perhaps has been abused.

If it be thought desirable and constitutional that it should be so limited as to make the President merely a common reformer against other public agents, he should at least be permitted to act in that capacity before some tribunal independent of party politics, ready to investigate the merits of every case, furnished with the means of taking evidence, and bound to decide according to established rules. This would guarantee the safety of the accuser when he acts in good faith, and at the same time secure the rights of the other party.

I speak, of course, with all proper respect for the present Senate; but it does not seem to me that any legislative body can be so constituted as to insure its fitness for these functions. It is not the theory of this government that public officers are the property of those that hold them. They are given merely as a trust for the public benefit, sometimes for a fixed period, sometimes during good behavior, but generally they are liable to be terminated at the pleasure of the appointing power, which represents the collective majesty, and speaks the will of the people. The forced retention in office of a single dishonest person may work great injury to the public interests. The danger to the public service comes not from the power to remove, but from the power to appoint. Therefore it was that the framers of the Constitution left the power of removal unrestricted, while they gave the Senate the right to reject all appointments, which in its opinion were not fit to be made. A little reflection on this subject will probably satisfy all who have the good of the country at heart, that our best course is to take the path marked out by the founders of the republic, and obey the rules made sacred by the observance of our great predecessors. The present condition of our finances and circulating medium is one to which your early consideration is invited.