

Good out of Nazareth.

Whatever may be the outcome of the present complications in regard to the presidential election, one positive good is likely to result therefrom, to wit, a thoughtful consideration of the condition of the South, by the people of the North. Ever since the passage of what are known as the Reconstruction Acts by Congress, there has been a growing inclination on the part of the people of the North, irrespective of party, to "let the South alone." The American nation seemed to have settled down to the conviction that when it had once freed the slave and then enfranchised the freedman, it had done all that it was called upon to do, to secure republican government at the South. The cry of Southern Democrats to be let alone, their angry imprecations whenever any one attempted to attract the attention of the American people to the facts attending the institution of self-governing communities in this part of the union, have hitherto been looked upon as reasonable and just. If intimidation and virtual disfranchisement existed in any state or locality, the cry was - "Why do you not put ~~them~~ ^{it} down?" "We have done all we can" said a prominent Republican Senator to some Southern Republicans who were talking gloomily of the future. "Now you of the South must take care of yourselves." It was impossible to convince even this large minded man, that the interests of the nation were involved in the movements which were then being instituted throughout the South, to evade and neutralize the spirit of the reconstruction measures and render self-government at the South a mockery.

Now, however, the fate of the nation directly depends upon the vote of certain of these states. South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana, one or all of them, must determine whose hands are to hold the reins of government during the next four years. Under these circumstances, it is impossible for any reasonable citizen to close his eyes to the importance of considering the results of Reconstruction.

This being the case, it may not be improper to suggest a few pertinent topics for meditation, on the part of thoughtfully disposed Northmen. As such the following are offered.

- 1 - Whether the unparalleled experiment

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of entrusting to unpunished rebels, in less than five years from the day of surrender equal and co-ordinate powers in the government they attempted to destroy, was not hazardous and is not likely to result in renewed peril?

2- Whether it was reasonable to expect equality of right to be maintained in a self-governing community two thirds of whose population are landless, poor and dependent for daily bread, upon the remaining third which rejected with scorn the re-habilitation offered to them upon the terms of civil equality, until they discovered a means to turn it to their advantage and "rule or ruin" as of old?

3- Whether it was not a mistake to suppose that a race just freed from the mastership of another, unpractical, illiterate (97 per cent of its voters cannot read) without land, implements or supplies for a month in advance, ^{could preserve its rights} against a people compacted by the pride of ancient mastership and the sting of defeat, practiced in statescraft and in war, owning the land and controlling the bread of those whose rights they would never recognize?

4- Whether the men whose hearts are now bursting with good will and yearning for conciliation are not of the same flock ^{with those} who painted slavery in angelic guise less than a score of years ago, and whether the man who protests that the status of the freedman, today, is peace, may not be as foolish-faced as he who protested that the estate of the slave was and unmitigated bliss?

5- Whether it is not a mistake to maintain that every Southern Republican is a compound of fool and knave and every Southern Democrat an immaculate gentleman, an unparalleled patriot and an infallible authority upon whatever concerns himself?

6- Whether Reconstruction was not an ill-considered experiment, - a makeshift by which the nation tried to throw off the responsibility of its one great and

immortal act and shelve the bur-
then of emancipation upon the help-
less freedman and exasperated
Master?

7- Whether the prohibition of slavery is
equivalent to the establishment of
liberty?

8- Whether the fear of death by violence
or starvation is a good prepara-
tion for the exercise of the rights
of citizenship and is likely to secure
an absolutely free election?

The solution of these conundrums must
be given by the American people be-
fore the "Southern Question" will be settled.
Either the nation must accept the respon-
sibility of maintaining republican govern-
ment, freedom of opinion and equality of
right upon every foot of its soil, or the
fear which reigns in Arkansas, Alabama
and Georgia must prevail until the
land crust is burst by the heaving
of the restless mass below. Recon-
struction must be regarded as an ex-
periment and not a finality, if the na-
tion means to be self-governing in the
future.

Tribune



*Good out of Raleigh
(on South)*

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