

Raleigh N. C.
To - Dr. Sunderland
Washington - D. C. April 15th 1877

My dear Doctor

Perhaps if I were to tell you the truth and confess that this letter was written while you were preaching on the Sabbath, you would be inclined to give me a little extra sermonizing or throw the letter in your waste basket without reading. The truth is, that I have suffered so much in persecution and vilification at the hands of Christian brethren that I became convinced that it was not good for me to go to church here. I do not mean to say anything against their religion but mine was not robust enough to stand such a strain. I have always managed to get along somehow - I hardly know how - during the past 12 years, until the last few months. The political feeling has been so bitter since the election that I have quite given over pretending to do anything, but endure what I can - with a good deal and curse my own folly in being where I am. So I go no more to church, in this part of the moral vineyard and it occurs to me, that the next thing to having a minister, is a visit to one.

You ask me what I think of the situation at this time and I am glad to see that you ask with no little indication of

dealt in your own mind & singularly enough I
received from a noted divine of Brooklyn, who
has been my lifelong friend, a letter congratula-
ting me that a new policy had been adopted
and that "prospects are brightening for men of
your ^(my) stamp, in the South" and that times are
growing better there as the President's policy is devel-
oped and the Southern people see that it means -
Peace x

I don't know that I had any right to be
incensed at what I knew were sincere wishes
for my good, but it did seem so preposterous that
a man of such eminence and activity of mind
should be such a fool as to believe that every-
thing was all lovely and serene at the South
merely because somebody chattered about a
new policy and prattled about the wonders that
were to be performed by a split among
Southern democrats that I could not
control myself to answer him further than
to say that "times are better here; for such men

as I am, only in the sense that Hell is better than Purgatory, It is 12 years today, since I first roled through the streets on which I now look. All of that time I have lived here yet I have never seen an hour when political bitterness has been so intense and hostility to Northern men so fierce as it is today."

He knows me to be exceptionally candid and quite regardless of approval or disapproval in the expression of my sentiments. He knows that I am a close observer and have had unrivalled opportunities for observation. There are probably few men to whose testimony, in most matters, he would give equal credence. Yet I know very well that he will not believe one word of what I have written him. He knows more about the South than he can be told or as I once heard an old hunter say of a conceited man, "He thinks he knows more about it, than the Supreme being did — at his age."

Yet he is more than a fair exponent of the mind and heart of the North. He is liberal — perhaps I might say Radical — a lover of liberty.

who has known persecution for the sake of
his opinions & He is a man ordinarily of clear per-
ceptions, strong convictions and has the courage to
have his own opinions &

Now, why, upon this subject above will
he not believe my testimony? If you will an-
swer this inquiry I will tell you gladly what
I think of the situation & I cannot until you do
for it is not a question of policies, however much
acts may be made over them & It is a question
of facts & If the facts be as Southern Republicans
see and understand them to be, then one thing is
true of the policy & If the facts are as presented
by Southern Democrats, then another thing is
true of the policy &

That the Administration and the masses
of the Northern people believe the Democratic
statement of the facts affecting the South is true
and, equally true that they disbelieve what-
ever a Republican may say upon that
matter & There is no half-way ground tenable
If the one is true the other is false, absolutely

and ungratefully x

Why is this?

Before the war the people of the north believed the fugitive as against his master: the victim of mob law as against those who tarred & feathered him for seditious language: Even the poor dumb slave science was accredited to be more truthful than the master's noisy protestations x John Brown of Ossawatimie was the highest of authority against the asseverations of thousands of border ruffians x During the war our generals, soldiers and the whole people of the north learned to trust only the colored man and the few white refugees as to what existed within the Confederate lines x It became a byword - the falsity of its press and the representations of its public men x When Sherman said that Hampton was a braggart and a liar, nobody doubted his statement x After three-quarters of a century of falsehood and equivocation the north learned, or seemed to have learned that the testimony of the Southern gentleman could not be believed in so far as he testified in regard to the South.

as soon as the war was over, however, all this changed, until now, the same old class who lied for two generations about Slavery - systematically, deliberately and continuously - are the only one who can be believed & Ninety = nine hundredths of the late slaves deny their allegations. & Has Facetious made those liars who could be believed in slavery, even when they did not speak? - Four = fourth of the carpet-buggers are men who gave their blood to save the country & It is rare indeed that you meet one who has not this badge of worthiness or folly on his person & Most of them enterprising, intelligent men who entered the service under the breath of good repute at their places of residence and nativity at the North & Did service in the Federal Army so corrupt these men that they cannot be believed? Nine tenths of them at least have no hesitation in testifying against the Democratic view & Of the Union men of the South about the same proportion bear the same testimony, except in those regions where the old policy of silence has produced peace &

You are sometimes told that all these parties are interested witnesses & That is true and so are those who testify against them & I want to call attention to the interest we have in the matter though

The interests of all these classes, are, - more than any others - on the side of peace and prosperity. The colored man lives by his labor and can live in no other way. That he may live he brags first of all things, for continuous peace. The Unionist wants a few days of peace and quiet in his old home before he goes hence to be here no more. But you ever think or know that there are no young white Republicans in the South? I don't believe we have 2,000 white voters under thirty years of age in our 30,000 white Republicans in the state. The Carpet-baggers are most of them, largely interested in real estate and want peace and prosperity to enable them to sell of nothing more.

Now, against them are put the old slave-race, - not one whit changed by time except as a whipped man is more bitter & reckless - and their statement is accepted by the Administration and the North and believed and we are told that we are liars and commended to the brimstone lake even in this life.

Now, if the Democratic statement of facts is true, "the policy" is right and will bear good fruit. If it is wrong the reverse.

There is no discrepancy among the witnesses & the
only question is, - who shall be believed &

For me - I hate to hear the word policy acquire
We have only had it in our government once since 1861, &
its fruit were not cheerful then & it smacks to me of
the old era when political success secured excellence
in many things. The war was an era of convictions & convictions
spoke out their convictions & it seems to me now
that the Administration thinks that they can sneak
around a back way, hide and cheat and lie
out some sort of fair weather which people will
call success & I see old Ben Wash has in the dis
tinction which must come upon us in every honest
mind which regards matters from our standpoint.

"The path to hell is paved with good intentions" Nobody
doubts the patriotism of the Administration nor the honesty
of purpose of Pontius Pilate & Herod & I doubt result
with good - though it may be a long way off and
with a sea of blood between our time and its
era. The blood of the martyrs is "always & believe" the
seed of the church, but it is nevertheless "rough" on the
martyrs. "The policy" - may bring good, I believe it will
simply because I believe in God. But it will grind to powder
every man in the South who has stood by the Government in
the past & every one who has fought for the country's integrity or
favored the policy of reconstruction will have reason to curse
the day he was so, - May - he does it now - when he thinks
of himself - his family or the future &

I had an idea that I should bore any
one with as many lines as I have con-
tinued to you on the situation. You
understand though the fault is your own
There is no council about you which
I will not let you know - just as a
party of for no other reason,

I want to ask one thing which I am a
great ashamed to mention - but I
will not say any more in connection
with the statement of this letter. The answer is
(1) - It is all I can do to live among
these people now and I must leave
without serious loss until times im-
prove.

(2) - I hold a little office (Pension) by
the call of which is an object and I don't
know how soon they might reform
me out if they know I told the truth
They have already made an assault
on me for being a carpet-bagger and having
ten "Tomato's". I don't want to hear any more
known as being worse than truth.

Respectfully
A. M. ...