

AN ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE FREE STATES

BY THE

PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY.

RICHMOND, January 5, 1863.

Citizens of the non-slave-holding States of America, swayed by peaceable motives, I have used all my influence, often thereby endangering my position as the President of the Southern Confederacy, to have the unhappy conflict now existing between my people and yourselves, governed by those well established international rules, which heretofore have softened the asperities which necessarily are the concomitants of a state of belligerency, but all my efforts in the premises have heretofore been unavailing. Now, therefore, I am compelled *e necessitati rei* to employ a measure, which most willingly I would have omitted to do, regarding, as I always must, State Rights, as the very organism of politically associated society.

For nearly two years my people have been defending their inherent rights—their political, social and religious rights against the speculators of New England and their allies in the States heretofore regarded as conservative. The people of the Southern Confederacy have—making sacrifices such as the modern world has never witnessed—patiently, but determinedly, stood between their homeinterests and the well paid, well fed and well clad mercenaries of the Abolitionists, and I need not say that they have nobly vindicated the good name of American citizens. Heretofore, the warfare has been conducted by white men—peers, scions of the same stock; but the programme has been changed, and your rulers despairing of a triumph by the employment of white men, have degraded you and themselves, by inviting the co-operation of the black race. Thus, while they deprecate the intervention of white men—the French and the English—in behalf of the Southern Confederacy, they, these Abolitionists, do not hesitate to invoke the intervention of the African race in favor of the North.

The time has, therefore, come when a becoming respect for the good opinion of the civilized world impels me to set forth the following facts:—

First. Abraham Lincoln, the President of the Non-Slaveholding States, has issued his proclamation, declaring the slaves within the limits of the Southern Confederacy to be free.

Second. Abraham Lincoln has declared that the slaves so emancipated may be used in the Army and Navy, now under his control, by which he means to employ, against the Free People of the South, insurrectionary measures, the inevitable tendency of which will be to inaugurate a Servile War, and thereby prove destructive, in a great measure, to slave property.

Now, therefore, as a compensatory measure, I do hereby issue the following Address to the People of the Non-Slaveholding States:—

On and after February 22, 1863, all free negroes within the limits of the Southern Confederacy shall be placed on the slave status, and be deemed to be chattels, they and their issue forever.

All negroes who shall be taken in any of the States in which slavery does not now exist, in the progress of our arms, shall be adjudged, immediately after such capture, to occupy the slave status, and in all States which shall be vanquished by our arms, all free negroes shall, *ipso facto*, be reduced to the condition of helotism, so that the respective normal conditions of the white and black races may be ultimately placed on a permanent basis, so as to prevent the public peace from being thereafter endangered.

Therefore, while I would not ignore the conservative policy of the Slave States, namely, that a Federal Government cannot, without violating the fundamental principles of a Constitution, interfere with the internal policy of several States; since, however, Abraham Lincoln has seen fit to ignore the Constitution he has solemnly sworn to support, it ought not to be considered polemically or politically improper in me to vindicate the position which has been, at an early day of this Southern republic, assumed by the Confederacy, namely, that slavery is the corner-stone of a Western Republic. It is not necessary for me to elaborate this proposition. I may merely refer, in passing, to the prominent fact, that the South is emphatically a producing section of North America; this is equally true of the West and Northwest, the people of which have been mainly dependent on the South for the consumption of their products. The other States, in which slavery does not exist, have occupied a middle position, as to the South, West and Northwest. The States of New England, from which all complicated difficulties have arisen, owe their greatness and power to the free suffrages of all other sections of North America; and yet, as is now evident, they have, from the adoption of the Federal Constitution, waged a persistent warfare against the interests of all the other States of the old Union. The great centre of their opposition has been Slavery, while the annual statistics of their respective State Governments abundantly prove that they entertain within all their boundaries fewer negroes than any single State which does not tolerate slavery.

In view of these facts, and conscientiously believing that the proper condition of the negro is slavery, or a complete subjection to the white man,—and entertaining the belief that the day is not distant when the old Union will be restored with slavery nationally declared to be the proper condition of all of African descent,—and in view of the future harmony and progress of all the States of America, I have been induced to issue this address, so that there may be no misunderstanding in the future.

JEFFERSON DAVIS.