

ment upon a constitutional basis. Men who sought to foster agitation and perpetuate feuds between the sections, hoped to find in him a willing instrument to accomplish their purposes, because they imagined he had old jealousies to gratify, and old indignities which he had suffered in the fury of the strife to resent. Time has proved their mistake, and the course of the President proves that peace as well as war can develop the highest forms of patriotism and statesmanship.

He has devoted his energies to the restoration of the States to their former position in the Union, and, as the fundamental principle of American liberty, he has aimed to place the administration of the local State Governments in the hands of the people of the States, giving to the citizens of the Southern States their political rights. Accordingly we find he has pardoned many individuals who took a prominent part in the late rebellion, and James L. Orr, only a year ago in the so-called Confederate Senate, is now the Governor of the State of South Carolina, and holds the most friendly relations with the Federal Government and the constituted authorities. Numerous other cases might be cited analogous in principle.

Does not the course of the President towards the Southern States teach a lesson to our legislators in Maryland which patriotism, a love of civil liberty, and a regard for the fundamental principles of republican liberty, should admonish them to heed?

A constitution was framed in the midst of the commotions of civil war, which not only disfranchises those who were in actual hostility to the United States, but deprives men of their political rights for even the expression of desires or opinions. Men who have occupied the highest positions in the State, who, during the war have borne the burdens of taxation, and discharged every obligation to the State, and who are called upon now to bear all the burdens of government, find themselves with no voice in the conduct of the State or Federal Government. Such sweeping clauses of disqualification never should have been inserted in the Constitution. Even during the existence of the war there was no State necessity for such enactments in the Organic law. But the citizens of the State are not only disfranchised by the existing Constitution. By the action of the Officers of Registration appointed to register the voters of the State, the disqualification to vote, and the loss of political rights, have been extended even beyond the intent and objects sought by the Constitution. Men have been excluded from the exercise of their political rights, in many cases, from partisan motives—in others from mere personal hatred and prejudice. Not only those who are disqualified by the Consti-