

her mountains and plains blasted by the ravages of war and stained with the blood of her faithful children fallen in the great struggle for the maintenance of the Union—having already conformed her constitution and laws to every provision of this amendment, will at once upon its submission by Congress irrevocably ratify it, and be without further delay represented in Congress by her loyal Representatives and Senators, duly elected and duly qualified and ready to take the oath of office prescribed by existing law.

Let that great example be set by Tennessee and it will be worth a hundred thousand votes to the loyal people in the free North. Let this be done and it will be hailed as the harbinger of that day for which all good men pray, when the fallen pillars of the Republic shall be restored without violence or the noise of words or the sound of the hammer, each to its original place in the sacred temple of our national liberties, thereby giving assurance to all the world that for the defense of the Republic it was not in vain that a million and a half of men, the very elect of the earth, rushed to arms; that the Republic still lives, and will live forevermore, the sanctuary of an inviolable justice, the refuge of liberty, and the imperishable monument of the nation's dead, from the humblest soldier who perished on the march, or went down amid the thunder and tempest of the dread conflict, up through all the shining roll of heroes, and patriots, and martyrs, to the incorruptible and immortal Commander-in-Chief, who fell by an assassin's hand in the capital, and thus died that his country might live.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to conclude the debate, but I will not move the previous question until I finish what I have to say.

I am glad, sir, to see great unanimity among the Union friends in this House on all the provisions of this joint resolution except the third one. I am not very much gratified to see any division among our friends on that which I consider the vital proposition of them all. Without that, it amounts to nothing. I do not care the snap of my finger whether it be passed or not if that be stricken out. Before another Congress shall have assembled here, and before this can be carried into full effect, there will be no friends of the Union left on this side of the House to carry it out as—

Mr. LE BLOND. Members are crowding the aisles on the other side and the open space in the center of the House so that we can neither see nor hear what is going on.

The SPEAKER. Members must resume their seats.

Mr. STEVENS. I should be sorry to find that that provision was stricken out, because before any portion of this can be put into operation there will be, if not a Herod, a worse than Herod elsewhere to obstruct our actions. That side of the House will be filled with yelling secessionists and hissing copperheads. Give us the third section or give us nothing. Do not balk us with the pretense of an amendment which throws the Union into the hands of the enemy before it becomes consolidated.

Gentlemen say I speak of party. Whenever party is necessary to sustain the Union I say rally to your party and save the Union. I do not hesitate to say at once, that section is there to save or destroy the Union party, is there to save or destroy the Union by the salvation or destruction of the Union party.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BINGHAM] who has just taken his seat thinks it difficult to carry it into execution, and he proposes to put it into a bill which the President can veto. Will my friend tell me how much easier it is to execute it as a law than as a provision of the Constitution? I say if this amendment prevails you must legislate to carry out many parts of it. You must legislate for the purpose of ascertaining the basis of representation. You must legislate for registry such as they have in Maryland. It will not execute itself, but as soon as it becomes a law, Congress at the next

session will legislate to carry it out both in reference to the presidential and all other elections as we have the right to do. So that objection falls to the ground.

Gentlemen tell us it is too strong—too strong for what? Too strong for their stomachs, but not for the people. Some say it is too lenient. It is too lenient for my hard heart. Not only to 1870, but to 18070, every rebel who shed the blood of loyal men should be prevented from exercising any power in this Government. That, even, would be too mild a punishment for them.

Gentlemen here have said you must not humble these people. Why not? Do not they deserve humiliation? Do not they deserve degradation? If they do not, who does? What criminal, what felon deserves it more, sir? They have not yet confessed their sins; and He who administers mercy and justice never forgives until the sinner confesses his sins and humbles himself at His footstool. Why should we forgive any more than He?

But we are told that we must take them back as equal brothers at once. I shall not agree they shall come back except as supplicants in sackcloth and ashes. Let them come back and ask forgiveness, and let us then consider how many we will forgive and how many we will exclude. All I regret is, this is not sufficiently stringent.

Sir, they tell us, I hear several gentlemen say, that these men should be admitted as equal brethren. Let not these friends of secession sing to me their siren song of peace and good will until they can stop my ears to the screams and groans of the dying victims at Memphis. I hold in my hand an elaborate account from a man whom I know to be of the highest respectability in the country, every word of which I believe. This account of that foul transaction only reached me last night. It is more horrible in its atrocity, although not to the same extent, than the massacre at Jamaica. Tell me Tennessee or any other State is loyal of whom such things are proved!

I regret that the true men of these States cannot be brought in, but they cannot be brought in with rebel constituency behind them. They would misrepresent their States. Therefore I can never agree to let them in under the present state of affairs. Let us have probation; let us be sure that something more than mere willingness to come in has been felt by them.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to occupy many minutes. I was indeed astonished to find my respected colleague, I will not say so tender-hearted, but so lenient to those toward whom mercy is not rendered necessary. But I know so well his natural kindness of heart and his proximity to that eloquent divine who so lately has slaughtered whole herds of fatted calves, that I cannot be much surprised at it. But, sir, if he is so fond of such associates, let me suggest in all kindness to him that he can find better company nearer home. He lives very near Cherry Hill, where there is a State institution containing several hundred inmates who—

Mr. THAYER. Will the gentleman allow me to correct him in his geography? I do not live near Cherry Hill. I live on the top of Chestnut Hill. [Laughter.] And I would like to know the name of the distinguished divine to whom he refers. I cannot recollect any one.

Mr. STEVENS. It is the late Henry Ward Beecher. [Laughter.]

Mr. THAYER. I understood my colleague to say a neighbor of mine. Mr. Beecher lives about a hundred miles from me.

Mr. STEVENS. Well, that is in the neighborhood in this country, three thousand miles in extent. [Laughter.]

Mr. THAYER. The gentleman himself is about as near and much nearer to him in many things than I am. [Laughter.]

Mr. STEVENS. How near does my friend live to Cherry Hill?

Mr. THAYER. About ten miles.

Mr. STEVENS. Well, let him walk ten miles, instead of going two or three thousand South, and he will find, as I said, three or four

hundred inmates, whom, if he wishes to forgive and enfranchise, he will find at present a little restrained of their rights. They have done nothing but err. There is no blood upon their hands; they have only erred in committing such little acts as arson and larceny. Let him go to one of those corridors and cause it to be opened and they will flock around him, and he will see men who are not half as bloody and have not committed half as many crimes as the rebels whom he wishes to see immediately admitted here.

Now, sir, for my part I am willing they shall come in when they are ready. Do not, I pray you, admit those who have slaughtered half a million of our countrymen until their clothes are dried, and until they are recled. I do not wish to sit side by side with men whose garments smell of the blood of my kindred. Gentlemen seem to forget the scenes that were enacted here years ago. Many of you were not here. But my friend from Ohio [Mr. GARFIELD] ought to have kept up his reading enough to have been familiar with the history of those days, when the men that you propose to admit occupied the other side of the House; when the mighty Toombs, with his shaggy locks, headed a gang who, with shouts of defiance on this floor, rendered this a hell of legislation.

Ah, sir, it was but six years ago when they were here, just before they went out to join the armies of Catiline, just before they left this Hall. Those of you who were here then will remember the scene in which every southern member, encouraged by their allies, came forth in one yelling body, because a speech for freedom was being made here; when weapons were drawn, and Barksdale's bowie-knife gleamed before our eyes. Would you have these men back again so soon to reenact those scenes? Wait until I am gone, I pray you. I want not to go through it again. It will be but a short time for my colleague to wait. I hope he will not put us to that test.

Mr. THAYER. Will the gentleman yield? Mr. STEVENS. Yes, sir.

Mr. THAYER. This amendment does not affect the eligibility of the people to whom he refers. That portion to which I directed my remarks excludes them from voting; and I wish to ask my colleague in this connection whether he thinks he can build a penitentiary big enough to hold eight million people.

Mr. STEVENS. Yes, sir, a penitentiary which is built at the point of the bayonet down below, and if they undertake to come here we will shoot them. That is the way to take care of these people. They deserve it, at least for a time.

Now, sir, if the gentlemen had remembered the scenes twenty years ago, when no man dared to speak without risking his life, when but a few men did do it—for there were cowards in those days, as there are in these—you would not have found them asking to bring these men in, and I only wonder that my friend from Ohio [Mr. BINGHAM] should intimate a desire to bring them here.

Mr. BINGHAM. I beg the gentleman's attention one moment. I have not by one word or vote of mine ever justified him in saying that I consent ever to bring them in.

Mr. STEVENS. Never; but the gentleman wished to strike out a section and kill this amendment, the most popular before the people of any that can be presented.

Mr. BINGHAM. I ask the gentleman to indulge me a moment. The third section does not touch the question of their coming in.

Mr. STEVENS. Then why is it you oppose it? If it is going to hurt nobody, in God's name let it remain. If it is going to hurt anybody, it will be the men that deserve it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my motion to recommit, and move the previous question.

Mr. GARFIELD. In case the previous question is not seconded, will my motion to amend be in order?

The SPEAKER. A motion to amend will be in order if the previous question is not seconded.