

Monday Morning, April 24, 1865.

## Situation of Affairs.

There is a temporary truce between the armies. For a moment only, perhaps, the weapons of war are dropped, and the opposing hosts take breath after the perilous and protracted struggle. How soon they will resume their weapons, whether they will ever resume them, is the question. And if the war ceases, what are to be the conditions of the cessation? These are the questions, the solution of which lies hidden in the womb of time.

Who can propose to solve it, even through the most logical conjecture? Our Congress, our people, our press? Alas! the one has seemingly surrendered everything to the Government; the Government yields everything to the President; the people concede to Congress, and the press is really no oracle. It rather feeds the populace vanity than seek to correct its errors, rebuke its vanity, and inform its understanding. What is done, what shall be done, will be at the fiat of certain persons, possibly appointed by the President, who will carry on negotiations, of which we shall be permitted to know nothing, until the telegraph shall tell us of an action in the premises, which may be beyond recall or remedy. Negotiations are said to be going on; but between what agents? We are told that Judge John A. Campbell, of the District Court, and an assistant secretary of one of the Government Departments, has been left by the President at Richmond to conduct negotiations—or rather see what can be done. This report is unofficial. It may be true or not; it is quite probable. In what degree does this proceeding meet the sanction of Congress? How far is Congress privy to it, and what are the qualities, as a statesman, which Judge Campbell possesses for the work? He has considerable reputation as a lawyer, but lawyers rarely make good statesmen. His mind is logical and sensible. He is shrewd rather than profound; will write you a good disquisition upon a judicial subject, and maintain a respectable position in a controversy. But he has acquired no reputation as a diplomatist—has had no experience in the province, and we doubt if he be the right sort of person to meet the exigency in the present instance. But the probability is that he acts under instructions of President Davis.

What are these instructions? To give

them as all, and for such a purpose, the President must have reached a result in his own mind, which is decisive as to our situation. He must have settled the question, first, as to our capacity to carry on the war; as to the policy of doing so or not; as to the exigencies which make it necessary to secure peace; as to the resources which we still possess, by which to command such terms as shall consist with honor and safety, and especially to satisfy the people of these Confederate States. Unluckily, the status of the people is not of a sort to command much consideration, except when votes are wanted at a popular election. They exact no responsibilities, and few officials care to defer their public performances to their judgment.

But there is Congress—the press. Well, where is Congress—where the press? The former, no doubt, possesses sources of information which the press does not. The action cannot be delayed till press and people get the information. A people may be lost in the delay. The Congress is nowhere at present. The Senate, which is appointed to sanction the action of the President, or not, in all matters of negotiation, and which should advise with him, does not appear in position at his ear. Is Judge Campbell to assume all the responsibility? Is his judgment to decide the momentous question?

The primary questions are, briefly—are we a conquered people? Is it no longer possible to oppose resistance to the invader? This is the first and most important question. With the capacity still to bring into the field an army or armies of 300,000 fighting men, are we to submit and pass under the yoke—are we to be subjugated—forced back into a union with a people whom we hate—under a despotism which we hate, and which strips of all present possessions, and all future hope? Shall we sink to the condition of vassalage, a serfage to vassals, and at the sport of a legion of satraps of the types of Banks and Butler? It should be some, conclusive, absolute, pressing, nay, permanent necessity, which should justify this wretched surrender of right, country, property and sacred honor.

There will be arguments enough, no doubt, even to justify this submission in the alleged: 1. Want of ammunition and arms. 2. In the lack of clothing and provisions. 3. In the present exhaustion of the country, &c. If to these you could add—in the self-sabotage of the people; in the broken spirits of our soldiers;

in the skulking of thousands; in the blind cupidity of thousands more; and in the resignation of all to a fate against which they have no longer courage to contend, then, indeed, you may drop the weapon, and betake yourselves to your knees with all possible despatch.

The negotiations will take their character from the morale of the country at its present juncture. It is highly important—nay, vital—to any successful negotiation, that this morale should be fortified by proper argument, by a just survey of the premises, of the prospects, of our own resources, as at present left to us; as to the numbers we can still bring into the field, as to the fields in which we may find cover during a protracted struggle, where the Fabian warfare shall supersede that mockery of the Napoleonic, which has been the curse of our late campaigning. In this survey, we shall need to inquire into the condition of our enemy; his embarrassments; into his relations with other States, and why we should hold off from any negotiation which, in promising us peace only, denies the recognition of our independence. All these are subjects, with many more, needing the profoundest statesmanship to consider and weigh. Mere political cunning rarely achieves anything in negotiation. We need in the statesman a philosopher—one who does not reject human nature, and all its instincts, as among the essential elements of his subject. Is Judge Campbell the man for this? Is he alone, or has he associates? And, if so, who are they? The people, if there be a people, should insist upon security in statesmanship when their liberties are at stake. They may need to take the matter into their own hands. They should make no vital sacrifices. We would yield nothing to secure peace to the country, save our honor, and those inherent rights and privileges, deprived of which, as a people, we should be worse than bondmen.

We are informed that President Davis delivered a very cheering speech in Charlotte, Wednesday evening last, in which he stated that the surrender of Gen. Lee did not "wound" the army of Northern Virginia, and that in six weeks all would be right again. He also announced that France had determined on an intervention.

It is currently reported that a French fleet has passed up the Mississippi to New Orleans, having annihilated the Yankee fleet at the mouth of the river.

President Davis and his Cabinet are in Charlotte, N. C.