

Wednesday Morning, April 26, 1865.

**Mastery Inactivity.**

It is Sancho, we believe, who says, in a moment of incertitude and loss, "Patience, and shuffle the cards." Mr. Burke's well known and felicitous phrase, "mastery inactivity," has its special meaning at those periods in the life of the statesman, when the curtain of the future seems let down close to his feet, and he sees not in what direction to take the next step. At such a moment, it is the fool only who through mere weariness, or fretfulness, or fright, still persists in movement, though he knows not but that his next step will be over the precipice. There are periods, brief, when men and nations have to fold their hands and throw themselves humbly and hopefully upon God; when, having done all that was in their wisdom to conceive and in their strength to execute, they must fold their hands and wait patiently upon that Divine Power who has been pleased to let down an impenetrable veil between human search and action, and the inscrutable future of design as well as event. To do otherwise—to bound forward unadvisedly—to hurry on, through a mere sense of weariness and uneasiness, is to exhibit impatience with God. There is no wisdom in showing oneself impatient with God. It only hurries one on to self-sacrifice. Patience for a reason—that is, when you can neither work nor see where to go—and in the language of the poet,

"The darkest day,

Wait till to-morrow, will have passed away."

Now, especially, it appears to us that the season of "mastery inactivity" is upon us. Our situation leaves human wisdom at a loss in all speculations upon what the hour shall demand, and what the morrow may bring forth. We have done all that we could—very far from wisely, we grant—but Heaven is merciful even to vanity, ignorance and imbecility—that is, just so soon as they will humble themselves, confess their impertinence and worthlessness, and submit to wait events at the hands of the Great Disposer of all human affairs. We are temporarily an exhausted people, and, unluckily, there are too many thousands not merely a depending people, but they are impatient of the delay in the resumption of those private devotions to Mammon in which they have shown themselves more devout in homage than to the gods of patriotism and humanity. They may show themselves now, if impatient of the slow ordinances of God, as much too eager in procuring peace as they were, perhaps, precipitate in demanding war. "*Lex extremæ se touchent.*" Avoid the extreme. If rash, as they think, in provoking war, they may be equally so in their desire after peace. The very eagerness of the enemy in offering truce and peace—if they have done so—argues the existence of a condition of things which we shall need time to decipher. Now is the time to exert our vigilance to the utmost—to be most circumspect in feeling our way—to listen with incredulous ears to the smooth and specious assurance of those who have shown themselves so bellicose in their hate, and to

beware, lest the terms of peace shall involve us—not only in a foreign war, but in one, engaging in which, we shall forfeit all the grateful supports of conscience. To ally ourselves with our present enemies, simply to secure a peace at all hazards, is probably to force us into foreign war, against those who have no quarrel with us, all the sons who are still spared to us from four years of bloody battle through which we have gone. It is time that our sons should have rest—that mothers should cease to wail over the premature sacrifice of their first-born on the altars of Moloch—that we should be permitted to return to our desolated homes, and seek to recover from the ashes, and through the healing help of time, the repose and happiness so long denied, if not absolutely lost. If we are still to fight—if there are to be more wars, taking our children away to the slaughter, then, in God's name, let it be with those still who have destroyed so many—the ravagers of our homes—the violators of all our securities—the reckless and restless robbers who will never be at peace with any people, so long as they have wealth for the spoiler, and victims for the tyrant. Let us pause for a season—beware of haste—keep our arms bright—our armies on the watch—and avoid, as we would shame and death, any precipitate action, which shall again throw us into the embrace of our natural enemies.

**Democracy and Demagoguism.**

Democracy makes cowards of public men. Men who fear the popular vote, will never oppose the popular will. Men who build upon the masses will appeal to the lowest standards as the most numerous. Numbers thus become the substitutes for intellect as well as character. The relations of the two—the leader and the people—will result in the degradation of the former and the presumption of the latter. In degree as the one is weak and timorous, will the other be bold and insolent. The caprice of the populace will keep strict pace with the contempt which they will feel at the weakness of their leaders; and one set of demagogues will thus give place to another as the sparks fly upward, each successive swarm making an increase in the downward progress of intellect and character. Very soon, there will be no moral restraints upon the passions of the multitude. The creature who buys their votes, sells himself in the purchase. They know his price in their own. The tenure of his hold upon them will be limited by his need in subserviency. Should he forget himself for a moment—forget duly to acknowledge his subserviency—he will be cast off. If he is simply cunning, he will continue to play his game consistently. He will appear before them in rags. If he forgets himself in his vanity, they will revenge upon him all their hurts of self-esteem; and fresher subserviency, and a more lavish hand in bribery, will enable any competitor to win the voices that were lately all his own. The populace, fed on vanities and in false relations to their leaders, are always jealous of neglect. They are jealous of all shows as well as assertions of authority. In all countries, from the days of Aristides to the present, they are jea-

lous of their own great men. Hence, they voted Aristides into banishment because of his virtues, which made them ashamed. Hence it was that neither Webster, Clay nor Calhoun, the master statesmen of their times and sections in the United States, could ever be elevated to the Presidency; while such men of straw as Harrison, Pierce, Polk, could all rise into the seats once filled by Washington and Jefferson. In Democracy, we call upon God to bear witness to a lie. He has made all men unequal, studiously so—some with five talents, others again with only one talent—in order that they should have various uses, and thus be made mutually dependent for the proper working of society. In the teeth of all experience, in defiance of all thought, philosophy and religion, we declare them all equal; and assume for the race at large the capacity for the government of society, when hardly one in a thousand is able to govern himself. God will not sanction a lie. He witnesses against it. All the favorite democracies of the world; to the present day, have devoured each other; the survivor, if any, finally devouring himself. That Democracy makes cowards of its public men, is perhaps the cause of all the evil. Were the popular leader brave and honest enough to oppose the passions of his people, they might be saved. And yet, the passions of the people once aroused, are as the horse maddened into a reckless consciousness of his own powers, and rendering the harness that fetters him to the car. The error is in suffering him to get the bit between his teeth—in suffering the man to exercise his powers as a beast, without having trained him to the development of his higher nature, which might have lifted him to a height only next below that of an angel.

**What to Think?**

You may suppose anything. Conjecture is boundless, and takes its aspects from the moods of men. One man has a habit of seeking the dark, another the bright aspects of a subject. One says, touching the reported assassination of Lincoln, "It is the worst thing in the world for us, for Andy Johnson is a brute and drunkard, (as if Lincoln were any better,) and he will be a thousand times more disposed to tyrannize than would a better man." Another thinks that the change is wonderfully for the better, and he has his reasons—such as they are—for this profound conclusion. Now, all this matter is mere child's play. You may go on guessing from morning to night, and sleep no better for it, and surely wake no wiser in the morning. Were we, as a people, good for anything but prattle, we should not ask or care who was President or ruler among our enemies. We should rather prepare for the worst at their hands, and pluck our flower of safety from the nettle of danger.

There is hardly a chance of reasoning for the concoction of the Yankee people. They are not governed by law or principle. The most intelligent people in the world, they have succumbed, in the caprice of passion, to the first despotism that offered. They have submitted blindly to his will, never even remonstrating, though he has subverted every fundamental law of the Constitution, and every tradition of the land,