

and deception from distrust of your ability to govern by open straight-forwardness of speech and forcible restraint of the unrelenting. That while your friends sedulously proclaimed you "the honest," your utterances, from first to last, evince the consciousness of a necessity to speak evasively and deceptively, so that each of the two hostile parties might flatter themselves that you were the champion of their measures, until you could secure power to enforce your policy. That once committed to this policy you have been obliged to continue it.

Hence it is also charged that every department of your administration has caught the inspiration of this policy of governing by deception. That your Foreign Secretary has been "making history" of current events for foreign countries on such a scale of deception as to have made Americans, like Chinese, diplomatic statements a scold and derision; that your War Secretary seizing and appropriating the telegraph to making current history for the people at home, plays upon popular credulity in a manner which would cause the Chinese to stare, and the author of the veritable Baron Trenck or Baron Munchausen to wonder. That your Financial Secretary moves the wires for the depletion of the pockets of the masses and the implosion of the pockets of the favored few with all the treacherous secrecy, dissembling and falsehood of the gambling hell. That religious journalism, imposing upon the popular confidence in statements from such sources, sedulously gathers and circulates with its endorsement the stories hardest of belief. That the pulpit assumes them as the foundation of its homilies on the times, on the situation and on the Providence of God. And, at your suggestion, from time to time, when the success of the deception is specially important to your measures, the ministers of religion under the guise of prayer tell the story to God, in the presence of the people, as assurance to them of its truth.

Need I remind you that, so far as such impersonations of your administration go, the Church of Christ, who is the King of Truth, and whose religion is distinguished from all others by its supreme regard for truth must, by committing herself in any way to an administration so conceived of, destroy her influence for good and expose religion to the scorn and derision of the multitude. That however diplomatic Talleyrands may define language as "an instrument for concealing thought," or military necessity, as an instrument for circulating falsehood, the great representatives of Christ's religion on earth must stand clear of endorsing the ethical justice of either definition.

So again with the popular conception of your administration as signalized by its faithlessness to pledges and solemn constitutional covenants. It is widely held that your only real conquests in this war have been the now plundered and desolated Border States, whom you seduced into subjection by solemn

pledges never kept, and purposes solemnly avowed the direct contrary of which have been executed. Such was the assurance of your want either of right or disposition to interfere with or injure, in any way, their property in slave labor. Such the pledge through your earlier representative, Mr. Holt, that "the tread of your armies, if quietly admitted, should not crush the lowliest of their beautiful flowers nor a blade of their green grass!" And the reward of their credulity is desolations wider, and spoiliations more infamous, of a fairer Eden, than those of Hyder Ali in the Carnatic. You are understood, indeed, to avow the right to set aside the covenants of the constitution whenever necessary according to the paradox of the Hodge's letter, to save it. You have recently put at the head of the Supreme Court, chief interpreter of the constitution, the committee man of the Buffalo Convention in 1843—long before the days of "military necessity" and "slavery aggression"—who reported the monstrous resolve—

"That we regard and treat the third clause of that instrument, (the constitution), whenever applied in the case of a fugitive slave, as utterly null and void, and consequently as forming no part of the Constitution of the United States, whenever we are called upon as sworn to support it!" And allow me, Mr. President, to bear my testimony against another form of this same ethical wrong, about which the public clamor has said little. I refer to the shocking irreverence for the oath which has infected the whole country by reason of the policy of your administration in devising all sorts of conscience—entangling oaths, and enforcing them by all sorts of cruel pains and penalties; by permitting the framing of such oaths to cease, brutal and ignorant subterfuges, oftentimes to be extemporized as the occasion calls for them, and filled with stupid falsehoods to be affirmed before God; imposing absurd oaths of citizenship on women and children, and multiplying oaths to be taken touching the most frivolous matters, until the sense of the solemnity of a special covenant before God is becoming extinct among the people. And this crying sin has its chief source in the absurd and unconstitutional claim of the civil government to legislate and make inquisition not for *overt acts* merely but for the thoughts of the mind and the sympathies of the heart also.

Now, bad as all this is in the popular conception of a secular administration, it becomes utterly ruinous to the influence of religion, when observed to be countenanced and approved by the church whose God is the "Angel of the Covenant," who reveals Himself, as keeping his covenant, forever, and threatens with special wrath the covenant breakers.

Multitudes of the people at home, and most of the civilized world abroad, regard your administration as signalized also by its unprecedented ferocity and bloodthirst in the conduct of the war. Making all due allowance for the party spirit that may have exaggerated