

honest difference of opinion, by extreme men, augurs unfavorably for the success of our free institution, if such is to be permitted to pass without rebuke, by any large class of the people of this country. Such a spirit, when carried to the excess that we have witnessed, cannot fail, sooner or later, to find its own condemnation. President Johnson fortunately for himself, is not without his record in the past. Taunted with his humble origin, in which he only shares the lot of the mechanical and working classes throughout the country, charged with complicity in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, whose friend he was, and whose policy he is steadily and faithfully pursuing—denounced as a rebel and a traitor, after having sacrificed everything for his country he may find himself ere long, from the very intensity of a studied persecution, the rallying point of a more healthy public sentiment, among reflecting men of all parties, which if it would save this country from anarchy and ruin, must curb the intemperate spirit which rules the hour, and inaugurate a new era of toleration and forbearance in our national differences, in the midst of the whirlwind which has been so unjustly and wantonly provoked, by excited and impulsive men. Is it not time that this warfare, so disparaging to our national character, should cease?

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

A convention of the people of the State to revise the present Constitution will be advisable at an early day. Some of its leading provisions were prompted, as is well known, by the war then raging, and the confused condition of our national affairs. Happily, the settlement of all these differences renders their retention as part of our organic law no longer a matter of policy or necessary precaution. Apart from this, however, there are measures of practical reform which should not be lost sight of, in the new career upon which we have entered. In any action upon this subject, you will be prepared to reflect the public sentiment in determining whether you will be content to resort to the power conferred by the Constitution upon the Legislature in making such changes as you may deem most urgent, or refer the whole subject to the people, to be decided by them.

In discharging the duties incumbent upon you in this trying crisis of our national affairs, gentlemen of the Senate and House of Delegates, I trust that past differences will be buried, and that the paramount object of re-uniting our distracted and bleeding country may be uppermost in your deliberations.

The obligations of party must be subordinated to the more sacred claims growing out of a common origin and a common nationality; and those who have been brothers in the past should strive to extinguish, rather than rekindle anew, the smouldering fires of alienation and strife.