

of Congress, as they have so emphatically asserted in their report. It must be taken as true, that, in their view the danger is real and imminent. But considering the difference in the weapons used "in the halls of Congress" from those employed on that other "battle field," and considering that the Southern Representatives, in disparity of numbers, would be at as great disadvantage in the one as on the other, it is difficult to imagine a higher tribute than they pay to Southern Representatives for that moral power and intellectual prowess which usually command success in legislative halls, and which, in the opinion of the Committee, if admitted into the halls of Congress, would achieve such terrible results.

Report of the
Committee.

Section three of the proposed amendment describes a class of persons thereby declared to be ineligible to be a Senator or Representative in Congress, Elector of President and Vice President, or to hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any other State.

"Every person having previously taken an oath as a member of Congress or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State Legislature, or as an Executive or Judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States who shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof" belongs to this prescribed class.

Two things are inevitably admitted by Congress in proposing this section as an amendment to the Constitution. First, that there was no law in existence at the time when the act was committed which prescribed the proposed punishment. Second, that Congress has now no rightful power under the Constitution to pass a law to impose such punishment.

If there was such a law, or if Congress had the rightful power to pass such a law, why ask the ratification of this amendment by three-fourths of the Legislatures of the several States to make it "valid as a part of the Constitution."

This third section presents a most grave question for the consideration of the Legislature. It