

## THE CONFISCATION ACT.

This Act of Congress, to which recent reference has been made, authorizes only the confiscation of property used or intended to be used for rebellious purposes—not of the whole property of rebels, as a penalty of their rebellion.

It is *not* therefore under this Act that the recent seizures, by the Government, of vessels in Northern ports, monies in Northern banks, &c., have been made—for said Act authorizes nothing of the kind.

Such seizures are made under that well understood law of military policy, which disables an enemy every way it can.

As to slaves, the Congressional Confiscation Act takes a similar ground—it enacts that the employment of a slave in hostile service against the Government, shall cause a forfeiture by the master of his claim to the labor or service of such slave—and, as we infer from the language of the Act, in effect sets the slave free. For it says:—

In every such case, the person to whom such labor or service is claimed to be due *shall forfeit his claim to such labor*, any law of the state or of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding. And whenever thereafter the person claiming such labor or service *shall seek to enforce his claim*, it shall be *a full and sufficient answer* to such claim that the person whose service or labor is claimed has been employed in hostile service against the Government of the United States, contrary to the provisions of this Act.

It will be perceived that nothing is said relative to the title to the slave passing into the hands of the Government—the Act simply nullifies the claim of the master, and thus leaves the slave to himself.