

PROCLAMATION OF EMANCIPATION.

Freedom of the Slaves in Rebellious States on the
First Day of January Next.

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

A PROCLAMATION.

I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare, that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the Constitutional relation between the United States and the people thereof, in which States that relation is or may be suspended or disturbed; that it is my purpose at the next meeting of Congress to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure, tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all the slave States, so called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which States may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, immediate or gradual abolishment of slavery within their respective limits, and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent, with their consent, upon this continent, or elsewhere, with the previously obtained consent of the governments existing there, will be continued; that on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or any designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward and forever, free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom; that the Executive will, on the 1st day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States, or parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively will then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State or people thereof shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof have not been in rebellion against the United States; that attention is hereby called to an Act of Congress, entitled, "An Act to make an additional Article of War," approved March 13th, 1862, and which Act is in the words and figures following:—

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that hereafter the following shall be promulgated as an additional article of war, for the government of the army of the United States, and shall be obeyed and observed as such:

Article —. All officers or persons in the military or naval service of the United States are prohibited from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives from service or labor who may have escaped from any persons to whom such service or labor is claimed to be due, and any officer who shall be found guilty by court martial of violating this article shall be dismissed from the service.

Section 2. And be it further enacted, That this Act shall take effect from and after its passage."

Also to the 9th and 10th sections of an Act entitled "An Act to suppress insurrection, to punish treason and rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes," approved July 17, 1862, and which sections are in the words and figures following:—

"Section 9. And be it further enacted, That all slaves of persons who shall be in rebellion against the Government of the United States, or who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto, escaping from such person, and taking refuge within the lines of the army, and all slaves captured from such persons, or deserted by them, and coming under the control of the Government of the United States, and all slaves of such persons found on or being within any place occupied by rebel forces, and afterwards occupied by the forces of the United States, shall be deemed captures of war, and shall be forever free of their servitude, and not again held as slaves.

Section 10. And be it further enacted, That no slave, escaping into any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, from any of the States, shall be delivered up, or any way impeded or hindered of his liberty, except for crime, or some offence against the laws, unless the person claiming said fugitive shall first make oath that the person to whom the labor or service of such fugitive is alleged to be due is his lawful owner, and has not been in arms against the United States in the present rebellion, nor in any way given aid and comfort thereto; and no person engaged in the military or naval service of the United States shall, under any pretence whatever, assume to decide on the validity of the claim of any person to the service or labor of any other person, or surrender up any such person to the claimant, on pain of being dismissed from the service."

And I do hereby enjoin and order all persons engaged in the military and naval service of the United States to observe, obey and enforce within their respective spheres of service the Acts and sections above recited; and the Executive will in due time recommend that all citizens of the United States, who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall, upon the restoration of the Constitutional relations between the United States and their respective States and people, if the relations shall have been suspended or disturbed, be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States, including the loss of slaves.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this 22d day of September, in the year of our Lord 1862, and of the independence of the United States the 87th.

By the President,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WM. H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State.*

REMARKS. Though we believe that this Proclamation is not all that the exigency of the times and the consequent duty of the government require,—and therefore are not so jubilant over it as many others,—still, it is an important step in the right direction, and an act of immense historic consequence, and justifies the almost universal gladness of expression and warm congratulation which it has simultaneously elicited in every part of the Free States. It calls for the prompt and efficient enforcement, by the army and navy, of the Confiscation Act, as passed by Congress, whereby the slaves of all rebels who may be captured, or who may seek protection under the national flag, are to be liberated unconditionally; and as the great mass of the slaveholders are in furious rebellion, it emancipates more than three-fourths of the entire slave population, as fast as they shall become accessible. It also forbids any person connected with the military or naval service to arrest or send back any fugitive slave whatever. These commands, if faithfully executed by the army and navy, will speedily give a staggering blow to the rebellion. The objectionable features of the Proclamation are its avowed readiness to return to bloody stripes, and horrible torture, and life-long servitude, (if he be not killed outright,) any hunted bondman on the mere oath of the villain claiming him, that he is loyal to the government—its seemingly contradictory talk (for the first portion of it is a characteristic jumble of words) about emancipating the slaves in all existing rebel States, on the first of January, 1863, (a time sufficient to enable Jeff. Davis and his traitorous confederates to anticipate that measure theinselves, and thus secure their independence by foreign intervention)—its proposition to make a new overture to the Slave States to sell their slave system at a bargain—and its mean, absurd and proscriptive device to expatriate the colored population from this their native land.