GENERAL COX AND THE NEGROES.

There is no question on which our political doctors disagree more widely than this: "What is to be done with the negro?" From the very beginning of the agitation of the slavery question, this interrogatory was regarded as final and conclusive of the whole matter. The postulate being assumed that nothing could be done with the negro but what was doing with him, it followed that any attempt to do anything else was absurd and impossible. The suppression of the rebellion, however, and that of slavery with it, has forced the facts upon all thinking minds—and on many minds that do not think—that something else must be done with him, and everybody seems to be ready with an infallible scheme. The latest that we have noticed is contained in a letter from Gen. J. D. Cox, the Republican candidate for Governor of Ohio, to some enquiring friends in Oberlin, anxious for the political orthodoxy of their candidate. The distinguished services of Gen. Cox during the war, and the confidence of the Republicans of Ohio in him, evinced by this nomination, should secure to the opinions he has thus expressed a full consideration and a respectful treatment.

Gen. Cox assumes that there is a radical and irreducible hostility between the white and black races at the South which will make political unity impossible; that a struggle for supremacy must follow any attempt to compel such unity, which must end in the subjection or extermination of the weaker party. The remedy he suggests is the separation of the whites and blacks by assigning to the latter a territory formed out of contiguous portions of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida, and organizing thereupon a black dependency of a territorial character, under the protection and nurture of the United States, the government to be wholly in their own hands, with such assistance only at the start as may be necessary or convenient. He does not propose a coercive collection of all the colored population in this promised land, but thinks that the attractions it would hold out to them would secure their voluntary migration to it. Gen. Cox admits that there are difficulties attending the carrying his scheme into effect, in which proposition, at least, we cordially agree with him. Only we hold the difficulties to be nothing less than insuperable, and his remedy no better than the disease, were it possible to apply it.

General Cox appeals to history to show the difficulty with which different nationalities have amalgamated in the old world. The Norman and the Saxon, the Gaul and the Frank, were centuries in amalgamating, and thence he infers that political unity cannot exist between races of more distinctly marked separation. But he does not allow for the immensely greater rapidity with which opinions and customs and habits change in these latter days. The printing-press, the steamship, and the railway have given to a decade now changes which a century could not compass five hundred years ago. And his admission that the fusion of races "from the eastern shore of Germany to the western coast of Ireland" is already so perfect on this continent, that there are few Yankees "in whose veins is not mixed the blood of several," appears to us fatal to his argument. History does not repeat herself, as is often rhetorically flourished in our ears. The race ever accommodates itself to new conditions, and forgets the old ones on which it has turned its back. If nations from every clime and of every tongue can agree to live together in political unity at the North, why may we not hope that common sense and common interest may make political unity possible at the South, between races that have been for generations in contact with each other? Such theories as these, however unintentionally, have a grave tendency to aggravate the very difficulties their authors most deprecate.

Why cannot the whites and blacks live together in unity and political equality after emancipation? There is not the least objection to the neighborhood of the negro, nor to his contact, as long as he is a slave. It is the element of freedom that vitiates his nature and makes him an intolerable nuisance. Gen. Cox could hardly look into the faces of the colored people in the northermmost slave States without seeing written upon them the proofs that there is no insuperable antipathy between the white and the black race. Is it inconceivable that in no very long time the former may find it possible to live on fair terms of political equality with the latter, as different classes and nationalities do with us, when that equality is firmly established? We do not agree with Gen. Cox that "reflecting men in the Southern States" will fall in with his plan. Such know too well the politico-economical necessity of black labor under which they lie. Reflecting men of no nation ever consent to part with the labor on which the prosperity of every community rests. The late slaveholding class yet clings to the idea that slavery in some form will be accorded to them, and the outcry and agitation against the extension of political rights to the negroes will be kept up as long as they see a possibility of that beastial consummation. But when the nation has definitively freed every slave, and put his own protection into his own hands by giving him the ballot and the bayonet, and the safeguard of the national arm while necessary arises, we do not believe human nature South will be found materially different from human nature North. It will make the best of its new condition, which it will soon find to have bettered the old beyond its fears and beyond its hopes.

Another main difficulty Gen. Cox would have to encounter would be the unwillingness of the blacks themselves to escape into his new city of refuge. If there be a quality of the negro's nature stronger than another, it is his love of his native home. He has had few reasons enough to love it, yet nothing but the infernal furies of slavery could drive him to break the ties that bound him to it. For fifty years or more the whole legislative policy of the slave States has been directed to compel the free negroes to forsake the neighborhood of the slaves, whom they infected by the sight of their freedom. The cruelty of the laws and the villanies to which the public sentiment of the South subjected this unhappy class have never been equalled in the case of any oppressed race not actually enslaved. And, on the other hand, the Colonization Society tempted them with lands and political equality in Africa, and Hayti invited them to enter in and possess that fairest of the sea-girt isles. But neither cruelties nor bribes could separate them from the soil they loved, though it had been but an unjust stepmother to them. And should they consent to congregate themselves in the Utopia which Gen. Cox would provide for them, what safeguard would they have from the irritations and depredations of their enemies, who would hem them about? The Creeks, and Cherokees, and Seminoles could give them better warning as to that. A standing army of the United States would be needed for their defence against their hostile neighbors. It is better to face the difficulty manfully now, in full faith in the supremacy of the democratic principle for the regulation of societies, than to endeavor to evade it by schemes like these, even were they practicable.

There is but one key to the problem, "What is to be done with the negro?" And that is, Justice. The nation has restored him to his liberty, and is bound in honor and in self-interest to see that it is secured to him. We believe that it has not learnt the lessons of the last few years so ill as to intend leaving him in the power of his old oppressors. It may permit experiments to be tried, and the former ruling class to be proved incompetent to govern now, out of their own mouths and by their own actions. But it does not mean to deliver either itself or its black allies bound into their hands. A republican form of government and none other will be guaranteed to each of the pardoned States—a republican form of government, in which the governing power will be lodged in the hands of the majority, on equal terms, without regard to race or color. The rebels did not find us the cowards they thought to find us when they rose in arms; they will not find us the fools they hope to find us now that our foot is on their necks. The only indemnity for the past that we demand is security for the future, and that we can only have through absolute political justice to the negro. That justice he will have, though an armed occupation of the rebel country be necessary during the existing generation. And General Cox may be assured, should he live to serve his country in civil life as long as he
served her well in the field, that he will see the impossible done—whites and blacks living together in political, industrial unity, and enjoying the prosperity and happiness which spring only from impartial liberty.

**ENGLISH OPINION ON DAVIS'S GUILT.**

Our London correspondent, who was in the darkest days one of the ablest and most effective supporters of the cause of the United States Government, has, in his letter this week, produced an argument against the infliction of capital punishment on Jefferson Davis which deserves attention, as embodying the opinions of that portion of the English public which has never sympathized with the Confederacy. The gist of it is, that the judgment formed of the nature of Davis's offence by this generation may be reversed by the next; that there is a real moral difference between crimes committed by a man in his public capacity, as the head of a government or army, and those committed by him as a private individual; and that capital punishment is barbarous.

The last of these will, of course, apply to any case as well as Davis's, so we need not discuss it here. The production of the other two, however, shows how completely even friendly English critics, who have shown how great is the distance between a system that has failed to catch the real point on which the American public has relied for its moral justification in carrying it on, to ask Americans to place Davis in the same category as Napoleon, is to ask them to surrender not only their whole case against Davis, but the fundamental doctrines of their political system. Napoleon derived his claims to immortality at the hands both of the Bourbons and the allies, not simply from the fact that he had been the recognized head of a belligerent power, but that the revolution to which he owed his elevation was morally justifiable; that the rule of the Bourbon dynasty was rightfully overthrown; and that their restoration, by the act of foreign bayonets, was an immoral act, and gave them no valid claim to the allegiance of Napoleon or any other Frenchman. Louis XVIII. had, perhaps, a legal right to slay him, but he had no moral right to do so, and it is from the moral point of view that posterity looks at these things.

The same thing may be said of the proposal to shoot Washington. The reason why everybody now acknowledges that to have executed him would have been a crime, is not simply their admiration of his personal character, but their belief that his cause was a righteous one.

It may be said, of course, that people's estimate of the goodness or badness of causes changes from generation to generation, just as their estimate of the goodness or badness of men. But there are certain features about this Southern rebellion which, in the opinion of the American public, are distinctive, and mark it off from any other recorded in history, by certain broad lines. It was a revolt, in the first place, against the only government on earth which has been established after full and fair discussion by the free will and consent of the governed. It was, moreover, the only revolt on record which was not caused by solid palpable grievances, capable of being, or actually enunciated on paper; and, last of all, it was the only revolt ever set on foot avowedly to avoid a remote and only probable risk of interference with the institution of slavery.

Now, granting that the distinction which the long divorce between morality and politics in the Old World has created between political and private crimes be one of which it is right that European governments should take notice, because men there are bred under it, it does not follow that Americans should allow it to be set up in justification of crimes against their peace; because, apart from the institution of slavery, it is a distinction which has never been recognized in American politics. As between white men, at least—and Davis is a white man—the political institutions of this country have never been based, as those of nearly every other country are, on mere force or tradition. Every thing has been done that can be done to give opinion full play, and to embody in the laws the highest moral sentiment of the whole community. Therefore, even supposing Davis had not revolted in support of slavery, and even supposing the crime of treason was not, as it is, defined by the Constitution and made punishable by statute, his revolting against a Government like this, without any other excuse than a desire to change or to assert a naked right, was, we insist upon it, a worse crime than revolt against any other government in the world could be, and, if anything can deserve hanging, would deserve it.

The argument drawn from the chance of opinions changing as to the nature of his crime in the next generation, derives all its force from the theory that his offence was, as treason generally is in Europe, merely a conventional offence created by statute. On conventional matters, of course, opinions do change from age to age and year to year; but if Americans believe anything earnestly and fervently, it is that there is a bond of honor under their system of government, elevated it from the rank of an offence against a particular form of government, or a particular order of titularities, into the rank of a crime against society; that they have provided a political machinery which renders an appeal to armed force for the decision of political differences an offence so dark that no lapse of time, nothing short of a total revolution in our fundamental ideas of morality, can suffice to change its complexion in men's eyes.

Nothing could illustrate better than our correspondent's plea the confusion which has been wrought in the Old World in men's notions of right and wrong by centuries of war and revolution, in which little else than the interests of families or of individuals was at stake, and in which, if principle was ever visible, it was only dimly seen and at rare intervals.

**THE SWINDLING EPIDEMIC.**

The New York Post and some other journals are disposed to ascribe the plague of forgeries and swindlings which has showed itself in the last few weeks to the influence of the paper currency in fostering the spirit of speculation. There is no doubt that the inflation of the currency, and its sensitiveness to the influence of military events, has during the past four years given an unusual impetus to speculation. But to ascribe the exploits of Ketchem, Jenkins, Munford & Co. to it is, in our opinion, to be guilty of very slavish and reckless generalization. The spirit of speculation is nothing now in Wall Street. It was there before the war, and so was the eager desire to get rich suddenly, to procure fine clothes, fast horses, and fine houses. There is probably no "Street" in the world in which this spirit has been for many years more rampant; but its presence is due not to the nature of the currency, but the condition of the country. There is no more eagerness, in our opinion, to get rich quickly here than in France or England, but the means of getting rich quickly are within the reach of a great number, and it is this, and not the peculiar nature of the currency, which creates speculation.

The material resources of the United States are enormous, and it is only within the last twenty years that the development of them has fairly begun. Such mineral wealth of all kinds is nowhere else to be found; railroads have nowhere else the importance they possess here, and when a population as energetic as ours flings itself on such a harvest, the gains of many are naturally very great, the disappointment of those who do not gain naturally very great also. Moreover, the Those which has the shrewdness and intelligence to speculate here is very large, larger than in any other country. Nearly every boy in America has a knowledge of business and of investments and the mode of making them, such as only few men in Europe ever acquire; and the shares in most enterprises are sold so low that nearly everybody who has a little money to spare, and everybody has some, has the means of getting hold of them. The result is that the commercial spirit, so social philosophers now call it—or, in other words, the spirit of the age—is more widely diffused here than elsewhere, and not during the war alone, but at all times.

Moreover, we venture to assert that, judged, as they ought to be judged, not so much by the number of times they fall as by the number and nature of the temptations they resist—for this is the real test of virtue—Wall Street men are the honest men of their class in the world. We doubt if there is any community in which swindling is so easy as in this. For instance, nowhere else are checks so generally used as they are here in making payments of money. On the continent of Europe they are entirely unknown; in England they are chiefly used in the transfer of large sums. Here almost every sum over ten dollars is paid in this way. Now the field this opens up to the forger and the swindler is immense, and yet how few avail themselves of it, how rarely we hear of a forged check, or of a check drawn without