

The Committee then called upon Secretary Stanton who received them in his inner office, alone. When we were seated F. T. King introduced the subject by remarking that coming to Washington, to present an address to the President, they felt unwilling to leave the City, without calling to express their thankfulness to him, for the uniform kindness & consideration with which he & his Department had treated Friends - that they deeply appreciated it & desired, although in a people of few words, to express it to him, also to read to him the address, just delivered to the President, to which he assented & it was done.

After which a member of the Committee, expressed on behalf of himself & the Society, his sense of the Secretary's kindness & the favor he had shown Friends, & said he believed the Divine blessing would rest upon him, for his conscientious effort to relieve Friends, that their prayers had arisen for his preservation & support.

Another Member, on behalf of the Young Men of the Society, whom the kindness of the Secy had often relieved, desired to assure him, that they shared the warm feelings, so well expressed by his elder friends; that both in the administration of his own department & in his promotion, of favorable legislation on this subject, they recognized his kindness, & accorded him their warm gratitude.

One of the Committee added that he was grateful not only for the relief afforded to our members, but especially for his & the government's recognition of the rights of conscience in the respect they have manifested for religious principles. — The Secretary of War replied with much feeling.

He said, that he deeply appreciated the sentiments which had been expressed, that in the administration of his department, he had ever sought to respect the religious views of the Society of Friends.

By other religious bodies, & had been careful from the moment that he solemnly assumed the duties of his Office, to endeavor to do no act which could by displeasing the Almighty, bring His displeasure upon his country. That in the merciful preservation of his own life, when others better & able than himself, and more fitted to advance the interests of the Nation had been smitten down, he recognized the hand of Divine power. The wisdom of whose decrees, it was not for him to question. If the prayers of your people have gone up for the Government during the continuance of the contest; they are more needed now, when a greater work is before us. It is a comparatively easy matter to overcome physical force — although it is in the power of the Lord, not to grant the battle to the strong, nor the race to the swift — but the task before us now, is to conquer ourselves, to restrain our own passions, that our successes, might not turn to ashes on our lips; but that we might so act, as to restore to our country the blessings of peace. To this end the prayers of all good men & women should be incessantly raised to our Heavenly Father, that His blessing might rest upon the Head of the Government, & his advisers, & that while he continued to administer the affairs of his Department he should be actuated by these desires. After a brief silence one of the Committee knelt, the Secy kneeling beside him, — when prayer was offered up that the blessing of the Lord might rest upon this opportunity & that the sentiments, which had just been expressed might prevail in the Councils of the Nation.

It would be difficult to convey in words, the solemnity of the occasion & the deep earnestness, the simplicity & reverent manner, with which the Secy of War, expressed these noble sentiments, to which but justice has been done.