level with others *under* the law, to make the laws of all our states and municipalities deal equally with all classes of citizens, without distinction of class, color, or genealogical descent.

The rights of citizens are of two kinds, natural and conventional. The first kind relate to the individual, and they are enumerated in the Declaration of Independence as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." To secure these rights recourse to the law courts, both as parties and witnesses, must be allowed without discrimination of persons; and to do this, as we understand the case, is the design of this bill. The other or conventional class of rights belong to the citizen by virtue of the constitution of the government. They include the right to vote, to serve on juries, and to hold public offices. Morally it might seem wrong to deprive any class of persons of these rights on account of merely natural accidents; but this law does not interfere with anything of that kind. Its design is to protect all alike in the enjoyment of their natural rights as citizens of the republic, and to go no further. The questions of negro suffrage and of eligibility to office are not touched, nor indeed is anything granted to any one affecting his relations as a factor in the government.

The objections of President Johnson (though many of the details are condemned by him) are against the spirit and chief intent of the law. He objects to granting equal protection to colored persons and others, and repeats the stale slanders of the slavery-debauched sentiment of both South and North about the inferiority and unfitness of negroes to be associated with white men. His kindest utterance toward any of that race simply acknowledged them as the "wards of the government," a relation in which, if protection may be hoped for, but not demanded, so also authority must be submitted to at the discretion of the ruling race. The right to humane treatment may belong to the black man as well as to the white, and even to dumb animals; but these cannot be enforced by law. As to legal ones, he seems to fully coincide with the historical fact cited by Chief Justice Taney, that "they have no rights that white men are bound to respect." That a better ethico-political creed has at length become embodied in American law is cause for sincere thankfulness, which is shaded only by the fact that an act so glorious, because so righteous, could not receive the sanction of the American President.

Passage of the Civil Rights Bill.

Nearly a month ago the President of the United States returned to the Senate, unsigned, and with his objections, the bill securing the rights of citizens to all native born persons, without distinction of race or color. The bill, which originated in the Senate, had passed both houses by very large majorities, but still the President felt compelled to withhold his assent. When its reconsideration in the Senate, according to the provisions of the Constitution, occurred, it was again passed by that body by a vote of thirty-three against fifteen, more than the requisite two thirds, and so far as the voice of the Senate was concerned, giving to the bill the validity of law without the signature of the President. A few days later it was acted upon in the House of Representatives, and passed by a vote of one hundred and twenty-two against forty-one, thus completing its enactment as a law of the land. The formalities of registering and proclamation follow as matters of course, and so the Civil Rights Bill is now among our regularly enacted statutes.

The case is an unusual one, if not indeed unprecedented, in our history. The veto power, wisely granted to the Executive by the Constitution, has always been regarded as one to be used sparingly, carefully, and only in peculiar emergencies. It has, however, been used to some extent by nearly every President, most frequently by General Jackson and Mr. Tyler, who during much of their administrations had not a majority of Congress with them. But in both these cases, and in almost all others where the veto has been interposed, the majorities in favor of the vetoed bills were less than two thirds, so that the President's disapproval proved fatal. In this case a measure of the highest importance, and involving some of the most momentous questions of government—a question, too, that is destined to divide and define the political parties of the country for years to come—is decided by Congress in opposition to the chosen and pertinaciously maintained policy of the Executive. The case furnishes an interesting illustration of the movements of our political machinery, and with a not unpleasant one of the independent action of the co-ordinate branches of the government. Still such lack of harmony is to be regretted, and since the Civil Rights Bill was to become a law, one could have wished it might have been enacted in the usual way of legislation.

Of the details of the law we cannot speak at length, nor need we; its spirit rather than its outward form is that which gives it its value. Its purpose is to accomplish in actual life the thing designed in the Constitutional Amendment for the prohibition of slavery. While slavery existed as a fact recognized in the fundamental law of the nation, the whole negro race were by implication excluded from equality before the law, from which position any of them could be relieved only by special local legislation. The utter extirpation of slavery by the Constitutional Amendment changed all that, and by clearly logical sequence made every man of that race the peer of his white fellow-citizen. The same amendment expressly conferred on Congress the power to enact all needful legislation for carrying out its design, and by that authority and in pursuance of that design has this law been enacted. It purposes simply to place colored men upon the same