

**THE AMERICAN THEORY OF
GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED
WITH REFERENCE TO THE
PRESENT CRISIS**

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The American Theory of Government Considered with Reference to the Present Crisis by Peter H. Burnett

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PETER H. BURNETT

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Burnett, P. 16.

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BY
PETER H. BURNETT.

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P R E F A C E .

“But it is a novelty in the history of society,” says De Tocqueville, “to see a great people turn a calm and scrutinizing eye upon itself, when apprised by the Legislature that the wheels of Government had stopped; to see it carefully examine the extent of the evil, and patiently wait two whole years until a remedy was discovered, which it voluntarily adopted without having wrung a tear or a drop of blood from mankind.”

These generous remarks were made by the learned and profound Frenchman, in reference to the noble forbearance exhibited by the American people in the peaceful formation of their Constitution. But we are now exhibiting to the world a spectacle of another kind: not, indeed, a novelty, but only one of those crises not very uncommon in the history of nations. We are in the midst of a mighty revolution; and are now passing through one of the ordinary, though painful stages in the progress of a people from youth to mature age. And it would seem that this bloody revolution must and will run its due course.

Most happy would it have been for us, and for others, could we have avoided the terrible struggle; and have