

A D D R E S S

BY

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THE DUTY OF SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT IN THE PRESENT CRISIS
OF AFFAIRS.

FELLOW-CITIZENS, — I have never addressed you under a deeper sense of responsibility than at the present time. The country is rent by civil war: but the political contest in which we are engaged at home is fraught with greater danger; or rather, in my judgment, it depends very much upon the result of this political contest whether the civil war shall be brought to a successful and honorable close, or whether all the treasure which has been expended, and all the precious blood which has been shed, shall have been worse than wasted. In a letter, which I had occasion to address to a convention in Illinois a twelvemonth and more ago, I remarked that the elections, then about to be held, would throw light on the question, how far it is possible for a free Government, constituted in its legislative and executive branches by popular choice, expressed in frequently recurring elections, to prosecute for any considerable length of time a war which entails heavy burdens on the community. If such a Government is habitually torn by parties which paralyze the administrative powers of the State, and in time of war embarrass its movements, and thus encourage the enemy, one of two results will follow, — it will eventually sink in the struggle with the nearest compact despotism; or the people, tired and wasted by faction, will resign themselves to a despotic central government. The result of the impending election will go far to decide the question, whether, in consequence of our party dissensions, it is necessary for twenty-two millions of freemen to succumb in a struggle with less than half that amount of a mixed free and slave population, waging an unprovoked and treasonable war; whether

it is possible for any administration to bear up under the mountain load of a gigantic contest, while every person belonging to it, and every prominent individual actively supporting it, throughout the length and breadth of the land, is the object of the fiercest detraction, and the common enemy is daily encouraged by the assurances of a hundred vigorous presses, and a thousand eloquent platforms, that they have to do with a feeble, incompetent, corrupt antagonist. The political contest now waging at the North is, in my opinion, a greater evil than the loss of many pitched battles. Were we moving with one heart and one mind, it would be worth fleets and armies to the cause. If we are defeated in this mighty struggle, my friends, we shall have been defeated by ourselves. General Grant observes in a letter of the 16th of August, that “all we want now, to insure an early restoration of the Union, is a *determined unity of sentiment* at the North.”

The unanimity displayed by the loyal States, when the treason, meditated for a generation, was consummated at Sumter, seemed to promise such a “unity of sentiment” while the war should last. It was, however, perhaps asking too much of poor human nature to expect that the party arrived at power, should, on achieving its first national success, renounce the fruits of victory; or that the defeated party, claiming, almost from time immemorial, a monopoly of office, should forego the chance of recovering its ascendancy, afforded by the burdens and the miscarriages of the war; and, if you please, by the errors of the administration in conducting it. Eighteen months ago, I thought — I hoped — that this presidential election might possibly be

ted over without a party struggle, and I did all in my power to promote that end. But conflicting opinions, interests, and passions have prevailed. The contest exists; the parties are arrayed against each other; and the question presents itself to all good citizens, especially to those who are unpledged by their political antecedents, with which party they shall act. The two parties are the Republican, which has nominated Mr. Lincoln for re-election; and the Democratic party, which, disorganized at the last election, has to some extent re-organized itself upon the Chicago platform, and nominated General McClellan. At the presidential election of 1860, there was a third, and I hope I may be allowed to call it a patriotic party, which aimed to occupy a position of mediating influence between the extremes, and thus avert the shock which there was too much reason to fear might result from the triumph of either. Some members of this third party, for whom I cherish a warm personal regard, have joined the Democracy in the present canvass. Others, of whom I am one, have not been able to see the line of duty in that direction, and for reasons which I shall now proceed to state fairly and plainly, with as little allusion as may be to the candidates in nomination, with each of whom my relations are those of sincere esteem and respectful friendship.

A personal friend, from whom I have the misfortune to differ politically, said to me the other day, there ought to be a change of administration, because this administration had shown that it was alike unable to carry on the war or make peace. Let us see if this is so. The war of course is the great — the dominant — interest, and all public questions must be solved with reference to it. The loyal people of the Union, with great approach to unanimity, regard it as a most causeless and wicked war, forced upon the country in resistance to a gigantic treason, and in defence of the greatest political blessing ever vouchsafed to mankind, a free, prosperous, and powerful nationality. All political measures and combinations must be referred to this test, how they will affect the most vigorous prosecution of the war, with a view to the earliest possible restoration of an honorable and lasting peace. The first thing to be done, therefore, in deciding our duty in the present canvass, is to inquire whether the war has thus far been conducted in such a manner, and with such results, as to require a change of administration. I find, then, that, though sprung like a mine upon the

Government in the bombardment of Fort Sumter, it has, making due allowance for the vicissitudes of all human things, and especially of war, been conducted for three years and a half, by land and by sea, with wonderful vigor and success. The border States, including Maryland, Western Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana, have been either successfully rescued, defended, or recovered from the rebels. The entire seacoast, 3,550 miles in extent, has been and is held in strict blockade; and all but one of nearly two hundred ports, inlets, and mouths of rivers effectually closed. The most important inland position in the lower South, after a campaign of astonishing brilliancy, has been occupied, and "the gate of the Southwest" shut. The great artery of life and power, from the interior of the continent to the Gulf of Mexico, again beats with loyal pulsation, thanks to those marvelous operations at Forts Jackson and St. Philip, at Vicksburg and New Orleans. Those strong fortresses at the mouth of the Mississippi, the three powerful forts at the entrance of Mobile Bay, Fort Pickens on Santa Rosa, Pensacola, the Tortugas, Key West, Pulaski, Port Royal, Sumter, the fortresses on the coast of North Carolina with one exception, Norfolk, and Fortress Monroe, are all in our possession or in ruins. With the fall of Richmond and the more effectual closure of Cape Fear River, the military power of the rebellion will be crushed. Partisan forces and bands of guerillas will appear in different places, in the great extent of territory recovered to the Union, as long as its inhabitants will allow that lawless species of warfare to be kept up; but all semblance of an organized military power, acting under political authority, will have passed away. To produce these results, vast armies have been raised; a *matériel* of war of unexampled magnitude has been created; protracted marches into the enemy's country have been skillfully and successfully made; the terrors of vertical suns and malarious swamps fearlessly braved by troops from the North and West; sieges of strongholds deemed impregnable pushed to a successful result; powerful fleets extemporized, upon the sea-board and the great rivers, of novel construction, armature, and armament; two of the three pirates fitted out in a neutral country to prey upon our merchant ships and whalers, safe — the one at New Bedford, and the other at the bottom of the British Channel; and deeds of heroism and skill achieved, which will form

an era in naval warfare, and live on the page of history to the end of time. Dupont, Worden, Porter, Rogers, Winslow, Farragut, what country, what naval service, can boast of brighter names? At this moment the number of our seamen afloat exceeds that of England by one fourth; and we have built, or in progress of construction, a fleet of iron-clads, which, for all the purpose of defensive warfare, may bid defiance to any navy in Europe.

Results like these bear ample testimony to the manner in which the two great arms of the service—the Army and Navy—have been administered. With respect to the treasury, a great debt has necessarily been accumulated; but thus far it is mostly due to ourselves, and the interest will be paid at home. The credit of the Government is good; loans are readily taken by the people and by capitalists abroad; the country not only submits to taxation, but calls for it; and if any complaint has been made of the manner in which the treasury has been administered, it is that taxation was not earlier resorted to,—the fault, not of the department, but of Congress, which, however, probably accomplished the difficult task of arranging the tariff of duties as promptly as could be expected. Let me advise any one, who takes a desponding view of the finances of the country, to study the admirable pamphlet of Mr. David A. Wells, of Troy, entitled “Our Burden and Our Strength.”

Lastly, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty and embarrassment, the foreign relations of the country have been conducted at Washington, London, and Paris, with such ability, moderation, firmness, and good sense, that a friendly understanding with the great powers has been preserved, and hostile intervention averted, despite the arts of the rebel emissaries, the sinister influence of party struggles in foreign countries, the greed of blockade-runners, and speculators in cotton loans, and the cupidity of wretches willing to plunge two kindred nations into a murderous war for the sake of the paltry gains of their shipyards.

That in carrying on these vast operations, diplomatic, fiscal, military, and naval, on either element, at home and abroad, in which of necessity so many subordinates are employed, and responsibility so much divided, nothing has been left undone that ought to have been done, and nothing done that ought not to have been done, would be too much to expect of men or governments. Errors in both kinds, we are bound to believe, have been committed. Jour-

nals, that daily comment with unsparing severity on every member of the administration, tell us that the liberty of the press is gone. Orators, who denounce every measure of the administration with the utmost vehemence, assure us that the liberty of speech has departed. Intercourse with the enemy, scarcely disguised, is kept up from Baltimore; the public mails to Europe (witness the shameful disclosures made by Mr. Lindsay in the British Parliament) are laden with treasonable correspondence; hundreds of persons walk the streets of New York, well known to the Government to be plotting the ruin of the country, and meet at their hotels in the evening, and agree that the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* is trampled under foot; the drafts necessary to recruit our armies are resisted with all the dread accompaniments of mob violence,—pillage, murder, and fire; and when a few persons suspected, often guilty, of overt acts of treason, are arrested, and sent to a fortress, the country rings with a clamor against dungeons and bastiles. These accusations refute themselves. They are the dangerous arts with which party seeks to make “political capital” out of the exigencies, the dangers, and the sufferings of the country.

No administration is safe from this domestic warfare, which, even in time of peace, makes it all but impossible to administer the Government with energy and success. Even in the war of the Revolution, the civil and military administration of General Washington was assailed by the generals, and members of Congress associated in Conway’s cabal, in terms not unlike those in which Mr. Lincoln’s administration is now denounced. As President of the United States, General Washington was spoken of, as he himself pathetically said, in language fit to be applied to “a pickpocket or common defaulter.” The administration of his patriotic successor broke down under the same party warfare. But the debt was repaid with interest, by the opposition to Messrs. Jefferson and Madison. Though led by honest and patriotic men, so indiscriminating and occasionally so unjust and prejudicial to the public interest was it, that, on the return of peace in 1815, the party disappeared from the arena of politics, never to return. Scarcely had the President, John Quincy Adams, been inaugurated, when it was declared, by a person afterwards a Democratic Vice-President of the United States, that his administration (composed or supported as it was by Clay, Webster, Sergeant, Rush, Southard, Barbour, Wirt, John Davis, and their pa-

triotic associates) should be pulled down, through as pure as the angels of heaven." For my own part, when I consider how much has been done, and, in the main, how well; what difficulties have been surmounted, what dangers averted, what successes achieved in three and a half years of the war, which found us worse than unprepared, and for which the enemy had long been making open and secret preparation, compared with what was effected in the first years of the wars of the French Revolution, waged as they were on the part of the allies by long-established military governments, with veteran armies, powerful navies, and all the experience and traditions of former contests, I own I deem the contrast greatly in our favor. When I go further, and meditate on the history of the civil wars in Greece and in Rome, in the Italian republics, in France, in England, and the Spanish-American States, and then consider that there has not a drop of blood been shed except on the battle-field, nay, not a dollar confiscated in the tremendous contest except by legal process or in the case of persons in arms against the country, I own I am shocked at hearing the Government daily denounced as tyrannical, despotic, and corrupt.

In this state of things, the question which I have to ask myself, as a person owing allegiance to neither of the contending parties, but owing to my country a duty which transcends all personal regards and considerations of private friendship, is, whether, at this critical juncture, when, though as we all hope the agony of the struggle is passed, it may yet be necessary to make vigorous preparation for the possibility of another campaign, is it wise or safe, by a political revolution, to paralyze an administration by which the war thus far has been conducted in the manner I have described, — to encourage the enemy to hold out with the prospect of the cessation of hostilities, and greatly to augment, in this way, the danger of another campaign, to be entered upon under much increased disadvantage, and thus incur the risk of a settlement which will render vain this mighty expense of treasure and blood? To this question I can return but one answer, — an emphatic negative.

By the peculiarity of our Constitution, the result of the election will be known early in November, while the change of administration (if one should take place) will be delayed till March. For four months the government of the country, as far as measures which divide public opinion are concerned, will be in abeyance, nominally in the hands of persons defeated in an appeal to the people, — the

source of all power, — while those who, after a warmly contested election, are to succeed them (an election in which all the real and all the imaginary points of difference between the parties have been stated in the strongest terms, and every thing has been said which human wit can conceive or human speech utter, to convince Mr. Davis and his associates that one party is incompetent to conduct the war, and the other disposed to give up the attempt), must remain for four months wholly without the power of giving a new direction to affairs. In other words, a general paralysis must ensue. The outgoing administration must be powerless under the stigma of public opinion, while the incoming administration will have no means of entering on the measures which it deems necessary for the salvation of the country.

Now, all wars require at least a season's forecast, especially at the close of the autumn. The very doubt whether we are to have a new campaign will so encourage the enemy as to make a new campaign necessary, for which they will have made all possible preparations, while we have made none. It will be impossible for the outgoing administration to recruit the army after the accession to power of a party who denounce the draft as unconstitutional, and who leave it even doubtful whether another campaign will be undertaken. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?" doubtful whether he hears the clarion rallying to the charge, the bugle hurrying the retreat, or the echo of the mournful blast which saluted Major Anderson's tattered flag as it went down at Sumter. If this administration is overturned, between 150,000 and 200,000 colored troops inured or physically adapted to a warm climate, and now rendering most important service in the trenches and in the forts, as well as in the front of the battle, must be disbanded; and this serious deduction made from our armies, without any preparation beforehand to fill the gap by 200,000 extra white soldiers. At this moment 25,000 hammers (I speak without exaggeration) are at work in our navy yards, and every forge and furnace in the country is at white heat on our iron-clads and gunboats and the ordnance which is to arm them. In the uncertainty of peace or war, can an administration which has been repudiated by the people, and partly on the very ground of profuse and injudicious expenditure on the navy, continue this enormous expense, with no assurance whether it will be needed? It must be re-

membered, too, that, in addition to the uncertainty necessarily arising from a change of administration, every art will be employed by our astute foe to induce us, by fallacious utterances in their journals, to abandon all preparations to continue the war. This game is already actively played with a view to influence the pending election.

Under these circumstances, I own that it seems to me little short of fatuity to endeavor to throw the administrative powers of the Government into abeyance. How often have we not, on a change of ministry in England, even in time of peace, seen a delay of a week or two, in forming a new government, deprecated as dangerous to the country! Would it not have been thought a proof of returning insanity on the part of George III., in the crisis of the great struggle with Napoleon, and while the Tower guns were roaring for Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, as ours have been for the victories of Farragut and Sherman at Mobile and Atlanta, if he had formed and announced a new government in November, not to take effect till March following; leaving the incumbents of office for four months under the virtual impeachment of dismissal, while their designated successors were unable to act in their place? I dare not give my vote to throw every branch of the public service into this perilous condition. It cannot fail to have effects the most humiliating and disastrous.

But, if a change of administration is to take place, we must ask ourselves who are to succeed them. When we look to the antecedents of the Democratic party, who, it is claimed, are alone capable either of carrying on the war or restoring peace, the political friends with whom it has ever been my pride to act will surely find no reason why we should aid in restoring them to power. We have ever claimed to be faithful disciples in the school of the illustrious statesman of New England, whose life was one long warfare with the modern Democracy, and who in turn was the object of its persistent, unrelenting, and, I am sorry to be obliged to add, personal hostility. I say this from no unkind feeling; but when I hear the lofty eulogies on his character, and witness the eagerness with which any phrase thought to favor their cause is caught up from Mr. Webster's writings by our Democratic friends, with whom I am told, as "Webster Whigs," we ought to co-operate, I cannot forget that there never was a moment

when he could have been chosen to an office by a Democratic constituency, or appointed to an office by a Democratic executive. In the very scene which the artist has delineated on the canvas before you, in that very Titanic debate in which he smote the argument of the great nullifier as with the club of Hercules, not one Democratic voice responded to his; no, not from that New England whose good name he defended against the bitterest calumnies, in a strain of eloquence which will live till the English language shall cease from the lips of men.

Such being the case, there is surely nothing which should predispose "the friends of Mr. Webster," merely as such, to obey the call to co-operate in restoring that party to power. Nor am I aware of any thing in the recent political history of the country which should incline them beforehand to do so. It has been my good fortune to have some most valued friends in that party; men whom, notwithstanding political differences, I have respected and loved: I have such still. There is, however, a great difference between the Democracy of the present day and that of the ancient school. The patriotic instincts of the latter habitually got the better of their anti-national theories. Mr. Jefferson had the moral courage, as President of the United States, to cast to the winds, in the acquisition of Louisiana, the great principle of constitutional politics, with which he had succeeded, three years before, in overturning the administration of his predecessor. Nor less do I honor Mr. Madison for his indignant protest against the glosses which the nullifiers put upon the Resolutions of 1798. As for Gen. Jackson, though there were some measures of his administration which I greatly disapproved, I have said twenty times, since the war began, that I only wished we had the hero of New Orleans back again. What a scene it would have been to witness the flash of his eye, and to hear the thunder of his voice, when he heard of the attack on Sumter! When the nullification phrensy was at its height in South Carolina, the Union men in Charleston sent a deputation to Washington to inform the President that they were daily threatened with an outbreak, and did not consider their lives safe. Scarcely waiting to hear the words uttered, the general sprang to his feet, and, with a voice and a look of almost superhuman energy,

exclaimed, "The lives of Union men not safe while Andrew Jackson is President! Go back to Charleston, and tell the nullifiers, that if a hair on the head of a Union man is harmed, that moment I order Gen. Coffee to march on Carolina with 50,000 Tennessee volunteers; and if that does not settle the business, tell them (he added with an attestation I shall not repeat) that I will take the field myself with 50,000 more."

To such Democracy as this we should all be willing to confide the destinies of the country. But the principles of the Democratic party, as understood by many of great influence among its leaders at the present day, are not such, in my judgment, as should warrant us in doing so in a crisis like this: the very reverse. Unduly leaning toward what Washington called "the monster of State sovereignty," and still avowing its sympathy with some of the most dangerous doctrines of the Secession school, there is too much reason to think that one wing of the party at the present day, while nominally professing an attachment to the Union, understands nothing but a dual confederacy, with a Custom's Union on the plan of the German *Zollverein*, and an impossible alliance offensive and defensive abroad, — a chimerical project of Mr. Calhoun, with all the defects and none of the advantages of the old confederation.

If we look to those features of the modern Democratic policy more or less connected with the present state of affairs, we shall surely find no reason for intrusting that party with the Government at a moment like this. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of '98 and '99, notwithstanding the protest of Mr. Madison, were the arsenal from which the most dangerous weapons of nullification and secession have been and are drawn. One of their leading principles was embodied in the resolutions of the Democratic convention in Massachusetts last year. The first open and successful revolt against the authority of the Federal Government, — the expulsion of the Indians from Georgia, — attended as it was with the violation of the faith of seventeen treaties, and followed by a most iniquitous partition of their lands by a land lottery, was a Democratic measure. So was the Seminole war, in which the United States expended 100,000,000 dollars to create a new slave State, and enable

Georgia to recover a few hundred fugitive slaves. Notwithstanding our just complaints against the Mexican Government, the great political advantages of the acquisition of the Mexican provinces, and the blessings which might have redounded to the cause of universal humanity by the extension of the Anglo-Saxon civilization into those vast half-desert and ill-governed regions, the manner in which the Texan annexation was effected and the Mexican war commenced caused those measures to be opposed by every Whig member of Congress. Mr. Webster, particularly, was unsparing in his denunciations, and this at the time of their inception, and before Texas had repaid the two hundred millions she had cost the United States by the blackest ingratitude and treachery.

But the most disastrous measures of the modern Democracy, connected also directly with the present state of the country, were the repeal of the Missouri restriction (which for thirty-four years had been accepted, both by the South and the North, as a satisfactory adjustment of the territorial controversy), and the acts both of fraud and violence employed to force slavery upon the people of Kansas. Talleyrand was accustomed to say that the invasion of Spain was worse than a crime: it was a fault. The Kansas policy of the two last administrations was both, — wrong in principle, and ruinous in effect. The fountains of the great deep, partially stilled by the legislation of 1850, were again broken up by a tempest of sectional agitation. I need not dwell on the immediate and powerful agency of these measures in causing the present state of things, nor comment on the strange inconsequence of again bringing the Democratic party into power, prostrated as it was by the odium of these very measures, under the idea that they alone can rescue the country from the distressful condition into which they had so directly contributed to plunge it.

But it is said that a change of administration is necessary because Mr. Lincoln cannot bring the war to an honorable close. He insists upon a condition, — the abandonment of slavery, — to which it is said that the people of the South will never agree, and which interposes an insuperable obstacle to pacification. But I find no foundation in fact for this assertion. Some of the last utterances, even of Mr. Jefferson Davis, authorize a very different conclusion.

"We are not," says he, "fighting for slavery. It never was an essential element in the controversy. You have already emancipated nearly two million of our slaves; and, if you will take care of them, you may emancipate the rest. I had a few when the war began. I was of some use to them: they were of none to me." This language of the head of the Confederate Government, uttered in the presence of his Secretary of State, who confirmed it by the figures, showing the accuracy of Mr. Davis's calculation, certainly negatives the idea, that to insist on the abandonment of slavery is to throw an insuperable obstacle in the way of peace. On the other hand, the really insuperable obstacle, according to Mr. Davis, is insisted upon by General McClellan as resolutely as by Mr. Lincoln. The general, in his letter of acceptance, very properly says, "The re-establishment of the Union, in all its integrity, is, and must continue to be, the condition of any settlement. . . . The Union must be preserved *at all hazards*;" and this idea is repeated in the same letter in several forms. Now, it is well known that the Confederate Government has on all occasions avowed its unalterable determination to insist on separation and independence. Mr. Davis, on the occasion just referred to, said, "The war must go on till the last man in this generation falls in his tracks, and his children seize his musket and fight our battles, unless you acknowledge our right of self-government. We are not fighting for slavery: we are fighting for independence; and that or extermination we *will* have." If any reliance is to be placed on Mr. Davis's opinions, it is the "Union at all hazards," not the "abandonment of slavery," that is the insuperable bar to negotiation. It is said that Mr. Lincoln's policy threatens the subjugation of the South, — a measure not possible; and, if possible, barbarous and unchristian. I am not aware that Mr. Lincoln has ever made such a threat; or, if he has used language that sounds like it, I presume that it was intended to go no farther than the prostration of the political and military power of the rebels. Between that and the acknowledgment of their independence, there is, of course, no middle term. He certainly has not used language stronger than General McClellan, who, in a memorandum addressed to the President on the 4th of August, 1861, stated very justly, that "the object of the present war

differs from those in which nations are usually engaged; namely, in this, — that the purpose of an ordinary war is to conquer a peace, and make a treaty on advantageous terms. In this contest it has become necessary to *crush a population sufficiently numerous, intelligent, and warlike to constitute a nation*. We have not only to defeat their armed and organized forces in the field, but to display such an overwhelming strength as will convince our antagonists, and especially those of the governing class, of the utter impossibility of resistance. . . . The contest began with a class: now it is with a people. Our military successes alone can restore the former issue."

This change of issue from a *class*, to a *people* who are to be "crushed," is ascribed by General McClellan to the reverse at Bull Run. It was therefore, of course, not produced by the Emancipation Proclamation, which did not appear for more than a twelvemonth afterwards. This disposes of the objection to Mr. Lincoln's policy, so often urged and so much insisted upon, that by changing the issue he had united the South.

This alleged inconsistency of the policy now pursued, with that in which the war commenced, is one of the gravest charges against the administration. It is, however, an inconsistency of a kind which probably never fails to occur in protracted wars, and when such tremendous forces, political, military, and moral, are called into action. There are signal examples in our own history well worthy our meditation at the present time. In October, 1774, the Continental Congress adopted a petition "to the king's most excellent majesty." Richard Henry Lee, John Adams, and Patrick Henry, were of the committee who drafted it. It commenced, "Most gracious sovereign;" and, after setting forth and commenting upon the grievances of the colonies, it declared, "These sentiments are extorted from hearts that would much more willingly bleed in your majesty's service;" and it closed in the following strain: "That your majesty may enjoy every felicity through a long and glorious reign over loyal and happy subjects, and that your descendants may inherit your prosperity and dominions till time shall be no more, is, and always will be, our sincere and fervent prayer." About a year and a half pass away, and in pursuance of a resolution moved by the same Richard Henry Lee, and on the report of a committee of which John Adams was a member, Congress, after reciting, in the most indignant

language, substantially the same grievances which were set forth in the petition to the king, and asserting "that a prince, whose character is thus marked by every act that can define a *tyrant*, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people," renounced their allegiance to the British Crown, and declared the independence of the United States. In 1755, a young Virginian volunteer solicited, through the British governor, a commission in the Royal army, in the war waged for the purpose of driving the French from the American continent. As late as 1774, the same individual, with undiminished feelings of loyalty, writing to an officer in General Gage's army in Boston, who had been his comrade in the old French war, said, "I think I can announce as a fact, that it is not the wish nor the interest of Massachusetts or any other government on this continent to set up for independence." On the 15th of the following June, this same volunteer Virginia colonel, George Washington, accepted the appointment of "Commander-in-Chief of the armies, raised or to be raised for the defence of the liberties of America;" and on this very day, this blessed 19th of October, the united French and American armies, by the capitulation of Yorktown, put the seal to the independence of the United States. No doubt the Congress of 1776; and especially such leaders as Washington, Adams, and Lee, were accused of inconsistency, not merely by the Tory journals at New York, but by the tardier members (for many such there were) of their own body. By the English historians even of the present day, Dr. Franklin is charged with duplicity for having assured Lord Chatham in January, 1775, that the Colonies did not aspire to independence. A like inconsistency undoubtedly exists between the policy of the Administration, when it came into office, and which was expressed in the Resolution of July, 1861, and that which has been forced upon the country by eighteen months' experience of a desolating war. The real inconsistency in governments and men, especially in new countries, is that which seals its ears to the solemn teachings of Providence; which allows the march of events to work no change in our opinions or policy; and, if I may compare great things with small, thinks to extinguish a conflagration which is wrapping a city in flames with the same bucket of water that would have quenched it when first kindled in a basket of shavings.

But let us see to what this inconsistency amounts, — this alleged change of plan, on

the part of the administration, in conducting the war, which, it is maintained, now makes an honorable pacification impossible. What are the facts?

Slavery had been the subject of an imbittered sectional agitation between North and South for more than a generation. The acquisition of the Mexican territories, and the resulting questions relative to their incorporation into the Union, greatly increased its violence. Allayed for two or three years by the legislation of 1850, it was rekindled by the transactions in Kansas; till, on the election of President Lincoln exclusively by the votes of the non-slaveholding States, South Carolina passed the ill-starred ordinance of Secession. She alleged, as the sole reason for the fatal step, the non-execution of the fugitive-slave law by the Northern States. That gloomy winter of 1860-61 was passed in vain attempts to avert the catastrophe by measures of conciliation with respect to slavery. This was the exclusive subject of consideration and debate in the National Legislature and the Peace Congress, the engrossing topic of the journals, the political meetings, and the social circle, throughout the country. When the attack was made on Sumter, there was not a man of reflection in the United States, North or South, who denied or doubted, that, either as motive, pretext, or rallying cry, slavery was the cause of the war.

And now, fellow-citizens, mark an attempted fraud on public opinion, of signal audacity. The success of the rebellion was mainly dependent on its prompt recognition by foreign powers and their hostile intervention. To bring about this result, to deprive the Government of the United States of the sympathy of the civilized world, and to authorize the nations, on the plea of humanity, to interfere on the part of the victims of an oppressive and tyrannical government, recourse was had to a systematic deception, of which the boldness was equalled only by the meanness. In face of the notorious facts just stated, the capitals of Europe swarmed with emissaries, some of them clothed with official pretensions, who declared, in all the circles to which they found admission, that slavery had nothing to do with the struggle; that it was a revolution against oppressive government (which they had always controlled themselves); that the Constitution of the United States protected slavery, and was more tolerant of the African slave-trade than that of the Confederacy; and that, if the great powers would recognize and be-

friend the Confederate States, they would gradually ameliorate, and finally abolish, slavery; and this, too, although these or other agents were secretly instructed by no means to commit their government against the African slave-trade, and although Mr. Vice-President Stephens had declared that his new republic was to be founded on the corner-stone of slavery!

I was advised at the time, and from the best informed source, of the activity with which these intrigues were pushed. The crafty insinuations to which I have alluded took effect. A considerable portion of the foreign press, extensively subsidized as we learn from the intercepted correspondence of Mr. Benjamin, gave them currency; persons in the highest official position credited them. Nay, more: perceiving that the Government of the United States (not yet availing itself of the rights which the law of nations accords to belligerents, and willing still that the rebellious States should return to their allegiance, without paying the penalty of their madness and folly), had not only made no demonstration against slavery, but disclaimed the wish to do so: even the anti-slavery sentiment of Europe was so strangely misled, as to withhold its sympathy from the North in a contest, which, as I have just said, in every stage, from its inception, and throughout its progress, had been exclusively caused by slavery either as motive or pretext.

A course so suicidal, and so fraught with peril on the part of the United States, was viewed with astonishment by our friends in Europe. In the month of February, 1862, I received a letter from a person of very high position and influence on the Continent, in which he wrote, "What we cannot well comprehend is the hesitation of your Government on the subject of slavery. It is with this question as with the other great problems of modern society. When they are forced upon us by circumstances, we must make up our minds to meet and resolve them. . . . We cannot, in Europe, comprehend your hesitations, which will but end in aggravating the difficulty. You will never get through this war without boldly attacking slavery; and it is for the interest of all concerned to do it as soon as possible." There were few persons abroad who had any adequate conception of the difficulties with which the subject was environed.

While this state of things existed in Europe, and the danger of hostile intervention

was constantly increasing, the Government of the United States, patient to the last, still carried on the war with strict adherence to the principles of the Resolution of July, 1861. It was perfectly well understood, that, by the terms of this resolution, non-interference with slavery was intended. There never was a moment, from the first gun fired at Sumter, till the appearance of the Proclamation of the 1st of January, 1863, when the States of rebellion might not have resumed their allegiance on the basis of that resolution. But not the slightest intimation was ever given in any manifesto of the Confederate Government, by any journal supposed to express its views, or by any prominent individual in its confidence, that this condition would be agreed to, or any condition except the severance of the Union. On the contrary, the firm purpose of the leaders of the rebellion, to accept no terms short of the acknowledgment of the Southern Confederacy, was declared on every occasion and in every form.

Thus, then, a desolating war was waged for eighteen months against the constitutional Government of the country, at a cost of a thousand millions of treasure and a hundred thousand lives. On the part of the United States, the object of the war was declared to be to restore the authority of the Government throughout the Union. On the part of the Confederates, it was notoriously waged, after thirty years of agitation, for the sake of causing a rupture of the States, and establishing a new slave-holding confederacy. While the non-interference with slavery, the cause or pretext of the war, by the Government of the United States, produced not the slightest effect in the way of conciliating the rebels, whom it left in the undisturbed possession of what they regard as a chief source of strength in carrying on the war, it was rapidly losing us the sympathy of Europe, where their emissaries did not scruple to adduce this very non-interference as a proof that "slavery had nothing to do with the contest." Without gaining any thing by forbearance at home, we were allowing the tide of public opinion to run against us abroad, and materially increasing the danger of hostile intervention, on the professed grounds that it was required by the interests of humanity, and that slavery had nothing to do with the struggle.

It was under these circumstances that the President, as Commander-in-Chief of the

armies of the United States, felt himself warranted in drawing this new weapon from the armory of the public law. Considering that slavery, either as motive or pretext, had caused the war; that it strengthened the rebels with the physical power of 600,000 able-bodied men, inhabitants of the South, and owing allegiance to the United States; that besides the employment of one-half of this number in direct military service in forts, field-works, and general camp labor, it released an equal number of white men from agricultural labor and other domestic employments at home, thus increasing to that extent the force of their armies, while in many cases the slaves themselves were actually armed, and accompanied their masters to the field; considering further that it had been shown, by the experience of eighteen months' war, that the apprehension of a servile insurrection so generally entertained was groundless; considering that the continued forbearance of the United States towards slavery was weakening us in that public opinion which is the ultimate ruling power in the civilized world, and in various ways aiding and strengthening the cause of the rebellion abroad, — the Government of the United States, warranted by clear principles of the law of nations, and in the exercise of the undoubted right of a belligerent in a just war, declared, by the President's proclamation of 22d September, 1862, that, after the first day of January next ensuing, the slaves in States then in rebellion should be free, and that compensation should be made to loyal citizens.

Such is the history of these proclamations. I am not pledged to their defence. My opinion of such a measure was informally asked in advance by a member of the Cabinet; and I expressed, in reply, a doubt of its policy, though I added that I had no doubt of its constitutionality. I did not regard it as a measure of great practical importance. I considered slavery as doomed, as Mr. Stephens warned his fellow-citizens it would be, by the operations of the war; and by what particular instrumentality, or in what precise form, provided it was constitutionally done, was of no great moment. I have no belief, however, that the measure has had the slightest effect in increasing the difficulty of pacification. The governing class, a small minority, will hold out for independence till their military power is crushed. When that is done, the masses will rise, and demand peace.

I will add, that it is very doubtful whether any act of the Government of the United States was necessary to liberate the slaves in a State which is in rebellion. There is much reason for the opinion, that, by the simple act of levying war against the United States, the relation of slavery was terminated, certainly so far as concerns the duty of the United States to recognize it, or to refrain from interfering with it. Not being founded on the law of nature, and resting solely on positive local law, and that not of the United States, as soon as it becomes either the motive or pretext of an unjust war against the Union, an efficient instrument in the hands of the rebels for carrying on the war, a source of military strength to the rebellion, and of danger to the Government at home and abroad, with the additional certainty, that, in any event but its abandonment, it will continue, in all future time, to work these mischiefs, who can suppose it is the duty of the United States to continue to recognize it? To maintain this would be a contradiction in terms. It would be to recognize a right in a rebel master to employ his slave in acts of rebellion and treason, and the duty of the slave to aid and abet his master in the commission of the greatest crime known to the law. No such absurdity can be admitted; and any citizen of the United States, from the President down, who should, by any overt act, recognize the duty of a slave to obey a rebel master in a hostile operation, would himself be giving aid and comfort to the enemy.

While, therefore, I think nothing can be clearer than that the administration is, in its emancipation policy, in the exercise of an undoubted right on the clearest principles of the public law, I have no belief, that, by adopting that policy, it has increased the difficulty of an honorable pacification. Conservative men of all parties have, with the best intentions, as it seems to me, acted under great misconceptions in this matter. The idea that the foundations of this Union rest on slavery, and that it is at all events, and under all circumstances, and to the end of time, to be cherished and preserved, is quite a recent idea. The fathers of the Republic knew nothing of it. They with one accord, South as well as North, regarded slavery as an evil forced upon the country in its colonial state, and temporarily tolerated. It was supposed to depend on the continued importation of slaves; and the framers of the Constitution of 1789 believed, that, in providing for the prohibition

of the African slave-trade after 1808, they had commenced the abolition of slavery. Mr. Webster says, and repeats the remark in his speech of the 7th March, 1850, that the members of the Federal Convention "thought that slavery could not be continued in the country, if the importation of slaves were made to cease; and therefore they provided, that, after a certain period, the importation might be prevented by an act of the new government." "It was then (April, 1776) the prevailing opinion," says Bancroft (VIII. 321), "especially in Virginia, that the total prohibition of the slave-trade would, at no very distant day, be followed by universal emancipation."

With the rapid extension of the culture of cotton, a different feeling began to prevail at the South, but by no means universally. In 1816, a manumission society in East Tennessee addressed their fellow-Christians throughout the United States in favor of the abolition of slavery. In 1823, in a very interesting conversation with Mr. Calhoun on the condition of the Cherokees, I expressed my regret that the great progress of that tribe in the arts of civilized life had been accompanied by the introduction of slavery. Mr. Calhoun spoke of it as a frequent incident of the early stages of social progress, and added, in his nervous, rapid way, "Scaffolding, scaffolding, sir: when the building is finished it will come away." In 1832, slavery was denounced in the Legislature of Virginia, after the massacre at Southampton, in language as uncompromising as was ever heard in this hall. A plan of emancipation was at that time reported by Mr. Thomas Jefferson Randolph, the grandson of President Jefferson, and who has been, and is perhaps now, a member of Mr. Davis's cabinet; and it was defended by Mr. C. J. Faulkner, who holds, I believe, a command in the rebel army, in language like this: "So great and overshadowing are the evils of slavery, so sensibly are they felt by those who have traced the causes of our *national* decline, so perceptible is the poisonous operation of its principles in the varied and diversified interests of this Commonwealth, that all whose minds are not warped by prejudice and interest must admit that the disease has now assumed that mortal tendency, as to justify the application of any remedy, which, under the great law of State necessity, we might consider advisable; yes, sir, if politic, the immediate removal of that whole class of our population." It may be enough to add, that it was admitted by Vice-President Stephens,

in the spring of 1861, that views like these prevailed till within twenty years; that is, as late as 1840.

Who can suppose that, within twenty years, an entire revolution has taken place in public opinion, at the South, in reference to an interest which embraces but a small minority of the population? There are but fifteen or sixteen hundred thousand persons directly interested as slaveholders, allowing a family of five to every person of that class. It is abundantly shown by the books of Mr. Olmstead and other intelligent travellers, having the best means of observation, that there is no sympathy between the small proprietors, and still less "the poor whites" and the rich planters. The highland ridge that penetrates the entire South-west almost to the Gulf of Mexico, and the valleys embosomed in it, are inhabited by an industrious population, who own but few slaves, and have no attachment to the institution of slavery. I have within a few days conversed with a most intelligent gentleman past the meridian of life, who, to avoid being forced into the trenches, succeeded a few weeks since in escaping from one of the Gulf States. He assured me that he had conversed with wealthy planters who were weary of sacrificing their sons to preserve their slaves; and it is within my personal knowledge, that many of the most enlightened citizens of the South regard slavery as an unmitigated evil. They did so even before it had wantonly involved them in the measureless calamities of war. Is it in human nature that the masses of the people should carry on a ruinous war forever, to gratify the pride, the temper, the ambition of a few political and military leaders, or the governing aristocracy to which they belong? Why then should we overturn the administration of our own Government in the crisis of the struggle, in order to bring in successors who will offer to those leaders new guaranties on the subject of slavery, with the assurance beforehand that the offer will be rejected?

Much is said about restoring "the Constitution as it is and the Union as it was;" and, as far as I have been able to penetrate the real intentions of the Chicago Democracy, it is to make overtures of peace on that nominal basis, with new guaranties and compromises on the subject of slavery. Have those who favor such a policy well considered what the Union was, and the Constitution is, in this respect? A little impartial reflection on that subject will show that it is by no means at the North that the departure from its spirit, nay, its

letter, has taken place. I do not refer to extreme opinions uttered by ardent men North and South, but to legislative acts and official measures of the General Government. While the Government of the United States is not chargeable with the smallest violation of the Constitution, or the slightest departure from the spirit of the Union (but very far the contrary in respect to slavery), both have been wholly disregarded and set at nought by the slaveholding interest. I have not time, at this late hour, to go into this discussion at length; but I will state a few propositions, which, as I think, defy refutation.

First, By the wise and good men of the South as well as the North, who framed the Constitution, slavery, as I have already stated, was considered, and habitually declared, to be a social, political, and moral evil, forced upon us by the Colonial Government, of which it was both the interest and duty of the country to rid itself as soon as possible. For this reason, they would not allow the word "slave" to find a place in the Constitution, in order, as was urged by Mr. Madison, that they might not seem to recognize such a thing as property in man.

Secondly, It was universally believed at that time, that slavery could only be kept up by the African slave-trade. Several of the States had already prohibited it; and the Constitution made provision for its final prohibition in twenty years, which actually took place.

Thirdly, Contemporaneously with the formation of the Constitution, slavery was by the Ordinance of 1787 prohibited in all the territory then belonging to the United States, under circumstances that exclude the idea that any difference of policy would be pursued in territory hereafter to be acquired. This prohibition was accompanied by the clause for the extradition of fugitives held to labor, from which the word *slave* was carefully excluded.

Fourthly, As a compensation for allowing three-fifths of the slaves to be added to the representative numbers (an arrangement which has almost always secured to the slaveholding States the control of the Government), it was provided that direct taxation should be assessed on the same principle.

Such is the "Union as it was, and the Constitution as it is," in the intendment of its framers. What have they since become? what are they now? Instead of a univer-

sally recognized temporary evil, intentionally placed in a train of extinction by the prohibition of the African slave-trade, a struggle commencing with the rapid extension of the cotton culture has been kept up for forty years to preserve, perpetuate, and extend slavery; and this struggle has culminated in a gigantic war, against that very constitution, and in order to effect that object by a rupture of the Union. Or, if we choose to consider the rupture of the Union as the *primary object*, then slavery is the pretext and rallying-cry made use of to effect it, while the new government proposed to be erected on the ruins of the "Union as it was" is declared to be built on the corner-stone of slavery.

Instead of confining slavery, with a view to its final extinction, to the States in which it existed in 1787, and wholly excluding it from the Territories (which was the design of the fathers of the Union as it was), nine new slave States have been admitted, with stipulations for four more to be added in Texas, in territory acquired by treaties conceded by Messrs. Jefferson and Madison to be in violation of "the Constitution as it is." A new compromise which excluded slavery from the Territories North of 36 deg. 30 min., and admitted it into all the Territories south of the line, in contravention of the design of the fathers of the Constitution as it is and the Union as it was, was repealed by the Democracy in 1854, while the Supreme Court of the United States decided that the Constitution, into which its framers would not admit the word, carries, *proprio vigore*, the thing into all the territory of the United States.

Of direct taxation, which was to be the equivalent for the representation of the slaves, and which it was supposed, by the framers of the Union as it was and the Constitution as it is, would be the main support of the Government, fourteen millions only had been raised from the adoption of the Constitution up to 1861, while the hundreds of millions by which the public debt has been liquidated and the Government carried on — by which two foreign wars have been waged, and Louisiana, Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and California paid for — have been raised by indirect taxation, and the public lands, five-sixths of which have, at all times, accrued from the free States.

In the face of these facts, which prove that, before 1861, every principle with respect to slavery on which the Union was established

and the Constitution framed has been violated, and every compromise disregarded, set at nought, defeated, reversed, till at length a civil war, such as the world has never witnessed before, is waged against the Union in further defiance and outrage of those principles, and in order to effect its utter overturn and destruction by force of arms, we are now called upon to overthrow the administration, and restore the Democracy, in the vain hope of bringing the men, who, for selfish and ambitious purposes, have waged the war, back to the Union, which they tell us they loathe, by new guaranties and further compromises.

Such are my views of the questions which the pending election presents to the people of the United States. They have decided the course which I have felt it my duty to take. If ever there was a time, when, laying aside all other feeling, especially every thought of party or self, it is our duty to look exclusively to our beloved and bleeding country, that time has come. I need not say to you, my friends, that no one, in a sphere of private influence, has labored harder than I to avert the catastrophe. Thinking that I saw, in the violent agitation which prevailed between the two sections of the country, the gathering of a storm but too likely to burst and desolate the land, I spared no pains to turn aside the peril. After the sectional warfare of opinion and feeling had reached a dangerous height, anxious, if possible, to bring a counteractive and conciliating influence into play, feeling that there was yet one golden chord of sympathy which ran throughout the land, in the hope of contributing something, however small, to preserve what remained, and restore what was lost of kind feeling between the two sections of the country, I devoted the greater part of my time, for three years, to the attempt to give new strength in the hearts of my countrymen, — to the last patriotic feeling, in which they seemed to beat in entire unison, — veneration and love for the name of Washington, and reverence for the place of his rest. With this object in view, I travelled thousands of miles, by night and by day, in midwinter and midsummer, speaking three, four, and five times a week, in feeble health, and under a heavy burden of domestic care and sorrow, and inculcating the priceless value of the Union, in precisely the same terms, from Maine to Georgia, and from New York to St. Louis.

In the spring of 1860, from the same motive, but with the extremest reluctance, I allowed my name to be placed on the Union ticket; and, in my letter of acceptance, I painted, in the strongest language I could command, the horrors of civil war, and the duty and necessity of conciliation. Pursuing this policy to the last, I gave my humble support to all the healing measures which were brought forward in the winter of 1860–61. Every sentiment which I uttered on these occasions was received with approbation by the entire conservative press of the country, Whig and Democratic; and now, because I support the Government in a righteous war of self-defence, — a war marked, on the part of the enemy, with every character of treason to the Union, and of violence and cruelty to the Union men of the South, — I am daily taunted with inconsistency by writers and speakers who concurred with every thing I wrote and said in favor of peace, and now think themselves defamed if any doubt is expressed of their sincerity in urging the prosecution of the war, till the rebellion and “the people” waging it are “crushed.”

But no! fellow-citizens, the contest could not be avoided. The political and military leaders of the South were determined to bring the controversy to the dread arbitrament of arms. Providence is putting our patriotism to this austere test to see if we have the manhood and virtue to sustain that grand nationality to which our fathers placed the seal of a crowning victory, at Yorktown, on the 19th of October, 1781. That it is our duty to do so, was the sentiment of every loyal heart when the blow was struck at Sumter, and the country, as one man, sprang to the defence of the Union. Need I remind you how, for the second time in our history, and on the twice consecrated 19th of April, the pathetic glory was reserved to Massachusetts, of shedding the first blood in the sacred cause? Never was a grander movement in the annals of our race, than when, trampling party in the dust, and forgetting all that divided opinion on measures or men, the citizens of the loyal States remembered only that the flag of that Union “which makes us one people” had been traitorously stricken down, and that ambitious men, marching through the bloody portals of rebellion, were striving to rend in sordid tatters the seamless garment which infolds our beloved country.

The cause is as sacred now as then, and the dearer for the precious blood shed in its defence. We knew no party in '61: can we

not again rise above it in '64? Shall we, in the face of the world, as the struggle is drawing to a close, paralyze the only arm, which, by a constitutional necessity, can wield the power of the State? The eyes of the nations are upon us. I am well persuaded that we have not a sincere friend in the civilized world, who will not deplore the overthrow of

the administration; and however parties, led by mistaken opinion, interest, or passion, may differ now, I am equally persuaded, that, in after-years, coming generations, South as well as North, nay, the South still more than the North, will recognize the justice of our cause, and that the South will date her own regeneration from our success in the struggle.

A P P E N D I X .

Three facts have been shown by the experience of the war, which furnish an answer to all the serious objections to the emancipation policy of the Administration, and which demonstrate the unreasonableness of subverting it, in order that that policy may be reversed.

The *first* is, that there is no danger of a servile insurrection, in consequence of the civil war. The very heart of the South has been reached by our armies. It is of course unnecessary to say, that no inducements have been held out by their commanders to attempt such an insurrection; but the slaves themselves, as far as we are aware, have nowhere shown the slightest disposition to act over again the terrible scenes of Hayti. This fact at once furnishes an answer to the passionate declamations of the Southern press and the sympathizing press of Europe and the North, on the barbarity of the measure, and demonstrates the integrity with which the Government of the United States, on this most delicate subject, confines itself within the limits of Christian warfare.

Secondly, it had, even before the war, been proved by numerous examples, that the moment the slave was compensated for his labor, he worked with a fidelity and zeal before unknown. This was seen in the case of slaves allowed to purchase their freedom, — a very common practice at the South, and particularly in the memorable case of Macdonough's slaves at New Orleans. It was, on that occasion, fully proved, that even the remote prospect of freedom converted the slaves into laborers, as industrious and cheerful as those of any complexion and race. Since the war, new proofs of this truth have been furnished on the Atlantic coast, and still more on the Mississippi. Hundreds of plantations have been profitably cultivated by freedmen, under all the disadvantages of a provisional system, the danger of guerillas, the demands of the army, and the inexperience of employ-

ers. In some cases the slaves have been employed and paid by their former owners, and to the satisfaction of both parties. There is no reason to doubt, that, on the restoration of peace, the greater part of the freedmen would return to the planters by whom they were kindly treated, and who were willing to pay them fair wages. Mr. Davis says we have emancipated about 2,000,000 of slaves, and may have the rest if we will take care of them. But if the South, instead of pursuing this unprovoked and suicidal war, will wisely yield to the state of things which she has brought upon herself and upon the country, her laboring population, influenced by the same local attachments that bind their fellow-men to the place of their birth, will, when assured of freedom, kind treatment, and fair wages, prefer to live and to die on the spot where they were born. That no difficulties and embarrassments will present themselves, in so considerable a social change, is not to be expected; but neither history nor observation obliges us to regard these difficulties as insuperable. A few centuries ago, all the agricultural labor of Europe was performed by bondmen, and our British ancestors were bought and sold as slaves, in all the markets of the world. At the present day the emancipation of 22,000,000 of serfs in Russia is going on quietly and without the slightest convulsion of society.

Thirdly, if, as may be no doubt expected, the colored population of the South should be somewhat diminished by the events of this war; if the memory of recent hardships and sufferings, antagonisms of race, the pressure of political disabilities, or any other cause, should compel a portion of the freedmen permanently to leave their native States; if, as will probably be the case, especially should facilities for emigration be afforded, considerable numbers should go forth in search of a more eligible home, in Liberia or elsewhere;

then it has been amply shown, by the experience of our armies, that the supposed inability of the white race to sustain a Southern climate is, in a great degree, imaginary. By observing proper sanitary precautions, our armies, notwithstanding necessary exposure in unhealthy localities, and the superadded causes of disease incident to camp life, have been remarkably free from disease. There is no reason to doubt that, with the return of a settled order of things, just in proportion as an opening is made by the withdrawal of any part of the colored population of the South, the tide of emigration will begin to flow from

the North and from Europe, bringing with it an energy and an enterprise, a thrift and skill, a supply of machinery and capital, together with moral elements of progress, hitherto unknown in that naturally favored region. Why then revolutionize our own Government for the avowed purpose of arresting a policy, by which Providence is so manifestly educing good from evil? Why seek, by unsolicited guarantees and humiliating compromises, to deprive the country, the civilized world, and humanity itself, of the great compensation for all the sacrifices and sufferings of a war into which slavery has plunged us?

THE REBELLION INEXCUSABLE:

WARNING AND PROTEST AGAINST IT.

BY ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS,

MADE AT THE CAPITOL OF GEORGIA, JANUARY, 1861.

It is well known that A. H. Stephens, now Vice-President of the Confederacy, at first set himself resolutely against the rebellion. His utterances at that time, so terribly confirmed by what has since taken place, deserve record as showing its utterly inexcusable folly and guilt. In the Georgia Convention, of January, 1861, pending the question of secession, he said:—

“This step (secession), once taken, can never be recalled; and all the baneful consequences that must follow, will rest on the convention for all coming time. When we and our posterity shall see our lovely South desolated by the demon of war, which this act of yours will inevitably invite and call forth; when our green fields of waving harvests shall be trodden down by the murderous soldiery and fiery car of war sweeping over our land, our temples of justice laid in ashes, all the horrors and desolations of war upon us, who but this convention will be held responsible for it, and who but he that shall give his vote for this unwise and ill-timed measure, shall be held to strict account for this suicidal act by the present generation, and probably cursed and execrated by posterity in all coming time, for the wide and desolating ruin that will inevitably follow this act you now propose to perpetrate?”

“Pause, I entreat you, and consider for a moment what reasons you can give that will even satisfy yourselves in calmer moments, what

reasons you can give to your fellow-sufferers in the calamity that it will bring. What reasons can you give to the nations of the earth to justify it? They will be the calm and deliberate judges in the case; and to what cause, or one overt act can you point, on which to rest the plea of justification? What right has the North assailed? What interest of the South has been invaded? What justice has been denied, or what claim, founded in justice and right, has been withheld? Can any of you to-day name one governmental act of wrong deliberately and purposely done by the Government at Washington, of which the South has a right to complain? I challenge the answer.

“On the other hand, let me show the facts of which I wish you to judge; and I will only state facts which are clear and undeniable, and which now stand as records authentic in the history of our country. When we of the South demanded the slave trade, or the importation of Africans for the cultivation of our lands, did they not yield the right for twenty years? When we asked for a three-fifths representation in Congress, for our slaves, was it not granted? When we demanded the return of any fugitive from justice, or the recovery of those persons owing labor or allegiance, was it not incorporated in the Constitution, and again ratified and strengthened in the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850? When we asked that more territory

should be added, that we might spread the institution of slavery, have they not yielded to our demands, in giving Louisiana, Florida and Texas, out of which four states have been carved, and ample territory for four more to be added in due time, if you, by this unwise and impolitic act, do not destroy this hope, and perhaps by it lose all, and have your last slave wrenched from you by stern military rule, as South America and Mexico were, or by the vindictive decree of universal emancipation, which may reasonably be expected to follow?

“But what have we to gain by this proposed change of our relation to the General Government? We have always had the control of it, and can yet, if we remain in it, and are united as we have been. We have had a majority of the Presidents chosen from the South, as well as the control and management of most of those chosen from the North. We have had sixty years of Southern Presidents to their twenty-four, thus controlling the Executive Department. So of the Judges of the Supreme Court, we have had eighteen from the South, and but eleven from the North. Although nearly four-fifths of the judicial business has arisen in the free States, yet a majority of the Court has always been from the South. This we have *required* so as to guard against any interpretation of the Constitution unfavorable to us. In like manner we have been equally watchful to guard our interest in the Legislative branch of government. In choosing the presiding Presidents (*pro tem.*) of the Senate, we have had twenty-four to their eleven. Speakers of the House we have had twenty-three and they twelve. While the majority of representatives, from their greater population, have always been from the North, yet we have so generally secured the Speaker, because he, to a great extent, shapes and controls the legislation of the country.

“Nor have we had less control in every other department of the General Government. Of Attorney Generals we have had fourteen, while the North have had but five. Of Foreign Ministers we have had eighty-six, and they had but

fifty-four. While three-fourths of the business which demands diplomatic agents abroad is clearly from the free States, from their greater commercial interest, yet we have had the principal embassies, so as to secure the world's market for our cotton, tobacco and sugar on the best possible terms. We have had a vast majority of the higher offices of both army and navy, while a larger proportion of the soldiers and sailors were drawn from the North. Equally so of clerks, auditors and comptrollers filling the Executive Department, the record shows for the last fifty years, that of the three thousand thus employed, we have had more than two-thirds of the same, while we have but one-third of the white population of the republic. Again, look at another item, in which we have a great and vital interest, that of revenue, or means of supporting Government. From official documents we learn that a fraction over *three-fourths* of the revenue collected for the support of Government has uniformly been raised from the North.

“Pause now, while you can, and contemplate carefully and candidly these important items. Leaving out of view for the present the countless millions of dollars you must expend in war with the North, with tens of thousands of your sons and brothers slain in battle, and offered up as sacrifices upon the altar of your ambition, — and for what? Is it for the overthrow of the American Government, established by our common ancestry, cemented and built up by their sweat and blood, and founded on the broad principles of right, justice and humanity? And as such, I must declare here, as I have often done before, and which has been repeated by the greatest and wisest of statesmen and patriots in this and other lands, that it is the best and freest government, the most equal in its rights, the most just in its decisions, the most lenient in its measures, and the most inspiring in its principles to elevate the race of men, that the sun of heaven ever shone upon. Now, for you to attempt to overthrow such a government as this, unassailed, is the height of madness, folly and wickedness.”