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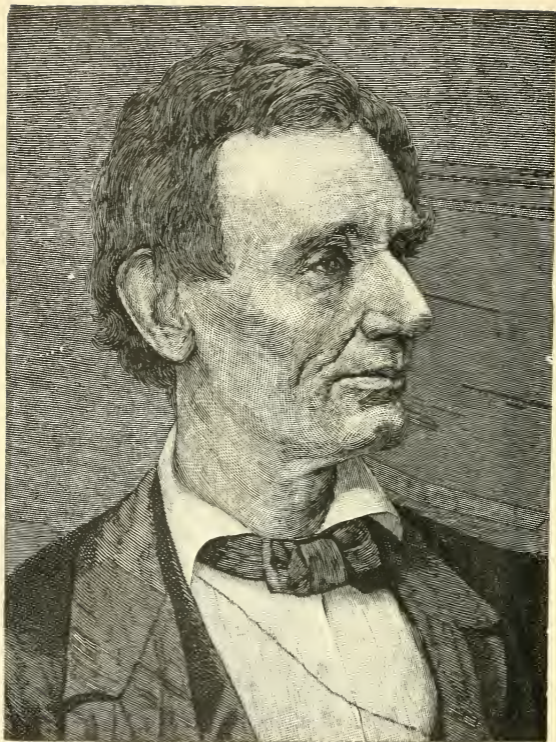
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ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

# BEST AMERICAN ORATIONS

SELECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

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## PREFACE

“THERE were giants in the earth in those days.” What days? Whenever giants were needed. In the time of personal physical force, as in the ancient Hebrew tradition quoted, “the mighty men of old” were heroes of battle. In succeeding ages, every great national crisis seems to have developed the strong men for its needs. So has it been in America. The Colonial, Revolutionary, and Constructive periods had their giants; the day of expanding territory, commerce, and manufactures, with conflicting sectional interests and discussion of the mutual relations of the States and the Union, had its champions; and the culminating struggle over slavery, involving the very existence of the Union and the Constitution, bred its men of might, both civil and military, on both sides of the vast conflict.

America has always been prolific of orators, as is natural in a land of popular government, where frequent appeal to the people is requisite. Aside from the pulpit invocations to higher personal life, nothing is so important or so universally interesting as the public discussion of public policies. Thus it is that politics, in the larger sense — the ethical

regulation of government in the interest of the people, evokes the clearest logic, the most fervid passion, and the most effective rhetoric of oratory. Its range is general, but its appeal is personal; and the finest examples of public speech in any nation will therefore be found in its political records.

It is inevitable, then, that a collection of American orations must be chiefly from the utterances of its statesmen upon the great issues of their times; so that this little gathering of themes and thinkers presents almost an outline sketch of the history of our country, as is shown by the chronological table of Contents. In any largely representative compilation of such addresses there are many — very many — that might be advantageously included; but in so compact a selection as the present, only the most notable and influential may be taken. Even of these, some treat of so numerous a range of subordinate matters or are so variously illustrated that our limits have compelled abridgment of portions — which, however, are always indicated in the text.

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JAMES OTIS

1725-1783

OF a wealthy and aristocratic colonial family in Massachusetts, a graduate of Harvard, with fine classical training and a wide taste in literature, a brilliantly successful lawyer, JAMES OTIS was not a Tory, like many of his social grade, but an ardent defender of the rights of the colonies.

In 1760 the royal governors had arranged a new device called *Writs of Assistance*, or search-warrants, to enable them to seek out goods suspected of not having paid taxes due, which greatly troubled the merchants of Boston and Salem. The application of the Crown to the court to issue such writs was argued in February, 1761. OTIS, who had been Crown Advocate-General, resigned that position, to appear for the merchants in opposition. He was, wrote JOHN ADAMS, "a flame of fire; with a promptitude of classical allusions, a depth of research, a rapid summary of historical events and dates, a profusion of legal authorities, a prophetic glance of his eyes into futurity, and a rapid torrent of impetuous eloquence, he hurried away all before him. American independence was then and there born." As to the writs, the court withheld its decision, and at the next term no more was heard of them.

This speech, of which but a portion remains, placed OTIS among the friends of colonial freedom and the enemies of royalty, and he was so received by both parties. He was a member of the Massachusetts legislature in 1761, of the Congress at New York in 1765, and again legislator in Massachusetts in 1766. Everywhere OTIS took high rank as lawmaker, lawyer, and orator. He was also one of the most convincing writers on the hotly contested political topics of the time, and throughout the Revolution was a prime factor in sustaining the cause of independence.

## THE WRITS OF ASSISTANCE

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONORS: I was desired by one of the court to look into the books, and consider the question now before them concerning writs of assistance. I have accordingly considered it, and now appear not only in obedience to your order, but likewise in behalf of the inhabitants of this town, who have presented another petition, and out of regard to the liberties of the subject. And I take this opportunity to declare, that whether under a fee or not (for in such a cause as this I despise a fee), I will to my dying day oppose with all the powers and faculties God has given me, all such instruments of slavery on the one hand, and villany on the other, as this writ of assistance is.

It appears to me the worst instrument of arbitrary power, the most destructive of English liberty and the fundamental principles of law, that ever was found in an English law-book. I must therefore beg your honors' patience and attention to the whole range of an argument, that may perhaps appear uncommon in many things, as well as to points of learning that are more remote and unusual; that the whole tendency of my design may the more easily be perceived, the conclusions better descend, and the

force of them be better felt. I shall not think much of my pains in this cause, as I engaged in it from principle. I was solicited to argue this cause as Advocate-General; and because I would not, I have been charged with desertion from my office. To this charge I can give a very sufficient answer. I renounced that office, and I argue this cause from the same principle; and I argue it with the greater pleasure, as it is in favor of British liberty, at a time when we hear the greatest monarch upon earth declaring from his throne that he glories in the name of Briton, and that the privileges of his people are dearer to him than the most valuable prerogatives of his crown; and as it is in opposition to a kind of power, the exercise of which in former periods of history cost one king of England his head, and another his throne. I have taken more pains in this cause than I ever will take again, although my engaging in this and another popular cause has raised much resentment. But I think I can sincerely declare, that I cheerfully submit myself to every odious name for conscience' sake; and from my soul I despise all those whose guilt, malice, or folly has made them my foes. Let the consequences be what they will, I am determined to proceed. The only principles of public conduct, that are worthy of a gentleman or a man, are to sacrifice estate, ease, health, and applause, and even life, to the sacred calls of his country.



These manly sentiments, in private life, make the good citizens; in public life, the patriot and the hero. I do not say that, when brought to the test, I shall be invincible. I pray God I may never be brought to the melancholy trial, but if ever I should, it will be then known how far I can reduce to practice principles which I know to be founded in truth. In the meantime I will proceed to the subject of this writ.

Your honors will find in the old books concerning the office of a justice of the peace, precedents of general warrants to search suspected houses. But in more modern books, you will find only special warrants to search such and such houses, specially named, in which the complainant has before sworn that he suspects his goods are concealed; and will find it adjudged, that special warrants only are legal. In the same manner I rely on it, that the writ prayed for in this petition, being general, is illegal. It is a power that places the liberty of every man in the hands of every petty officer. I say I admit that special writs of assistance, to search special places, may be granted to certain persons on oath; but I deny that the writ now prayed for can be granted, for I beg leave to make some observations on the writ itself, before I proceed to other Acts of Parliament.

In the first place, the writ is universal, being directed "to all and singular justices, sheriffs, con-

stables, and all other officers and subjects"; so that, in short, it is directed to every subject in the King's dominions. Every one with this writ may be a tyrant; if this commission be legal, a tyrant in a legal manner, also, may control, imprison, or murder any one within the realm. In the next place, it is perpetual, there is no return. A man is accountable to no person for his doings. Every man may reign secure in his petty tyranny, and spread terror and desolation around him, until the trump of the archangel shall excite different emotions in his soul. In the third place, a person with this writ, in the day-time, may enter all houses, shops, etc., at will, and command all to assist him. Fourthly, by this writ, not only deputies, etc., but even their menial servants, are allowed to lord it over us. What is this but to have the curse of Canaan with a witness on us; to be the servant of servants, the most despicable of God's creation?

Now one of the most essential branches of English liberty is the freedom of one's house. A man's house is his castle; and whilst he is quiet, he is as well guarded as a prince in his castle. This writ, if it should be declared legal, would totally annihilate this privilege. Custom-house officers may enter our houses when they please; we are commanded to permit their entry. Their menial servants may enter, may break locks, bars, and everything in their way; and whether they break through malice or

revenge, no man, no court can inquire. Bare suspicion without oath is sufficient. This wanton exercise of this power is not a chimerical suggestion of a heated brain. I will mention some facts. Mr. Pew had one of these writs, and when Mr. Ware succeeded him, he indorsed this writ over to Mr. Ware; so that these writs are negotiable from one officer to another; and so your honors have no opportunity of judging the persons to whom this vast power is delegated. Another instance is this: Mr. Justice Walley had called this same Mr. Ware before him, by a constable, to answer for a breach of the Sabbath-day acts, or that of profane swearing. As soon as he had finished, Mr. Ware asked him if he had done. He replied, "Yes." "Well then," said Mr. Ware, "I will show you a little of my power. I command you to permit me to search your house for uncustomed goods;" and went on to search the house from the garret to the cellar; and then served the constable in the same manner!

But to show another absurdity in this writ: if it should be established, I insist upon it every person, by the 14th of Charles II, has this power as well as the custom-house officers. The words are: "It shall be lawful for any person or persons authorized," etc. What a scene does this open! Every man prompted by revenge, ill-humor, or wantonness to inspect the inside of his neighbor's house, may get a writ of assistance. Others will ask it from self-defence; one

arbitrary exertion will provoke another, until society be involved in tumult and in blood.

[Here ends the only direct report of the speech that remains; but John Adams, who heard the oration, and who said that in it American independence was born, wrote out an abstract of it, which here follows:—]

1. He began with an exordium, containing an apology for his resignation of the position of Advocate-General in the Court of Admiralty: and for his appearance in that cause in opposition to the Crown and in favor of the town of Boston and the merchants of Boston and Salem.

2. A dissertation on the rights of man in a state of nature. He asserted that every man, merely natural, was an independent sovereign, subject to no law but the law written on his heart and revealed to him by his Maker, in the constitution of his nature, and the inspiration of his understanding and his conscience. His right to his life, his liberty, no created being could rightfully contest. Nor was his right to his property less incontestable. The club that he had snapped from a tree, for a staff or for defence, was his own. His bow and arrow were his own; if by a pebble he had killed a partridge or a squirrel, it was his own. No creature, man or beast, had a right to take it from him. If he had taken an eel, or a smelt, or a sculpin, it was his property. In short, he sported upon this topic with so much wit

and humor, and at the same time with so much indisputable truth and reason, that he was not less entertaining than instructive. He asserted that these rights were inherent and inalienable; that they never could be surrendered or alienated, but by idiots or madmen, and all the acts of idiots and lunatics were void, and not obligatory, by all the laws of God and man. Nor were the poor negroes forgotten. Not a Quaker in Philadelphia, or Mr. Jefferson in Virginia, ever asserted the rights of negroes in stronger terms. Young as I was, and ignorant as I was, I shuddered at the doctrine he taught; and I have all my life shuddered, and still shudder, at the consequences that may be drawn from such premises. Shall we say that the rights of masters and servants clash, and can be decided only by force? I adore the idea of gradual abolitions! but who shall decide how fast or how slowly these abolitions shall be made?

3. From individual independence he proceeded to association. If it was inconsistent with the dignity of human nature to say that men were gregarious animals, like wild geese, it surely could offend no delicacy to say they were social animals by nature: that there were natural sympathies, and, above all, the sweet attraction of the sexes, which must soon draw them together in little groups, and by degrees in larger congregations, for mutual assistance and defence. And this must have happened before any formal covenant, by express words or signs, was

concluded. When general councils and deliberations commenced, the objects could be no other than the mutual defence and security of every individual for his life, his liberty, and his property. To suppose them to have surrendered these in any other way than by equal rules and general consent was to suppose them idiots or madmen, whose acts were never binding. To suppose them surprised by fraud, or compelled by force into any other compact, such fraud and such force could confer no obligation. Every man had a right to trample it under foot whenever he pleased. In short, he asserted these rights to be derived only from nature and the Author of nature: that they were inherent, inalienable, and indefeasible by any laws, pacts, contracts, covenants, or stipulations which man could devise.

4. These principles and these rights were wrought into the English Constitution as fundamental laws. And under this head he went back to the old Saxon laws, and to Magna Charta, and the fifty confirmations of it in Parliament, and the executions ordained against the violators of it, and the national vengeance which had been taken on them from time to time, down to the Jameses and Charleses, and to the Petition of Right and the Bill of Rights and the Revolution. He asserted that the security of these rights to life, liberty, and property had been the object of all those struggles against arbitrary power, temporal and spiritual, civil and political, military

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and ecclesiastical, in every age. He asserted that our ancestors, as British subjects, and we, their descendants, as British subjects, were entitled to all those rights, by the British Constitution, as well as by the law of nature and our provincial charter, as much as any inhabitant of London or Bristol, or any part of England; and were not to be cheated out of them by any phantom of "virtual representation," or any other fiction of law or politics, or any monkish trick of deceit and hypocrisy.

5. He then examined the Acts of Trade, one by one, and demonstrated that if they were considered as revenue laws, they destroyed all our security of property, liberty, and life, every right of nature, and the English Constitution, and the charter of the province. Here he considered the distinction between "external and internal taxes," at that time a popular and commonplace distinction. But he asserted that there was no such distinction in theory, or upon any principle but "necessity." The necessity that the commerce of the empire should be under one direction was obvious. The Americans had been so sensible of this necessity that they had connived at the distinction between external and internal taxes, and had submitted to the Acts of Trade as regulations of commerce, but never as taxations or revenue laws. Nor had the British government till now ever dared to attempt to enforce them as taxa-

tions or revenue laws. They had lain dormant in that character for a century almost. The Navigation Act he allowed to be binding upon us, because we had consented to it by our own legislature. Here he gave a history of the Navigation Act of the first of Charles II., a plagiarism from Oliver Cromwell. This act had lain dormant for fifteen years. In 1675, after repeated letters and orders from the king, Governor Leverett very candidly informs his Majesty that the law had not been executed, because it was thought unconstitutional, Parliament not having authority over us.



PATRICK HENRY

1736-1799

A POOR boy in Virginia, with few early advantages and too little energy to improve those, HENRY became a lawyer, and for some time an unsuccessful one. But finally, in a case that interested and roused him, — defence of the legislature against a salary suit by the clergy, — he dropped the stilted fashion of speech he had imitated from older men, and giving free rein to his native sense and emotional power, thrilled his hearers and surprised himself with a startling success. This changed the man; he had found himself, and others had found him, for thenceforward he was as brilliantly successful as before he had dismally failed. His eloquence — simple, direct, forcible, irresistible — gave him reputation, and in 1765, at the age of twenty-nine, he was elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses.

This was in the heat of the discussion of the hated Stamp Act, when men hardly knew whether to submit or to resist; but HENRY introduced resolutions declaring that Virginians were bound to pay no taxes not imposed by their own legislature, and flung himself into the debate with that short and now familiar speech in which he cried, "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third" — "Treason!" cried the Speaker — "may profit by their example," concluded HENRY; and his resolutions were passed.

In 1775 he uttered before the Virginia Convention of Delegates the vehement address here following, arousing the Virginians to arms; and in all his legislative career, in the Continental Congress of 1774 and the Virginia Convention of 1775, he was foremost in repelling the idea of British aggression. He was made Governor of Virginia in 1776-1779 and in 1784-1786. In 1788, in the Virginia Ratification Convention, he opposed the new Constitution as giving too much power to the general government. From first to last PATRICK HENRY was a singularly eloquent Tribune of the People.

## AMERICAN LIBERTY

MR. PRESIDENT: No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope that it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as I do, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfil the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offence, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty towards the majesty of heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge

in the illusions of Hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with these warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These

are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, Sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motives for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging.

And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer on the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, Sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done everything that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have

been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne.

In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free — if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending — if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, we must fight! I repeat it, Sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

They tell us, Sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance, by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of Hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of the means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy

can send against us. Besides, Sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, Sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, Sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat, but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable — and let it come! I repeat it, Sir, let it come!

It is in vain, Sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry peace, peace — but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!





SAMUEL ADAMS

1722-1803

SAMUEL ADAMS — born, bred, living, and dying in Boston — was one of the potent forces, not only in the American Revolution itself, but in promoting and bringing it about. From the first, he refused to believe that any good could come out of further British control of America, repudiated parliamentary taxation without representation, rejected all compromising measures, busied himself in correspondence urging coöperation between the Colonies, aimed at independence, and did his best to ferment the war feeling.

ADAMS early entered political life, being in the Massachusetts legislature in 1776. He was an influential member of the First and of the Second Continental Congresses, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, an earnest member of the Massachusetts Ratification Convention, and tireless in speaking, writing, publishing, the fieriest appeals to his countrymen. His speech on American Independence, here given, was delivered in Philadelphia, August 1, 1776, and had great weight.

After the war and the new Constitution, he was Lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts in 1789 and Governor in 1794. His death at the age of eighty-two removed one of the most notable figures of that great time.

## AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

*Delivered at the State House, in Philadelphia, August 1, 1776*

COUNTRYMEN AND BRETHREN: I would gladly have declined an honor to which I find myself unequal. I have not the calmness and impartiality which the infinite importance of this occasion demands. I will not deny the charge of my enemies, that resentment for the accumulated injuries of our country, and an ardor for her glory, rising to enthusiasm, may deprive me of that accuracy of judgment and expression which men of cooler passions may possess. Let me beseech you, then, to hear me with caution, to examine without prejudice, and to correct the mistakes into which I may be hurried by my zeal.

Truth loves an appeal to the common sense of mankind. Your unperverted understandings can best determine on subjects of a practical nature. The positions and plans which are said to be above the comprehension of the multitude may be always suspected to be visionary and fruitless. He who made all men hath made the truths necessary to human happiness obvious to all.

Our forefathers threw off the yoke of popery in religion; for you is reserved the honor of leveling the popery of politics. . . . What an affront to the King of the universe, to maintain that the happiness of a monster, sunk in debauchery and spreading desolation and murder among men, of a Caligula, a Nero, or a Charles, is more precious in his sight than that of millions of his suppliant creatures, who do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God! No! in the judgment of Heaven there is no other superiority among men, than a superiority in wisdom and virtue. And can we have a safer model in forming ours? The Deity then has not given any order or family of men authority over others, and if any men have given it, they only could give it for themselves. Our forefathers, 'tis said, consented to be subject to the laws of Great Britain. I will not, at present, dispute it, nor mark out the limits and conditions of their submission; but will it be denied that they contracted to pay obedience, and to be under the control of Great Britain, because it appeared to them most beneficial in their then present circumstances and situations? We, my countrymen, have the same right to consult and provide for our happiness, which they had to promote theirs. If they had a view to posterity in their contracts, it must have been to advance the felicity of their descendants. If they erred in their expectations and prospects, we can never be condemned

for a conduct which they would have recommended had they foreseen our present condition.

Ye darkeners of counsel, who would make the property, lives, and religion of millions depend on the evasive interpretations of musty parchments; who would send us to antiquated charters, of uncertain and contradictory meaning, to prove that the present generation are not bound to be victims to cruel and unforgiving despotism, tell us whether our pious and generous ancestors bequeathed to us the miserable privilege of having the rewards of our honest industry, the fruits of those fields which they purchased and bled for, wrested from us at the will of men over whom we have no check? Did they contract for us that, with folded arms, we should expect that justice and mercy from brutal and inflamed invaders which have been denied to our supplications at the foot of the throne? Were we to hear our character as a people ridiculed with indifference? Did they promise for us that our meekness and patience should be insulted; our coasts harassed; our towns demolished and plundered, and our wives and offspring exposed to nakedness, hunger, and death, without feeling the resentment of men, and exerting those powers of self-preservation which God has given us? No man had once a greater veneration for Englishmen than I entertained. They were dear to me as branches of the same paternal trunk, and partakers of the same religion and laws; I still

view with respect the remains of the Constitution as I would a lifeless body which had once been animated by a great and heroic soul. But when I am roused by the din of arms; when I behold legions of foreign assassins, paid by Englishmen to imbrue their hands in our blood; when I tread over the uncoffined bones of my countrymen, neighbors and friends; when I see the locks of a venerable father torn by savage hands, and a feeble mother, clasping her infants to her bosom, and on her knees imploring their lives from her own slaves, whom Englishmen have allured to treachery and murder; when I behold my country, once the seat of industry, peace, and plenty, changed by Englishmen to a theater of blood and misery, Heaven forgive me, if I cannot root out those passions which it has implanted in my bosom and detest submission to a people who have either ceased to be human, or have not virtue enough to feel their own wretchedness and servitude.

Men who content themselves with the semblance of truth, and a display of words, talk much of our obligations to Great Britain for protection! Had she a single eye to our advantage? A nation of shopkeepers are very seldom so disinterested. Let us not be so amused with words; the extension of her commerce was her object. When she defended our coasts, she fought for her customers, and convoyed our ships loaded with wealth, which we had acquired for her by industry. She has treated us as beasts of

burden, whom the lordly masters cherish that they may carry a greater load. Let us inquire also against whom she has protected us? Against her own enemies with whom we had no quarrel, or only on her account, and against whom we always readily exerted our wealth and strength when they were required. Were these Colonies backward in giving assistance to Great Britain, when they were called upon in 1739, to aid the expedition against Carthagera? They at that time sent three thousand men to join the British army, although the war commenced without their consent. But the last war, 'tis said, was purely American. This is a vulgar error, which, like many others, has gained credit by being confidently repeated. The dispute between the Courts of Great Britain and France related to the limits of Canada and Nova Scotia. The controverted territory was not claimed by any in the Colonies, but by the Crown of Great Britain. It was therefore their own quarrel. The infringement of a right which England had, by the Treaty of Utrecht, of trading in the Indian country of Ohio, was another cause of the war. The French seized large quantities of British manufactures, and took possession of a fort which a company of British merchants and factors had erected for the security of their commerce. The war was therefore waged in defence of lands claimed by the Crown, and for the protection of British property. The French at that time had no quarrel with

America; and, as appears by letters sent from their commander-in-chief, to some of the Colonies, wished to remain in peace with us. The part therefore which we then took, and the miseries to which we exposed ourselves, ought to be charged to our affection for Britain. These Colonies granted more than their proportion to the support of the war. They raised, clothed, and maintained nearly twenty-five thousand men, and so sensible were the people of England of our great exertions, that a message was annually sent to the House of Commons purporting: "That His Majesty, being highly satisfied of the zeal and vigor with which his faithful subjects in North America had exerted themselves in defence of His Majesty's just rights and possessions, recommended it to the House, to take the same into consideration, and enable him to give them a proper compensation."

But what purpose can arguments of this kind answer? Did the protection we received annul our rights as men, and lay us under an obligation of being miserable? Who among you, my countrymen, that is a father, would claim authority to make your child a slave because you had nourished him in his infancy? It is a strange species of generosity which requires a return infinitely more valuable than anything it could have bestowed. . . .

Courage, then, my countrymen! our contest is not only whether we ourselves shall be free, but



whether there shall be left to mankind an asylum on earth, for civil and religious liberty. Dismissing therefore the justice of our cause, as incontestable, the only question is, What is best for us to pursue in our present circumstances?

The doctrine of dependence on Great Britain is, I believe, generally exploded; but as I would attend to the honest weakness of the simplest of men, you will pardon me if I offer a few words on that subject.

We are now on this continent, to the astonishment of the world, three millions of souls united in one common cause. We have large armies, well disciplined and appointed with commanders inferior to none in military skill, and superior in activity and zeal. We are furnished with arsenals and stores beyond our most sanguine expectations, and foreign nations are waiting to crown our success by their alliances. There are instances of, I would say, an almost astonishing Providence in our favor; our success has staggered our enemies, and almost given faith to infidels; so that we may truly say it is not our own arm which has saved us.

The hand of heaven appears to have led us on to be, perhaps, humble instruments and means in the great providential dispensation which is completing. We have fled from the political Sodom; let us not look back, lest we perish and become a monument of infamy and derision to the world! For can we ever expect more unanimity and a better preparation

for defence; more infatuation of counsel among our enemies, and more valor and zeal among ourselves? The same force and resistance which are sufficient to procure us our liberties will secure us a glorious independence and support us in the dignity of free, imperial States. We cannot suppose that our opposition has made a corrupt and dissipated nation more friendly to America, or created in them a greater respect for the rights of mankind. We can therefore expect a restoration and establishment of our privileges, and a compensation for the injuries we have received from their want of power, from their fears, and not from their virtues. The unanimity and valor, which will effect an honorable peace, can render a future contest for our liberties unnecessary. He who has strength to chain down the wolf is a madman if he lets him loose without drawing his teeth and paring his nails.

From the day on which an accommodation takes place between England and America, on any other terms than as independent States, I shall date the ruin of this country. A politic minister will study to lull us into security, by granting us the full extent of our petitions. The warm sunshine of influence would melt down the virtue, which the violence of the storm rendered more firm and unyielding. In a state of tranquillity, wealth, and luxury, our descendants would forget the arts of war, and the noble activity and zeal which made their ancestors invin-

cible. Every art of corruption would be employed to loosen the bond of union which renders our assistance formidable. When the spirit of liberty which now animates our hearts and gives success to our arms is extinct, our numbers will accelerate our ruin, and render us easier victims to tyranny. Ye abandoned minions of an infatuated ministry, if peradventure any should yet remain among us! — remember that a Warren and Montgomery are numbered among the dead. Contemplate the mangled bodies of our countrymen, and then say, What should be the reward of such sacrifices? Bid us and our posterity bow the knee, supplicate the friendship, and plough, and sow, and reap, to glut the avarice of the men who have let loose on us the dogs of war to riot in our blood, and hunt us from the face of the earth? If we love wealth better than liberty, the tranquillity of servitude than the animating contest of freedom — go from us in peace. We ask you not counsels or arms. Crouch down and lick the hands which feed you. May your chains set lightly upon you and may posterity forget that ye were our countrymen!

To unite the supremacy of Great Britain and the liberty of America, is utterly impossible. So vast a continent and of such a distance from the seat of empire will every day grow more unmanageable. The motion of so unwieldy a body cannot be directed with any despatch and uniformity, without committing to the Parliament of Great Britain powers

inconsistent with our freedom. The authority and force which would be absolutely necessary for the preservation of the peace and good order of this continent, would put all our valuable rights within the reach of that nation.

As the administration of government requires firmer and more numerous supports in proportion to its extent, the burdens imposed on us would be excessive, and we should have the melancholy prospect of their increasing on our posterity. . . .

Prejudice, I confess, may warp our judgments. Let us hear the decision of Englishmen on this subject, who cannot be suspected of partiality: "The Americans," say they, "are but little short of half our number. To this number they have grown from a small body of original settlers by a very rapid increase. The probability is that they will go on to increase, and that in fifty or sixty years they will be double our number; and form a mighty empire, consisting of a variety of States, all equal or superior to ourselves in all the arts and accomplishments which give dignity and happiness to human life. In that period will they be still bound to acknowledge that supremacy over them which we now claim? Can there be any person who will assert this, or whose mind does not revolt at the idea of a vast continent, holding all that is valuable to it, at the discretion of a handful of people on the other side the Atlantic? But if at that period this would be unreasonable,

what makes it otherwise now? Draw the line if you can. But there is still a greater difficulty. Britain is now, I will suppose, the seat of liberty and virtue, and its legislature consists of a body of able and independent men, who govern with wisdom and justice. The time may come when all will be reversed; when its excellent constitution of government will be subverted; when, pressed by debts and taxes, it will be greedy to draw to itself an increase of revenue from every distant province, in order to ease its own burdens; when the influence of the Crown, strengthened by luxury and an universal profligacy of manners, will have tainted every heart, broken down every fence of liberty, and rendered us a nation of tame and contented vassals; when a general election will be nothing but a general auction of boroughs, and when the Parliament, the grand council of the nation, and once the faithful guardian of the state and a terror to evil ministers, will be degenerated into a body of sycophants, dependent and venal, always ready to confirm any measures, and little more than a public court for registering royal edicts. Such, it is possible, may, some time or other, be the state of Great Britain. What will at that period be the duty of the Colonies? Will they be still bound to unconditional submission? Must they always continue an appendage to our Government and follow it implicitly through every change that can happen to it? Wretched condition, indeed, of millions

of freemen as good as ourselves! Will you say that we now govern equitably, and that there is no danger of such revolution? Would to God that this were true. But will you not always say the same? Who shall judge whether we govern equitably or not? Can you give the Colonies any security that such a period will never come?"

*No! The period, countrymen, is already come.* The calamities were at our door. The rod of oppression was raised over us. We were roused from our slumbers, and may we never sink into repose until we can convey a clear and undisputed inheritance to our posterity. This day we are called upon to give a glorious example of what the wisest and best of men were rejoiced to view only in speculation. This day presents the world with the most august spectacle that its annals ever unfolded. Millions of freemen, deliberately and voluntarily forming themselves into a society for their common defence and common happiness. Immortal spirits of Hampden, Locke, and Sidney! will it not add to your benevolent joys to behold your posterity rising to the dignity of men, and evincing to the world the reality and expediency of your systems, and in the actual enjoyment of that equal liberty which you were happy, when on earth, in delineating and recommending to mankind?

Other nations have received their laws from conquerors; some are indebted for a constitution to the sufferings of their ancestors through revolving cen-

turies. The people of this country, alone, have formally and deliberately chosen a government for themselves, and with open and uninfluenced consent bound themselves into a social compact. Here, no man proclaims his birth or wealth as a title to honorable distinction, or to sanctify ignorance and vice with the name of hereditary authority. He who has most zeal and ability to promote public felicity, let him be the servant of the public. This is the only line of distinction drawn by nature. Leave the bird of night to the obscurity for which nature intended him, and expect only from the eagle to brush the clouds with his wings, and look boldly in the face of the sun.

Some who would persuade us that they have tender feelings for future generations, while they are insensible to the happiness of the present, are perpetually foreboding a train of dissensions under our popular system. Such men's reasoning amounts to this — give up all that is valuable to Great Britain, and then you will have no inducements to quarrel among yourselves; or suffer yourselves to be chained down by your enemies, that you may not be able to fight with your friends.

This is an insult on your virtue as well as your common sense. Your unanimity this day and through the course of the war, is a decisive refutation of such invidious predictions. Our enemies have already had evidence that our present Constitution

contains in it the justice and ardor of freedom, and the wisdom and vigor of the most absolute system. When the law is the will of the people, it will be uniform and coherent; but fluctuation, contradiction, and inconsistency of councils must be expected under those governments where every revolution in the ministry of a court produces one in the state. Such being the folly and pride of all ministers, that they ever pursue measures directly opposite to those of their predecessors.

We shall neither be exposed to the necessary convulsions of elective monarchies, nor to the want of wisdom, fortitude, and virtue, to which hereditary succession is liable. In your hands it will be to perpetuate a prudent, active and just legislature, and which will never expire until you yourselves lose the virtues which give it existence. . . .

By the beneficence of Providence, we shall behold our empire arising, founded on justice and the voluntary consent of the people, and giving full scope to the exercise of those faculties and rights which most ennoble our species. Besides the advantages of liberty and the most equal constitution, heaven has given us a country with every variety of climate and soil, pouring forth in abundance whatever is necessary for the support, comfort, and strength of a nation. Within our own borders we possess all the means of sustenance, defence, and commerce; at the same time, these advantages are so distributed



among the different States of this continent, as if nature had in view to proclaim to us — Be united among yourselves, and you will want nothing from the rest of the world. . . .

These natural advantages will enable us to remain independent of the world, or make it the interest of European powers to court our alliance, and aid in protecting us against the invasions of others. What argument therefore do we want, to show the equity of our conduct; or motive of interest to recommend it to our prudence? Nature points out the path, and our enemies have obliged us to pursue it.

If there is any man so base or so weak as to prefer a dependence on Great Britain to the dignity and happiness of living a member of a free and independent nation, let me tell him that necessity now demands what the generous principle of patriotism should have dictated.

We have now no other alternative than independence, or the most ignominious and galling servitude. The legions of our enemies thicken on our plains; desolation and death mark their bloody career; whilst the mangled corpses of our countrymen seem to cry out to us as a voice from heaven — “Will you permit our posterity to groan under the galling chains of our murderers? Has our blood been expended in vain? Is the only reward which our constancy, till death, has obtained for our own country, that it should be sunk into a deeper and more

ignominious vassalage? Recollect who are the men that demand your submission; to whose decrees you are invited to pay obedience!" . . .

Countrymen! the men who now invite you to surrender your rights into their hands, are the men who have let loose the merciless savages to riot in the blood of their brethren — who have dared to establish popery triumphant in our land — who have taught treachery to your slaves, and courted them to assassinate your wives and children.

These are the men to whom we are exhorted to sacrifice the blessings which Providence holds out to us — the happiness, the dignity of uncontrolled freedom and independence.

Let not your generous indignation be directed against any among us who may advise so absurd and maddening a measure. Their number is but few and daily decreases; and the spirit which can render them patient of slavery will render them contemptible enemies.

Our Union is now complete; our Constitution composed, established, and approved. You are now the guardians of your own liberties. We may justly address you, as the Decemviri did the Romans, and say — "Nothing that we propose can pass into a law without your consent. Be yourselves, O Americans, the authors of those laws on which your happiness depends."

You have now in the field armies sufficient to

repel the whole force of your enemies, and their base and mercenary auxiliaries. The hearts of your soldiers beat high with the spirit of freedom — they are animated with the justice of their cause, and while they grasp their swords, can look up to heaven for assistance. Your adversaries are composed of wretches who laugh at the rights of humanity, who turn religion into derision, and would, for higher wages, direct their swords against their leaders or their country. Go on, then, in your generous enterprise, with gratitude to Heaven, for past success, and confidence of it in the future. For my own part, I ask no greater blessing than to share with you the common danger and common glory. If I have a wish dearer to my soul, than that my ashes may be mingled with those of a Warren and Montgomery — it is that these American States may never cease to be free and independent!



ALEXANDER HAMILTON

1757-1804

A VERY rare genius was this young West Indian, who at fifteen years of age broke away from a clerk's desk and came to New York to enter King's College (now Columbia). A brilliant scholar, an omnivorous reader, a cogent writer, he entered at once into the political interests of the time, published essays on colonial rights, urged the people to arms in public speech, and himself entered the Revolutionary army as a captain of artillery.

He soon attracted Washington's attention, and became his aide-de-camp and secretary through the war, at times being intrusted with active military duties. His talents seemed equal to any emergency, and he rapidly rose in rank.

HAMILTON was essentially aristocratic in nature, feeling, and opinion, and, naturally, of the highest ambition. He took foremost part in the construction of the new Constitution, with urgent conviction of the need of a strong central government. He made several effective speeches in the Convention itself, and others in the New York Ratification Convention, — one of which is here given, — and wrote most of the famous papers of "The Federalist," in advocacy of ratifying the Constitution. He was Washington's first Secretary of the Treasury, his financial policies winning him wide fame. He went to New York, and there stood the acknowledged head of the bar.

In every relation of life, HAMILTON showed wisdom, skill, prudence, energy, and unequalled capacity. Capable soldier, brilliant lawyer, comprehensive legislator, great financier, gifted with personal attractiveness, clear-minded, logical, and persuasive with pen and tongue, he used his remarkable intellect and all his powers in the service of America. And rightly America holds his memory as a precious legacy.

## THE FEDERAL SENATE <sup>1</sup>

I AM persuaded, Mr. Chairman, that I in my turn shall be indulged in addressing the committee. We all, in equal sincerity, profess to be anxious for the establishment of a republican government, on a safe and solid basis. It is the object of the wishes of every honest man in the United States, and I presume I shall not be disbelieved, when I declare, that it is an object of all others, the nearest and most dear to my own heart. The means of accomplishing this great purpose become the most important study which can interest mankind. It is our duty to examine all those means with peculiar attention, and to choose the best and most effectual. It is our duty to draw from nature, from reason, from examples, the best principles of policy, and to pursue and apply them in the formation of our government. We should contemplate and compare the systems which, in this examination, come under our view; distinguish, with a careful eye, the defects and excellencies of each, and discarding the former, incorporate the latter, as far as circumstances will admit, into our Constitution. If we pursue a different course and

<sup>1</sup> June 24 and 25, 1788.

neglect this duty, we shall probably disappoint the expectations of our country and of the world.

In the commencement of a revolution, which received its birth from the usurpations of tyranny, nothing was more natural than that the public mind should be influenced by an extreme spirit of jealousy. To resist these encroachments, and to nourish this spirit, was the great object of all our public and private institutions. The zeal for liberty became predominant and excessive. In forming our Confederation, this passion alone seemed to actuate us, and we appear to have had no other view than to secure ourselves from despotism. The object certainly was a valuable one, and deserved our utmost attention. But, Sir, there is another object, equally important, and which our enthusiasm rendered us little capable of regarding: I mean a principle of strength and stability in the organization of our government, and vigor in its operations. This purpose can never be accomplished but by the establishment of some select body, formed peculiarly upon this principle. There are few positions more demonstrable than that there should be in every republic, some permanent body to correct the prejudices, check the intemperate passions, and regulate the fluctuations of a popular assembly. It is evident, that a body instituted for these purposes, must be so formed as to exclude, as much as possible, from its own character, those infirmities and that mutability which it is designed to



remedy. It is therefore necessary that it should be small, that it should hold its authority during a considerable period, and that it should have such an independence in the exercise of its powers as will divest it as much as possible of local prejudices. It should be so formed as to be the center of political knowledge, to pursue always a steady line of conduct, and to reduce every irregular propensity to system. Without this establishment, we may make experiments without end, but shall never have an efficient government.

It is an unquestionable truth, that the body of the people in every country desire sincerely its prosperity; but it is equally unquestionable, that they do not possess the discernment and stability necessary for systematic government. To deny that they are frequently led into the grossest errors by misinformation and passion, would be a flattery which their own good sense must despise. That branch of administration especially, which involves our political relations with foreign states, a community will ever be incompetent to. These truths are not often held up in public assemblies; but they cannot be unknown to any who hear me. From these principles it follows, that there ought to be two distinct bodies in our government: one, which shall be immediately constituted by and peculiarly represent the people, and possess all the popular features; another, formed upon the principle, and for the purposes before

explained. Such considerations as these induced the convention who formed your State constitution to institute a senate upon the present plan. The history of ancient and modern republics had taught them, that many of the evils which these republics suffered arose from the want of a certain balance and mutual control indispensable to a wise administration; they were convinced that popular assemblies are frequently misguided by ignorance, by sudden impulses, and the intrigues of ambitious men; and that some firm barrier against these operations was necessary; they therefore instituted your Senate, and the benefits we have experienced have fully justified their conceptions.

Now, Sir, what is the tendency of the proposed amendment?<sup>1</sup> To take away the stability of government, by the depriving the Senate of its permanency; to make this body subject to the same weakness and prejudices which are incident to popular assemblies, and which it was instituted to correct; and by thus assimilating the complexion of the two branches, destroy the balance between them. The amendment will render the senator a slave to all the capricious humors among the people. It will probably be here suggested, that the legislatures, not the people, are to have the power of recall. Without

<sup>1</sup>That no senator should serve more than six years in any term of twelve years, and that the State legislatures might at any time recall and replace any senator.

attempting to prove that the legislatures must be, in a great degree, the image of the multitude, in respect to Federal affairs, and that the same prejudices and factions will prevail, I insist that, in whatever body the power of recall is vested, the senator will perpetually feel himself in such a state of vassalage and dependence, that he never can possess that firmness which is necessary to the discharge of his great duty to the Union.

Gentlemen, in their reasoning, have placed the interests of the several States and those of the United States in contrast: this is not a fair view of the subject; they must necessarily be involved in each other. What we apprehend is, that some sinister prejudice, or some prevailing passion, may assume the form of a genuine interest. The influence of these is as powerful as the most permanent conviction of the public good; and against this influence we ought to provide. The local interests of a State ought in every case to give way to the interests of the Union; for when a sacrifice of one or the other is necessary, the former becomes only an apparent, partial interest, and should yield, on the principle that the small good ought never to oppose the great one. When you assemble from your several counties in the legislature, were every member to be guided only by the apparent interest of his county, government would be impracticable. There must be a perpetual accommodation and sacrifice of local

advantage to general expediency; but the spirit of a mere popular assembly would rarely be actuated by this important principle. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the Senate should be so formed, as to be unbiassed by false conceptions of the real interests, or undue attachment to the apparent good of their several States. . . .

Every member must have been struck with an observation of a gentleman from Albany. Do what you will, says he, local prejudices and opinions will go into the Government. What! shall we then form a constitution to cherish and strengthen these prejudices? Shall we confirm the distemper instead of remedying it? It is undeniable that there must be a control somewhere. Either the general interest is to control the particular interests, or the contrary. If the former, then certainly the Government ought to be so framed, as to render the power of control efficient to all intents and purposes: if the latter, a striking absurdity follows; the controlling powers must be as numerous as the varying interests, and the operations of government must therefore cease; for the moment you accommodate these different interests, which is the only way to set the Government in motion, you establish a general controlling power. Thus, whatever constitutional provisions are made to the contrary, every government will be at last driven to the necessity of subjecting the partial to the universal interest. The gentlemen ought

always, in their reasoning, to distinguish between the real, genuine good of a State, and the opinions and prejudices which may prevail respecting it; the latter may be opposed to the general good, and consequently ought to be sacrificed; the former is so involved in it, that it never can be sacrificed. . . .

Sir, if you consider but a moment the purposes for which the Senate was instituted, and the nature of the business which they are to transact, you will see the necessity of giving them duration. They, together with the President, are to manage all our concerns with foreign nations; they must understand all their interests and their political systems. This knowledge is not soon acquired — but a very small part is gained in the closet. Is it desirable, then, that new and unqualified members should be continually thrown into that body? When public bodies are engaged in the exercise of general powers, you cannot judge of the propriety of their conduct but from the result of their systems. They may be forming plans which require time and diligence to bring to maturity. It is necessary, therefore, that they should have a considerable and fixed duration, that they may make their calculations accordingly. If they are to be perpetually fluctuating they can never have that responsibility which is so important in republican governments. In bodies subject to frequent changes, great political plans must be conducted by members in succession: a single assembly

can have but a partial agency in them, and consequently cannot properly be answerable for the final event. Considering the Senate, therefore, with a view to responsibility, duration is a very interesting and essential quality.

There is another view in which duration in the Senate appears necessary. A government, changeable in its policy, must soon lose its sense of national character, and forfeit the respect of foreigners. Senators will not be solicitous for the reputation of public measures in which they have had but a temporary concern, and will feel lightly the burden of public disapprobation in proportion to the number of those who partake of the censure. Our political rivals will ever consider our mutable counsels as evidence of deficient wisdom, and will be little apprehensive of our arriving at any exalted station in the scale of power. Such are the internal and external disadvantages which would result from the principle contended for. Were it admitted, I am fully persuaded, Sir, that prejudices would govern the public deliberations, and passions rage in the councils of the Union. If it were necessary, I could illustrate my subject by historical facts; I could travel through an extensive field of detail, and demonstrate that wherever the fatal principle of the head suffering the control of the members, has operated, it has proved a fruitful source of commotions and disorder.

This, Sir, is the first fair opportunity that has been

offered of deliberately correcting the errors in government. Instability has been a prominent and very defective feature in most republican systems. It is the first to be seen and the last to be lamented by a philosophical inquirer. It has operated most banefully in our infant republic. It is necessary that we apply an immediate remedy, and eradicate the poisonous principle from our government. If this be not done, Sir, we shall feel and posterity will be convulsed by a painful malady.

[*June 25, Hamilton continuing.*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: In debates of this kind it is extremely easy, on either side, to say a great number of plausible things. It is to be acknowledged that there is even a certain degree of truth in the reasonings on both sides. In this situation it is the province of judgment and good sense to determine their force and application, and how far the arguments advanced on one side are balanced by those on the other. The ingenious dress in which both may appear renders it a difficult task to make this decision, and the mind is frequently unable to come to a safe and solid conclusion. On the present question, some of the principles on each side are admitted, and the conclusions drawn from them denied, while other principles, with their inferences, are rejected altogether. It is the business of the committee to seek the truth in this labyrinth of argument.

There are two objects in forming systems of government,—safety for the people and energy in the administration. When these objects are united, the certain tendency of the system will be to the public welfare. If the latter object be neglected, the people's security will be as certainly sacrificed as by disregarding the former. Good constitutions are formed upon a comparison of the liberty of the individual with the strength of government; if the tone of either be too high, the other will be weakened too much. It is the happiest possible mode of conciliating these objects to institute one branch peculiarly endowed with sensibility, another with knowledge and firmness. Through the opposition and mutual control of these bodies, the Government will reach, in its operations, the perfect balance between liberty and power. . . .

Sir, the senators will constantly be attended with a reflection that their future existence is absolutely in the power of the States. Will not this form a powerful check? It is a reflection which applies closely to their feelings and interests, and no candid man, who thinks deliberately, will deny that it would be alone a sufficient check. The legislatures are to provide the mode of electing the President, and must have a great influence over the electors. Indeed, they convey their influence through a thousand channels into the general government. Gentlemen have endeavored to show that there will be no clash-



ing of local and general interests; they do not seem to have sufficiently considered the subject. We have in this State <sup>1</sup> a duty of sixpence per pound on salt, and it operates lightly and with advantage; but such a duty would be very burdensome to some of the States. If Congress should, at any time, find it convenient to impose a salt tax, would it not be opposed by the Eastern States? Being themselves incapable of feeling the necessity of the measure, they could only feel its apparent injustice. Would it be wise to give the New England States a power to defeat this measure, by recalling their senators who may be engaged for it? I beg the gentlemen once more to attend to the distinction between the real and apparent interests of the States. I admit that the aggregate of individuals constitutes the government; yet every State is not the government; every petty district is not the government. Sir, in our State legislatures, a compromise is frequently necessary between the interests of counties; the same must happen in the general government between States. In this the few must yield to the many; or, in other words, the particular must be sacrificed to the general interest. If the members of Congress are too dependent on the State legislatures, they will be eternally forming secret combinations from local views. This is reasoning from the plainest principles. Their interest is interwoven with their dependence,

<sup>1</sup> New York.

and they will necessarily yield to the impression of their situation. . . .

It has been remarked that there is an inconsistency in our admitting that the equal votes in the Senate were given to secure the rights of the States, and, at the same time, holding up the idea that their interests should be sacrificed to those of the Union. But the committee certainly perceive the distinction between the rights of the State and its interests. The rights of a State are defined by the Constitution, and cannot be invaded without a violation of it; but the interests of a State have no connection with the Constitution, and may be in a thousand instances constitutionally sacrificed. An uniform tax is perfectly constitutional, and yet it may operate oppressively upon certain members of the Union. The gentlemen are afraid that their State governments will be abolished. But, Sir, their existence does not depend upon the laws of the United States. Congress can no more abolish the State governments than they can dissolve the Union. The whole Constitution is repugnant to it, and yet the gentlemen would introduce an additional useless provision against it. It is proper that the influence of the States should prevail to a certain extent. But shall the individual States be the judges how far? Shall an unlimited power be left them to determine in their own favor? . . .

Sir, in contending for a rotation, the gentlemen

carry their zeal beyond all reasonable bounds. I am convinced that no government, founded on this feeble principle, can operate well. I believe, also, that we shall be singular in this proposal. We have not felt the embarrassments resulting from rotation, that other States have: and we hardly know the strength of their objections to it. There is no probability that we shall ever persuade a majority of the States to agree to this amendment. The gentlemen deceive themselves. The amendment would defeat their own design. When a man knows he must quit his station, let his merit be what it may, he will turn his attention chiefly to his own emolument: nay, he will feel temptations, which few other situations furnish, to perpetuate his power by unconstitutional usurpations. Men will pursue their interests. It is as easy to change human nature as to oppose the strong current of the selfish passions. A wise legislator will gently divert the channel, and direct it, if possible, to the public good.



GEORGE WASHINGTON

1732-1799

It cannot be needful to say much here about the best known of all Americans. His Virginian birth; his comparatively brief schooling (ceasing when he was sixteen); his surveying expeditions in wild regions; his precocious military experience; his diplomacy with the French forces in Pennsylvania districts; his exploit at Fort Necessity, and later valuable service and wonderful escape in the Braddock defeat; his driving the French from Western frontiers; his retirement and marriage; his work as colonial and congressional legislator; his entrance into the army as commander-in-chief, and difficult, perilous, disheartening, but finally triumphant career through the Revolution, — all are familiar.

His services in forming and ratifying the Constitution and his two presidential terms as chief of the new Republic emphasize the peculiar quality of WASHINGTON'S nature, in that, without special brilliancy (except his thunderbolt speed in war after patient awaiting of opportunity), his character was so admirably balanced that all men rested upon his judgment and his integrity. At nineteen, he was Assistant Adjutant-General of Virginia; at twenty-six, "Commander-in-Chief of all the forces raised and to be raised in Virginia" (French and English War); in 1776, acclaimed head of the Revolutionary army; later, President of the Constitutional Convention; finally, through two terms, President of the United States, — everywhere and always trusted as leader.

WASHINGTON'S public addresses were all in the elaborately formal style of his time, unimpassioned, lucid, fundamentally sensible, and elevated in sentiment. The one here selected is his Farewell Address to the people (September 17, 1796) before his final retirement in the December following. It is one of the American classics. The kindly wisdom of its counsels cannot be too often read and pondered by Americans, — especially in these days of expanding powers and interests, temptations of ambition, loosening of religious ties, clashing of party conflicts, and divers allurements, against which the venerable chieftain proffered his sagacious, prophetic warnings.

## FAREWELL ADDRESS

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: The period for a new election of a citizen, to administer the executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that in withdrawing the tender of service which silence, in my situation, might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of and continuance hitherto, in

the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address, to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety, and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove of my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust I will only say, that I have with good intentions contributed towards the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the



outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience, in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services, faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently

want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and the guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing wishes that heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration, in every department, may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with

the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union, to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and

prosperity, watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of *American*, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with

the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds, in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure, by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnat-

ural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find, in the united mass of means and efforts, greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves which so frequently afflict neighboring countries, not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues, would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere ?

Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation, in such a case, were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who, in any quarter, may endeavor to weaken its hands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs, as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations — Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western — whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen, in the negotiation by

the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction of that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic States, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties — that with Great Britain and that with Spain — which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely, for the preservation of these advantages, on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such they are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts, can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions, which alliances, in all times, have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced



and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter the constitutions of government. But the constitution, which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the rights of the people to establish a government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force, to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small, but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the

public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterward the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Toward the preservation of your government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you speedily discountenance irregular opposition to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that

facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion. And remember especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty, is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction; to confine each member of society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discrimination. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you, in the most solemn manner, against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes, in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed. But in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissensions, which, in different ages and countries, has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads, at length, to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later, the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, (which, nevertheless, ought not to be entirely out of sight,) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves to always distract the public councils, and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself, through the channels of party passion. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion, that parties, in free countries, are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This, within certain limits, is probably true; and, in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking, in a free country, should inspire caution in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding, in the exercise of the powers of one department, to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominate in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of

political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositaries, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasion by the other, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern: some of them in our country, and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers, be, in any particular, wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance, in permanent evil, any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the destinies of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connection with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths,

which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles.

It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of proper government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who, that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable

wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should coöperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment, inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always the choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all; religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that, in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages that might be lost by a steady



adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation, which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another, disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.

Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition,

and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, and sometimes, perhaps, the liberty of nations, has been the victim.

So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding, with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence, in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot.

How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions; to practice the arts of seduction; to mislead public opinion; to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak nation, toward a great and powerful one, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens), the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake; since history and experience prove, that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate, to see danger only on one side; and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships and enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own, to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

'Tis our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so

far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary, and would be unwise, to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, in a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, and a liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying, by gentle means, the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be, from time to time, abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that

it must pay, with a portion of its independence, for whatever it may accept under that character; that, by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion, which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations! But, if I may even flatter myself, that they be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit; to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigues; to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far, in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself the assurance of my own con-

science is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of April 22, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take, a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary, on this occasion, to detail. I will only observe, that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflection and

experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress, without interruption, to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though, in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am, nevertheless, too sensible of my defects, not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence, and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this, as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate, with pleasing expectations, that retreat in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government — the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.



JOHN ADAMS

1735-1826

LIKE many other notable men, JOHN ADAMS, after his Harvard graduation at twenty, began life as a school-teacher and then studied law. He came into public notice in 1765, first in connection with the closing of the courts on account of the Stamp Act, and then through some published essays on canon and feudal law. He was a hard-working, prominent lawyer in Boston when in 1774 he was elected to the Continental Congress, and did eminent work there. He went to Europe in 1778 as Commissioner, with FRANKLIN and LEE, to negotiate treaties with foreign powers, and, with an interval at home in the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention, he returned as Minister Plenipotentiary for negotiating a treaty of peace with Great Britain. FRANKLIN, JAY, LAWRENCE, and JEFFERSON were added later, and the treaty of 1783 was the result.

Then Mr. ADAMS was Vice-President under Washington for eight years (1788-1796) and President the next term. He was offered the governorship of Massachusetts on retiring from the presidency, but declined it, and after presiding over the convention for revising the State constitution he remained quietly at home until his death in 1826, at the great age of ninety-one years.

All these public stations were the continuing recognition of his great abilities and unremitting devotion to public duty. He was a genuine patriot, of indomitable courage and tremendous energy. As a writer, he was learned, but compact, terse, and logical; as an orator, daring and ardent, but a close, persuasive reasoner. His greatest fault was his intense conviction of his own correctness in any matter to be decided. Yet, though disagreeable to others, this was doubtless one element of many achievements. A lovable side of his nature appeared in the series of letters to his wife before and during the Revolution, published after his death, which, with his Diary and his political pamphlets, form an invaluable and intimate record of those trying times, so large a part of which he was. Here is given his Presidential Inaugural Address, March 4, 1797.

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS

WHEN it was first perceived, in early times, that no middle course for America remained, between unlimited submission to a foreign legislature and a total independence of its claims, men of reflection were less apprehensive of danger from the formidable power of fleets and armies they must determine to resist, than from those contests and dissensions which would certainly arise concerning the forms of government to be instituted over the whole, and over the parts, of this extensive country. Relying, however, on the purity of their intentions, the justice of their cause, and the integrity and intelligence of the people, under an overruling Providence, which had so signally protected this country from the first, the representatives of this nation, then consisting of little more than half its present numbers, not only broke to pieces the chains which were forging, and the rod of iron that was lifted up, but frankly cut asunder the ties which had bound them, and launched into an ocean of uncertainty.

The zeal and ardor of the people during the Revolutionary War, supplying the place of government, commanded a degree of order, sufficient, at least, for

the temporary preservation of society. The Confederation, which was early felt to be necessary, was prepared from the models of the Batavian and Helvetic confederacies, the only examples which remain, with any detail and precision, in history, and certainly the only ones which the people at large had ever considered. But, reflecting on the striking difference, in so many particulars, between this country and those, where a courier may go from the seat of government to the frontier in a single day, it was then certainly foreseen by some, who assisted in Congress at the formation of it, that it could not be durable.

Negligence of its regulations, inattention to its recommendations, if not disobedience to its authority, not only in individuals, but in States, soon appeared with their melancholy consequences: universal languor, jealousies, rivalries of States, decline of navigation and commerce, discouragement of necessary manufactures, universal fall in the value of lands and their produce, contempt of public and private faith, loss of consideration and credit with foreign nations; and, at length, discontents, animosities, combinations, partial conventions, and insurrection, threatening some great national calamity.

In this dangerous crisis, the people of America were not abandoned by their usual good sense, presence of mind, resolution, or integrity. Measures were pursued to concert a plan to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility,

provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. The public disquisitions, discussions, and deliberations issued in the present happy constitution of government.

Employed in the service of my country abroad during the whole course of these transactions, I first saw the Constitution of the United States in a foreign country. Irritated by no literary altercation, animated by no public debate, heated by no party animosity, I read it with great satisfaction, as the result of good heads, prompted by good hearts; as an experiment better adapted to the genius, character, situation, and relations of this nation and country than any which had ever been proposed or suggested. In its general principles and great outlines, it was conformable to such a system of government as I had ever most esteemed; and in some States, my own native State in particular, had contributed to establish. Claiming a right of suffrage in common with my fellow-citizens in the adoption or rejection of a constitution, which was to rule me and my posterity, as well as them and theirs, I did not hesitate to express my approbation of it on all occasions, in public and in private. It was not then nor has been since any objection to it, in my mind, that the Executive and Senate were not more permanent. Nor have I entertained a thought of promoting any alteration in it, but such as the people themselves, in the course of

their experience, should see and feel to be necessary or expedient, and by their representatives in Congress and the State Legislatures, according to the Constitution itself, adopt and ordain.

Returning to the bosom of my country, after a painful separation from it for ten years, I had the honor to be elected to a station under the new order of things; and I have repeatedly laid myself under the most serious obligations to support the Constitution. The operation of it has equaled the most sanguine expectations of its friends; and from an habitual attention to it, satisfaction in its administration, and delight in its effects upon the peace, order, prosperity, and happiness of the nation, I have acquired an habitual attachment to it, and veneration for it.

What other form of government, indeed, can so well deserve our esteem and love?

There may be little solidity in an ancient idea that congregations of men into cities and nations are the most pleasing objects in the sight of superior intelligences; but this is very certain, that to a benevolent human mind there can be no spectacle presented by any nation more pleasing, more noble, majestic, or august, than an assembly like that which has so often been seen in this and the other chamber of Congress — of a government in which the executive authority, as well as that of all the branches of the legislature, are exercised by citizens, selected at regular periods

by their neighbors, to make and execute laws for the general good. Can anything essential, anything more than mere ornament and decoration, be added to this by robes or diamonds? Can authority be more amiable or respectable, when it descends from accidents or institutions established in remote antiquity, than when it springs fresh from the hearts and judgments of an honest and enlightened people? For it is the people only that are represented; it is their power and majesty that is reflected, and only for their good, in every legitimate government, under whatever form it may appear. The existence of such a government as ours for any length of time, is a full proof of a general dissemination of knowledge and virtue throughout the whole body of the people. And what object of consideration, more pleasing than this, can be presented to the human mind? If national pride is ever justifiable or excusable, it is when it springs, not from power or riches, grandeur or glory, but from conviction of national innocence, information, and benevolence.

In the midst of these pleasing ideas, we should be unfaithful to ourselves if we should ever lose sight of the danger to our liberties — if anything partial or extraneous should infect the purity of our free, fair, virtuous, and independent elections. If an election is to be determined by a majority of a single vote, that can be procured by a party through artifice or corruption, the government may be the choice

of a party, for its own ends, not of the nation for the national good. If that solitary suffrage can be obtained by foreign nations, by flattery or menaces, by fraud or violence, by terror, intrigue, or venality, the government may not be the choice of the American people, but of foreign nations. It may be foreign nations who govern us, and not we, the people, who govern ourselves; and candid men will acknowledge that, in such cases, choice would have little advantage to boast of over lot or chance.

Such is the amiable and interesting system of government (and such are some of the abuses to which it may be exposed) which the people of America have exhibited to the admiration and anxiety of the wise and virtuous of all nations for eight years, under the administration of a citizen, who, by a long course of great actions, regulated by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, conducting a people inspired with the same virtues, and animated with the same ardent patriotism and love of liberty, to independence and peace, to increasing wealth and unexampled prosperity, has merited the gratitude of his fellow-citizens, commanded the highest praises of foreign nations, and secured immortal glory with posterity.

In that retirement, which is his voluntary choice, may he long live to enjoy the delicious recollection of his services — the gratitude of mankind; the happy fruits of them to himself and the world, which



are daily increasing, and that splendid prospect of the future fortunes of his country, which is opening from year to year. His name may be still a rampart, and the knowledge that he lives a bulwark, against all open or secret enemies of his country's peace.

This example has been recommended to the imitation of his successors, by both Houses of Congress, and by the voice of the legislatures and the people, throughout the nation.

On this subject it might become me better to be silent, or to speak with diffidence; but as something may be expected, the occasion, I hope, will be admitted as an apology, if I venture to say, that if a preference, upon principle, of a free republican government, formed upon long and serious reflection, after a diligent and impartial inquiry after truth; if an attachment to the Constitution of the United States, and a conscientious determination to support it, until it shall be altered by the judgments and wishes of the people, expressed in the mode prescribed in it; if a respectful attention to the constitutions of the individual States, and a constant caution and delicacy towards the State governments; if an equal and impartial regard to the rights, interests, honor, and happiness of all the States in the Union without preference or regard to a northern or southern, eastern or western position, their various political opinions on essential points, or their personal

attachments; if a love of virtuous men, of all parties and denominations; if a love of science and letters, and a wish to patronize every rational effort to encourage schools, colleges, universities, academies, and every institution for propagating knowledge, virtue, and religion among all classes of the people, not only for their benign influence on the happiness of life, in all its stages and classes, and of society in all its forms, but as the only means of preserving our Constitution from its natural enemies, the spirit of sophistry, the spirit of party, the spirit of intrigue, profligacy, and corruption, and the pestilence of foreign influence, which is the angel of destruction to elective governments; if a love of equal laws, of justice and humanity in the interior administration; if an inclination to improve agriculture, commerce, and manufactures for necessity, convenience, and defense; if a spirit of equity and humanity towards the aboriginal nations of America, and a disposition to ameliorate their condition, by inclining them to be more friendly to us, and our citizens to be more friendly to them; if an inflexible determination to maintain peace and inviolable faith with all nations, and that system of neutrality and impartiality among the belligerent powers of Europe which has been adopted by the government, and so solemnly sanctioned by both Houses of Congress, and applauded by the legislatures of the States and the public opinion, until it shall be otherwise ordained

by Congress; if a personal esteem for the French nation, formed in a residence of seven years chiefly among them, and a sincere desire to preserve the friendship, which has been so much for the honor and interest of both nations; if, while the conscious honor and integrity of the people of America, and the internal sentiment of their own power and energies must be preserved, an earnest endeavor to investigate every just cause, and remove every colorable pretense, of complaint; if an intention to pursue, by amicable negotiation, a reparation for the injuries that have been committed on the commerce of our fellow-citizens, by whatever nation; and if success cannot be obtained, to lay the facts before the legislature, that they may consider what further measures the honor and interest of the government and its constituents demand; if a resolution to do justice, as far as may depend upon me, at all times and to all nations, and maintain peace, friendship, and benevolence with all the world; if an unshaken confidence in the honor, spirit, and resources of the American people, on which I have so often hazarded my all, and never been deceived; if elevated ideas of the high destinies of this country, and of my own duties towards it, founded on a knowledge of the moral principles and intellectual improvements of the people, deeply engraven on my mind in early life, and not obscured but exalted by experience and age; and with humble reverence, I feel it my duty to add,

if a veneration for the religion of a people, who profess and call themselves Christians, and a fixed resolution to consider a decent respect for Christianity among the best recommendations for the public service, can enable me, in any degree, to comply with your wishes, it shall be my strenuous endeavor that this sagacious injunction of the two Houses shall not be without effect.

With this great example before me; with the sense and spirit, the faith and honor, the duty and interest of the same American people, pledged to support the Constitution of the United States, I entertain no doubt of its continuance in all its energy; and my mind is prepared, without hesitation, to lay myself under the most solemn obligations to support it to the utmost of my power.

And may that Being who is supreme over all, the patron of order, the fountain of justice, and the protector, in all ages of the world, of virtuous liberty, continue his blessing upon this nation and its governments, and give it all possible success and duration, consistent with the ends of his providence.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

1743-1826

“AFTER WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN,” wrote Lord BROUGHAM, “there is no person who fills so eminent a place among the great men of America as JEFFERSON.” He was, indeed, a powerful leader of men. Not as an orator, for he rarely gave personal utterance to his productions, but as a writer. With a penetrating and logical intellect, educated at the William and Mary College of Virginia, a profound student of social and political developments ancient and modern, JEFFERSON was sent to the House of Burgesses at the age of twenty-six (1769); in 1775 was member of the Continental Congress and penned the Declaration of Independence — “title-deed of American liberties,” as WEBSTER called it. He was made Governor of Virginia in 1779, and after the establishment of the new Constitution was Ambassador to France, succeeding FRANKLIN, was WASHINGTON’S Secretary of State, and Vice-President under the presidency of JOHN ADAMS, whom he succeeded as President, serving two terms.

JEFFERSON was as democratic in feeling and opinion as HAMILTON was aristocratic, and the two men frequently clashed, although not in enmity. He opposed the new Constitution as too centralized, and was the natural head of the Anti-Federalists, — the party that was later called Republican, and after that Democratic, — the party originally demanding strict construction of the Constitution, lest from being federal it should become national. His many state papers were singularly lucid and strong — witness his First Inaugural Address herein (March 4, 1801); his “Notes on Virginia,” describing the State and its resources, with exposition of Republican ideas, was highly praised, especially in France; he was a great promoter of education and founded the University of Virginia, while his opposition to negro slavery and his ardent advocacy of religious liberty were in advance of his times. He not only was a great political leader, but he still is — among those who really cherish the principles rather than the mere name of “Jeffersonian Democracy.”

## FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled, to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look toward me, to declare a sincere consciousness, that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments, which the greatness of the charge, and the weakness of my powers, so justly inspire. A rising nation, spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking. Utterly, indeed, should I despair, did not the presence of many, whom I see here, remind me, that, in the other high

authorities provided by our Constitution, I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal, on which to rely under all difficulties. To you, then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked, amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled world.

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed, the animation of discussions and of exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely, and to speak and to write what they think; but this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the Constitution, all will of course arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate which would be oppression. Let us then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind, let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things. And let us reflect, that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which



mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little, if we countenance a political intolerance, as despotic, as wicked, and as capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore; that this should be more felt and feared by some, and less by others, and should divide opinions as to measures of safety; but every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who wish to dissolve this Union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong; that this government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear, that this government, the world's best hope, may, by possibility, want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I

believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others? Or, have we found angels in the form of kings, to govern him? Let history answer this question.

Let us then, with courage and confidence, pursue our own federal and republican principles; our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe; too high-minded to endure the degradation of the others; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisition of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and their sense of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practiced in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man, acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which, by all its dispensations, proves that it delights in the happiness of man here, and his greater happiness hereafter; with all these

blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens, a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government; and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, upon the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principles of our government, and consequently, those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle, but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people, a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the

sword of revolution where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace, and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information, and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person, under the protection of the *habeas corpus*, and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation, which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages, and blood of our heroes, have been devoted to their attainment; they should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps, and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair, then, fellow-citizens, to the post you have assigned me. With experience enough in subordinate offices to have seen the difficulties of this, the greatest of all, I have learned to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man, to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him into it. Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and greatest revolutionary character, whose preëminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not, if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage, is a great consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be, to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others, by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

Relying then on the patronage of your good-will,

I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choices it is in your power to make. And may that infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe, lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity.

JOHN RANDOLPH

1773-1833

VIRGINIA certainly furnished her full share of masterful men as leaders of opinion and activity in the early days of the republic. JOHN RANDOLPH of Roanoke was one of them. Of an aristocratic family, and a slave-owner, he was imbued, nevertheless, with earnest ideas as to individual liberty, both civil and religious, was not a political partisan of slavery, and freed his slaves by will at his death, while throughout his political career he was usually in violent opposition to the general government along the lines of State rights. He went to Congress in 1799 and in 1801 became chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, — an important post. He was keen of perception, and, if not highly cultivated, was widely read, so that, with a native fluency of language and a keen wit, his legislative experience made him a strong debater, — too strong, indeed, for his causes or his own interest, since a rash and fiery temper and a lack of consideration for others kept him usually in a turmoil of misunderstandings.

Perhaps the most important of his deliverances was the speech in Congress, March 5, 1806, opposing a commercial rupture with Great Britain then proposed, a portion of which is here reproduced. It cost him his place in Congress, although he was again returned in 1815. He went abroad in 1821 for relaxation, returned for a two years' term as United States Senator, and in 1830 was sent as Minister to Russia. On a reelection he returned to Congress, but died in 1833.

RANDOLPH was trusted by Virginia, and was valuable in Washington, yet his bitter temper deprived both him and his country of much of the influence of his better qualities.



## OPPOSING A RUPTURE WITH ENGLAND

I AM not surprised to hear this resolution<sup>1</sup> discussed by its friends as a war measure. They say, it is true, that it is not a war measure; but they defend it on principles which would justify none but war measures, and seem pleased with the idea that it may prove the forerunner of war. If war is necessary, if we have reached this point, let us have war. But while I have life, I will never consent to these incipient war measures, which in their commencement breathe nothing but peace, though they plunge us at last into war. . . .

It has always appeared to me that there are three points to be considered, and maturely considered, before we can be prepared to vote for the resolution of the gentleman from Pennsylvania: first, Our ability to contend with Great Britain for the question

<sup>1</sup> That until equitable and satisfactory arrangements concerning impressment of seamen and seizures of American vessels should be made between the United States and British governments, it was expedient that no goods, wares or merchandise, of the growth, product or manufacture of Great Britain, or any of the colonies or dependencies thereof, ought to be imported into the United States, until otherwise proclaimed by the President.

in dispute; secondly, The policy of such a contest; and thirdly, In case both these shall be settled affirmatively, the manner in which we can, with the greatest effect, react upon and annoy our adversary.

What is the question in dispute? The carrying trade. What part of it? The fair, the honest, and the useful trade that is engaged in carrying our own productions to foreign markets, and bringing back their productions in exchange? No, Sir; it is that carrying trade which covers enemy's property, and carries the coffee, the sugar, and other West India products, to the mother-country. No, Sir; if this great agricultural nation is to be governed by Salem and Boston, New York and Philadelphia, and Baltimore and Norfolk and Charleston, let gentlemen come out and say so; and let a committee of public safety be appointed from those towns to carry on the government. I, for one, will not mortgage my property and my liberty to carry on this trade. The nation said so seven years ago; I said so then, and I say so now. It is not for the honest carrying trade of America, but for this mushroom, this fungus of war, for a trade which, as soon as the nations of Europe are at peace, will no longer exist; it is for this that the spirit of avaricious traffic would plunge us into war. . . .

But we are asked, are we willing to bend the neck to England; to submit to her outrages? No, Sir;

I answer, that it will be time enough for us to tell gentlemen what we will do to vindicate the violation of our flag on the ocean, when they shall have told us what they have done, in resentment of the violation of the actual territory of the United States by Spain — the true territory of the United States, not your new-fangled country over the Mississippi, but the good old United States — part of Georgia, of the old thirteen States, where citizens have been taken, not from our ships, but from our actual territory. When gentlemen have taken the padlock from our mouths, I shall be ready to tell them what I will do relative to our dispute with Britain, on the law of nations, on contraband, and such stuff. . . .

France is at war with England: suppose her power on the Continent of Europe no greater than it is on the ocean. How would she make her enemy feel it? There would be a perfect non-conductor between them. So with the United States and England; she scarcely presents to us a vulnerable point. Her commerce is carried on, for the most part, in fleets; where in single ships, they are stout and well-armed; very different from the state of her trade during the American war, when her merchantmen became the prey of paltry privateers. Great Britain has been too long at war with the three most powerful maritime nations of Europe, not to have learnt how to protect her trade. She can afford convoy to it all; she has eight hundred ships in commission;

the navies of her enemies are annihilated. Thus, this war has presented the new and curious political spectacle of a regular annual increase (and to an immense amount) of her imports and exports, and tonnage and revenue, and all the insignia of accumulating wealth, whilst in every former war, without exception, these have suffered a greater or less diminution. And wherefore? Because she has driven France, Spain, and Holland, from the ocean. Their marine is no more. I verily believe that ten English ships of the line would not decline a meeting with the combined fleets of those nations.

But this is not my only objection to entering upon this naval warfare. I am averse to a naval war with any nation whatever. I was opposed to the naval war of the last administration, and I am as ready to oppose a naval war of the present administration, should they meditate such a measure. What! shall this great mammoth of the American forest leave his native element, and plunge into the water in a mad contest with the shark? Let him beware that his proboscis is not bitten off in the engagement. Let him stay on shore, and not be excited by the mussels and periwinkles on the strand, or political bears, in a boat to venture on the perils of the deep. Gentlemen say, will you not protect your violated rights? and I say, why take to water, where you can neither fight nor swim? Look at France; see her vessels stealing from port to port, on her own coast; and

remember that she is the first military power of the earth, and as a naval people, second only to England. Take away the British navy, and France to-morrow is the tyrant of the ocean.

This brings me to the second point. How far is it politic in the United States to throw their weight into the scale of France at this moment? — from whatever motive to aid the views of her gigantic ambition — to make her mistress of the sea and land — to jeopardize the liberties of mankind? Sir, you may help to crush Great Britain — you may assist in breaking down her naval dominion, but you cannot succeed to it. The iron scepter of the ocean will pass into his hands who wears the iron crown of the land. You may then expect a new code of maritime law. Where will you look for redress? I can tell the gentleman from Massachusetts, that there is nothing in his rule of three that will save us, even although he should outdo himself, and exceed the financial ingenuity which he so memorably displayed on a recent occasion. No, Sir; let the battle of Actium be once fought, and the whole line of sea-coast will be at the mercy of the conqueror. The Atlantic, deep and wide as it is, will prove just as good a barrier against his ambition, if directed against you, as the Mediterranean to the power of the Cæsars. Do I mean, when I say so, to crouch to the invader? No, I will meet him at the water's edge, and fight every inch of ground from thence to the mountains, from

the mountains to the Mississippi. But after tamely submitting to an outrage on your domicile, will you bully and look big at an insult on your flag three thousand miles off?

But, Sir, I have yet a more cogent reason against going to war for the honor of the flag in the narrow seas, or any other maritime punctilio. It springs from my attachment to the principles of the Government under which I live. I declare, in the face of day, that this Government was not instituted for the purposes of offensive war. No; it was framed, to use its own language, for the common defense and the general welfare, which are inconsistent with offensive war. I call that offensive war, which goes out of our jurisdiction and limits, for the attainment or protection of objects, not within those limits, and that jurisdiction. As, in 1798, I was opposed to this species of warfare, because I believed it would raze the Constitution to the very foundation; so, in 1806, am I opposed to it, and on the same grounds.

For my part, I never will go to war but in self-defense. I have no desire for conquests — no ambition to possess Nova Scotia — I hold the liberties of this people at a higher rate. Much more am I indisposed to war, when among the first means for carrying it on, I see gentlemen propose the confiscation of debts due by Government to individuals. Does a *bona fide* creditor know who holds his paper? Dare any honest man ask himself the question?

'Tis hard to say whether such principles are more detestably dishonest than they are weak and foolish. What, Sir; will you go about with proposals for opening a loan in one hand, and a sponge for the national debt in the other? If, on a late occasion, you could not borrow at a less rate of interest than eight per cent when the Government avowed that they would pay to the last shilling of the public ability, at what price do you expect to raise money with an avowal of these nefarious opinions? — God help you! if these are your ways and means for carrying on war. . . .

But the gentleman has told you that we ought to go to war, if for nothing else, for the fur trade. Now, Sir, the people on whose support he seems to calculate, follow, let me tell him, a better business; and let me add, that whilst men are happy at home reaping their own fields, the fruit of their labor and industry, there is little danger of their being induced to go sixteen or seventeen hundred miles in pursuit of beavers, raccoons or opossums — much less of going to war for the privilege. They are better employed where they are. This trade, Sir, may be important to Britain, to nations who have exhausted every resource of industry at home — bowed down by taxation and wretchedness. Let them, in God's name, if they please, follow the fur trade. They may, for me, catch every beaver in North America. Yes, Sir, our people have a better occupation —

a safe, profitable, honorable employment. Whilst they should be engaged in distant regions in hunting the beaver, they dread, lest those whose natural prey they are, should begin to hunt them — should pillage their property, and assassinate their constitution. Instead of these wild schemes, pay off your public debt, instead of prating about its confiscation. Do not, I beseech you, expose at once your knavery and your folly. You have more lands than you know what to do with; you have lately paid fifteen millions for yet more. Go and work them, and cease to alarm the people with the cry of wolf, until they become deaf to your voice, or at least laugh at you. . . .

I am prepared, Sir, to be represented as willing to surrender important rights of this nation to a foreign government. I have been told that this sentiment is already whispered in the dark, by time-servers and sycophants; but if your clerk dared to print them, I would appeal to your journals! — I would call for the reading of them, but that I know they are not for profane eyes to look upon. I confess that I am more ready to surrender to a naval power a square league of ocean than to a territorial one a square inch of land, within our limits; and I am ready to meet the friends of the resolution on this ground, at any time. Let them take off the injunction of secrecy. They dare not. They are ashamed and afraid to do it. They may give winks and nods, and



pretend to be wise, but they dare not come out, and tell the nation what they have done. Gentlemen may take notes, if they please; but I will never, from any motives short of self-defense, enter upon war. I will never be instrumental to the ambitious schemes of Bonaparte, nor put into his hands what will enable him to wield the world, — and on the very principle that I wished success to the French arms in 1793. And wherefore? Because the case is changed. Great Britain can never again see the year 1760. Her Continental influence is gone forever. Let who will be uppermost on the Continent of Europe, she must find more than a counterpoise for her strength. Her race is run. She can only be formidable as a maritime power; and even as such, perhaps not long. Are you going to justify the acts of the last administration for which they have been deprived of the government, at our instance? Are you going back to the ground of 1798–1799?

I ask of any man who now advocates a rupture with England, to assign a single reason for his opinion, that would not have justified a French war in 1798. If injury and insult abroad would have justified it, we had them in abundance then. But what did the Republicans say at that day? That under the cover of a war with France, the executive would be armed with a patronage and power which might enable it to master our liberties. They deprecated foreign war and navies, and standing armies, and loans, and

taxes. The delirium passed away — the good sense of the people triumphed — and our differences were accommodated without a war. And what is there in the situation of England that invites to war with her? 'Tis true she does not deal so largely in perfectability, but she supplies you with a much more useful commodity — with coarse woolens. With less professions, indeed, she occupies the place of France in 1793. She is the sole bulwark of the human race against universal dominion. No thanks to her for it! In protecting her own existence, she insures theirs. I care not who stands in this situation, whether England or Bonaparte — I practice the doctrines now, that I professed in 1798. Gentlemen may hunt up the journals if they please — I voted against all such projects under the administration of John Adams, and I will continue to do so under that of Thomas Jefferson. . . .

Is it to be inferred from all this, that I would yield to Great Britain? No; I would act towards her now, as I was disposed to do towards France in 1798-1799 — treat with her; and for the same reason, on the same principles. Do I say treat with her? At this moment you have a negotiation pending with her government. With her you have not tried negotiation, and failed, totally failed, as you have done with Spain, or rather France. And wherefore, under such circumstances, this hostile spirit to the one, and this (I won't say what), to the other? . . .

But you are told England will not make war — she has her hands full. Holland calculated in the same way, in 1781. How did it turn out? You stand now in the place of Holland, then — without her navy, unaided by the preponderating fleets of France and Spain — to say nothing of the Baltic powers. Do you want to take up the cudgels where these great maritime powers have been forced to drop them? to meet Great Britain on the ocean, and drive her off its face? If you are so far gone as this, every capital measure of your policy has hitherto been wrong. You should have nurtured the old, and devised new systems of taxation — have cherished your navy. Begin this business when you may, land-taxes, stamp-acts, window-taxes, hearth-money, excise, in all its modifications of vexation and oppression, must precede, or follow after.

But, Sir, since French is the fashion of the day, I may be asked for my *projet*. I can readily tell gentlemen what I will not do. I will not propitiate any foreign nation with money. I will not launch into a naval war with Great Britain, although I am ready to meet her at the Cowpens, or Bunker's Hill. And for this plain reason. We are a great land animal, and our business is on shore. I will send her no money, Sir, on any pretext whatsoever, much less on pretense of buying Labrador, or Botany Bay, when my real object was to secure limits which she formally acknowledged at the peace of 1783. I go

further: I would (if anything) have laid an embargo. This would have got our own property home, and our adversary's into our power. If there is any wisdom left among us, the first step towards hostility will always be an embargo. In six months all your mercantile megrims would vanish. As to us, although it would cut deep, we can stand it. Without such a precaution, go to war when you will, you go to the wall. As to debts, strike the balance to-morrow, and England is, I believe, in our debt. . . .

Gentlemen may say what they please. They may put an insignificant individual to the ban of the republic; I shall not alter my course. I blush with indignation at the misrepresentations which have gone forth in the public prints of our proceedings, public and private. Are the people of the United States, the real sovereigns of the country, unworthy of knowing what, there is too much reason to believe, has been communicated to the privileged spies of foreign governments? . . . Let the nation know what they have to depend upon. Be true to them, and, trust me, they will prove true to themselves and to you. The people are honest; now at home at their plows, not dreaming of what you are about. But the spirit of inquiry, that has too long slept, will be, must be, awakened. Let them begin to think; not to say Such things are proper because they have been done — but What has been done? and wherefore? — and all will be right.

EDWARD EVERETT

1794-1865

A MAN of fine rather than strong qualities, EVERETT was an excellent type of the intellectual culture that in New England, and especially Massachusetts, succeeded the vigorous Revolutionary energy of the Puritan element. He was an accomplished gentleman, scholar, and rhetorician. His early ministrations in a Boston church were greatly admired; his Greek professorship and later presidency at Harvard were eminently satisfactory; his service in the House of Representatives and in the United States Senate was both useful and elegant; his ambassadorship to England reflected credit upon his country and greatly interested many of the foremost British statesmen and men of letters; his governorship of Massachusetts was all that it should be; as President Fillmore's Secretary of State, in 1852, amidst the turmoil of domestic political conflict he serenely guided the nation's foreign affairs. In all the official stations with which he was honored, he satisfactorily fulfilled his duties.

EVERETT'S prime gift, however, was oratory. It was not "the power of speech to move men's blood," but the historic research, the admirable grouping and presentation of events and their consequences, the felicity of illustration, the harmony of language, the music of voice, the grace of pose and gesture, that made EVERETT a favorite orator on all specific "occasions." His oration on "Washington" he repeated about a hundred and fifty times, the pecuniary returns, enlarged by payments for periodical writings to \$100,000, being given towards the purchase of Mount Vernon as a national property. His discourse on "The History of Liberty" (at Charlestown, Massachusetts, July 4, 1828), here given, is one of his characteristic deliverances.

But the difference between his elegancies and the direct speech of more practical men is well shown in what he himself wrote to President LINCOLN the day after they had both made addresses at the Gettysburg Dedication: "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

## THE HISTORY OF LIBERTY

THE event which we commemorate is all-important, not merely in our own annals, but in those of the world. The sententious English poet has declared that "the proper study of mankind is man," and of all inquiries of a temporal nature, the history of our fellow-beings is unquestionably among the most interesting. But not all the chapters of human history are alike important. The annals of our race have been filled up with incidents which concern not, or at least ought not to concern, the great company of mankind. History, as it has often been written, is the genealogy of princes, the field-book of conquerors; and the fortunes of our fellow-men have been treated only so far as they have been affected by the influence of the great masters and destroyers of our race. Such history is, I will not say a worthless study, for it is necessary for us to know the dark side as well as the bright side of our condition. But it is a melancholy study which fills the bosom of the philanthropist and the friend of liberty with sorrow.

But the history of liberty — the history of men struggling to be free — the history of men who have

acquired and are exercising their freedom — the history of those great movements in the world, by which liberty has been established and perpetuated, forms a subject which we cannot contemplate too closely. This is the real history of man, of the human family, of rational immortal beings. . . .

We hear much at school of the liberty of Greece and Rome — a great and complicated subject, which this is not the occasion to attempt to disentangle. True it is that we find, in the annals of both these nations, bright examples of public virtue — the record of faithful friends of their country — of strenuous foes of oppression at home or abroad — and admirable precedents of popular strength. But we nowhere find in them the account of a populous and extensive region, blessed with institutions securing the enjoyment and transmission of regulated liberty. In freedom, as in most other things, the ancient nations, while they made surprisingly close approaches to the truth, yet, for want of some one great and essential principle or instrument, they came utterly short of it in practice. They had profound and elegant scholars; but, for want of the art of printing, they could not send information out among the people, where alone it is of great use in reference to human happiness. Some of them ventured boldly out to sea, and possessed an aptitude for foreign commerce; yet, for want of the mariner's compass, they could not navigate distant seas, but



crept for ages along the shores of the Mediterranean. In respect to freedom, they established popular governments in single cities; but, for want of the representative principle, they could not extend these institutions over a large and populous country. But as a large and populous country, generally speaking, can alone possess strength enough for self-defense, this want was fatal. The freest of their cities accordingly fell a prey, sooner or later, either to a foreign invader or to domestic traitors.

In this way, liberty made no firm progress in the ancient states. It was a speculation of the philosopher, and an experiment of the patriot, but not an established state of society. The patriots of Greece and Rome had indeed succeeded in enlightening the public mind on one of the cardinal points of freedom — the necessity of an elected executive. The name and the office of a king were long esteemed not only something to be rejected, but something rude and uncivilized, belonging to savage nations, ignorant of the rights of man, as understood in cultivated states. . . . The [Roman] empire began and continued a pure military despotism, ingrafted, by a sort of permanent usurpation, on the forms and names of the ancient republic. The spirit, indeed, of liberty had long since ceased to animate these ancient forms, and when the barbarous tribes of Central Asia and Northern Europe burst into the Roman empire, they swept away the

poor remnant of these forms, and established upon their ruins the system of feudal monarchy from which all modern kingdoms are descended. Efforts were made in the Middle Ages by the petty republics of Italy to regain the political rights which a long proscription had wrested from them. But the remedy of bloody civil wars between neighboring cities was plainly more disastrous than the disease of subjection. The struggles of freedom in these little states resulted much as they had done in Greece, exhibiting brilliant examples of individual character and short intervals of public prosperity, but no permanent progress in the organization of liberal governments.

At length a new era seemed to begin. The art of printing was invented. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks drove the learned Greeks of that city into Italy, and letters revived. A general agitation of public sentiment in various parts of Europe ended in the religious reformation. A spirit of adventure had been awakened in the maritime nations, projects of remote discovery were started, and the signs of the times seemed to augur a great political regeneration. But, as if to blast this hope in its bud; as if to counterbalance at once the operations of these springs of improvements; as if to secure the permanence of the arbitrary institutions which existed in every part of the Continent, at the moment when it was most threatened,

the last blow at the same time was given to the remaining power of the great barons, the sole check on the despotism of the monarch which the feudal system provided was removed, and a new institution was firmly established in Europe, prompt, efficient, and terrible in its operation beyond anything which the modern world has seen — I mean the system of standing armies; in other words, a military force organized and paid to support the king on his throne and retain the people in their subjection. . . .

All hope of liberty then seemed lost; in Europe all hope was lost. A disastrous turn has been given to the general movement of things; and in the disclosure of the fatal secret of standing armies, the future political servitude of man was apparently decided.

But a change is destined to come over the face of things, as romantic in its origin as it is wonderful in its progress. All is not lost; on the contrary, all is saved, at the moment when all seemed involved in ruin. . . . The discovery of America had taken place under the auspices of the government most disposed for maritime adventure, and best enabled to extend a helping arm, such as it was, to the enterprise of the great discoverer. But it was not from the same quarter that the elements of liberty could be introduced into the New World. Causes, upon which I need not dwell, made it impossible that the great political reform should go forth from Spain.

For this object, a new train of incidents was preparing in another quarter.

The only real advance which modern Europe had made in freedom had been made in England. The cause of constitutional liberty in that country was persecuted, was subdued, but not annihilated, nor trampled out of being. From the choicest of its suffering champions were collected the brave band of emigrants who first went out on the second, the more precious voyage of discovery — the discovery of a land where liberty and its consequent blessings might be established.

A late English writer has permitted himself to say that the original establishment of the United States, and that of the colony of Botany Bay, were modeled nearly on the same plan. The meaning of this slanderous insinuation is, that the United States was settled by deported convicts, as New South Wales has been settled by transported felons. . . . In one sense, indeed, we might doubt whether the allegation were more of a reproach or a compliment. During the time that the colonization of America was going on most rapidly, some of the best citizens of England, if it be any part of good citizenship to resist oppression, were immured in her prisons of state or lying at the mercy of the law.

Such were some of the convicts by whom America was settled — men convicted of fearing God more than they feared man; of sacrificing property, ease,

and all the comforts of life, to a sense of duty and to the dictates of conscience; men convicted of pure lives, brave hearts, and simple manners. The enterprise was led by Raleigh, the chivalrous convict, who unfortunately believed that his royal master had the heart of a man, and would not let a sentence of death, which had slumbered for sixteen years, revive and take effect after so long an interval of employment and favor. But *nullum tempus occurrit regi*. The felons who followed next were the heroic and long-suffering church of Robinson, at Leyden — Carver, Brewster, Bradford, Winslow, and their pious associates, convicted of worshiping God according to the dictates of their consciences, and of giving up all — country, property, and the tombs of their fathers — that they might do it unmolested. Not content with having driven the Puritans from her soil, England next enacted or put in force the oppressive laws which colonized Maryland with Catholics, and Pennsylvania with Quakers. Nor was it long before the American plantations were recruited by the Germans, convicted of inhabiting the Palatinate, when the merciless armies of Louis XIV were turned into that devoted region, and by the Huguenots, convicted of holding what they deemed the simple truth of Christianity, when it pleased the mistress of Louis XIV to be very zealous for the Catholic faith. These were followed, in the next century, by the Highlanders, convicted of the

enormous crime, under a monarchical government, of loyalty to their hereditary prince on the plains of Culloden, and the Irish, convicted of supporting the rights of their country against what they deemed an oppressive external power. Such are the convicts by whom America was settled.

In this way, a fair representation of whatsoever was most valuable in European character — the resolute industry of one nation, the inventive skill and curious arts of another, the courage, conscience, principle, self-denial of all — was winnowed out, by the policy of the prevailing governments, as a precious seed wherewith to plant the American soil. By this singular coincidence of events, our country was constituted the great asylum of suffering virtue and oppressed humanity. . . . Had we been the unmixed descendants of any one nation of Europe, we should have retained a moral and intellectual dependence on that nation, even after the dissolution of our political connection had taken place. It was sufficient for the great purpose in view that the earliest settlements were made by men who had fought the battles of liberty in England, and who brought with them the rudiments of constitutional freedom to a region where no deep-rooted proscriptions would prevent their development. Instead of marring the symmetry of our social system, it is one of the most attractive and beautiful peculiarities, that, with the prominent qualities of the Anglo-

Saxon character inherited from our English fathers, we have an admixture of almost everything that is valuable in the character of most of the other states of Europe.

Such was the first preparation for the great political reform, of which America was to be the theater. The colonies of England — of a country where the supremacy of laws and the constitution is best recognized — the North American colonies — were protected from the first against the introduction of the unmitigated despotism which prevailed in the Spanish settlements. . . .

On the other hand, by what I had almost called an accidental circumstance, but one which ought rather to be considered as a leading incident in the great train of events connected with the establishment of constitutional freedom in this country, it came to pass that nearly all the colonies (founded as they were on the charters granted to corporate institutions in England, which had for their object the pursuit of the branches of industry and trade pertinent to a new plantation) adopted a regular representative system, by which, as in ordinary civil corporations, the affairs of the community are decided by the will and the voices of its members, or those authorized by them. It was no device of the parent government which gave us our colonial assemblies. It was no refinement of philosophical statesmen to which we are indebted for our republican institutions of gov-

ernment. They grew up, as it were, by accident, on the simple foundation I have named. "A House of Burgesses," says Hutchinson, "broke out in Virginia, in 1620;" and, "although there was no color for it in the charter of Massachusetts, a House of Deputies appeared suddenly in 1634." "Lord Say," observes the same historian, "tempted the principal men of Massachusetts to make themselves and their heirs nobles and absolute governors of a new colony, but, under this plan, they could find no people to follow them."

At this early period, and in this simple, unpretending manner, was introduced to the world that greatest discovery in political science, or political practice, a representative republican system. "The discovery of the system of the representative republic," says M. de Châteaubriand, "is one of the greatest political events that ever occurred." But it is not one of the greatest, it is the very greatest, and, combined with another principle, to which I shall presently advert, and which is also the invention of the United States, it marks an era in human affairs — a discovery in the great science of social life, compared with which everything else that terminates in the temporal interests of man sinks into insignificance.

Thus, then, was the foundation laid, and thus was the preparation commenced, of the world's grand political regeneration. . . . But at length this hope, never adequately satisfied, began to turn into doubt



and despair. The Colonies had become too important to be overlooked; their government was a prerogative too important to be left in their own hands; and the legislation of the mother-country decidedly assumed a form which announced to the patriots that the hour at length had come when the chains of the great discoverer were to be avenged, the sufferings of the first settlers to be compensated, and the long-deferred hopes of humanity to be fulfilled.

You need not, friends and fellow-citizens, that I should dwell upon the incidents of the last great acts in the colonial drama. . . . The Revolution was at length accomplished. The political separation of the country from Great Britain was effected, and it now remained to organize the liberty which had been reaped on bloody fields — to establish, in the place of the government whose yoke had been thrown off, a government at home, which should fulfill the great design of the Revolution and satisfy the demands of the friends of liberty at large. What manifold perils awaited the step! The danger was great that too little or too much would be done. Smarting under the oppressions of a distant government, whose spirit was alien to their feelings, there was great danger that the Colonies, in the act of declaring themselves sovereign and independent States, would push to an extreme the prerogative of their separate independence, and refuse to admit any authority beyond the limits of each particular commonwealth.

On the other hand, achieving their independence under the banners of the Continental Army, ascribing, and justly, a large portion of their success to the personal qualities of the beloved Father of his Country, there was danger not less imminent, that those who perceived the evils of the opposite extreme, would be disposed to confer too much strength on one general government, and would, perhaps, even fancy the necessity of investing the hero of the Revolution, in form, with that sovereign power which his personal ascendancy gave him in the hearts of his countrymen. Such and so critical was the alternative which the organization of the new government presented, and on the successful issue of which the entire benefit of this great movement in human affairs was to depend. . . . Such was the task that devolved on the statesmen who convened at Philadelphia on May 2, 1787, in the assembly of which General Washington was elected president, and over whose debates your townsman, Mr. Gorham, presided for two or three months as chairman of the committee of the whole, during the discussion of the plan of the Federal Constitution. . . .

The members of that convention, in going about the great work before them, deliberately laid aside the means by which all preceding legislators had aimed to accomplish a like work. In founding a strong and efficient government, adequate to the raising up of a powerful and prosperous people, their

first step was to reject the institutions in which other governments traced their strength and prosperity, or had, at least, regarded as the necessary conditions of stability and order. The world had settled down into the belief that an hereditary monarch was necessary to give strength to the executive power. The framers of our Constitution provided for an elective chief magistrate, chosen every four years. Every other country had been betrayed into the admission of a distinction of ranks in society, under the absurd impression that privileged orders are necessary to the permanence of the social system. The framers of our Constitution established everything on the purely natural basis of a uniform equality of the elective franchise, to be exercised by all the citizens at fixed and short intervals. In other countries it had been thought necessary to constitute some one political center, towards which all political power should tend, and at which, in the last resort, it should be exercised. The framers of the Constitution devised a scheme of confederate and representative sovereign republics, united in a happy distribution of powers, which, reserving to the separate States all the political functions essential to local administrations and private justice, bestowed upon the general government those, and those only, required for the service of the whole.

Thus was completed the great revolutionary movement; thus was perfected that mature organiza-

tion of a free system, destined, as we trust, to stand forever, as the exemplar of popular government. Thus was discharged the duty of our fathers to themselves, to the country, and to the world.

The power of the example thus set up, in the eyes of the nations, was instantly and widely felt. It was immediately made visible to sagacious observers that a constitutional age had begun. It was in the nature of things, that, where the former evil existed in its most inveterate form, the reaction should also be the most violent. Hence the dreadful excesses that marked the progress of the French Revolution, and, for a while, almost made the name of liberty odious. But it is not less in the nature of things, that, when the most indisputable and enviable political blessings stand illustrated before the world—not merely in speculation and in theory, but in living practice and bright example—the nations of the earth, in proportion as they have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hands to grasp, should insist on imitating the example. France clung to the hope of constitutional liberty through thirty years of appalling tribulation, and now enjoys the freest constitution in Europe. Spain, Portugal, the two Italian kingdoms, and several of the German states have entered on the same path. Their progress has been and must be various, modified by circumstances, by the interests and passions of governments and men, and, in some cases, seemingly

arrested. But their march is as sure as fate. . . . A public opinion of a new kind has risen among men — the opinion of the civilized world. Springing into existence on the shores of our own continent, it has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength, till now, this moral giant, like that of the ancient poet, marches along the earth and across the ocean, but his front is among the stars. The course of the day does not weary, nor the darkness of the night arrest him. He grasps the pillars of the temple where Oppression sits enthroned, not groping and benighted, like the strong man of old, to be crushed, himself, beneath the fall, but trampling, in his strength, on the massy ruins. . . .

In that unceasing march of things, which calls forward the successive generations of men to perform their part on the stage of life, we at length are summoned to appear. Our fathers have passed their hour of visitation — how worthily, let the growth and prosperity of our happy land and the security of our firesides attest. Or, if this appeal be too weak to move us, let the eloquent silence of yonder famous heights — let the column which is there rising in simple majesty<sup>1</sup> — recall their venerable forms, as they toiled in the hasty trenches through the dreary watches of that night of expectation, heaving up the sods, where many of them

<sup>1</sup> The Bunker Hill monument.

lay in peace and honor before the following sun had set. The turn has come to us. The trial of adversity was theirs; the trial of prosperity is ours. Let us meet it as men who know their duty and prize their blessings. Our position is the most enviable, the most responsible, which men can fill. If this generation does its duty, the cause of constitutional freedom is safe. If we fail — if we fail — not only do we defraud our children of the inheritance which we received from our fathers, but we blast the hopes of the friends of liberty throughout our continent, throughout Europe, throughout the world, to the end of time.

History is not without her examples of hard-fought fields, where the banner of liberty has floated triumphantly on the wildest storm of battle. She is without her examples of a people by whom the dear-bought treasure has been wisely employed and safely handed down. The eyes of the world are turned for that example to us. . . .

Let us, then, as we assemble on the birthday of the nation, as we gather upon the green turf, once wet with precious blood — let us devote ourselves to the sacred cause of constitutional liberty! Let us abjure the interests and passions which divide the great family of American freemen! Let the range of party spirit sleep to-day! Let us resolve that our children shall have cause to bless the memory of their fathers, as we have cause to bless the memory of ours!

ROBERT YOUNG HAYNE

1791-1840

SENATOR HAYNE was one of whom no one had anything to say but words of high, cordial praise. BENTON in his "Thirty Years' View" wrote: "Nature had lavished upon him all the gifts which lead to eminence in public and happiness in private life. . . . I can truly say that in ten years' association with him [in the Senate] I never saw him actuated by a sinister motive, a selfish calculation, or an unbecoming aspiration."

Born of a South Carolina family of small means, his education was confined to a Charleston grammar school and the reading of law. Before practising his profession, however, he served in the army during the War of 1812; after which his oratorical gifts brought him quick success as a lawyer. He served in the State legislature from 1814 to 1818, the last year as Speaker, and then became Attorney-General until 1822, when he was elected to the United States Senate. Here he had a brilliant career, as one of the most industrious on committee, wise in council, and eloquent on the floor, besides attracting many friendships. In 1832 he became Governor of South Carolina.

As a strenuous States right man Mr. HAYNE had, before leaving the Senate, been a member of the South Carolina convention that adopted the famous nullification ordinance, and as Governor of the State he proclaimed it. The ordinance was adopted November 24, 1832. On December 10 President JACKSON vigorously denounced it and CLAY'S Compromise Tariff Act of March, 1833, quieted the agitation.

While in the Senate, Mr. HAYNE was closely associated with CALHOUN and BENTON, and in especial harmony with the former he championed the rights of the States, and defended the South and its "domestic institutions" [slavery]. It was in a speech on Senator FOOTE'S resolution concerning the sale of public lands, which process he attacked as favoring the East and North to the prejudice of the West and South, that HAYNE made a speech which WEBSTER answered; from HAYNE'S rejoinder to that (January 21, 1830), are here given the themes he chiefly emphasized — the South, slavery, and the rights of the States to nullify laws of the United States under the Constitution.



## THE SOUTH AND THE CONSTITUTION

THE honorable gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. Webster] has gone out of his way to pass a high eulogium on the State of Ohio. . . . In contrasting the State of Ohio with Kentucky, for the purpose of pointing out the superiority of the former, and of attributing that superiority to the existence of slavery in one State and its absence in the other, I thought I could discern the very spirit of the Missouri question, intruded into this debate for objects best known to the gentleman himself. . . . Mr. President, the impression which has gone abroad, of the weakness of the South, as connected with the slave question, exposes us to such constant attacks, has done us so much injury, and is calculated to produce such infinite mischiefs, that I embrace the occasion presented by the remarks of the gentleman of Massachusetts, to declare that we are ready to meet the question promptly and fearlessly. It is one from which we are not disposed to shrink, in whatever form or under whatever circumstances it may be pressed upon us.

We are ready to make up the issue with the gentleman, as to the influence of slavery on individual and

national character — on the prosperity and greatness, either of the United States or of particular States. Sir, when arraigned before the bar of public opinion, on this charge of slavery, we can stand up with conscious rectitude, plead not guilty, and put ourselves upon God and our country. . . . If slavery, as it now exists in this country, be an evil, we of the present day found it ready made to our hands. Finding our lot cast among a people whom God had manifestly committed to our care, we did not sit down to speculate on abstract questions of theoretical liberty. We met it as a practical question of obligation and duty. We resolved to make the best of the situation in which Providence had placed us, and to fulfill the high trusts which had devolved upon us as the owners of slaves in the only way in which such a trust could be fulfilled, without spreading misery and ruin throughout the land. We found that we had to deal with a people whose physical, moral, and intellectual habits and character totally disqualified them from the enjoyment of the blessings of freedom. We could not send them back to the shores from whence their fathers had been taken; their numbers forbade the thought, even if we did not know their condition here is infinitely preferable to what it possibly could be among the barren sands and savages tribes of Africa; and it was wholly irreconcilable with all our notions of humanity to tear asunder the tender ties which they

had formed among us, to gratify the feelings of a false philanthropy. . . .

Sir, I have had some opportunities of making comparison between the condition of the free negroes of the North, and the slaves of the South, and the comparison has left not only an indelible impression of the superior advantages of the latter, but has gone far to reconcile me to slavery itself. Never have I felt so forcibly that touching description, "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head," as when I have seen this unhappy race, naked and houseless, almost starving in the streets, and abandoned by all the world. Sir, I have seen, in the neighborhood of one of the most moral, religious, and refined cities of the North, a family of free blacks driven to the caves of the rocks, and there obtaining a precarious subsistence from charity and plunder.

When the gentleman from Massachusetts adopts and reiterates the old charge of weakness as resulting from slavery, I must be permitted to call for the proof of those blighting effects which he ascribes to its influence. I suspect that when the subject is closely examined it will be found that there is not much force even in the plausible objection of the want of physical power in slaveholding States. The power of a country is compounded of its population and its wealth, and in modern times, where, from the

very form and structure of society, by far the greater portion of the people must, even during the continuance of the most desolating wars, be employed in the cultivation of the soil and other peaceful pursuits, it may be well doubted, whether slaveholding States, by reason of the superior value of their productions, are not able to maintain a number of troops in the field, fully equal to what could be supported by States, with a larger white population, but not possessed of equal resources.

It is a popular error, to suppose that in any possible state of things, the people of a country could ever be called out *en masse*, or that a half, or a third, or even a fifth part of the physical force of any country, could ever be brought into the field. The difficulty is not to procure men, but to provide the means of maintaining them; and in this view of the subject, it may be asked whether the Southern States are not a source of strength and power, and not of weakness to the country? — whether they have not contributed, and are not now contributing, largely to the wealth and prosperity of every State in this Union? From a statement which I hold in my hand, it appears that in ten years — from 1818 to 1827, inclusive — the whole amount of the domestic exports of the United States was \$521,811,045; of which, three articles (the product of slave labor), viz., cotton, rice, and tobacco, amounted to \$339,203,232 — equal to about two-thirds of the

whole. It is not true, as has been supposed, that the advantages of this labor are confined almost exclusively to the Southern States. Sir, I am thoroughly convinced, that at this time, the States north of the Potomac actually derive greater profits from the labor of our slaves, than we do ourselves. It appears from our public documents, that in seven years, from 1821 to 1827, inclusive, the six Southern States exported \$190,337,281, and imported only \$55,646,301. Now the difference between these two sums (near \$140,000,000) passed through the hands of the Northern merchants, and enabled them to carry on their commercial operations with all the world. Such part of these goods as found its way back to our hands came charged with the duties, as well as the profits, of the merchant, the shipowner, and a host of others, who found employment in carrying on these immense exchanges; and for such part as was consumed at the North, we received in exchange Northern manufactures, charged with an increased price, to cover all the taxes which the Northern consumer has been compelled to pay on the imported article. It will be seen, therefore, at a glance, how much slave labor has contributed to the wealth and prosperity of the United States, and how largely our Northern brethren have participated in the profits of that labor. . . .

But, Sir, whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the effect of slavery on national wealth and

prosperity, if we may trust to experience, there can be no doubt that it has never yet produced any injurious effect on individual or national character. Look through the whole history of the country, from the commencement of the Revolution down to the present hour; where are there to be found brighter examples of intellectual and moral greatness than have been exhibited by the sons of the South? From the Father of his Country, down to the distinguished chieftain who has been elevated by a grateful people to the highest office in their gift, the interval is filled up by a long line of orators, of statesmen, and of heroes, justly entitled to rank among the ornaments of their country, and the benefactors of mankind. Look at "the Old Dominion," great and magnanimous Virginia, "whose jewels are her sons." Is there any State in this Union which has contributed so much to the honor and welfare of the country? Sir, I will yield the whole question — I will acknowledge the fatal effects of slavery upon character, if any one can say, that for noble disinterestedness, ardent love of country, exalted virtue, and a pure and holy devotion to liberty, the people of the Southern States have ever been surpassed by any in the world. . . .

The senator from Massachusetts tells us that the tariff is not an Eastern measure, and treats it as if the East had no interest in it. The senator from Missouri insists it is not a Western

measure, and that it has done no good to the West. The South comes in, and, in the most earnest manner, represents to you, that this measure, which we are told "is of no value to the East or the West," is "utterly destructive of our interests." We represent to you, that it has spread ruin and devastation through the land, and prostrated our hopes in the dust. We solemnly declare that we believe the system to be wholly unconstitutional, and a violation of the compact between the States and the Union; and our brethren turn a deaf ear to our complaints, and refuse to relieve us from a system "which not enriches them, but makes us poor indeed." Good God! Mr. President, has it come to this? Do gentlemen hold the feelings and wishes of their brethren at so cheap a rate, that they refuse to gratify them at so small a price? Do gentlemen value so lightly the peace and harmony of the country, that they will not yield a measure of this description to the affectionate entreaties and earnest remonstrances of their friends? Do gentlemen estimate the value of the Union at so low a price, that they will not even make one effort to bind the States together with the cords of affection? And has it come to this? Is this the spirit in which this government is to be administered? If so, let me tell gentlemen, the seeds of dissolution are already sown, and our children will reap the bitter fruit. . . .

The gentleman has made a great flourish about his

fidelity to Massachusetts; I shall make no professions of zeal for the interests and honor of South Carolina — of that, my constituents shall judge. If there be one State in the Union, Mr. President (and I say it not in a boastful spirit), that may challenge comparisons with any other, for an uniform, zealous, ardent, and uncalculating devotion to the Union, that State is South Carolina. Sir, from the very commencement of the Revolution up to this hour, there is no sacrifice, however great, she has not cheerfully made; no service she has ever hesitated to perform. She has adhered to you in your prosperity; but in your adversity she has clung to you, with more than filial affection. No matter what was the condition of her domestic affairs, though deprived of her resources, divided by parties, or surrounded with difficulties, the call of the country has been to her as the voice of God. Domestic discord ceased at the sound; every man became at once reconciled to his brethren, and the sons of Carolina were all seen crowding together to the temple, bringing their gifts to the altar of their common country.

What, Sir, was the conduct of the South during the Revolution? Sir, I honor New England for her conduct in that glorious struggle. But great as is the praise which belongs to her, I think, at least equal honor is due to the South. They espoused the quarrel of their brethren, with a generous zeal, which did not suffer them to stop to calculate their interest



in the dispute. Favorites of the mother-country, possessed of neither ships nor seamen to create a commercial rivalship, they might have found in their situation a guaranty that their trade would be forever fostered and protected by Great Britain. But trampling on all considerations either of interest or of safety, they rushed into the conflict, and fighting for principle, periled all, in the sacred cause of freedom. Never was there exhibited in the history of the world higher examples of noble daring, dreadful suffering, and heroic endurance, than by the Whigs of Carolina, during the Revolution. The whole State, from the mountains to the sea, was overrun by an overwhelming force of the enemy. The fruits of industry perished on the spot where they were produced, or were consumed by the foe. The "plains of Carolina" drank up the most precious blood of her citizens! Black and smoking ruin marked the places which had been the habitations of her children! Driven from their homes, into the gloomy and almost impenetrable swamps, even there the spirit of liberty survived, and South Carolina (sustained by the example of her Sumters and her Marions) proved, by her conduct, that though her soil might be overrun, the spirit of her people was invincible. . . .

I come now to the War of 1812 — a war which I well remember was called in derision (while its event was doubtful) the Southern war, and sometimes the

Carolina war; but which is now universally acknowledged to have done more for the honor and prosperity of the country, than all other events in our history put together. What, Sir, were the objects of that war? "Free trade and sailors' rights"! It was for the protection of Northern shipping, and New England seamen, that the country flew to arms. . . . Sir, the whole South, animated as by a common impulse, cordially united in declaring and promoting that war. South Carolina sent to your councils, as the advocates and supporters of that war, the noblest of her sons. How they fulfilled that trust, let a grateful country tell. Not a measure was adopted, not a battle fought, not a victory won, which contributed in any degree, to the success of that war, to which Southern counsels and Southern valor did not largely contribute. Sir, since South Carolina is assailed, I must be suffered to speak it to her praise, that at the very moment when, in one quarter, we heard it solemnly proclaimed, "that it did not become a religious and moral people to rejoice at the victories of our army or our navy," her legislature unanimously "Resolved, That we will cordially support the government in the vigorous prosecution of the war, until a peace can be obtained on honorable terms, and we will cheerfully submit to every privation that may be required of us, by our government, for the accomplishment of this object."

South Carolina redeemed that pledge. She threw open her treasury to the government. She put at the absolute disposal of the officers of the United States all that she possessed — her men, her money, and her arms. She appropriated half a million of dollars, on her own account, in defense of her maritime frontier, ordered a brigade of State troops to be raised, and when left to protect herself by her own means, never suffered the enemy to touch her soil, without being instantly driven off or captured.

Such, Sir, was the conduct of the South — such the conduct of my own State in that dark hour “which tried men’s souls.” . . .

It will be recollected, Sir, that our great causes of quarrel with Great Britain were her depredations on Northern commerce, and the impressment of New England seamen. From every quarter we were called upon for protection. Importunate as the West is now represented to be, on another subject, the importunity of the East on that occasion was far greater. I hold in my hands the evidence of the fact. Here are petitions, memorials, and remonstrances from all parts of New England, setting forth the injustice, the oppression, the depredations, the insults, the outrages, committed by Great Britain against the unoffending commerce and seamen of New England, and calling upon Congress for redress. . . .

Well, Sir, the war at length came, and what did

we behold? The very men who had been for six years clamorous for war, and for whose protection it was waged, became at once equally clamorous against it. They had received a miraculous visitation; a new light suddenly beamed upon their minds, the scales fell from their eyes, and it was discovered that the war was declared from "subserviency to France"; and that Congress, and the Executive, "had sold themselves to Napoleon"; that Great Britain had, in fact, "done us no essential injury"; that she was "the bulwark of our religion"; that where "she took one of our ships, she protected twenty"; and, that if Great Britain had impressed a few of our seamen it was because "she could not distinguish them from her own." . . . Whatever difference of opinion might have existed as to the causes of the war, the country had a right to expect, that when once involved in the contest, all America would have cordially united in its support. Sir, the war effected in its progress a union of all parties at the South. But not so in New England; there, great efforts were made to stir up the minds of the people to oppose it. Nothing was left undone to embarrass the financial operations of the government, to prevent the enlistment of troops, to keep back the men and money of New England from the service of the Union — to force the President from his seat.

Sir, if I am asked for the proof of those things, I fearlessly appeal to contemporary history, to the

public documents of the country, to the recorded opinion and acts of public assemblies, to the declaration and acknowledgments, since made, of the executive and legislature of Massachusetts herself. . . .

Who, then, Mr. President, are the true friends of the Union? Those who would confine the Federal government strictly within the limits prescribed by the Constitution; who would preserve to the States and the people all powers not expressly delegated; who would make this a federal and not a national union, and who, administering the government in a spirit of equal justice, would make it a blessing and not a curse. And who are its enemies? Those who are in favor of consolidation — who are constantly stealing power from the States and adding strength to the Federal government; who, assuming an unwarrantable jurisdiction over the States and the people, undertake to regulate the whole industry and capital of the country. But, Sir, of all descriptions of men, I consider those as the worst enemies of the Union, who sacrifice the equal rights which belong to every member of the confederacy, to combinations of interested majorities, for personal or political objects. . . .

The senator from Massachusetts, in denouncing what he is pleased to call the Carolina doctrine, has attempted to throw ridicule upon the idea that a State has any constitutional remedy, by the exercise of its sovereign authority, against “a gross, palpable,

and deliberate violation of the Constitution." He calls it "an idle" or "ridiculous notion," or something to that effect, and added, that it would make the Union "a mere rope of sand." Now, Sir, as the gentleman has not condescended to enter into any examination of the question, and has been satisfied with throwing the weight of his authority into the scale, I do not deem it necessary to do more than to throw into the opposite scale, the authority on which South Carolina relies; and there, for the present, I am perfectly willing to leave the controversy.

[Here Mr. Hayne cited resolutions from various State legislatures.]

Thus, it will be seen, Mr. President, that the South Carolina doctrine is the Republican doctrine of '98: that it was promulgated by the fathers of the faith — that it was maintained by Virginia and Kentucky in the worst of times — that it constituted the very pivot on which the political revolution of that day turned — that it embraces the very principles, the triumph of which, at that time, saved the Constitution at its last gasp, and which New England statesmen were not unwilling to adopt, when they believed themselves to be the victims of unconstitutional legislation. Sir, as to the doctrine that the Federal government is the exclusive judge of the extent as well as the limitations of its powers, it seems to me to be utterly subversive of the sovereignty and inde-

pendence of the States. It makes but little difference, in my estimation, whether Congress or the Supreme Court are invested with this power. If the Federal government, in all, or any of its departments, is to prescribe the limits of its own authority, and the States are bound to submit to the decision, and are not to be allowed to examine and decide for themselves when the barriers of the Constitution shall be overleaped, this is practically "a government without limitation of powers." The States are at once reduced to mere petty corporations, and the people are entirely at your mercy.

I have but one word more to add. In all the efforts that have been made by South Carolina to resist the unconstitutional laws which Congress has extended over them, she has kept steadily in view the preservation of the Union, by the only means by which she believes it can be long preserved — a firm, manly, and steady resistance against usurpation. The measures of the Federal government have, it is true, prostrated her interests, and will soon involve the whole South in irretrievable ruin. But even this evil, great as it is, is not the chief ground of our complaints. It is the principle involved in the contest — a principle which, substituting the discretion of Congress for the limitations of the Constitution, brings the States and the people to the feet of the Federal government, and leaves them nothing they can call their own. Sir, if the measures of the Federal

government were less oppressive, we should still strive against this usurpation. The South is acting on a principle she has always held sacred — resistance to unauthorized taxation. These, Sir, are the principles which induced the immortal Hampden to resist the payment of a tax of twenty shillings. Would twenty shillings have ruined his fortune? No! but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle on which it was demanded, would have made him a slave. Sir, if in acting on these high motives — if animated by that ardent love of liberty which has always been the most prominent trait in the Southern character — we should be hurried beyond the bounds of a cold and calculating prudence, who is there, with one noble and generous sentiment in his bosom, that would not be disposed, in the language of Burke, to exclaim, “You must pardon something to the spirit of liberty!”



DANIEL WEBSTER

1782-1852

THROUGH pinching family economy DANIEL WEBSTER graduated at Dartmouth (1801), and in 1805, at the age of twenty-three, began legal practice in Boscawen and Portsmouth in New Hampshire, his native State. In 1813 he became Congressman from that State, and thereafter spent his active life chiefly in Washington, although often called away for important legal arguments, or addresses on great occasions, — laying the corner-stone of Bunker Hill Monument (1825) and its dedication (1843), commemorating the deaths of JEFFERSON and ADAMS (1836), etc. He removed his residence to Boston in 1816, and from 1823 represented Massachusetts in the House of Representatives till 1827, and in the Senate till 1841, and 1845 to 1850.

WEBSTER was a wonderful lawyer, with vast legal knowledge and colossal oratorical power, which also made him a leader in Congress, especially as to construction of the Constitution, the relations of which to the people and the States had been his profound study. WEBSTER'S dominance in oratory arose from his majestic personality, his mastery of every subject discussed, his lucid method of statement, his fund of historical and literary illustration, and his power of raising his theme to the regions of emotion and by his grand voice and presence transporting his hearers thither also.

This appeared signally in his reply to Senator HAYNE'S second speech on the FOOTE resolution concerning sales of public lands. HAYNE spoke; WEBSTER replied; HAYNE rejoined (see pp. 141-156), covering many matters, but especially "The South and the Union." Then (January 26, 1830) WEBSTER made that fundamental speech on which thereafter stood the defenders of Constitution and Union. Portions referring to the South, State sovereignty, and the Constitution are herewith given.

WEBSTER was twice Secretary of State, achieving notable service. He was twice Whig Presidential candidate — never reaching his highest ambition. Yet the presidency would have added nothing to the fame of this great lawyer, councilor, legislator, philosopher, statesman, and orator.

## THE STATES AND THE CONSTITUTION

MR. PRESIDENT: When the mariner has been tossed for many days, in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and, before we float farther on the waves of this debate, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are. I ask for the reading of the resolution.

[The secretary read the resolution relating to the sales of public lands.]

We have thus heard, Sir, what the resolution is, which is actually before us for consideration; and it will readily occur to every one that it is almost the only subject about which something has not been said in the speech, running through two days, by which the Senate has been now entertained by the gentleman from South Carolina. Every topic in the wide range of our public affairs, whether past or present — everything, general or local, whether

belonging to national politics, or party politics, seems to have attracted more or less of the honorable member's attention, save only the resolution before the Senate. He has spoken of everything but the public lands. They have escaped his notice. To that subject, in all his excursions, he has not paid even the cold respect of a passing glance. . . .

I spoke, Sir, of the ordinance of 1787, which prohibited slavery in all future times northwest of the Ohio, as a measure of great wisdom and foresight; and one which had been attended with highly beneficial and permanent consequences. I supposed that on this point no two gentlemen in the Senate could entertain different opinions. But the simple expression of this sentiment has led the gentleman not only into a labored defense of slavery, in the abstract, and on principle, but, also, into a warm accusation against me, as having attacked the system of domestic slavery now existing in the Southern States. For all this there was not the slightest foundation in anything said or intimated by me. I did not utter a single word which any ingenuity could torture into an attack on the slavery of the South. I said only that it was highly wise and useful in legislating for the northwestern country, while it was yet a wilderness, to prohibit the introduction of slaves; and added, that I presumed, in the neighboring State of Kentucky, there was no reflecting and intelligent gentleman, who would doubt, that if the same pro-

hibition had been extended at the same early period over that commonwealth, her strength and population would, at this day, have been far greater than they are. . . . The slavery of the South has always been regarded as a matter of domestic policy, left with the States themselves, and with which the Federal government had nothing to do. Certainly, Sir, I am, and ever have been of that opinion. The gentleman, indeed, argues that slavery, in the abstract, is no evil. Most assuredly I need not say I differ with him, altogether and most widely, on that point. I regard domestic slavery as one of the greatest of evils, both moral and political. But though it be a malady, and whether it be curable, and if so, by what means; or, on the other hand, whether it be the *vulnus immedicabile* of the social system, I leave it to those whose right and duty it is to inquire and to decide. And this I believe, Sir, is, and uniformly has been, the sentiment of the North. . . .

Let me observe, that the eulogium pronounced on the character of the State of South Carolina, by the honorable gentleman, for her Revolutionary and other merits, meets my hearty concurrence. I shall not acknowledge that the honorable member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent, or distinguished character, South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honor, I partake in the pride, of her great names. I claim them for countrymen, one and all. The Laurenses, the Rutledges,

the Pinckneys, the Sumters, the Marions — Americans, all — whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by State lines than their talents and patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits. In their day and generation they served and honored the country, and the whole country; and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him, whose honored name the gentleman himself bears — does he esteem me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism, or sympathy for his sufferings, than if his eyes had first opened upon the light of Massachusetts, instead of South Carolina? Sir, does he suppose it in his power to exhibit a Carolina name so bright as to produce envy in my bosom? No, Sir, increased gratification and delight, rather. I thank God, that, if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit, which would drag angels down. When I shall be found, Sir, in my place here, in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit, because it happens to spring up beyond the little limits of my own State, or neighborhood; when I refuse, for any such cause, or for any cause, the homage due to American talent, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or, if I see an uncommon endowment of Heaven — if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue in any son of the South — and if, moved by local prejudice, or gangrened by State jealousy, I

get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections — let me indulge in refreshing remembrances of the past — let me remind you that in early times, no States cherished greater harmony, both of principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return! Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution — hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling, if it exist, alienation and distrust, are the growth, unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that same great arm never scattered.

Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts — she needs none. There she is — behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history; the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill — and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State, from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie forever. And, Sir, where American liberty raised its first voice and where its youth was nurtured and sustained

there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it — if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it — if folly and madness — if uneasiness, under salutary and necessary restraint — shall succeed to separate it from that Union, by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain, over the friends who gather round it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.

There yet remains to be performed, Mr. President, by far the most grave and important duty, which I feel to be devolved on me, by this occasion. It is to state, and to defend, what I conceive to be the true principles of the Constitution under which we are here assembled. I might well have desired that so weighty a task should have fallen into other and abler hands. I could have wished that it should have been executed by those, whose character and experience give weight and influence to their opinions such as cannot possibly belong to mine. But, Sir, I have met the occasion, not sought it; and I shall proceed to state my own sentiments, without challenging for them any particular regard, with studied plainness, and as much precision as possible.

I understand the honorable gentleman from South



Carolina to maintain that it is a right of the State legislatures to interfere, whenever, in their judgment, this Government transcends its constitutional limits, and to arrest the operation of its laws.

I understand him to maintain this right; as a right existing under the Constitution, not as a right to overthrow it, on the ground of extreme necessity, such as would justify violent revolution.

I understand him to maintain an authority, on the part of the States, thus to interfere, for the purpose of correcting the exercise of power by the general Government, of checking it, and of compelling it to conform to their opinion of the extent of its powers.

I understand him to maintain, that the ultimate power of judging of the constitutional extent of its own authority, is not lodged exclusively in the general Government, or any branch of it; but that, on the contrary, the States may lawfully decide for themselves, and each State for itself, whether, in a given case, the act of the general Government transcends its power.

I understand him to insist, that if the exigency of the case, in the opinion of any State government, require it, such State government may, by its own sovereign authority, annul an act of the general Government, which it deems plainly and palpably unconstitutional.

This is the sum of what I understood from him, to be the South Carolina doctrine; and the doctrine

which he maintains. I propose to consider it, and compare it with the Constitution. Allow me to say, as a preliminary remark, that I call this the South Carolina doctrine, only because the gentleman himself has so denominated it. . . .

We, Sir, who oppose the Carolina doctrine, do not deny that the people may, if they choose, throw off any government, when it becomes oppressive and intolerable, and erect a better in its stead. We all know that civil institutions are established for the public benefit, and that when they cease to answer the ends of their existence, they may be changed. But I do not understand the doctrine now contended for to be that, which, for the sake of distinctness, we may call the right of revolution. I understand the gentleman to maintain, that, without revolution, without civil commotion, without rebellion, a remedy for supposed abuse and transgression of the powers of the general Government lies in a direct appeal to the interference of the State governments. What he contends for is, that it is constitutional to interrupt the administration of the Constitution itself, in the hands of those who are chosen and sworn to administer it, by the direct interference, in form of law, of the States, in virtue of their sovereign capacity. The inherent right in the people to reform their government I do not deny; and they have another right, and that is, to resist unconstitutional laws without overturning the government. It is no doc-

trine of mine, that unconstitutional laws bind the people. The great question is, whose prerogative is it to decide on the constitutionality, or unconstitutionality of the laws? On that the main debate hinges.

The proposition, that, in case of a supposed violation of the Constitution by Congress, the States have a constitutional right to interfere, and annul the law of Congress, is the proposition of the gentleman: I do not admit it. If the gentleman had intended no more than to assert the right of revolution, for justifiable cause, he would have said only what all agree to. But I cannot conceive that there can be a middle course, between submission to the laws, when regularly pronounced constitutional, on the one hand, and open resistance, which is revolution, or rebellion, on the other. . . .

It is observable enough, that the doctrine for which the honorable gentleman contends, leads him to the necessity of maintaining, not only that this general Government is the creature of the States, but that it is the creature of each of the States severally; so that each may assert the power, for itself, of determining whether it acts within the limits of its authority. It is the servant of four-and-twenty masters, of different wills and different purposes, and yet bound to obey all. This absurdity (for it seems no less) arises from a misconception as to the origin of this Government and its true character. It is, Sir,

the people's Constitution, the people's government; made for the people; made by the people; and answerable to the people. The people of the United States have declared that this Constitution shall be the supreme law. We must either admit the proposition, or dispute their authority. . . .

The national Government possesses those powers which it can be shown the people have conferred on it, and no more. All the rest belongs to the State governments or to the people themselves. So far as the people have restrained State sovereignty, by the expression of their will in the Constitution of the United States, so far, it must be admitted, State sovereignty is effectually controlled. I do not contend that it is, or ought to be, controlled farther.

The sentiment to which I have referred, propounds that State sovereignty is only to be controlled by its own "feeling of justice"; that is to say, it is not to be controlled at all; for one who is to follow his own feelings is under no legal control. Now, however men may think this ought to be, the fact is, that the people of the United States have chosen to impose control on State sovereignties. There are those, doubtless, who wish they had been left without restraint; but the Constitution has ordered the matter differently. To make war, for instance, is an exercise of sovereignty; but the Constitution declares that no State shall make war. To coin money is another exercise of sovereign power; but no State is

at liberty to coin money. Again, the Constitution says that no sovereign State shall be so sovereign as to make a treaty. These prohibitions, it must be confessed, are a control on the State sovereignty of South Carolina, as well as of the other States, which does not arise "from her own feelings of honorable justice." Such an opinion, therefore, is in defiance of the plainest provisions of the Constitution. . . .

Is the voice of one State conclusive? It so happens that at the very moment when South Carolina resolves that the tariff laws are unconstitutional, Pennsylvania and Kentucky resolve exactly the reverse. They hold those laws to be both highly proper and strictly constitutional. And now, Sir, how does the honorable member propose to deal with this case? How does he relieve us from this difficulty upon any principle of his? His construction gets us into it; how does he propose to get us out?

In Carolina the tariff is a palpable, deliberate usurpation; Carolina, therefore, may nullify it, and refuse to pay the duties. In Pennsylvania it is both clearly constitutional and highly expedient; and there the duties are to be paid. And yet we live under a government of uniform laws, and under a constitution, too, which contains an express provision, as it happens, that all duties shall be equal in all the States. Does not this approach absurdity?

If there be no power to settle such questions, independent of either of the States, is not the whole

Union a rope of sand? Are we not thrown back again precisely upon the old Confederation?

It is too plain to be argued. Four-and-twenty interpreters of constitutional law, each with a power to decide for itself, and none with authority to bind anybody else, and this constitutional law the only bond of their union! What is such a state of things but a mere connection during pleasure, or, to use the phraseology of the times, during *feeling*? And that feeling, too, not the feeling of the people, who established the Constitution, but the feeling of the State governments. . . .

And now, Sir, what I have first to say on this subject is, that, at no time, and under no circumstances, has New England, or any State in New England, or any respectable body of persons in New England, or any public man of standing in New England, put forth such a doctrine as this Carolina doctrine. . . . Let us follow up, sir, this New England opposition to the embargo laws; let us trace it till we discern the principle, which controlled and governed New England, throughout the whole course of that opposition. We shall then see what similarity there is between the New England school of constitutional opinions, and this modern Carolina school. The gentleman, I think, read a petition from some single individual, addressed to the legislature of Massachusetts, asserting the Carolina doctrine — that is, the right of State interference to arrest the laws of the Union. The

fate of that petition shows the sentiment of the legislature. It met no favor. The opinions of Massachusetts were otherwise. They had been expressed, in 1798, in answer to the resolutions of Virginia, and she did not depart from them, nor bend them to the times. Misgoverned, wronged, oppressed as she felt herself to be, she still held fast her integrity to the Union. The gentleman may find in her proceedings much evidence of dissatisfaction with the measures of Government, and great and deep dislike to the embargo; all this makes the case so much the stronger for her; for notwithstanding all this dissatisfaction and dislike, she claimed no right, still, to sever asunder the bonds of the Union. There was heat, and there was anger, in her political feeling. Be it so; her heat or her anger did not, nevertheless betray her into infidelity to the Government. The gentleman labors to prove that she disliked the embargo, as much as South Carolina dislikes the tariff, and expressed her dislike as strongly. Be it so; but did she propose the Carolina remedy?—did she threaten to interfere, by State authority, to annul the laws of the Union? . . .

In such a case, under such circumstances, how did Massachusetts demean herself? Sir, she remonstrated, she memorialized, she addressed herself to the general Government, not exactly “with the concentrated energy of passion,” but with her own strong sense, and the energy of sober conviction.

But she did not interpose the arm of her own power to arrest the law, and break the embargo. Far from it. Her principles bound her to two things; and she followed her principles, lead where they might. First, to submit to every constitutional law of Congress, and, secondly, if the constitutional validity of the law be doubted, to refer that question to the decision of the proper tribunals. The first principle is vain and ineffectual without the second. . . . Before those tribunals, therefore, they brought the question. . . .

This Government, Sir, is the independent offspring of the popular will. It is not the creature of State legislatures; nay, more, if the whole truth must be told, the people brought it into existence, established it, and have hitherto supported it, for the very purpose, amongst others, of imposing certain salutary restraints on State sovereignties. The States cannot now make war; they cannot contract alliances; they cannot make, each for itself, separate regulations of commerce; they cannot lay imposts; they cannot coin money. If this Constitution, Sir, be the creature of State legislatures, it must be admitted that it has obtained a strange control over the volitions of its creators. . . .

But, Sir, the people have wisely provided, in the Constitution itself, a proper, suitable mode and tribunal for settling questions of constitutional law. There are in the Constitution, grants of powers to



Congress; and restrictions on these powers. There are, also, prohibitions on the States. Some authority must, therefore, necessarily exist, having the ultimate jurisdiction to fix and ascertain the interpretation of these grants, restrictions, and prohibitions. The Constitution has itself pointed out, ordained, and established that authority. How has it accomplished this great and essential end? By declaring, Sir, that "the Constitution and the laws of the United States, made in pursuance thereof, shall be the supreme law of the land, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding."

This, Sir, was the first great step. By this the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the United States is declared. The people so will it. No State law is to be valid which comes in conflict with the Constitution, or any law of the United States passed in pursuance of it. But who shall decide this question of interference? To whom lies the last appeal? This, Sir, the Constitution itself decides, also, by declaring, that "the judicial power shall extend to all cases arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States." These two provisions, Sir, cover the whole ground. They are in truth, the keystone of the arch. With these, it is a Constitution; without them, it is a Confederacy.

Let it be remembered, that the Constitution of the United States is not unalterable. It is to con-

tinue in its present form no longer than the people who established it shall choose to continue it. If they shall become convinced that they have made an injudicious or inexpedient partition and distribution of power, between the State governments and the general Government, they can alter that distribution at will. If anything be found in the national Constitution, either by original provision, or subsequent interpretation, which ought not to be in it, the people know how to get rid of it. If any construction be established, unacceptable to them, so as to become, practically, a part of the Constitution, they will amend it, at their own sovereign pleasure: but while the people choose to maintain it, as it is; while they are satisfied with it, and refuse to change it, who has given, or who can give, to the State legislatures a right to alter it, either by interference, construction or otherwise? . . .

I profess, Sir, in my career, hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union. It is to that Union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that Union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its

benign influences, these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and, although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

I have not allowed myself, Sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of Disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counselor in the affairs of this government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union shall be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it shall be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant, that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind!

When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the

last time, the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood ! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original luster, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured — bearing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory, as What is all this worth ? Nor those other words of delusion and folly, Liberty first, and union afterwards — but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea, and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—LIBERTY *and* UNION, now and forever, one and inseparable !

THOMAS HART BENTON

1782-1858

“OLD BULLION,” as he was called from his adherence to the theory of “hard money” instead of paper, was born in North Carolina, and went with his parents to Tennessee, where he grew up, was educated, and became a lawyer. But at the age of twenty-eight he went into the army, and in the War of 1812 was aid on General JACKSON’S staff. He then went to St. Louis, practiced law, and edited a newspaper, and in 1821, so prominent had he become, he was sent to the United States Senate from Missouri. Here he remained until 1851, and in 1853 was returned to Washington for two years as Congressman. His great work, “Thirty Years’ View,” is a mine of historical and biographical record of the doings of Congress (1821-1856), while his voluminous “Abridgment of Debates in Congress” (1789-1856), is a monument of careful, skillful, valuable labor.

BENTON was a forcible speaker, and, although not a man of the highest grade of intellect, was influential by reason of his usually sound views, his honesty, energy, and persistence. He was intimately and vigorously interested in the opening up of the West — Missouri, Oregon, and California — and was a sturdy supporter of his son-in-law, JOHN C. FRÉMONT, in his daring explorations of the continental interior and the Pacific coast; yet when FRÉMONT was Republican candidate for the presidency, BENTON, as a Democrat, upheld BUCHANAN.

His friendship with JACKSON, both as General and as President, was a great element in his career; and although there intervened an alienation of years between them, BENTON supported many of JACKSON’S acts, and in 1834 moved in the Senate a resolution to expunge from the record the censure passed upon the President for his veto of the United States Bank bill in 1832. As he relates in the speech (here given) his resolution was pending for three years; but, although opposed by the Southern CALHOUN and CLAY and the Northern WEBSTER, BENTON triumphed; the censure was expunged.

## EXPUNGING THE JACKSON CENSURE

MR. PRESIDENT: It is now three years since the resolve was adopted by the Senate, which it is my present motion to expunge from the journal. At the moment that this resolve was adopted, I gave notice of my intention to move to expunge it ; and then expressed my confident belief that the motion would eventually prevail. That expression of confidence was not an ebullition of vanity or a presumptuous calculation, intended to accelerate the event it affected to foretell. It was not a vain boast, or an idle assumption, but was the result of a deep conviction of the injustice done President Jackson, and a thorough reliance upon the justice of the American people. I felt that the President had been wronged ; and my heart told me that this wrong would be redressed ! The event proves that I was not mistaken. The question of expunging this resolution has been carried to the people, and their decision has been had upon it. They decide in favor of the expurgation ; and their decision has been both made and manifested, and communicated to us in a great variety of ways. A great number of States have expressly instructed their senators to vote for this expurgation.

A very great majority of the States have elected senators and representatives to Congress, upon the express ground of favoring this expurgation. The Bank of the United States, which took the initiative in the accusation against the President, and furnished the material, and worked the machinery which was used against him, and which was then so powerful on this floor, has become more and more odious to the public mind, and musters now but a slender phalanx of friends in the two Houses of Congress. The late Presidential election furnishes additional evidence of public sentiment. The candidate, who was the friend of President Jackson, the supporter of his administration, and the avowed advocate for the expurgation, has received a large majority of the suffrages of the whole Union, and that after an express declaration of his sentiments on this precise point. The evidence of the public will, exhibited in all these forms, is too manifest to be mistaken, too explicit to require illustration, and too imperative to be disregarded. . . .

Assuming, then, that we have ascertained the will of the people on this great question, the inquiry presents itself, how far the expression of that will ought to be conclusive of our action here. I hold that it ought to be binding and obligatory upon us. . . . I do not mean to reopen the case nor to recommence the argument. I leave that work to others, if any others choose to perform it. For myself, I



am content ; and, dispensing with further argument, I shall call for judgment, and ask to have execution done, upon that unhappy journal, which the verdict of millions of freemen finds guilty of bearing on its face an untrue, illegal, and unconstitutional sentence of condemnation against the approved President of the republic. . . .

The political existence of this great man now draws to a close. In little more than forty days he ceases to be an object of political hope to any, and should cease to be an object of political hate, or envy, to all. Whatever of motive the servile and time-serving might have found in his exalted station for raising the altar of adulation, and burning the incense of praise before him, that motive can no longer exist. The dispenser of the patronage of an empire, the chief of this great confederacy of States, is soon to be a private individual, stripped of all power to reward, or to punish. His own thoughts, as he has shown us in the concluding paragraph of that message which is to be the last of its kind that we shall ever receive from him, are directed to that beloved retirement from which he was drawn by the voice of millions of freemen, and to which he now looks for that interval of repose which age and infirmities require. Under these circumstances, he ceases to be a subject for the ebullition of the passions, and passes into a character for the contemplation of history.

Historically, then, shall I view him; and, limiting

this view to his civil administration, I demand, where is there a chief magistrate of whom so much evil has been predicted, and from whom so much good has come? Never has any man entered upon the chief magistracy of a country under such appalling predictions of ruin and woe! never has any one been so pursued with direful prognostications! never has any one been so beset and impeded by a powerful combination of political and moneyed confederates! never has any one in any country where the administration of justice has risen above the knife or the bowstring, been so lawlessly and shamelessly tried and condemned by rivals and enemies, without hearing, without defense, without the forms of law and justice! History has been ransacked to find examples of tyrants sufficiently odious to illustrate him by comparison. Language has been tortured to find epithets sufficiently strong to paint him in description. Imagination has been exhausted in her efforts to deck him with revolting and inhuman attributes. Tyrant, despot, usurper; destroyer of the liberties of his country; rash, ignorant, imbecile; endangering the public peace with all foreign nations; destroying domestic prosperity at home; ruining all industry, all commerce, all manufactures; annihilating confidence between man and man; delivering up the streets of populous cities to grass and weeds, and the wharves of commercial towns to the encumbrance of decaying vessels; depriving labor of all reward;

depriving industry of all employment ; destroying the currency ; plunging an innocent and happy people from the summit of felicity to the depths of misery, want, and despair. Such is the faint outline followed up by actual condemnation of the appalling denunciations daily uttered against this one man, from the moment he became an object of political competition, down to the concluding moment of his political existence.

The sacred voice of inspiration has told us that there is a time for all things. There certainly has been a time for every evil that human nature admits of to be vaticinated of President Jackson's administration ; equally certain the time has now come for all rational and well-disposed people to compare the predictions with the facts, and to ask themselves if these calamitous prognostications have been verified by events? Have we peace, or war, with foreign nations? Certainly, we have peace with all the world ! peace with all its benign, and felicitous, and beneficent influences ! Are we respected, or despised abroad? Certainly the American name never was more honored throughout the four quarters of the globe than in this very moment. Do we hear of indignity or outrage in any quarter? of merchants robbed in foreign ports? of vessels searched on the high seas? of American citizens impressed into foreign service? of the national flag insulted anywhere? On the contrary, we see former wrongs

repaired ; no new ones inflicted. France pays twenty-five millions of francs for spoliations committed thirty years ago ; Naples pays two millions one hundred thousand ducats for wrongs of the same date ; Denmark pays six hundred and fifty thousand rix-dollars for wrongs done a quarter of a century ago ; Spain engages to pay twelve millions of reals vellon for injuries of fifteen years' date ; and Portugal, the last in the list of former aggressors, admits her liability and only waits the adjustment of details to close her account by adequate indemnity. So far from war, insult, contempt, and spoliation from abroad, this denounced administration has been the season of peace and good-will and the auspicious era of universal reparation. So far from suffering injury at the hands of foreign powers, our merchants have received indemnities for all former injuries. It has been the day of accounting, of settlement, and of retribution. The total list of arrearages, extending through four successive previous administrations, has been closed and settled up. The wrongs done to commerce for thirty years back, and under so many different Presidents, and indemnities withheld from all, have been repaired and paid over under the beneficent and glorious administration of President Jackson. . . .

At home the most gratifying picture presents itself to the view: The public debt paid off; taxes reduced one-half; the completion of the public defense sys-

tematically commenced; the compact with Georgia, uncompiled with since 1802, now carried into effect, and her soil ready to be freed, as her jurisdiction has been delivered, from the presence and incumbrance of an Indian population. Mississippi and Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee and North Carolina, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas, in a word, all the States encumbered with an Indian population have been relieved from that incumbrance; and the Indians themselves have been transferred to new and permanent homes, every way better adapted to the enjoyment of their existence, the preservation of their rights, and the improvement of their condition.

The currency is not ruined! On the contrary, seventy-five millions of specie in the country is a spectacle never seen before, and is the barrier of the people against the designs of any banks which may attempt to suspend payments, and to force a dishonored paper currency upon the community. . . . Domestic industry is not paralyzed, confidence is not destroyed, factories are not stopped, workmen are not mendicants for bread, and employment credit is not extinguished, prices have not sunk, grass is not growing in the streets of populous cities, the wharves are not lumbered with decaying vessels, columns of curses rising from the bosoms of a ruined and agonized people, are not ascending to heaven against the destroyer of a nation's felicity and prosperity. On the contrary, the reverse of all this is true! and

true to a degree that astonishes and bewilders the senses. . . .

From President Jackson the country has first learned the true theory and practical intent of the Constitution, in giving to the Executive a qualified negative on the legislative power of Congress. Far from being an odious, dangerous, or kingly prerogative, this power, as vested in the President, is nothing but a qualified copy of the famous veto power vested in the Tribunes of the People among the Romans, and intended to suspend the passage of a law until the people themselves should have time to consider it. The qualified veto of the President destroys nothing; it only delays the passage of a law, and refers it to the people for their consideration and decision. It is the reference of a law, not to a committee of the House, or of the whole House, but to the committee of the whole Union. It is a recommitment of the bill to the people, for them to examine and consider; and if, upon this examination, they are content to pass it, it will pass at the next session. The delay of a few months is the only effect of a veto, in a case where the people shall ultimately approve a law; where they do not approve it, the interposition of the veto is the barrier which saves them the adoption of a law, the repeal of which might afterwards be almost impossible. The qualified negative is, therefore, a beneficent power, intended as General Hamilton expressly declares in the "Federalist," to protect,

first, the executive department from the encroachments of the legislative department; and, secondly, to preserve the people from hasty, dangerous, or criminal legislation on the part of their representatives. This is the design and intention of the veto power; and the fear expressed by General Hamilton was, that Presidents, so far from exercising it too often, would not exercise it as often as the safety of the people required; that they might lack the moral courage to stake themselves in opposition to a favorite measure of the majority of the two Houses of Congress; and thus deprive the people, in many instances, of their right to pass upon a bill before it becomes a final law. The cases in which President Jackson has exercised the veto power have shown the soundness of these observations. No ordinary President would have staked himself against the Bank of the United States and the two Houses of Congress in 1832. It required President Jackson to confront that power — to stem that torrent — to stay the progress of that charter, and to refer it to the people for their decision. His moral courage was equal to the crisis. He arrested the charter until it could be got to the people, and they have arrested it forever. . . .

To detail specific acts which adorn the administration of President Jackson, and illustrate the intuitive sagacity of his intellect, the firmness of his mind, his disregard of personal popularity, and his entire devotion to the public good, would be incon-

sistent with this rapid sketch, intended merely to present general views, and not to detail single actions, howsoever worthy they may be of a splendid page in the volume of history. But how can we pass over the great measure of the removal of the public moneys from the Bank of the United States in the autumn of 1833—that wise, heroic, and masterly measure of prevention which has rescued an empire from the fangs of a merciless, revengeful, greedy, insatiate, implacable, moneyed power? . . .

The Treasury order for excluding paper money from the land offices is another wise measure, originating in an enlightened forecast, and preventing great mischiefs. The President foresaw the evils of suffering a thousand streams of paper money, issuing from a thousand different banks, to discharge themselves on the national domain. He foresaw that, if these currents were allowed to run their course, the public lands would be swept away, the Treasury would be filled with irredeemable paper, a vast number of banks must be broken by their folly, and the cry set up that nothing but a national bank could regulate the currency. He stopped the course of these streams of paper; and in so doing, has saved the country from a great calamity, and excited anew the machinations of those whose schemes of gain and mischief have been disappointed, and who had counted on a new edition of panic and pressure. . . .

The difficulty with France: What an instance it



presents of the superior sagacity of President Jackson over all the commonplace politicians who beset and impede his administration at home! That difficulty, inflamed and aggravated by domestic faction, wore, at one time, a portentous aspect; the skill, firmness, elevation of purpose, and manly frankness of the President avoided the danger, accomplished the object, commanded the admiration of Europe, and retained the friendship of France. He conducted the delicate affair to a successful and mutually honorable issue. All is amicably and happily terminated, leaving not a wound, nor even a scar, behind,—leaving the Frenchman and American on the ground on which they have stood for fifty years, and should forever stand—the ground of friendship, respect, good-will, and mutual wishes for the honor, happiness, and prosperity of each other.

But why this specification? So beneficent and so glorious has been the administration of this President, that where to begin, and where to end, in the enumeration of great measures, would be the embarrassment of him who has his eulogy to make. He came into office the first of generals; he goes out the first of statesmen. His civil competitors have shared the fate of his military opponents; and Washington city has been to the American politicians who have assailed him, what Orleans was to the British generals who attacked his lines. Repulsed! driven back! discomfited! crushed! has been the fate of all

assailants, foreign and domestic, civil and military. At home and abroad, the impress of his genius and of his character is felt. He has impressed upon the age in which he lives the stamp of his arms, of his diplomacy, and of his domestic policy. In a word, so transcendent have been the merits of his administration that they have operated a miracle upon the minds of his most inveterate opponents. He has expunged their objections to military chieftains! He has shown them that they were mistaken; that military men were not the dangerous rulers they had imagined, but safe and prosperous conductors of the vessel of state. He has changed their fear into love. With visible signs they admit their error, and instead of deprecating they now invoke the reign of chieftains. They labored hard to procure a military successor to the present incumbent, and if their love goes on increasing at the same rate, the republic may be put to the expense of periodical wars, to breed a perpetual succession of these chieftains to rule over them and their posterity forever.

To drop this irony, which the inconsistency of mad opponents has provoked, and to return to the plain delineations of historical painting, the mind instinctively dwells on the vast and unprecedented popularity of this President. Great is the influence, great the power, greater than any man ever before possessed in our America, which he has acquired over the public mind. And how has he acquired it?

Not by the arts of intrigue, or the juggling tricks of diplomacy; not by undermining rivals or sacrificing public interests for the gratification of classes or individuals. But he has acquired it, first, by the exercise of an intuitive sagacity which, leaving all book learning at an immeasurable distance behind, has always enabled him to adopt the right remedy at the right time, and to conquer soonest when the men of forms and office thought him most near to ruin and despair. Next, by a moral courage, which knew no fear when the public good beckoned him to go on. Last, and chiefest, he has acquired it by an open honesty of purpose, which knew no concealments; by a straightforwardness of action, which disdained the forms of office, and the arts of intrigue; by a disinterestedness of motive, which knew no selfish or sordid calculation; a devotedness of patriotism, which staked everything personal on the issue of every measure which the public welfare required him to adopt. By these qualities, and these means, he has acquired his prodigious popularity and his transcendent influence over the public mind; and if there are any who envy that influence and popularity, let them envy also, and emulate, if they can, the qualities and means by which they were acquired. . . .

Sir, I think it right, in approaching the termination of his great question, to present this faint and rapid sketch of the brilliant, beneficent, and glorious

administration of President Jackson. It is not for me to attempt to do it justice; it is not for ordinary men to attempt its history. . . . The contemporaries of such events are not the hands to describe them. Time must first do its office — must silence the passions, remove the actors, develop consequences, and canonize all that is sacred to honor, patriotism, and glory. In after ages the historic genius of our America shall produce the writers which the subject demands — men far removed from the contests of this day, who will know how to estimate this great epoch, and how to acquire an immortality for their own names by painting, with a master's hand, the immortal events of the patriot President's life.

And now, Sir, I finish the task which, three years ago, I imposed on myself. Solitary and alone, and amidst the jeers and taunts of my opponents, I put this ball in motion. The people have taken it up, and rolled it forward, and I am no longer anything but a unit in the vast mass which now propels it. In the name of that mass I speak. I demand the execution of the edict of the people; I demand the expurgation of that sentence which the voice of a few senators, and the power of their confederate, the Bank of the United States, have caused to be placed on the journal of the Senate; and which the voice of millions of freemen has ordered to be expunged from it.

CHARLES SUMNER

1811-1874

HERE was an accomplished orator. SUMNER'S Harvard graduation, admission to the bar at twenty-three, and three years' pursuance of legal science in Europe gave him — with his classical and historical lore and oratorical power — a grand foundation. But he liked practicing law less than expounding it, lecturing to Harvard law-students, editing and contributing to legal periodicals, etc., and he was sought for public orations.

His most famous early address was on "The True Grandeur of Nations" (July 4, 1845), when our government was in contention both with Mexico and Great Britain, and the war-spirit was abroad. He declared war against war, showing a higher plane for the nations. This spirited and scholarly address made great impression, both here and abroad. It was published several times, notably in 1870, enlarged by SUMNER with further illustrations, notes, etc. In this form it is well worth study in our "strenuous" day, and may be found in SUMNER'S "Life and Works" and in a separate issue, both published by LOTHROP, LEE, AND SHEPARD CO., Boston.

Such appeal to the ethical was characteristic. It led to SUMNER'S reluctantly entering politics, in advocacy of the anti-slavery sentiment. In 1848 defeated as Free-soil candidate for Congress, his high character, learning, and eloquence made him WEBSTER'S successor as senator from Massachusetts in 1851. Here he remained until his death in 1874.

SUMNER'S confidence in his own uprightness and opinions made him intolerant; his passionate hatred of slavery incited him to exasperating vehemence. During the Kansas agitation in 1856, after one of his invectives, he was assaulted, sitting in the Senate Chamber, by PRESTON S. BROOKS of South Carolina, and was three years recovering from it — if, indeed, he ever did. This aroused indignation throughout the North, and doubtless served SUMNER'S causes effectively.

After the war and emancipation, SUMNER'S peculiarities increased, in disagreements with the Republican leaders and with nearly everybody. His advocacy of GREELEY'S Democratic Presidential candidacy in 1872 severed him from his old associates. But he was a great man — scholar, thinker, legislator, orator, of sterling integrity and noble ideals; a potential element in that era of turbulent conflict and majestic outcome.

## THE TRUE GRANDEUR OF NATIONS

IN accordance with uninterrupted usage, on this Sabbath of the Nation, we have put aside our daily cares, and seized a respite from the never-ending toils of life, to meet in gladness and congratulation, mindful of the blessings transmitted from the Past, mindful also, I trust, of our duties to the Present and the Future.

All hearts turn first to the Fathers of the Republic. Their venerable forms rise before us, in the procession of successive generations. They come from the frozen rock of Plymouth, from the wasted bands of Raleigh, from the heavenly companionship of Penn, from the anxious councils of the Revolution, — from all those fields of sacrifice, where, in obedience to the spirit of their age, they sealed their devotion to duty with their blood. . . . Honor to the memory of our fathers! May the turf lie lightly on their sacred graves! Not in words only, but in deeds also, let us testify our reverence for their name, imitating what in them was lofty, pure, and good, learning from them to bear hardship and privation. May we, who now reap in strength what they sowed in weakness, augment the inheri-

tance we have received! To this end, we must not fold our hands in slumber, nor abide content with the past. To each generation is appointed its peculiar task; nor does the heart which responds to the call of duty find rest except in the grave. . . . Avoiding, then, all exultation in the abounding prosperity of the land, and in that freedom whose influence is widening to the uttermost circles of the earth, I would turn attention to the character of our country, and humbly endeavor to learn what must be done that the Republic may best secure the welfare of the people committed to its care, — that it may perform its part in the world's history, — that it may fulfill the aspirations of generous hearts, — and, practicing that righteousness which exalteth a nation, attain to the elevation of True Grandeur.

With this aim, and believing that I can in no other way so fitly fulfill the trust reposed in me to-day, I purpose to consider what, in our age, are the true objects of national ambition, — what is truly National Honor, National Glory, — *what is* THE TRUE GRANDEUR OF NATIONS. . . . The subject may be novel on an occasion like the present; but it is comprehensive, and of transcendent importance. It raises us to the contemplation of things not temporary or local, but belonging to all ages and countries, — things lofty as Truth, universal as Humanity. Nay, more; it practically concerns the general welfare, not only of our own cherished Republic, but of the whole



Federation of Nations. It has an urgent interest from transactions in which we are now unhappily involved. By an act of unjust legislation, extending our power over Texas, peace with Mexico is endangered, — while, by petulant assertion of a disputed claim to a remote territory beyond the Rocky Mountains, ancient fires of hostile strife are kindled anew on the hearth of our mother country. Mexico and England both avow the determination to vindicate what is called the *National Honor*; and our Government calmly contemplates the dread Arbitrament of War, provided it cannot obtain what is called an honorable peace. . . .

A war with Mexico would be mean and cowardly; with England it would be bold at least, though parricidal. The heart sickens at the murderous attack upon an enemy distracted by civil feud, weak at home, impotent abroad; but it recoils in horror from the deadly shock between children of a common ancestry, speaking the same language, soothed in infancy by the same words of love and tenderness, and hardened into vigorous manhood under the bracing influence of institutions instinct with the same vital breath of freedom. . . .

It is true that in us are impulses unhappily tending to strife. Propensities possessed in common with the beast, if not subordinated to what in man is human, almost divine, will break forth in outrage. This is the predominance of the animal. Hence

wars and fightings, with the false glory which crowns such barbarism. But the true civilization of nations, as of individuals, is determined by the extent to which these evil dispositions are restrained. Nor does the teacher ever more truly perform his high office than when, recognizing the supremacy of the moral and intellectual, he calls upon nations, as upon individuals, to declare independence of the bestial, to abandon practices founded on this part of our nature, and in every way to beat down that brutal spirit which is the Genius of War. In making this appeal, he will be startled as he learns, that, while the municipal law of each Christian nation, discarding the Arbitrament of Force, provides a judicial tribunal for the determination of controversies between individuals, International Law expressly *establishes* the Arbitrament of War for the determination of controversies between nations. . . .

I would now define the evil which I arraign. *War is a public armed contest between nations, under the sanction of International Law, to establish JUSTICE between them:* as, for instance, to determine a disputed boundary, the title to territory, or a claim for damages.

This definition is confined to contests between nations. . . . It is unreasonable to suppose that war can arise in the present age, under the sanctions of International Law, except to determine an *asserted right*. Whatever its character in periods of barbar-

ism, or when invoked to repel an incursion of robbers or pirates, "enemies of the human race," war becomes in our day, *among all the nations parties to existing International Law*, simply a mode of litigation, or of deciding a *lis pendens*. It is a mere *trial of right*, an appeal for justice to force. . . .

After considering, in succession, *first*, the character of war, *secondly*, the miseries it produces, and, *thirdly*, its utter and pitiful insufficiency, as a mode of determining justice, we shall be able to decide, strictly and logically, whether it must not be ranked as crime, from which no true honor can spring to individuals or nations. To appreciate this evil, and the necessity for its overthrow, it will be our duty, *fourthly*, to consider in succession the various prejudices by which it is sustained, ending with that prejudice, so gigantic and all-embracing, at whose command uncounted sums are madly diverted from purposes of peace to preparations for war. The whole subject is infinitely practical, while the concluding division shows how the public treasury may be relieved, and new means secured for human advancement.

I. First, as to the essential character and root of war, or that part of our nature whence it proceeds. . . . The idea rises to the mind at once, that war is a resort to brute force, where nations strive to overpower each other. Reason, and the divine part of our nature, where alone we differ from the beast,

where alone we approach the Divinity, where alone are the elements of that *justice* which is the professed object of war, are rudely dethroned. For the time men adopt the nature of beasts, emulating their ferocity, like them rejoicing in blood, and with lion's paw clutching an asserted right. Though in more recent days this character is somewhat disguised by the skill and knowledge employed, war is still the same, only more destructive from the genius and intellect which have become its servants. The primitive poets, in the unconscious simplicity of the world's childhood, make this boldly apparent. The heroes of Homer are likened to animals in ungovernable fury, or to things devoid of reason or affection. Menelaus presses his way through the crowd "like a wild beast." Sarpedon is aroused against the Argives, "as a lion against the crooked-horned oxen," and afterwards rushes forward "like a lion nurtured on the mountains, for a long time famished for want of flesh, but whose courage impels him to attack even the well-guarded sheepfold." . . .

From early fields of modern literature, as from those of antiquity, might be gathered similar illustrations, showing the unconscious degradation of the soldier, in vain pursuit of *justice*, renouncing the human character, to assume that of brute. Bayard, the exemplar of chivalry, with a name always on the lips of its votaries, was described by the qualities of beasts, being, according to his admirers, *ram in*

*attack, wild-boar in defense, and wolf in flight.* Henry the Fifth, as represented by our own Shakespeare, in the spirit-stirring appeal to his troops, exclaims: —

“When the blast of war blows in our ears,  
*Then imitate the action of the tiger.*”

This is plain and frank, revealing the true character of war.

I need not dwell on the moral debasement that must ensue. Passions, like so many bloodhounds, are unleashed and suffered to rage. Crimes filling our prisons stalk abroad in the soldier's garb, unwhipped of justice. Murder, robbery, rape, arson, are the sports of this fiendish Saturnalia, when

“The gates of mercy shall be all shut up,  
 And the fleshed soldier, rough and hard of heart,  
 In liberty of bloody hand shall range  
*With conscience wide as hell.*” . . .

II. The immediate effect of war is to sever all relations of friendship and commerce between the belligerent nations, and every individual thereof, impressing upon each citizen or subject the character of enemy. . . .

This is little compared with what must follow. It is but the first portentous shadow of disastrous eclipse, twilight usher of thick darkness, covering the whole heavens with a pall, broken only by the lightnings of battle and siege.

Such horrors redden the historic page, while, to the scandal of humanity, they never want historians with feelings kindred to those by which they are inspired. The demon that draws the sword also guides the pen. The favorite chronicler of modern Europe, Froissart, discovers his sympathies in his Prologue, where, with something of apostleship, he announces his purpose, "that the honorable enterprises and noble adventures and feats of arms which happened in the wars of France and England be notably registered and put in perpetual memory," and then proceeds to bestow his equal admiration upon bravery and cunning, upon the courtesy which pardoned as upon the rage which caused the flow of blood in torrents, dwelling with especial delight on "beautiful incursions, beautiful rescues, beautiful feats of arms, and beautiful prowesses"; and wantoning in pictures of cities assaulted, "which, being soon gained by force, were robbed, and men and women and children put to the sword without mercy, while the churches were burnt and violated." This was in a barbarous age. But popular writers in our own day, dazzled by false ideas of greatness, at which reason and humanity blush, do not hesitate to dwell on similar scenes even with rapture and eulogy. The humane soul of Wilberforce, which sighed that England's "bloody laws sent many unprepared into another world," could hail the slaughter of Waterloo, by which thousands were hurried into eternity

on the Sabbath he held so holy, as a "splendid victory." . . .

But wasted lands, famished cities, and slaughtered armies are not all that is contained in "the purple testament of bleeding war." Every soldier is connected with others, as all of you, by dear ties of kindred, love, and friendship. He has been sternly summoned from the embrace of family. To him there is perhaps an aged mother, who fondly hoped to lean her bending years on his more youthful form; perhaps a wife, whose life is just entwined inseparably with his, now condemned to wasting despair; perhaps sisters, brothers. As he falls on the field of war, must not all these rush with his blood? But who can measure the distress that radiates as from a bloody sun, penetrating innumerable homes? Who can give the gauge and dimensions of this infinite sorrow? . . .

III. But all these miseries are to no purpose. War is utterly ineffectual to secure or advance its professed object. The wretchedness it entails contributes to no end, helps to establish no right, and therefore in no respect determines *justice* between the contending nations.

The fruitlessness and vanity of war appear in the great conflicts by which the world has been lacerated. After long struggle, where each nation inflicts and receives incalculable injury, peace is gladly obtained on the basis of the condition before the war,

known as the *status ante bellum*. I cannot illustrate this futility better than by the familiar example — humiliating to both countries — of our last war with Great Britain, where the professed object was to obtain a renunciation of the British claim, so defiantly asserted, to impress our seamen. . . . The National Government appointed commissioners to treat for peace, with these specific instructions: “Your first duty will be to conclude a peace with Great Britain; and you are authorized to do it, *in case* you obtain a satisfactory stipulation against impressment, one which shall secure under our flag protection to the crew. . . . If this encroachment of Great Britain is not provided against, *the United States have appealed to arms in vain.*” . . . Yet the treaty that restored to us once more the blessings of peace, so rashly cast away, but now hailed with intoxication of joy, contained no allusion to impressment, nor did it provide for the surrender of a single American sailor detained in the British navy. Thus, by the confession of our own Government, “the United States *had appealed to arms in vain.*” These important words are not mine; they are words of the country.

All this is the natural result of an appeal to war for the determination of *justice*. Justice implies the exercise of the judgment. Now war not only supersedes the judgment, but delivers over the pending question to superiority of *force*, or to *chance*.



Superior force may end in conquest; this is the natural consequence; but it cannot adjudicate any right. . . . But the battle is not always to the strong. Superiority of force is often checked by the proverbial contingencies of war. Especially are such contingencies revealed in rankest absurdity, where nations, as is the acknowledged *custom*, without regard to their respective forces, whether weaker or stronger, voluntarily appeal to this mad umpirage. Who beforehand can measure the currents of the heady fight? In common language, we confess the "chances" of battle; and soldiers devoted to this harsh vocation yet call it a "game." . . .

Remember, fellow-citizens, that this criminal and impious custom [illustrated by the medieval Private Wars, the Trial by Combat, and the Duel — all now generally abolished], which all condemn in the case of individuals, is openly avowed by our own country, and by other countries of the great Christian Federation, nay, that it is expressly *established* by International Law, as the proper mode of determining *justice* between nations, — while the feats of hardihood by which it is waged, and the triumphs of its fields, are exalted beyond all other labors, whether of learning, industry, or benevolence, as the well-spring of Glory. Alas! upon our own heads be the judgment of barbarism which we pronounce upon those that have gone before! . . .

What has taught you, O man! thus to find glory

in an act, performed by a nation, which you condemn as a crime or a barbarism, when committed by an individual? In what vain conceit of wisdom and virtue do you find this incongruous morality? Where is it declared that God, who is no respecter of persons, is a respecter of multitudes? Whence do you draw these partial laws of an impartial God? Man is immortal; but Nations are mortal. Man has a higher destiny than Nations. Can Nations be less amenable to the supreme moral law? . . .

IV. I am now brought to review the obstacles encountered by those who, according to the injunction of St. Augustine, would *make war on War*, and slay it with the word. . . .

One of the most important is the prejudice from *belief in its necessity*. When War is called a necessity, it is meant, of course, that its object can be attained in no other way. Now I think it has already appeared, with distinctness approaching demonstration, that the professed object of War, which is justice between nations, is in no respect promoted by War, — that force is not justice, nor in any way conducive to justice, — that the eagles of victory are the emblems of successful force only, and not of established right. Justice is obtained solely by the exercise of reason and judgment; but these are silent in the din of arms. . . . If nations can agree in solemn provisions of International Law to establish War as Arbiter of Justice, they can also agree

to abolish this arbitrament, and to establish peaceful substitutes, — precisely as similar substitutes are established by Municipal Law to determine controversies among individuals. A system of Arbitration may be instituted, or a Congress of Nations, charged with the high duty of organizing an *Ultimate Tribunal*, instead of “these battles.” To do this, the will only is required. Let it not be said, then, that war is a *necessity*. . . .

Another prejudice is founded on *the practice of nations*, past and present. There is no crime or enormity in morals which may not find the support of human example, often on an extended scale. But it will not be urged in our day that we are to look for a standard of duty in the conduct of vain, fallible, mistaken man. Not by any subtile alchemy can man transmute Wrong into Right. Because War is according to the practice of the world, it does not follow that it is right. . . .

Often is it said that we need not be wiser than our fathers. Rather strive to excel our fathers. What in them was good imitate; but do not bind ourselves, as in chains of Fate, by their imperfect example. In all modesty be it said, we have lived to little purpose, if we are not wiser than the generations that have gone before. . . .

There is a topic which I approach with diffidence, but in the spirit of frankness. It is the influence which War, though condemned by Christ, has derived from the *Christian Church*. . . .

The Christian Church, after the early centuries, failed to discern the peculiar spiritual beauty of the faith it professed. Like Constantine, it found new incentive to War in the religion of Peace; and such is its character, even in our own day. . . . Well may we marvel that now, in an age of civilization, the God of Battles should be invoked. . . . Mars is not the God of Christians; he is not Our Father in Heaven; to him can ascend no prayers of Christian thanksgiving, no words of Christian worship, no pealing anthem to swell the note of praise. And yet Christ and Mars are still brought into fellowship, even interchanging pulpits. . . .

It will not be doubted that this strange and un-blessed conjunction of the Church with War has no little influence in blinding the world to the truth, too slowly recognized, that the whole custom of war *is contrary to Christianity*. . . .

From prejudices engendered by the Church I pass to prejudices engendered by the army itself, having their immediate origin in military life, but unfortunately diffusing themselves throughout the community, in widening though less apparent circles. I allude directly to what is called *the Point of Honor*, early child of Chivalry, living representative of its barbarism. It is difficult to define what is so evanescent, so impalpable, so chimerical, so unreal, and yet which exercises such fiendish power over many men, and controls the intercourse of nations. . . .

And when is honor at stake? This inquiry opens again the argument with which I commenced, and with which I hope to close. Honor can be at stake only where justice and beneficence are at stake; it can never depend on any hasty word of anger or folly, not even if followed by vulgar violence. True honor appears in the dignity of the human soul, in that highest moral and intellectual excellence which is the nearest approach to qualities we reverence as attributes of God. Our community frowns with indignation upon the profaneness of the duel, having its rise in this irrational *point of honor*. Are you aware that you indulge the same sentiment on a gigantic scale, when you recognize this very point of honor as a proper apology for War? We have already seen that justice is in no respect promoted by War. Is True Honor promoted where justice is not? . . . The rule of honor is founded in the imagined necessity of resenting by force a supposed injury, whether of word or act. Admit the injury received, seeming to sully the character; is it wiped away by any force, and descent to the brutal level of its author? "Could I wipe your blood from my conscience as easily as this insult from my face," said a marshal of France, greater on this occasion than on any field of fame, "I would lay you dead at my feet." . . .

Thank God! the age of chivalry is gone; but it cannot be allowed to prolong its fanaticism of honor

into our day. This must remain with the lances, swords, and daggers by which it was guarded, or appear, if it insists, only with its inseparable American companions, bowie-knife, pistol, and rifle. . . .

There is one other consideration, yielding to none in importance, — perhaps more important than all, being at once cause and effect, — the cause of strong prejudice in favor of War, and the effect of this prejudice. I refer to *Preparations for War in time of Peace*. Here is an immense practical evil. . . .

I shall not dwell upon the fearful cost of War itself. That is present in the mountainous accumulations of debt, piled like Ossa upon Pelion, with which civilization is pressed to earth. . . . The public debt of Great Britain in 1842 reached to \$3,827,833,102, the growth of War since 1688. This amount is equal to two-thirds of all the harvest of gold and silver yielded by Spanish America, including Mexico and Peru, from the discovery of our hemisphere by Christopher Columbus to the beginning of the present century, as calculated by Humboldt. For the six years preceding 1842, the average payment for interest on this debt was \$141,645,157 annually. If we add to this sum the further annual outlay of \$66,780,817 for the army, navy, and ordnance, we shall have \$208,425,974 as the annual tax of the English people, to pay for former wars and prepare for new. During this same period, an annual appropriation of \$24,858,442 was sufficient for the

entire civil service. Thus War consumed ninety cents of every dollar pressed by heavy taxation from the English people. What fabulous monster, what chimera dire, ever raged with a maw so ravenous? The remaining ten cents sufficed to maintain the splendor of the throne, the administration of justice, and diplomatic relations with foreign powers, — in short, all the more legitimate objects of a nation.

Thus much for the general cost of War. Let us now look exclusively at the *Preparations for War in time of Peace*. It is one of the miseries of War, that even in Peace its evils continue to be felt beyond any other by which suffering humanity is oppressed. . . . It is difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at any exact estimate of these Preparations, ranging under four different heads, — Standing Army, Navy, Fortifications, and Militia, or irregular troops. . . .

Colossal as are European expenditures for these purposes, they are still greater among us in proportion to other expenses of the National Government.

It appears that the average *annual* expenses of the National Government, for the six years ending 1840, exclusive of payments on account of debt, were \$26,474,892. Of this sum, the average appropriation each year for military and naval purposes amounted to \$21,328,903, being eighty per cent. Yes, — of all the annual appropriations by the National Government, eighty cents in every dollar were applied in this unproductive manner. The remaining twenty cents

sufficed to maintain the Government in all its branches, Executive, Legislative, and Judicial, — the administration of justice, our relations with foreign nations, the post-office, and all the light-houses, which, in happy, useful contrast with the forts, shed their cheerful signals over the rough waves beating upon our long and indented coast, from the Bay of Fundy to the mouth of the Mississippi. The relative expenditures of nations for Military Preparations in time of Peace, exclusive of payments on account of debts, when accurately understood, must surprise the advocates of economy in our country. In proportion to the whole expenditure of Government, they are, in Austria, as 33 per cent; in France, as 38 per cent; in Prussia, as 4 per cent; in Great Britain, as 74 per cent; in the United States, as 80 per cent!

To this stupendous waste may be added the still larger and equally superfluous expenses of the Militia throughout the country, placed recently by a candid and able writer at \$50,000,000 a year! . . .

[Here the orator by elaborate figures showed the enormous cost of the various warlike establishments as beside the comparatively insignificant sums expended upon all the institutions of learning and beneficence — schools, colleges, hospitals, asylums, etc. — the National and State judiciary and all other civil purposes, — preparations for war from the foundation of the Government to 1843 consuming nearly *twelve times* as much as the National Government expended on all other purposes whatsoever.]



Such are illustrations of that tax which nations constituting the great Federation of Civilization, including our own country, impose on the people, in time of profound peace, for no permanent productive work, for no institution of learning, for no gentle charity, for no purpose of good. Wearily climbing from expenditure to expenditure, from waste to waste, we seem to pass beyond the region of ordinary measurement; Alps on Alps arise, on whose crowning heights of everlasting cold, far above the habitations of man, where no green thing lives, where no creature draws breath, we behold the sharp, icy, flashing glacier of War. . . .

The maxim, *In time of Peace prepare for War*, is transmitted from distant ages, when brute force was the general law. It is the terrible inheritance which painfully reminds present generations of their connection with the Past. It belongs to the dogmas of barbarism. It is the companion of harsh, tyrannical rules by which the happiness of the many is offered up to the few. It is the child of suspicion, and the forerunner of violence. . . . Dismissing the actual usage on the one side, and considerations of economy on the other, I would regard these Preparations in the simple light of reason, in a just appreciation of the nature of man, and in the injunctions of the highest truth. Our conclusion will be very easy. They are twice pernicious, and whoso would vindicate them must satisfactorily answer

these two objections: *first*, that they inflame the people, exciting to deeds of violence, otherwise alien to the mind; and, *secondly*, that, having their origin in the low motives of distrust and hate, inevitably, by a sure law of the human mind, they excite to corresponding action in other nations. Thus, in fact, are they *promoters of War*, rather than *preservers of Peace*. . . .

War Preparations in a period of professed Peace must naturally prompt adverse Preparations, and everywhere within the circle of their influence quicken the Spirit of War. So are we all knit together that the feelings in our own bosoms awaken corresponding feelings in the bosoms of others, — as harp answers to harp in its softest vibration, as deep responds to deep in the might of its power. What in us is good invites the good in our brother; generosity begets generosity; love wins love; Peace secures Peace; — while all in us that is bad challenges the bad in our brother; distrust engenders distrust; hate provokes hate; War arouses War. Therefore are we admonished to avoid such appeal, and this is the voice of Nature itself. . . .

From the past and the present auspicious omens cheer us for the future. The terrible wars of the French Revolution were the violent rending of the body preceding the exorcism of the fiend. Since the morning stars first sang together, the world has not witnessed a peace so harmonious and enduring as that

which now blesses the Christian nations. Great questions, fraught with strife, and in another age heralds of War, are now determined by Mediation or Arbitration. Great political movements, which a few short years ago must have led to bloody encounter, are now conducted by peaceful discussion. Literature, the press, and innumerable societies, all join in the work of inculcating good-will to man. The Spirit of Humanity pervades the best writings, nor can the breathing thought and burning word of poet or orator have a higher inspiration. Genius is never so Promethean as when it bears the heavenly fire to the hearths of men. . . .

Recognizing those two transcendent ordinances of God, the *Law of Right* and the *Law of Love*, — twin suns which illumine the moral universe, — why not aspire to the true glory, and, what is higher than glory, the great good, of taking the lead in *the disarming of the nations*? Let us abandon the system of Preparations for War in time of Peace, as irrational, unchristian, vainly prodigal of expense, and having a direct tendency to excite the evil against which it professes to guard. Let the enormous means thus released from iron hands be devoted to labors of beneficence. Our battlements shall be schools, hospitals, colleges, and churches; our arsenals shall be libraries; our navy shall be peaceful ships, on errands of perpetual commerce; our army shall be the teachers of youth and the ministers of religion.

This is the cheap defense of nations. In such intrenchments what Christian soul can be touched with fear? Angels of the Lord will throw over the land an invisible, but impenetrable panoply: —

“Or if Virtue feeble were,  
Heaven itself would stoop to her.”

At the thought of such a change, the imagination loses itself in vain effort to follow the multitudinous streams of happiness which gush forth from a thousand hills. Then shall the naked be clothed and the hungry fed; institutions of science and learning shall crown every hilltop; hospitals for the sick, and other retreats for the unfortunate children of the world, for all who suffer in any way, in mind, body, or estate, shall nestle in every valley; while the spires of new churches leap exulting to the skies. The whole land shall testify to the change. Art shall confess it in the new inspiration of the canvas and the marble. The harp of the poet shall proclaim it in a loftier rhyme. Above all, the heart of man shall bear witness to it, in the elevation of his sentiments, in the expansion of his affections, in his devotion to the highest truth, in his appreciation of true greatness. The eagle of our country without the terror of his beak, and dropping the forceful thunderbolt from his pounces, shall soar, with the olive of Peace, into untried realms of ether, nearer to the sun.

HENRY CLAY

1777-1852

VIRGINIAN-BORN, a penniless orphan, with meager schooling, young CLAY entered an eminent Richmond law office as clerk, and became a lawyer. He settled in Lexington, Kentucky, at the age of twenty-one. Rather superficial than thorough, his alert intelligence, manifest sincerity, and charm of language, voice, and manner gave him rapid success. In 1803 he was sent to the State legislature, and in 1806, at the age of twenty-nine, to the United States Senate.

He went again to the State legislature, being Speaker of its House; was Congressman from Kentucky, and Speaker of the House of Representatives for ten years; Senator in varying terms for thirteen years; Peace Commissioner with England after the War of 1812; Secretary of State eight years; and thrice Whig candidate for the presidency. He was perhaps the most popular and widely beloved American of any time.

A very significant part of his life was in the House of Representatives, where he advocated tariff protection for "infant industries," and where his career as Speaker was exceptionally brilliant. He promoted the War of 1812. In 1820 in the Senate he quieted the discussion of slavery in the new Territories by the famous Missouri Compromise. With WEBSTER he often opposed President JACKSON, but, when South Carolina threatened nullification or secession, he devised the Compromise tariff of 1833, postponing the dreaded issue. In 1846, following Texas annexation and the Mexican War, violent agitation arose over the question of slavery or free labor in the territory acquired from Mexico. CLAY was always opposed to slavery, but loved the Union, and in 1850, he offered a Compromise bill, admitting California with its adopted constitution as a free State, and abolishing the slave trade in the District of Columbia, but enacting a stringent fugitive slave law. Portions of CLAY'S speech on it (May 13, 1850) are here given. The propositions were enacted separately, and once more "the great pacificator" had postponed the inevitable crisis.

CLAY died in 1852, a year marked also by the decease of his great compeer, WEBSTER.

## THE COMPROMISE MEASURES

I HAVE risen, Mr. President, for the purpose of making some further explanation, and an additional exposition to that contained in the report of the Committee of Thirteen,<sup>1</sup> which has recently been in consultation upon the important subjects referred to them. When the report of the Committee was presented to the Senate last week, various members of the Committee rose in their places, and stated that certain parts of the report did not meet with their concurrence. It might have been stated with perfect truth that no one member of the Committee concurred in all that was done by the Committee. There was a majority upon most, and even upon all the subjects reported by them; and each member, perhaps, if left to himself separately, would have presented the various matters which were reported to the Senate in a form somewhat different from that in which they were presented in the report. . . .

I have believed from the first, and I yet firmly believe, that if these unhappy subjects which have

<sup>1</sup> Appointed to consider the proposed measures, Mr. Clay being chairman.

divided the country shall be accommodated by an amicable adjustment, it must be done upon some such basis as that which the Committee has reported. And can there be a doubt on this subject? The crisis of the crisis, I repeat, has arrived, and the fate of the measures which have been reported by the Committee, in my humble judgment, determines the fate of the harmony or distraction of this country. . . .

The first measure upon which they reported was that of the true exposition of the compact between the United States and Texas, upon the occasion of the admission of that State into the Union. Upon that subject, as already announced in the report, I am happy to say, there was an undivided opinion. . . .

But I will not dwell longer upon that part of the subject. I will now approach that which, in the Committee, and perhaps in the two Houses, has given the most trouble and created the most anxiety, amongst all the measures upon which the Committee have reported — I mean the admission of California into the Union. Against that measure there were various objections. . . .

[After disposing of objections involving the population and the boundaries of California, Mr. Clay proceeded.]

It is mentioned in the report that there are other cases of States which have been admitted without



the previous authority of Congress.<sup>1</sup> The honorable gentleman from Alabama (Mr. Clemens) stated that in all the other instances of States admitted into the Union, they had served an apprenticeship of so many years. But the statement in the report stands uncontradicted. Michigan, Arkansas, Florida, if no other States, came into the Union without any previous act of Congress, according to the usage which prevailed in the early admission of States, authorizing them to meet in convention and form a constitution. But it is said that they were under the government of the United States. So much the better for them; they had a good government — a territorial government. But how was it with California? She had no government. You abandoned and deserted her — violated the engagement of the treaty of Hidalgo — left her to shift for herself as well as she could. In this state of abandonment, she has formed a constitution and come here. I ask again, as I had occasion to ask some three months ago, if she does not present stronger claims upon our consideration than any of those States which had territorial governments, but which, not satisfied with them, chose to form for themselves State constitutions, and come here to be admitted into the Union?

<sup>1</sup> The Californians had met in Convention, framed, and by popular vote adopted, a Constitution excluding slavery, and thereupon applied for admission as a State.

I think, then, Mr. President, that with respect to the population of California, with respect to the limits of California, and with respect to the circumstances under which she presents herself to Congress for admission as a State into the Union, all are favorable to the grant of what she solicits, and that we can find neither in the one nor the other a sufficient motive to reject or to throw her back into the state of lawless confusion and disorder from which she has emerged. . . .

[Mr. Clay here discussed territorial government for Utah and New Mexico, and settlement of the Texan boundaries.]

The next subject upon which the Committee acted was that of fugitive slaves. The Committee have proposed two amendments to be offered to the bill introduced by the Senator from Virginia, (Mr. Mason,) whenever the bill is taken up. The first of these amendments provides that the owner of a fugitive slave, when leaving his own State, and whenever it is practicable, — for sometimes, in the hot pursuit of an immediate runaway, it may not be in the power of the master to wait to get such record, and he will always do it if it is possible, — shall carry with him a record from the State from which the fugitive has fled; which record shall contain an adjudication of two facts: first the fact of slavery, and secondly, the fact of elopement;

and in the third place, such a general description of the slave as the court shall be enabled to give upon such testimony as shall be brought before it. It also provides that this record, taken from the county court, or from the court of record in the slaveholding State, shall be taken to the free State, and shall be there held to be competent and sufficient evidence of the facts which it avows. Now, Sir, I heard objection made to this that it would be an inconvenience and an expense to the slaveholder. I think the expense will be very trifling compared to the advantages which will result. . . .

Mr. President, in all subjects of this kind we must deal fairly and honestly by all. We must recollect that there are feelings, and interests, and sympathies on both sides of the question; and no man who has ever brought his mind seriously to the consideration of a suitable measure for the recapture of runaway slaves, can fail to admit that the question is surrounded with great difficulties. On the one hand, if the owner of the slave could go into this non-slaveholding State, and seize the negro, put his hands upon him, and the whole world would recognize the truth of his ownership of property, and the fact of the escape of that property, there would be no difficulty then in those States where prejudice against slavery exists in the highest degree. But he goes to a State which does not recognize slavery. Recollect how different the state of fact is now from

what it was in 1793, nearly sixty years ago. There were, then, comparatively few free persons of color — few, compared to the numbers which exist at present. By the progress of emancipation in the slaveholding States, and the multiplication of them by natural causes, vast numbers of them have rushed to the free States. There are in the cities of Philadelphia, New York, and Boston — I have not looked into the precise number — some eight or ten to one in proportion to the number there were in 1793 when the Act passed.

In proportion to the number of free blacks, multiplied in the free States, does the difficulty increase of recovering a fugitive from a slaveholding State.

Recollect, Mr. President, that the rule of law is reversed in the two classes of States. In the slaveholding States, color implies slavery, and the *onus probandi* of freedom is thrown on the persons claiming it, as every [colored] person in the slaveholding States is regarded *prima facie* as a slave. On the contrary, when you go to the non-slaveholding States, color implies freedom and not slavery. Every man who is seen in the free States, though he be a man of color, is regarded as free. And when a stranger from Virginia or Kentucky goes to remote parts of Pennsylvania, and sees a black person, who perhaps has been living there for years, and claims him to be his slave, the feelings and sympathy

of the neighborhood are naturally and necessarily excited in favor of the colored person. We all respect these feelings, where they are honestly entertained.

Well, Sir, what are you to do in a case of that kind? You will give every satisfaction that can be given that the person whom you propose to arrest is your property, and is a fugitive from your service or labor. That is the extent of one amendment which we propose to offer, but there is also another. The amendment upon which I have been commenting provides for the production of a record. Now, what is the inconvenience of that? It provides that when the owner of the slave shall arrest his property in a non-slaveholding State, and shall take him before the proper functionary to obtain a certificate to authorize the return of that property to the State from which he fled, and if he declares to that functionary at the time that he is a free man and not a slave, what does the provision require the officer to do? Why, to take a bond from the agent or owner that he will carry the black person back to the county of the State from which he fled; and that at the first court which may sit after his return, he shall be carried there, if he again assert the right to his freedom; the court shall afford and the owner shall afford to him all the facilities which are requisite to enable him to establish his right to freedom. Now, no surety is even required of the master.

The Committee thought, and in that I believe they all concurred, that it would be wrong to demand of a stranger, hundreds of miles from his home, surety to take back the slave to the State from which he fled. The trial by jury is what is demanded by the non-slaveholding States. Well, we put the party claimed to be a fugitive back to the State from which he fled, and give him trial by jury in that State.

Well, Sir, ought we not to make this concession? It is but very little inconvenience. I will tell you, Sir, what will be the practical operation of this. It will be this: When a slave has escaped from the master, and taken a refuge in a free State, and that master comes to recapture him and take him back to the State from which he fled, the slave will cry out, "I do not know the man; I never saw him in my life; I am a free man." He will say anything and do anything to preserve to himself that freedom of which he is for a moment in possession. He will assert most confidently before the judge that he is a free man. But take him back to the State from which he fled, to his comrades, and he will state the truth, and will relinquish all claim to freedom. The practical operation, therefore, of the amendment which we have proposed, will be attended with not the least earthly inconvenience to the party claiming the fugitive. The case is bond without surety. The bond is transmitted by the officer taking it to

the district attorney of the State from which he has fled. That officer sees that the bond is executed, and that the slave is taken before the court. Perhaps, before the slave reaches home, he will acknowledge that he is a slave; there is an end of the bond and an end of the trouble about the master. Is this unreasonable? Is it not a proper and rational concession to the prejudices, if you please, which exist in the non-slaveholding States? Sir, our rights are to be asserted; our rights are to be maintained. They will be asserted and maintained in a manner not to wound unnecessarily the sensibilities of others. And, in requiring such a bond as this amendment proposes to exact from the owner, I do not think there is the slightest inconvenience imposed upon him, of which he ought to complain.

Sir, there is one opinion prevailing — I hope not extensively — in some of the non-slaveholding States, which nothing we can do will conciliate. I allude to that opinion that asserts that there is a higher law — a divine law — a natural law — which entitles a man, under whose roof a runaway has come, to give him assistance, and succor, and hospitality. A divine law, a natural law! and who are they that venture to tell us what is divine and what is natural law? Where are their credentials of prophecy? Why, Sir, we are told that the other day at a meeting of some of these people at New York, Moses and all the prophets were rejected, and that the

name even of our blessed Saviour was treated with sacrilege and contempt by these propagators of a divine law, of a natural law which they have discovered above all human laws and constitutions. If Moses and the prophets, and our Saviour and all others, are to be rejected, will they condescend to show us their authority for propagating this new law, this new divine law of which they speak? The law of Nature, Sir! Look at it as it is promulgated, and even admitted or threatened to be enforced, in some quarters of the world. . . .

But there are persons in this age of enlightenment and progress and civilization, who will rise up in public assemblages, and, denouncing the Church and all that is sacred that belongs to it, — denouncing the founders of the religion which all profess and revere, — will tell you that notwithstanding the solemn oath which they have taken by kissing the Book to carry out into full effect all the provisions of the Constitution of our country, there is a law of their God — a divine law, which they have found out and nobody else has — superior and paramount to all human law; and that they do not mean to obey this human law, but the divine law, of which, by some inspiration, by some means undisclosed, they have obtained a knowledge. That is the class of persons we do not propose to conciliate by any amendment, by any concession which we can make.

But the Committee, in considering this delicate



subject, and looking at the feelings and interests on both sides of the question, thought it best to offer these two provisions, — that which requires the production of a record in the non-slaveholding States, and that which requires a bond to grant to the real claimant of his freedom a trial by jury, in the place where that trial ought to take place according to the interpretation of the Constitution of the United States, if it take place anywhere. Therefore, in order to obviate the difficulties which have been presented, and to satisfy the prejudices in the non-slaveholding States, we propose to give the fugitive the right of trial by jury in the State from which he fled. . . .

Mr. President, the only measure remaining upon which I shall say a word now, is the abolition of the slave-trade in the District of Columbia. There is, I believe, precious little of it. I believe the first man in my life that I ever heard denounce that trade was a Southern man, — John Randolph of Roanoke. I believe there has been no time within the last forty years when, if earnestly pressed upon Congress, there would not have been found a majority, perhaps a majority from the slaveholding States themselves, in favor of the abolition of the slave-trade in this District. . . .

At the beginning of this session, as you know, that offensive proviso, called the “Wilmot proviso,” was what was most apprehended, and what all the slave-

holding States were most desirous to get rid of.<sup>1</sup> Well, Sir, by the operation of causes upon the Northern mind friendly to the Union, hopes are inspired, which I trust will not be frustrated in the progress of this measure, that the North, or at least a sufficient portion of the North, are now willing to dispense with the proviso. . . . But I fear there are some of our Southern brethren who are not satisfied. There are some who say that there is yet the Wilmot proviso, under another form, lurking in the mountains of Mexico, in that natural fact to which my honorable friend from Massachusetts adverted, as I myself did when I hinted that the law of Nature was adverse to the introduction of slavery there. Now, as you find that just desire is to be obtained, there is something further, there are other difficulties in the way of the adjustment of these unhappy subjects of difference, and of obtaining that which is most to be desired, the cementing of the bonds of this Union.

Mr. President, I do not despair, I will not despair, that the measure will be carried. And I would almost stake my existence, if I dared, that if these measures which have been reported by the Committee of Thirteen were submitted to the people of the United States to-morrow, and their votes were taken upon

<sup>1</sup> Bill introduced in 1846 by David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, for purchasing territory from Mexico, provided that slavery be excluded from it.

them, there would be nine-tenths of them in favor of the pacification which is embodied in that report.

Mr. President, what have we been looking at? — What are we looking at? The “proviso”; an abstraction always; thrust upon the South by the North against all the necessities of the case, against all the warnings which the North ought to have listened to coming from the South; pressed unnecessarily for any Northern object; opposed, I admit, by the South, with a degree of earnestness uncalled for, I think, by the nature of the provision, but with a degree of earnestness natural to the South, and which the North itself perhaps would have displayed if a reversal of the conditions of the two sections of the Union could have taken place. Why do you of the North press it? You say because it is in obedience to certain sentiments in behalf of human freedom and human rights which you entertain. You are likely to accomplish those objects at once by the progress of events, without pressing this obnoxious measure. — You may retort, why is it opposed at the South? — It is opposed at the South because the South feels that, when once legislation on the subject of slavery begins, there is no seeing where it is to end. Begin it in the District of Columbia; begin it in the territories of Utah and New Mexico and California; assert your power there to-day, and in spite of all the protestations — and you are not wanting in making protestations —

that you have no purpose of extending it to the Southern States, what security can you give them that a new sect will not arise with a new version of the Constitution, or with something above or below the Constitution, which shall authorize them to carry their notions into the bosoms of the slaveholding States, and endeavor to emancipate from bondage all the slaves there? . . .

The cases, then, gentlemen of the North and gentlemen of the South, do not stand upon an equal footing. When you, on the one hand, unnecessarily press an offensive and unnecessary measure on the South, the South repels it from the highest of all human motives of action, the security of property and life, and everything else interesting and valuable in life. . . .

Mr. President, I trust that the feelings of attachment to the Union, of love for its past glory, of anticipation of its future benefits and happiness; a fraternal feeling which, I trust, will be common throughout all parts of the country; the desire to live together in peace and harmony, to prosper as we have prospered heretofore, to hold up to the civilized world the example of one great and glorious republic, fulfilling the high destiny that belongs to it, demonstrating beyond all doubt man's capacity for self-government; these motives and these considerations will, I trust, animate us all, bringing us together to dismiss alike questions of abstraction and form, and consummating the act in such a manner as to heal not one only, but all the wounds of the country.

. JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN

1782-1850

IN the second period of our national existence, when the Government was laboring at the adjustment of great interests — internal improvements, territorial expansion, troubles with England resulting in war, the tariff, the United States Bank and monetary question, the mutual relations of the States to the Union under the Constitution (a troublesome theme, underlying all the others), etc. — CALHOUN, CLAY, and WEBSTER were the immortal trio of Senators that drew the chief national attention, — WEBSTER the Northern Federalist, CALHOUN the Southern defender of State rights, and CLAY the harmonizer.

CALHOUN was a very able, noble, upright, intensely earnest man, whose sympathies grew more narrowly centered upon his own State and its interests as he grew older, thus somewhat limiting his large usefulness. A South Carolina Presbyterian of Scotch-Irish blood, born in poverty, but working his way through Yale College and law studies, he entered politics early in his native State, and was first in its legislature, then its representative in Congress; and his forty years in Washington — as Congressman, Secretary of War, Vice-President through two terms, almost President (although he disclaimed any wish for the post), Senator, again Secretary of War, and finally Senator to the end — were spent in conscientious and generally admirable service to the country.

His greatness appeared in his congressional career in both Houses, during which he took prominent part in all important questions, but he was at his greatest in the Senate, where the notable debates between him and his two great compeers took place. His last speech, during the discussion of the Clay Compromises of 1850, was read for him by another (on March 4), owing to his extreme weakness. But he was present, and his pallid face and intense eyes added solemnity to his words. He died on the 23d of that month. The address follows, somewhat abridged.

## SLAVERY AND THE UNION

I HAVE, Senators, believed from the first that the agitation of the subject of slavery would, if not prevented by some timely and effective measure, end in disunion. Entertaining this opinion, I have, on all proper occasions, endeavored to call the attention of both the two great parties which divide the country to adopt some measure to prevent so great a disaster, but without success. The agitation has been permitted to proceed with almost no attempt to resist it, until it has reached a point when it can no longer be disguised or denied that the Union is in danger. You have thus had forced upon you the greatest and gravest question that can ever come under your consideration — How can the Union be preserved?

To give a satisfactory answer to this mighty question, it is indispensable to have an accurate and thorough knowledge of the nature and the character of the cause by which the Union is endangered. Without such knowledge it is impossible to pronounce with any certainty, by what measure it can be saved; just as it would be impossible for a physician to pronounce in the case of some dan-

gerous disease, with any certainty, by what remedy the patient could be saved, without similar knowledge of the nature and character of the cause which produce it. The first question, then, presented for consideration in the investigation I propose to make in order to obtain such knowledge is — What is it that has endangered the Union?

To this question there can be but one answer, — that the immediate cause is the almost universal discontent which pervades all the States composing the Southern section of the Union. This widely extended discontent is not of recent origin. It commenced with the agitation of the slavery question, and has been increasing ever since. The next question, going one step further back, is — What has caused this widely diffused and almost universal discontent?

It is a great mistake to suppose, as is by some, that it originated with demagogues who excited the discontent with the intention of aiding their personal advancement, or with the disappointed ambition of certain politicians who resorted to it as the means of retrieving their fortunes. On the contrary, all the great political influences of the section were arrayed against excitement, and exerted to the utmost to keep the people quiet. The great mass of the people of the South were divided, as in the other section, into Whigs and Democrats. The leaders and the presses of both parties in the South were



very solicitous to prevent excitement and to preserve quiet; because it was seen that the effects of the former would necessarily tend to weaken, if not destroy, the political ties which united them with their respective parties in the other section.

Those who know the strength of party ties will readily appreciate the immense force which this cause exerted against agitation and in favor of preserving quiet. But, great as it was, it was not sufficient to prevent the widespread discontent which now pervades the section. No: some cause far deeper and more powerful than the one supposed, must exist, to account for discontent so wide and deep.

The question then recurs — What is the cause of this discontent? It will be found in the belief of the people of the Southern States, as prevalent as the discontent itself, that they cannot remain, as things now are, consistently with honor and safety, in the Union. The next question to be considered is — What has caused this belief?

One of the causes is, undoubtedly, to be traced to the long-continued agitation of the slave question on the part of the North, and the many aggressions which they have made on the rights of the South during the time. I will not enumerate them at present, as it will be done hereafter in its proper place.

There is another lying back of it — with which this is intimately connected — that may be re-

garded as the great and primary cause. This is to be found in the fact that the equilibrium between the two sections in the Government as it stood when the Constitution was ratified and the Government put in action has been destroyed. At that time there was nearly a perfect equilibrium between the two, which afforded ample means to each to protect itself against the aggression of the other; but, as it now stands, one section has the exclusive power of controlling the government, which leaves the other without any adequate means of protecting itself against its encroachment and oppression. To place this subject distinctly before you, I have, Senators, prepared a brief statistical statement, showing the relative weight of the two sections in the Government under the first census of 1790 and the last census of 1840. . . .

The result of the whole is to give the Northern section a predominance in every department of the Government, and thereby concentrate in it the two elements which constitute the Federal Government, — a majority of States, and a majority of their population, estimated in Federal numbers. Whatever section concentrates the two in itself possesses the control of the entire Government.

But we are just at the close of the sixth decade and the commencement of the seventh. The census is to be taken this year, which must add greatly to the decided preponderance of the North

in the House of Representatives and in the Electoral College. The prospect is, also, that a great increase will be added to its present preponderance in the Senate, during the period of the decade, by the addition of new States. Two Territories, Oregon and Minnesota, are already in progress, and strenuous efforts are making to bring in three additional States from the Territory recently conquered from Mexico; which, if successful, will add three other States in a short time to the Northern section, making five States, and increasing the present number of its States from fifteen to twenty, and of its senators from thirty to forty. On the contrary, there is not a single Territory in progress in the Southern section, and no certainty that any additional State will be added to it during the decade. The prospect then is, that the two sections in the Senate, should the efforts now made to exclude the South from the newly acquired Territories succeed, will stand, before the end of the decade, twenty Northern States to fourteen Southern (considering Delaware as neutral), and forty Northern senators to twenty-eight Southern. This great increase of senators, added to the great increase of members of the House of Representatives and the Electoral College on the part of the North, which must take place under the next decade, will effectually and irretrievably destroy the equilibrium which existed when the Government commenced.

Had this destruction been the operation of time without the interference of government, the South would have had no reason to complain; but such was not the fact. It was caused by the legislation of this Government, which was appointed as the common agent of all and charged with the protection of the interests and security of all.

The legislation by which it has been effected, may be classed under three heads. The first is, that series of acts by which the South has been excluded from the common territory belonging to all the States as members of the Federal Union — which have had the effect of extending vastly the portion allotted to the Northern section, and restricting within narrow limits the portion left the South. The next consists in adopting a system of revenue and disbursements, by which an undue proportion of the burden of taxation has been imposed upon the South, and an undue proportion of its proceeds appropriated to the North; and the last is a system of political measures by which the original character of the Government has been radically changed.

The first of the series of acts by which the South was deprived of its due share of the Territories, originated with the confederacy which preceded the existence of this Government. It is to be found in the provision of the ordinance of 1787. Its effect was to exclude the South [*i.e.* slavery] entirely from

that vast and fertile region which lies between the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers, now embracing five States and one Territory. The next of the series is the Missouri Compromise, which excluded the South from that large portion of Louisiana which lies north of  $36^{\circ} 30'$ , excepting what is included in the State of Missouri. The last of the series excluded the South from the whole of the Oregon Territory. All these, in the slang of the day, were what are called slave Territories, and not free soil; that is, Territories belonging to slaveholding powers and open to the emigration of masters with their slaves. By these several acts, the South was excluded from 1,238,025 square miles—an extent of country considerably exceeding the entire valley of the Mississippi. . . .

I have not included the territory recently acquired by the treaty with Mexico. . . . To sum up the whole, the United States, since they declared their independence, have acquired 2,373,046 square miles of territory, from which the North will have excluded the South, if she should succeed in monopolizing the newly acquired Territories, about three-fourths of the whole, leaving to the South but about one-fourth.

Such is the first and great cause that has destroyed the equilibrium between the two sections in the Government.

The next is the system of revenue and disburse-

ments which has been adopted by the Government. It is well known that the Government has derived its revenue mainly from duties on imports. I shall not undertake to show that such duties must necessarily fall mainly on the exporting States, and that the South, as the great exporting portion of the Union, has in reality paid vastly more than her due proportion of the revenue; because I deem it unnecessary, as the subject has on so many occasions been fully discussed. Nor shall I, for the same reason, undertake to show that a far greater portion of the revenue has been disbursed in the North, than its due share; and that the joint effect of these causes has been to transfer a vast amount from South to North, which, under an equal system of revenue and disbursements, would not have been lost to her. If to this be added that many of the duties were imposed, not for revenue but for protection, — that is, intended to put money, not in the Treasury, but directly into the pocket of the manufacturers, — some conception may be formed of the immense amount which in the long course of sixty years has been transferred from South to North. There are no data by which it can be estimated with any certainty; but it is safe to say that it amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars. Under the most moderate estimate it would be sufficient to add greatly to the wealth of the North, and thus greatly increase her population by attracting immigration from all

quarters to that section. This, combined with the great primary cause, amply explains why the North has acquired a preponderance in every department of the Government by its disproportionate increase of population and States. . . .

But while these measures were destroying the equilibrium between the two sections, the action of the Government was leading to a radical change in its character, by concentrating all the power of the system in itself. The occasion will not permit me to trace the measures by which this great change has been consummated. If it did, it would not be difficult to show the process commenced at an early period of the Government; and that it proceeded, almost without interruption, step by step, until it absorbed virtually its entire powers. . . .

The result of the whole of these causes combined is — that the North has acquired a decided ascendancy over every department of this Government, and through it a control over all the powers of the system. A single section governed by the will of the numerical majority, has now, in fact, the control of the Government and the entire powers of the system. What was once a constitutional federal republic, is now converted, in reality, into one as absolute as that of the Autocrat of Russia, and as despotic in its tendency as any absolute government that ever existed. . . .

But if there was no question of vital importance

to the South, in reference to which there was a diversity of views between the two sections, this state of things might be endured, without the hazard of destruction to the South. But such is not the fact. There is a question of vital importance to the Southern section, in reference to which the views and feelings of the two sections are as opposite and hostile as they can possibly be.

I refer to the relation between the two races in the Southern section, which constitutes a vital portion of her social organization. Every portion of the North entertains views and feelings more or less hostile to it. Those most opposed and hostile regard it as a sin, and consider themselves under the most sacred obligation to use every effort to destroy it. . . .

On the contrary, the Southern section regards the relation as one which cannot be destroyed without subjecting the two races to the greatest calamity, and the section to poverty, desolation, and wretchedness; and accordingly they feel bound by every consideration of interest and safety to defend it. . . .

Such is a brief history of the agitation, as far as it has yet advanced. Now I ask, Senators, what is there to prevent its further progress, until it fulfills the ultimate end proposed, unless some decisive measure should be adopted to prevent it? Has any one of the causes, which has added to its increase from its original small and contemptible beginning until it has attained its present magnitude, di-



minated in force? . . . No — no — no! The very reverse is true. Instead of being weaker, all the elements in favor of agitation are stronger now than they were in 1835, when it first commenced, while all the elements of influence on the part of the South are weaker. . . .

Unless something decisive is done, I again ask, What is to stop this agitation before the great and final object at which it aims — the abolition of slavery in the States — is consummated? Is it, then, not certain that if something is not done to arrest it, the South will be forced to choose between abolition and secession? Indeed, as events are now moving, it will not require the South to secede in order to dissolve the Union. Agitation will of itself effect it, of which its past history furnishes abundant proof — as I shall next proceed to show.

It is a great mistake to suppose that disunion can be effected by a single blow. The cords which bind these States together in one common Union are far too numerous and powerful for that. Disunion must be the work of time. It is only through a long process, and successively, that the cords can be snapped until the whole fabric falls asunder. Already the agitation of the slavery question has snapped some of the most important, and has greatly weakened all the others, as I shall proceed to show. . . .

If the agitation goes on, the same force, acting with increased intensity, as has been shown, will

finally snap every cord, when nothing will be left to hold the States together except force. But surely that can with no propriety of language be called a Union when the only means by which the weaker is held connected with the stronger portion is *force*. It may, indeed, keep them connected; but the connection will partake much more of the character of subjugation on the part of the weaker to the stronger than the union of free, independent, and sovereign States in one confederation, as they stood in the early stages of the Government, and which only is worthy of the sacred name of Union.

Having now, Senators, explained what it is that endangers the Union, and traced it to its cause, and explained its nature and character, the question again recurs, How can the Union be saved? To this I answer, there is but one way by which it can be — and that is, by adopting such measures as will satisfy the States belonging to the Southern section that they can remain in the Union consistently with their honor and their safety. There is, again, only one way by which this can be effected, and that is by removing the causes by which this belief has been produced. Do this, and discontent will cease, harmony and kind feelings between the sections be restored, and every apprehension of danger to the Union removed. The question, then, is, How can this be done?

But before I undertake to answer this question,

I propose to show by what the Union cannot be saved.

[Mr. Calhoun here discussed insincere eulogies and cries of "The Union!", Senator Clay's proposed Compromise bill, the Administration's plan of allowing territorial inhabitants instead of Congress to legislate for the Territories ("squatter sovereignty"), and particularly the proposed admission of California as a State, its constitution (excluding slavery) having been formed by its inhabitants without an enabling act from Congress.]

Having now shown what cannot save the Union, I return to the question with which I commenced, How can the Union be saved? . . .

There is but one way by which it can with any certainty; and that is, by a full and final settlement, on the principle of justice, of all the questions at issue between the two sections. The South asks for justice, simple justice, and less she ought not to take. She has no compromise to offer but the Constitution, and no concession or surrender to make. She has already surrendered so much that she has little left to surrender. Such a settlement would go to the root of the evil, and remove all cause of discontent, by satisfying the South that she could remain honorably and safely in the Union, and thereby restore the harmony and fraternal feelings between the sections which existed anterior to the Missouri agitation. Nothing else can, with any certainty,

finally and forever settle the question at issue, terminate agitation, and save the Union.

But can this be done? Yes, easily; not by the weaker party, for it can of itself do nothing — not even protect itself — but by the stronger. The North has only to will it to accomplish it: to do justice by conceding to the South an equal right in the acquired territory, and to do her duty by causing the stipulations relative to fugitive slaves to be faithfully fulfilled; to cease the agitation of the slave question, and to provide for the insertion of a provision in the Constitution, by an amendment, which will restore to the South, in substance, the power she possessed of protecting herself before the equilibrium between the sections was destroyed by the action of this Government. There will be no difficulty in devising such a provision — one that will protect the South, and which at the same time will improve and strengthen the Government instead of impairing and weakening it.

But will the North agree to this? It is for her to answer the question. But, I will say, she cannot refuse if she has half the love of the Union which she professes to have, or without justly exposing herself to the charge that her love of power and aggrandizement is far greater than her love of the Union. At all events, the responsibility of saving the Union rests on the North, and not on the South. The South cannot save it by any act of hers, and the

North may save it without any sacrifice whatever, unless to do justice and to perform her duties under the Constitution should be regarded by her as a sacrifice.

It is time, Senators, that there should be an open and manly avowal on all sides as to what is intended to be done. If the question is not now settled, it is uncertain whether it ever can hereafter be; and we, as the representatives of the States of this Union regarded as governments, should come to a distinct understanding as to our respective views, in order to ascertain whether the great questions at issue can be settled or not. If you who represent the stronger portion, cannot agree to settle them on the broad principle of justice and duty, say so; and let the States we both represent agree to separate and part in peace.

If you are unwilling we should part in peace, tell us so; and we shall know what to do when you reduce the question to submission or resistance. If you remain silent, you will compel us to infer by your acts what you intend. In that case California will become the test question. If you admit her under all the difficulties that oppose her admission, you compel us to infer that you intend to exclude us from the whole of the acquired territories, with the intention of destroying irretrievably the equilibrium between the two sections. We would be blind not to perceive in that case that your real

objects are power and aggrandizement, and infatuated not to act accordingly.

I have now, Senators, done my duty in expressing my opinions fully, freely, and candidly on this solemn occasion. In doing so I have been governed by the motives which have governed me in all the stages of the agitation of the slavery question since its commencement. I have exerted myself during the whole period to arrest it, with the intention of saving the Union if it could be done; and if it could not, to save the section where it has pleased Providence to cast my lot, and which I sincerely believe has justice and the Constitution on its side. Having faithfully done my duty to the best of my ability, both to the Union and my section, throughout this agitation, I shall have the consolation, let what will come, that I am free from all responsibility.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809-1865

THE Southern "poor white" is the type of lazy thriftlessness, yet from that class arose ABRAHAM LINCOLN. Born in Kentucky, migrating with his father, he grew up in Indiana and Illinois. He had practically no schooling, was physically tall, tough, and strong, had a tender heart, a clear head, a boundless fund of humor, and an indomitable persistence in reading and mastering the few books he could get.

In 1832 LINCOLN went to the Black Hawk War. After doing what he could in various country callings — meantime learning men, trade, and politics, and gaining a name for honesty and good judgment — he was in 1834 elected to the Illinois legislature. Remaining there till 1842, he read law, in 1837 beginning practice in Springfield, Illinois. As a lawyer LINCOLN succeeded, because he was sensible, careful, honorable, refusing cases that he did not trust, knowing what to say and how to say it. His assiduous study of a few great authors and his own lucid thinking gave him a rare mastery of expression. In 1847 he was elected to Congress for two years. In 1858, already known in the West, he encountered in public debate the able Senator STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS — both seeking the United States senatorship from Illinois. He lost that prize, but achieved a reputation that, with other notable addresses, made him President-elect in 1860, and heir to the awful burdens of the Civil War.

LINCOLN'S wise, kind, steady administration, his Emancipation Proclamation of 1862, his reelection in 1864, the Union triumph in 1865, and his assassination shortly after, are known of all. The examples of his simple, cogent oratory given are his brave speech on "The Divided House," at the Republican Convention, nominating him for the Senate against DOUGLAS (June 16, 1858), — premonitory of SEWARD on "The Irrepressible Conflict," in the following October, — and his immortal address at the Gettysburg Cemetery Dedication (November 19, 1863).



## THE DIVIDED HOUSE

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION: If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object, and confident promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation not only has not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South. Have we no tendency to the latter condi-

tion? Let any one who doubts carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination-piece of machinery, so to speak — compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted, but also let him study the history of its construction, and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design and concert of action among its chief architects from the beginning.

The new year of 1854 found slavery excluded from more than half the States by State constitutions, and from most of the national territory by Congressional prohibition. Four days later commenced the struggle which ended in repealing that Congressional prohibition. This opened all the national territory to slavery, and was the first point gained. But, so far, Congress only had acted, and an indorsement, by the people, real or apparent, was indispensable, to save the point already gained and give chance for more. This necessity had not been overlooked, but had been provided for, as well as might be, in the notable argument of "squatter sovereignty," otherwise called "sacred right of self-government"; which latter phrase, though expressive of the only rightful basis of any government, was so perverted in this attempted use of it as to amount to just this: that, if any one man choose to enslave another, no third man shall be allowed to object. That argu-

ment was incorporated with the Nebraska bill itself, in the language which follows: "It being the true intent and meaning of this act, not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom; but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States." Then opened the roar of loose declamation in favor of "squatter sovereignty," and "sacred right of self-government." "But," said opposition members, "let us amend the bill so as to expressly declare that the people of the Territory may exclude slavery." "Not we," said the friends of the measure; and down they voted the amendment.

While the Nebraska bill was passing through Congress, a law case, involving the question of a negro's freedom, by reason of his owner having voluntarily taken him first into a free State, and then into a Territory covered by the Congressional prohibition, and held him as a slave for a long time in each, was passing through the United States Circuit Court for the District of Missouri; and both Nebraska bill and lawsuit were brought to a decision in the same month of May, 1854. The negro's name was Dred Scott, which name now designates the decision finally made in the case. Before the then next presidential election, the law case came to, and was argued in, the Supreme Court of the United States;

but the decision of it was deferred until after the election. Still, before the election, Senator Trumbull, on the floor of the Senate, requested the leading advocate of the Nebraska bill to state his opinion whether the people of a Territory can constitutionally exclude slavery from their limits; and the latter answers: "That is a question for the Supreme Court."

The election came, Mr. Buchanan was elected, and the indorsement, such as it was, secured. That was the second point gained. The indorsement, however, fell short of a clear popular majority by nearly four hundred thousand votes, and so, perhaps, was not overwhelmingly reliable and satisfactory. The outgoing President, in his last annual message, as impressively as possible, echoed back upon the people the weight and authority of the indorsement. The Supreme Court met again, did not announce their decision, but ordered a reargument. The presidential inauguration came, and still no decision of the court; but the incoming President, in his inaugural address, fervently exhorted the people to abide by the forthcoming decision, whatever it might be. Then, in a few days, came the decision. The reputed author of the Nebraska bill finds an early occasion to make a speech at this capital [Douglas, at Springfield, Illinois], indorsing the Dred Scott decision, and vehemently denouncing all opposition to it. The new President, too, seizes the early occasion of

the Silliman letter to indorse and strongly construe that decision, and to express his astonishment that any different view had ever been entertained.

At length a squabble springs up between the President and the author of the Nebraska bill, on the mere question of fact, whether the Lecompton constitution was, or was not, in any just sense, made by the people of Kansas; and in that quarrel the latter declares that all he wants is a fair vote for the people, and that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up. I do not understand his declaration, that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up, to be intended by him other than as an apt definition of the policy he would impress upon the public mind — the principle for which he declares he has suffered so much, and is ready to suffer to the end. And well may he cling to that principle. If he has any parental feeling, well may he cling to it. That principle is the only shred left of his original Nebraska doctrine. Under the Dred Scott decision squatter sovereignty squattered out of existence — tumbled down like temporary scaffolding — like the mold at the foundry, served through one blast, and fell back into loose sand — helped to carry an election, and then was kicked to the winds. His late joint struggle with the Republicans against the Lecompton constitution involves nothing of the original Nebraska doctrine. That struggle was made on a point — the right of a people

to make their own constitution — upon which he and the Republicans have never differed.

The several points of the Dred Scott decision, in connection with Senator Douglas's "care-not" policy, constitute the piece of machinery in its present state of advancement. This was the third point gained. The working points of that machinery are: (1) That no negro slave, imported as such from Africa, and no descendant of such slave, can ever be a citizen of any State, in the sense of that term as used in the Constitution of the United States. This point is made in order to deprive the negro, in every possible event, of the benefit of that provision of the United States Constitution, which declares that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States." (2) That, "subject to the Constitution of the United States," neither Congress nor a Territorial legislature can exclude slavery from any United States territory. This point is made in order that individual men may fill up the territories with slaves, without danger of losing them as property, and thus to enhance the chances of permanency to the institution through all the future. (3) That whether the holding a negro in actual slavery in a free State makes him free, as against the holder, the United States courts will not decide, but will leave to be decided by the courts of any slave State the negro may be forced into by the master. This point is made,

not to be pressed immediately; but, if acquiesced in for a while, and apparently indorsed by the people at an election, then to sustain the logical conclusion that what Dred Scott's master might lawfully do with Dred Scott, in the State of Illinois, every other master may lawfully do with any other one or one thousand slaves, in Illinois, or in any other free State.

Auxiliary to all this, and working hand in hand with it, the Nebraska doctrine, or what is left of it, is to educate and mold public opinion, at least Northern public opinion, not to "care whether slavery is voted down or voted up." This shows exactly where we now are, and partially, also, whither we are tending.

It will throw additional light on the latter to go back, and run the mind over the string of historical facts already stated. Several things will now appear less dark and mysterious than they did when they were transpiring. The people were to be left "perfectly free," "subject only to the Constitution." What the Constitution had to do with it, outsiders could not then see. Plainly enough now, it was an exactly fitted niche for the Dred Scott decision to come in afterward, and declare the perfect freedom of the people to be just no freedom at all. Why was the amendment expressly declaring the right of the people voted down? Plainly enough now: the adoption of it would have spoiled the niche for

the Dred Scott decision. Why was the court decision held up? Why even a Senator's individual opinion withheld till after the presidential election? Plainly enough now: the speaking out then would have damaged the "perfectly free" argument upon which the election was to be carried. Why the outgoing President's felicitation on the indorsement? Why the delay of a reargument? Why the incoming President's advance exhortation in favor of the decision? These things look like the cautious patting and petting of a spirited horse preparatory to mounting him, when it is dreaded that he may give the rider a fall. And why the hasty after-indorsement of the decision by the President and others?

We cannot absolutely know that all these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places, and by different workmen, — Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James, for instance, — and when we see these timbers joined together, and see that they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortises exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few — not omitting even scaffolding — or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in — in such a case,



we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen, Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck.

It should not be overlooked that, by the Nebraska bill, the people of a State, as well as Territory, were to be left "perfectly free," "subject only to the Constitution." Why mention a State? They were legislating for Territories, and not for or about States. Certainly, the people of a State are and ought to be subject to the Constitution of the United States; but why is mention of this lugged into this merely Territorial law? Why are the people of a Territory and the people of a State therein lumped together, and their relation to the Constitution therein treated as being precisely the same? While the opinion of the court, by Chief Justice Taney, in the Dred Scott case, and the separate opinions of all the concurring judges, expressly declare that the Constitution of the United States permits neither Congress nor a Territorial legislature to exclude slavery from any United States territory, they all omit to declare whether or not the same Constitution permits a State, or the people of a State, to exclude it. Possibly, this is a mere omission; but who can be quite sure, if McLean or Curtis had sought to get into the opinion a declaration of unlimited power in the people of a State to exclude

slavery from their limits, just as Chase and Mace sought to get such declaration, in behalf of the people of a Territory, into the Nebraska bill — I ask, who can be quite sure that it would not have been voted down in the one case as it had been in the other?

The nearest approach to the point of declaring the power of a State over slavery is made by Judge Nelson. He approaches it more than once, using the precise idea, and almost the language, too, of the Nebraska act. On one occasion, his exact language is: "Except in cases when the power is restrained by the Constitution of the United States, the law of the State is supreme over the subjects of slavery within its jurisdiction." In what cases the power of the States is so restrained by the United States Constitution is left an open question, precisely as the same question, as to the restraint on the power of the Territories, was left open in the Nebraska act. Put this and that together, and we have another nice little niche, which we may, ere long, see filled with another Supreme Court decision, declaring that the Constitution of the United States does not permit a State to exclude slavery from its limits. And this may especially be expected if the doctrine of "care not whether slavery be voted down or voted up," shall gain upon the public mind sufficiently to give promise that such a decision can be maintained when made.

Such a decision is all that slavery now lacks of

being alike lawful in all the States. Welcome or unwelcome, such decision is probably coming, and will soon be upon us, unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown. We shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their State free, and we shall awake to the reality, instead, that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave State. To meet and overthrow that dynasty is the work before all those who would prevent that consummation. That is what we have to do. How can we best do it?

There are those who denounce us openly to their own friends, and yet whisper us softly that Senator Douglas is the aptest instrument there is with which to effect that object. They wish us to infer all, from the fact that he now has a little quarrel with the present head of the dynasty; and that he has regularly voted with us on a single point, upon which he and we have never differed. They remind us that he is a great man, and that the largest of us are very small ones. Let this be granted. "But a living dog is better than a dead lion." Judge Douglas, if not a dead lion, for this work, is at least a caged and toothless one. How can he oppose the advances of slavery? He don't care anything about it. His avowed mission is impressing the "public heart" to care nothing about it. A leading Douglas Democratic newspaper thinks Douglas's superior

talent will be needed to resist the revival of the African slave-trade. Does Douglas believe an effort to revive that trade is approaching? He has not said so. Does he really think so? But if it is, how can he resist it? For years he has labored to prove it a sacred right of white men to take negro slaves into the new Territories. Can he possibly show that it is less a sacred right to buy them where they can be bought cheapest? And unquestionably they can be bought cheaper in Africa than in Virginia. He has done all in his power to reduce the whole question of slavery to one of a mere right of property; and as such, how can he oppose the foreign slave-trade? How can he refuse that trade in that "property" shall be "perfectly free," unless he does it as a protection to the home production? And as the home producers will probably ask the protection, he will be wholly without a ground of opposition.

Senator Douglas holds, we know, that a man may rightfully be wiser to-day than he was yesterday — that he may rightfully change when he finds himself wrong. But can we, for that reason, run ahead, and infer that he will make any particular change, of which he himself has given no intimation? Can we safely base our action upon any such vague inference? Now, as ever, I wish not to misrepresent Judge Douglas's position, question his motives, or do aught that can be personally offensive to him. Whenever, if ever, he and we can come together on

principle, so that our cause may have assistance from his great ability, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle. But, clearly, he is not now with us — he does not pretend to be, he does not promise ever to be.

Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends — those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work — who do care for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger. With every external circumstance against us, of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then, to falter now? — now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent! The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail — if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate, or mistakes delay it; but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.

## THE GETTYSBURG CEMETERY

FOURSCORE and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition

that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD

1801-1872

COUNTRY born and bred, in western New York State, SEWARD graduated at Union College, studied law, and practiced it in Auburn until 1830, when he was elected to the State Senate. He was a man of excellent sense and judgment, cool and clear-headed, gifted with a persuasive logic in speech, and wisely pursuant of ethical aims in legislation. He was also a shrewd reader of men and political conditions, and, both as a Whig party man and a promoter of statesmanlike views, he was soon a recognized leader. An unsuccessful candidacy for Governor of New York in 1834 was succeeded by a success in 1838, and a reëlection in 1840, while in 1843 he was sent to the United States Senate. He remained there through all the turbulent excitement of the ante-war period until 1861, and was, both in the Senate and in many addresses throughout the North, one of the most noted men of the new Republican party which he had helped organize in 1856.

SEWARD was generally expected to be the Republican candidate in 1860, but Providence had for that place a simpler yet a stronger man in LINCOLN. He became, however, head of LINCOLN'S cabinet as Secretary of State, and was of signal service in various matters, especially in the *Trent* complication with England, in persuading France to withdraw her troops from Mexico, and in the purchase of Alaska from Russia.

On the night of LINCOLN'S assassination SEWARD was brutally attacked, but he recovered, and aided JOHNSON during the reconstruction tangle. He made several trips to Europe, in 1870-1871 going around the world. One of SEWARD'S most famous speeches—that on the "Irrepressible Conflict" (October 25, 1858)—is here given. Possibly suggested by LINCOLN'S speech on "The Divided House," it was yet a landmark in a time of political drifting, and showed the country its true position.



## THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

THE unmistakable outbreaks of zeal which occur all around me show that you are earnest men — and such a man am I. Let us, therefore, at least for a time, pass all secondary and collateral questions, whether of a personal or of a general nature, and consider the main subject of the present canvass. The Democratic party, or, to speak more accurately, the party which wears that attractive name — is in possession of the Federal government. The Republicans propose to dislodge that party, and dismiss it from its high trust.

The main subject, then, is whether the Democratic party deserves to retain the confidence of the American people. In attempting to prove it unworthy, I think that I am not actuated by prejudices against that party, or by prepossessions in favor of its adversary; for I have learned, by some experience, that virtue and patriotism, vice and selfishness, are found in all parties, and that they differ less in their motives than in the policies they pursue.

Our country is a theater, which exhibits, in full operation, two radically different political systems;

the one resting on the basis of servile or slave labor, the other on voluntary labor of freemen. The laborers who are enslaved are all negroes, or persons more or less purely of African derivation. But this is only accidental. The principle of the system is, that labor in every society, by whomsoever performed, is necessarily unintellectual, groveling, and base; and that the laborer, equally for his own good and for the welfare of the State, ought to be enslaved. The white laboring man, whether native or foreigner, is not enslaved, only because he cannot, as yet, be reduced to bondage.

You need not be told now that the slave system is the older of the two, and that once it was universal. The emancipation of our own ancestors, Caucasians and Europeans as they were, hardly dates beyond a period of five hundred years. The great melioration of human society which modern times exhibit is mainly due to the incomplete substitution of the system of voluntary labor for the one of servile labor, which has already taken place. This African slave system is one which, in its origin and in its growth, has been altogether foreign from the habits of the races which colonized these States, and established civilization here. It was introduced on this continent as an engine of conquest, and for the establishment of monarchical power, by the Portuguese and the Spaniards, and was rapidly extended by them all over South America, Central America, Louisiana,

and Mexico. Its legitimate fruits are seen in the poverty, imbecility, and anarchy which now pervade all Portuguese and Spanish America. The free-labor system is of German extraction, and it was established in our country by emigrants from Sweden, Holland, Germany, Great Britain, and Ireland. We justly ascribe to its influences the strength, wealth, greatness, intelligence, and freedom, which the whole American people now enjoy. One of the chief elements of the value of human life is freedom in the pursuit of happiness. The slave system is not only intolerable, unjust, and inhuman, toward the laborer, whom, only because he is a laborer, it loads down with chains and converts into merchandise, but is scarcely less severe upon the freeman, to whom, only because he is a laborer from necessity, it denies facilities for employment, and whom it expels from the community because it cannot enslave and convert into merchandise also. It is necessarily improvident and ruinous, because, as a general truth, communities prosper and flourish, or droop and decline, in just the degree that they practice or neglect to practice the primary duties of justice and humanity. The free-labor system conforms to the divine law of equality, which is written in the hearts and consciences of man, and therefore is always and everywhere beneficent.

The slave system is one of constant danger, distrust, suspicion, and watchfulness. It debases those

whose toil alone can produce wealth and resources for defense, to the lowest degree of which human nature is capable, to guard against mutiny and insurrection, and thus wastes energies which otherwise might be employed in national development and aggrandizement.

The free-labor system educates all alike, and by opening all the fields of industrial employment and all the departments of authority, to the unchecked and equal rivalry of all classes of men, at once secures universal contentment, and brings into the highest possible activity all the physical, moral, and social energies of the whole state. In states where the slave system prevails, the masters, directly or indirectly, secure all political power, and constitute a ruling aristocracy. In states where the free-labor system prevails, universal suffrage necessarily obtains, and the state inevitably becomes, sooner or later, a republic or democracy. . . . [*European instances.*]

In the United States, slavery came into collision with free labor at the close of the last century, and fell before it in New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, but triumphed over it effectually, and excluded it for a period yet undetermined, from Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. Indeed, so incompatible are the two systems, that every new State which is organized within our ever extending domain makes its first political act a choice of the one and the exclusion of the other, even at the

cost of civil war, if necessary. The slave States, without law, at the last national election, successfully forbade, within their own limits, even the casting of votes for a candidate for President of the United States supposed to be favorable to the establishment of the free-labor system in new States.

Hitherto, the two systems have existed in different States, but side by side within the American Union. This has happened because the Union is a confederation of States. But in another aspect the United States constitute only one nation. Increase of population, which is filling the States out to their very borders, together with a new and extended network of railroads and other avenues, and an internal commerce which daily becomes more intimate, is rapidly bringing the States into a higher and more perfect social unity or consolidation. Thus, these antagonistic systems are continually coming into closer contact, and collision results.

Shall I tell you what this collision means? They who think that it is accidental, unnecessary, the work of interested or fanatical agitators, and therefore ephemeral, mistake the case altogether. It is an *irrepressible conflict* between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation. Either the cotton and rice-fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately

be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts of legitimate merchandise alone, or else the rye-fields and wheat-fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become once more markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men. It is the failure to apprehend this great truth that induces so many unsuccessful attempts at final compromises between the slave and free States, and it is the existence of this great fact that renders all such pretended compromises, when made, vain and ephemeral.

Startling as this saying may appear to you, fellow-citizens, it is by no means an original or even a modern one. Our forefathers knew it to be true, and unanimously acted upon it when they framed the Constitution of the United States. They regarded the existence of the servile system in so many of the States with sorrow and shame, which they openly confessed, and they looked upon the collision between them, which was then just revealing itself, and which we are now accustomed to deplore, with favor and hope. They knew that one or the other system must exclusively prevail.

Unlike too many of those who in modern time invoke their authority, they had a choice between the two. They preferred the system of free labor, and they determined to organize the government, and

so direct its activity, that that system should surely and certainly prevail. . . . It is true that they necessarily and wisely modified this policy of freedom by leaving it to the several States, affected as they were by different circumstances, to abolish slavery in their own way and at their own pleasure, instead of confiding that duty to Congress; and that they secured to the slave States, while yet retaining the system of slavery, a three-fifths representation of slaves in the Federal government, until they should find themselves able to relinquish it with safety. But the very nature of these modifications fortifies my position, that the fathers knew that the two systems could not endure within the Union, and expected within a short period slavery would disappear forever. Moreover, in order that these modifications might not altogether defeat their grand design of a republic maintaining universal equality, they provided that two-thirds of the States might amend the Constitution. . . .

It is not to be denied, however, that thus far the course of that contest has not been according to their humane anticipations and wishes. In the field of Federal politics, slavery, deriving unlooked-for advantages from commercial changes, and energies unforeseen from the facilities of combination between members of the slaveholding class and between that class and other property classes, early rallied, and has at length made a stand, not merely to retain

its original defensive position, but to extend its sway throughout the whole Union. . . .

The very constitution of the Democratic party commits it to execute all the designs of the slaveholders, whatever they may be. It is not a party of the whole Union, of all the free States and of all the slave States; nor yet is it a party of the free States in the North and in the Northwest; but it is a sectional and local party, having practically its seat within the slave States, and counting its constituency chiefly and almost exclusively there. Of all its representatives in Congress and in the electoral colleges, two-thirds uniformly come from these States. Its great element of strength lies in the vote of the slaveholders, augmented by the representation of three-fifths of the slaves. Deprive the Democratic party of this strength, and it would be a helpless and hopeless minority, incapable of continued organization. The Democratic party, being thus local and sectional, acquires new strength from the admission of every new slave State, and loses relatively by the admission of every new free State into the Union. . . .

To expect the Democratic party to resist slavery and favor freedom is as unreasonable as to look for Protestant missionaries to the Catholic propaganda of Rome. The history of the Democratic party commits it to the policy of slavery. It has been the Democratic party, and no other agency, which



has carried that policy up to its present alarming culmination. . . .

[Here Mr. Seward gave a historical sketch of the transactions by which the Democratic party had fostered the interests of slavery.]

Such is the Democratic party. It has no policy, State or Federal, for finance, or trade, or manufacture, or commerce, or education, or internal improvements, or for the protection or even the security of civil or religious liberty. It is positive and uncompromising in the interest of slavery — negative, compromising, and vacillating in regard to everything else. It boasts its love of equality, and wastes its strength, and even its life, in fortifying the only aristocracy known in the land. . . .

This dark record shows you, fellow-citizens, what I was unwilling to announce at an earlier stage of this argument, that of the whole nefarious schedule of slaveholding designs which I have submitted to you, the Democratic party has left only one yet to be consummated — the abrogation of the law which forbids the African slave-trade. . . .

At last, the Republican party has appeared. It avows, now, as the Republican party of 1800 did, in one word, its faith and its works, "Equal and exact justice to all men." Even when it first entered the field, only half organized, it struck a blow which only just failed to secure complete and triumphant

victory. In this, its second campaign, it has already won advantages which render that triumph now both easy and certain. The secret of its assured success lies in that very characteristic which, in the mouth of scoffers, constitutes its great and lasting imbecility and reproach. It lies in the fact that it is a party of one idea; but that is a noble one — an idea that fills and expands all generous souls; the idea of equality — the equality of all men before human tribunals and human laws, as they all are equal before the Divine tribunal and Divine laws.

I know, and you know, that a revolution has begun. I know, and all the world knows, that revolutions never go backward. Twenty senators and a hundred representatives proclaim boldly in Congress to-day sentiments and opinions and principles of freedom which hardly so many men, even in this free State, dared to utter in their own homes twenty years ago. While the government of the United States, under the conduct of the Democratic party, has been all that time surrendering one plain and castle after another to slavery, the people of the United States have been no less steadily and perseveringly gathering together the forces with which to recover back again all the fields and all the castles which have been lost, and to confound and overthrow, by one decisive blow, the betrayers of the Constitution and freedom forever.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

1811-1884

OF an old and wealthy family in Boston, young PHILLIPS was graduated at Harvard, and in 1834 began the practice of law. Becoming more and more dissatisfied with the constitutional limitations that prevented interference with slavery in the South, he deserted the law and its binding oath of allegiance to the Constitution, and from 1839 threw his lot in with the extreme Abolitionists, becoming their chief spokesman.

His aristocratic appearance, cultured phrases, and refined rhetoric gave polish and point to the rapier-like thrusts of his argument. Seemingly calm and well-poised, he aroused his audiences to intense feeling, and was one of the most effective of the early agitators who incited the antislavery sentiment in the North.

But PHILLIPS was also a noted lyceum lecturer. His addresses on "The Lost Arts," "Toussaint L'Ouverture," and others, always attracted thronged houses. Whether one agreed with PHILLIPS or not, the orator's charm was upon him, and the voice, the manner, the deliverance itself, were delightful.

After the emancipation of the slaves, PHILLIPS turned his attention more specifically to woman suffrage, temperance, labor and penal reforms, although he had from the first advocated these causes, and was in 1870 the unsuccessful candidate for Governor of Massachusetts on a Labor and Prohibition ticket. In these matters, however, he made no such effect as in his earlier antislavery days. His address on Toussaint L'Ouverture, which follows, is selected as showing at once his historical and descriptive power and his devotion to the enslaved negro race. First delivered in 1861, it was repeated on demand of those to whom he was to lecture more than two thousand times.

PHILLIPS was never a self-seeker, but was a rare example of a man of wealth, culture, and high social position, devoting all that he was and had to the uplifting of the unfortunate.

## TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

THERE are three tests by which races love to be tried. The first, the basis of all, is courage, — the element which says, here and to-day, “This continent is mine, from the Lakes to the Gulf: let him beware who seeks to divide it!” And the second is the recognition that force is doubled by purpose; liberty regulated by law is the secret of Saxon progress. And the third element is persistency, endurance; first a purpose, then death or success. Of these three elements is made that Saxon pluck which has placed our race in the van of modern civilization.

In the hour you lend me to-night, I attempt the quixotic effort to convince you that the negro blood, instead of standing at the bottom of the list, is entitled, if judged either by its great men or its masses, either by its courage, its purpose, or its endurance, to a place as near ours as any other blood known in history. And, for the purpose of my argument, I take an island, St. Domingo, about the size of South Carolina, the third spot in America upon which Columbus placed his foot. Charmed by the magnificence of its scenery and fertility of its soil, he gave it the fondest of all names, Hispaniola,

Little Spain. His successor, more pious, rebaptized it from St. Dominic, St. Domingo; and when the blacks, in 1803, drove our white blood from its surface, they drove our names with us, and began the year 1804 under the old name, Hayti, the land of mountains.

It was originally tenanted by filibusters, French and Spanish, of the early commercial epochs, the pirates of that day as of ours. The Spanish took the eastern two-thirds, the French the western third of the island, and they gradually settled into colonies. The French, to whom my story belongs, became the pet colony of the mother land. Guarded by peculiar privileges, enriched by the scions of wealthy houses, aided by the unmatched fertility of the soil, it soon was the richest gem in the Bourbon crown; and at the period to which I call your attention, about the era of our Constitution, 1789, its wealth was almost incredible. The effeminacy of the white race rivaled that of the Sybarite of antiquity, while the splendor of their private life outshone Versailles, and their luxury found no mate but in the mad prodigality of the Cæsars. At this time the island held about thirty thousand whites, twenty or thirty thousand mulattoes, and five hundred thousand slaves. The slave-trade was active. About twenty-five thousand slaves were imported annually; and this only sufficed to fill the gap which the murderous culture of sugar annually produced. The mulattoes,

as with us, were children of the slaveholders, but, unlike us, the French slaveholder never forgot his child by a bondwoman. He gave him everything but his name, — wealth, rich plantations, gangs of slaves; sent him to Paris for his education, summoned the best culture of France for the instruction of his daughters, so that in 1790 the mulatto race held one-third of the real estate and one-quarter of the personal estate of the island. But though educated and rich, he bowed under the same yoke as with us. Subjected to special taxes, he could hold no public office, and, if convicted of any crime, was punished with double severity. His son might not sit on the same seat at school with a white boy; he might not enter a church where a white man was worshiping; if he reached a town on horseback, he must dismount and lead his horse by the bridle; and when he died, even his dust could not rest in the same soil with a white body. Such was the white race and the mulatto, — the thin film of a civilization beneath which surged the dark mass of five hundred thousand slaves.

It was over such a population, . . . that there burst, in 1789, the thunderstorm of the French Revolution. The first words which reached the island were the motto of the Jacobin Club, — “Liberty, Equality.” The white man heard them aghast. He had read of the streets of Paris running blood. The slave heard them with indifference; it was a

quarrel in the upper air, between other races, which did not concern him. The mulatto heard them with a welcome which no dread of other classes could quell. Hastily gathered into conventions, they sent to Paris a committee of the whole body, laid at the feet of the National Convention the free gift of six millions of francs, pledged one-fifth of their annual rental toward the payment of the national debt, and only asked in return that this yoke of civil and social contempt should be lifted from their shoulders. . . .

The Convention hastened to express its gratitude, and issued a decree which commences thus: "All freeborn French citizens are equal before the law." Ogé was selected — the friend of Lafayette, a lieutenant-colonel in the Dutch service, the son of a wealthy mulatto woman, educated in Paris, the comrade of all the leading French Republicans — to carry the decree and the message of French Democracy to the island. He landed. The decree of the National Convention was laid on the table of the General Assembly of the island. One old planter seized it, tore it in fragments, and trampled it under his feet, swearing by all the saints in the calendar that the island might sink before they would share their rights with bastards. They took an old mulatto, worth a million, who had simply asked for his rights under that decree, and hung him. A white lawyer of seventy, who drafted the petition,



they hung at his side. They took Ogé, broke him on the wheel, ordered him to be drawn and quartered, and one quarter of his body to be hung up in each of the four principal cities of the island; and then they adjourned.

You can conceive better than I can describe the mood in which Mirabeau and Danton received the news that their decree had been torn in pieces and trampled under foot by the petty legislature of an island colony, and their comrade drawn and quartered by the orders of its Governor. Robespierre rushed to the tribune and shouted, "Perish the colonies rather than sacrifice one iota of our principles!" The Convention reaffirmed their decree, and sent it out a second time to be executed.

But it was not then as now, when steam has married the continents. It took months to communicate; and while this news of the death of Ogé and the defiance of the National Convention was going to France, and the answer returning, great events had taken place in the island itself. The Spanish of the eastern section, perceiving these divisions, invaded the towns of the western, and conquered many of its cities. One-half of the slaveholders were republicans, in love with the new constellation which had just gone up in our Northern sky, seeking to be admitted a State in this Republic, plotting for annexation. The other half were loyalists, anxious, deserted as they supposed themselves by the Bour-

bons, to make alliance with George III. They sent to Jamaica, and entreated its Governor to assist them in their intrigue. At first, he lent them only a few hundred soldiers. Some time later, General Howe and Admiral Parker were sent with several thousand men, and finally, the English government entering more seriously into the plot, General Maitland landed with four thousand Englishmen on the north side of the island, and gained many successes. The mulattoes were in the mountains, awaiting events. They distrusted the government, which a few years before they had assisted to put down an insurrection of the whites, and which had forfeited its promise to grant them civil privileges. Deserted by both sections, Blanchelande, the Governor, had left the capital, and fled for refuge to a neighboring city. . . .

Deserted now by the whites and by the mulattoes, only one force was left him in the island, — that was the blacks: they had always remembered with gratitude the *code noir*, black code, of Louis XIV, the first interference of any power in their behalf. To the blacks Blanchelande appealed. He sent a deputation to the slaves. He was aided by the agents of Count d'Artois, afterward Charles X, who was seeking to do in St. Domingo what Charles II did in Virginia (whence its name of Old Dominion), institute a reaction against the rebellion at home. The two joined forces, and sent first to Toussaint. . . .

He said, therefore, to the envoys, "Where are your credentials?" "We have none." "I will have nothing to do with you." They then sought François and Biassou, two other slaves of strong passions, considerable intellect, and great influence over their fellow-slaves, and said, "Arm, assist the government, put down the English on the one hand, and the Spanish on the other;" and on the 21st of August, 1791, fifteen thousand blacks, led by François and Biassou, supplied with arms from the arsenal of the government, appeared in the midst of the colony. It is believed that Toussaint, unwilling himself to head the movement, was still desirous that it should go forward, trusting, as proved the case, that it would result in benefit to his race. He is supposed to have advised François in his course, — saving himself for a more momentous hour.

This is what Edward Everett calls the Insurrection of St. Domingo. It bore for its motto on one side of its banner, "Long live the King," and on the other, "We claim the Old Laws." Singular mottoes for a rebellion! In fact, it was the *posse comitatus*; it was the only French army on the island; it was the only force that had a right to bear arms; and what it undertook, it achieved. It put Blanchelande in his seat; it put the island beneath his rule. When it was done, the blacks said to the Governor they had created, "Now, grant us one day in seven; give us one day's labor; we will buy another, and with

the two buy a third," — the favorite method of emancipation at that time. Like the Blanchelande of five years before, he refused. He said, "Disarm! Disperse!" and the blacks answered, "The right hand that has saved you, the right hand that has saved the island for the Bourbons, may perchance clutch some of our own rights;" and they stood still. This is the first insurrection, if any such there were in St. Domingo, — the first determined purpose on the part of the negro, having saved the government, to save himself. . . .

At this moment, then, the island stands thus: The Spaniard is on the east triumphant; the Englishman is on the northwest intrenched; the mulattoes are in the mountains waiting; the blacks are in the valleys victorious; one half the French slaveholding element is republican, the other half royalist; the white race against the mulatto and the black; the black against both; the Frenchman against the English and Spaniard; the Spaniard against both. It is a war of races and a war of nations. At such a moment Toussaint l'Ouverture appeared.

He had been born a slave on a plantation in the north of the island, — an unmixed negro, — his father stolen from Africa. If anything, therefore, that I say of him to-night moves your admiration, remember, the black race claims it all, — we have no part nor lot in it. He was fifty years old at this time. An old negro had taught him to read. His

favorite books were Epictetus, Raynal, Military Memoirs, Plutarch. In the woods, he learned some of the qualities of herbs, and was village doctor. On the estate, the highest place he ever reached was that of coachman. At fifty, he joined the army as physician. Before he went, he placed his master and mistress on shipboard, freighted the vessel with a cargo of sugar and coffee, and sent them to Baltimore, and never afterward did he forget to send them, year by year, ample means of support. And I might add, that, of all the leading negro generals, each one saved the man under whose roof he was born, and protected the family.

Let me add another thing. If I stood here to-night to tell the story of Napoleon, I should take it from the lips of Frenchmen, who find no language rich enough to paint the great captain of the nineteenth century. Were I here to tell you the story of Washington, I should take it from your hearts, — you, who think no marble white enough on which to carve the name of the Father of his Country. I am about to tell you the story of a negro who has left hardly one written line. I am to glean it from the reluctant testimony of Britons, Frenchmen, Spaniards, — men who despised him as a negro and a slave, and hated him because he had beaten them in many a battle. All the materials for his biography are from the lips of his enemies. . . .

I cannot stop to give in detail every one of his

efforts. This was in 1793. Leap with me over seven years; come to 1800; what has he achieved? He has driven the Spaniard back into his own cities, conquered him there, and put the French banner over every Spanish town; and for the first time, and almost the last, the island obeys one law. He has put the mulatto under his feet. He has attacked Maitland, defeated him in pitched battles, and permitted him to retreat to Jamaica; and when the French army rose upon Laveaux, their general, and put him in chains, Toussaint defeated them, took Laveaux out of prison, and put him at the head of his own troops. The grateful French in return named him General-in-Chief. *Cet homme fait l'ouverture partout*, said one, — "This man makes an opening everywhere," — hence his soldiers named him L'Ouverture, *the opening*.

This was the work of seven years. Let us pause a moment, and find something to measure him by. You remember Macaulay says, comparing Cromwell with Napoleon, that Cromwell showed the greater military genius, if we consider that he never saw an army till he was forty; while Napoleon was educated from a boy in the best military schools in Europe. Cromwell manufactured his own army; Napoleon at the age of twenty-seven was placed at the head of the best troops Europe ever saw. They were both successful; but, says Macaulay, with such disadvantages, the Englishman showed the greater

genius. Whether you allow the inference or not, you will at least grant that it is a fair mode of measurement. Apply it to Toussaint. Cromwell never saw an army until he was forty; this man never saw a soldier till he was fifty. Cromwell manufactured his own army — out of what? Englishmen, — the best blood of Europe. Out of the middle class of Englishmen, — the best blood of the island. And with it he conquered what? Englishmen, — their equals. This man manufactured his army out of what? Out of what you call the despicable race of negroes, debased, demoralized by two hundred years of slavery, one hundred thousand of them imported into the island within four years, unable to speak a dialect intelligible even to each other. Yet out of this mixed, and, as you say, despicable mass, he forged a thunderbolt and hurled it at what? At the proudest blood in Europe, the Spaniard, and sent him home conquered; at the most warlike blood in Europe, the French, and put them under his feet; at the pluckiest blood in Europe, the English, and they skulked home to Jamaica. Now if Cromwell was a general, at least this man was a soldier. I know it was a small territory; it was not as large as the continent; but it was as large as that Attica, which, with Athens for a capital, has filled the earth with its fame for two thousand years. We measure genius by quality, not by quantity.

Further, — Cromwell was only a soldier; his fame

stops there. Not one line in the statute-book of Britain can be traced to Cromwell; not one step in the social life of England finds its motive power in his brain. The state he founded went down with him to his grave. But this man no sooner put his hand on the helm of state, than the ship steadied with an upright keel, and he began to evince a statesmanship as marvelous as his military genius. History says that the most statesmanlike act of Napoleon was his proclamation of 1802, at the Peace of Amiens, when, believing that the indelible loyalty of a native-born heart is always a sufficient basis on which to found an empire, he said: "Frenchmen, come home. I pardon the crimes of the last twelve years; I blot out its parties; I found my throne on the hearts of all Frenchmen," — and twelve years of unclouded success showed how wisely he judged. That was in 1802. In 1800 this negro made a proclamation; it runs thus: "Sons of St. Domingo, come home. We never meant to take your houses or your lands. The negro only asked that liberty which God gave him. Your houses wait for you; your lands are ready; come and cultivate them;" — and from Madrid and Paris, from Baltimore and New Orleans, the emigrant planters crowded home to enjoy their estates, under the pledged word, that was never broken, of a victorious slave.

Again, Carlyle has said, "The natural king is one who melts all wills into his own." At this moment



he turned to his armies, — poor, ill-clad, and half-starved, — and said to them: Go back and work on these estates you have conquered; for an empire can be founded only on order and industry, and you can learn these virtues only there. And they went. The French admiral, who witnessed the scene, said that in a week his army melted back into peasants.

It was 1800. The world waited fifty years before, in 1846, Robert Peel dared to venture, as a matter of practical statesmanship, the theory of free trade. . . . But in 1800 this black, with the instinct of statesmanship, said to the committee who were drafting for him a constitution: "Put at the head of the chapter of commerce that the ports of St. Domingo are open to the trade of the world." . . .

Again, it was 1800, at a time when England was poisoned on every page of her statute-book with religious intolerance, when a man could not enter the House of Commons without taking an Episcopal communion, when every State in the Union, except Rhode Island, was full of the intensest religious bigotry. This man was a negro. You say that is a superstitious blood. He was uneducated. You say that makes a man narrow-minded. He was a Catholic. Many say that is but another name for intolerance. And yet — negro, Catholic, slave — he took his place by the side of Roger Williams, and said to his committee: "Make it the first line

of my constitution that I know no difference between religious beliefs.”

Now, blue-eyed Saxon, proud of your race, go back with me to the commencement of the century, and select what statesman you please. Let him be either American or European; let him have a brain the result of six generations of culture; let him have the ripest training of university routine; let him add to it the better education of practical life; crown his temples with the silver of seventy years; and show me the man of Saxon lineage for whom his most sanguine admirer will wreath a laurel rich as embittered foes have placed on the brow of this negro, — rare military skill, profound knowledge of human nature, content to blot out all party distinctions and trust a state to the blood of its sons, anticipating Sir Robert Peel fifty years, and taking his station by the side of Roger Williams before any Englishman or American had won the right; — and yet this is the record which the history of rival states makes up for this inspired black of St. Domingo.

It was 1801. The Frenchmen who lingered on the island described its prosperity and order as almost incredible. You might trust a child with a bag of gold to go from Samana to Port-au-Prince without risk. Peace was in every household; the valleys laughed with fertility; culture climbed the mountains; the commerce of the world was represented in its harbors. At this time Europe concluded the

Peace of Amiens, and Napoleon took his seat on the throne of France. He glanced his eyes across the Atlantic, and, with a single stroke of his pen, reduced Cayenne and Martinique back into chains. He then said to his Council, "What shall I do with St. Domingo?" The slaveholders said, "Give it to us." Napoleon turned to the Abbé Gregoire, "What is your opinion?" "I think those men would change their opinions, if they changed their skins."

Colonel Vincent, who had been private secretary to Toussaint, wrote a letter to Napoleon, in which he said: "Sire, leave it alone; it is the happiest spot in your dominions; God raised this man to govern; races melt under his hand. He has saved you this island; for I know of my own knowledge that, when the Republic could not have lifted a finger to prevent it, George III offered him any title and any revenue if he would hold the island under the British crown. He refused, and saved it for France." Napoleon turned away from his Council, and is said to have remarked, "I have sixty thousand idle troops; I must find them something to do." He meant to say, "I am about to seize the crown; I dare not do it in the faces of sixty thousand republican soldiers: I must give them work at a distance to do."

The gossip of Paris gives another reason for his expedition against St. Domingo. It is said that the satirists of Paris had christened Toussaint, the Black Napoleon; and Bonaparte hated his black shadow.

Toussaint had unfortunately once addressed him a letter, "The first of the blacks to the first of the whites." He did not like the comparison. . . . So Napoleon resolved to crush Toussaint, from one motive or another, from the prompting of ambition, or dislike of this resemblance, — which was very close. If either imitated the other, it must have been the white, since the negro preceded him several years. They were very much alike. . . .

Like Napoleon, he could fast many days; could dictate to three secretaries at once; could wear out four or five horses. Like Napoleon, no man ever divined his purpose or penetrated his plan. He was only a negro, and so, in him, they called it hypocrisy. In Bonaparte we style it diplomacy. . . .

Then, again, like Napoleon, — like genius always, — he had confidence in his power to rule men. You remember when Bonaparte returned from Elba, and Louis XVIII sent an army against him, Bonaparte descended from his carriage, opened his coat, offering his breast to their muskets, and saying, "Frenchmen, it is the Emperor!" and they ranged themselves behind him, *his* soldiers, shouting, "*Vive l'Empereur!*" That was in 1815. Twelve years before, Toussaint, finding that four of his regiments had deserted and gone to Leclerc, drew his sword, flung it on the grass, went across the field to them, folded his arms, and said, "Children, can you point a bayonet at me?" The blacks fell on their knees, praying

his pardon. His bitterest enemies watched him, and none of them charged him with love of money, sensuality, or cruel use of power. . . .

Above the lust of gold, pure in private life, generous in the use of his power, it was against such a man that Napoleon sent his army, giving to General Leclerc, the husband of his beautiful sister Pauline, thirty thousand of his best troops, with orders to reintroduce slavery. Among these soldiers came all of Toussaint's old mulatto rivals and foes.

Holland lent sixty ships. England promised by special message to be neutral; and you know neutrality means sneering at freedom, and sending arms to tyrants.<sup>1</sup> England promised neutrality, and the black looked out on the whole civilized world marshaled against him. America, full of slaves, of course was hostile. Only the Yankee sold him poor muskets at a very high price. Mounting his horse, and riding to the eastern end of the island, Samana, he looked out on a sight such as no native had ever seen before. Sixty ships of the line, crowded by the best soldiers of Europe, rounded the point. They were soldiers who had never yet met an equal, whose tread, like Cæsar's, had shaken Europe, — soldiers who had scaled the Pyramids, and planted the French banners on the walls of Rome. He looked a moment, counted the flotilla, let the reins fall on the neck of his horse,

<sup>1</sup> Allusion to English arms furnished the South early in the Rebellion.

and, turning to Christophe, exclaimed: "All France is come to Hayti; they can only come to make us slaves; and we are lost!" He then recognized the only mistake of his life, — his confidence in Bonaparte, which had led him to disband his army.

Returning to the hills, he issued the only proclamation which bears his name and breathes vengeance: "My children, France comes to make us slaves. God gave us liberty; France has no right to take it away. Burn the cities, destroy the harvests, tear up the roads with cannon, poison the wells, show the white man the hell he comes to make;" — and he was obeyed. When the great William of Orange saw Louis XIV cover Holland with troops, he said, "Break down the dikes, give Holland back to ocean;" and Europe said, "Sublime!" When Alexander saw the armies of France descend upon Russia, he said, "Burn Moscow, starve back the invaders;" and Europe said, "Sublime!" This black saw all Europe marshaled to crush him, and gave to his people the same heroic example of defiance. . . .

Leclerc sent word to Christophe that he was about to land at Cape City. Christophe said, "Toussaint is governor of the island. I will send to him for permission. If without it a French soldier sets foot on shore, I will burn the town, and fight over its ashes."

Leclerc landed. Christophe took two thousand white men, women, and children, and carried them

to the mountains in safety, then with his own hands set fire to the splendid palace which French architects had just finished for him, and in forty hours the place was in ashes. The battle was fought in its streets, and the French driven back to their boats. Wherever they went they were met with fire and sword. . . .

Beaten in the field, the French then took to lies. They issued proclamations, saying, "We do not come to make you slaves; this man Toussaint tells you lies. Join us, and you shall have the rights you claim." They cheated every one of his officers, except Christophe and Dessalines, and his own brother Pierre, and finally these also deserted him, and he was left alone. He then sent word to Leclerc, "I will submit. I could continue the struggle for years, — could prevent a single Frenchman from safely quitting your camp. But I hate bloodshed. I have fought only for the liberty of my race. Guarantee that, I will submit and come in." He took the oath to be a faithful citizen; and on the same crucifix Leclerc swore that he should be faithfully protected, and that the island should be free. As the French general glanced along the line of his splendidly equipped troops, and saw, opposite, Toussaint's ragged, ill-armed followers, he said to him, "L'Ouverture, had you continued the war, where could you have got arms?" "I would have taken yours," was the Spartan reply.

He went down to his house in peace; it was sum-

mer. Leclerc remembered that the fever months were coming, when his army would be in hospitals, and when one motion of that royal hand would sweep his troops into the sea. He was too dangerous to be left at large. So they summoned him to attend a council; and here is the only charge made against him,—the only charge. They say he was fool enough to go. . . . The moment he entered the room, the officers drew their swords, and told him he was prisoner; and one young lieutenant who was present says, “He was not at all surprised, but seemed very sad.” They put him on shipboard, and weighed anchor for France. As the island faded from his sight, he turned to the captain, and said, “You think you have rooted up the tree of liberty, but I am only a branch; I have planted the tree so deep that all France can never root it up.”

Arrived in Paris, he was flung into jail, and Napoleon sent his secretary, Caffarelli, to him, supposing he had buried large treasures. He listened awhile, then replied, “Young man, it is true I have lost treasures, but they are not such as you come to seek.” He was then sent to the Castle of St. Joux, to a dungeon twelve feet by twenty, built wholly of stone, with a narrow window, high up on the side, looking out on the snows of Switzerland. In winter, ice covers the floor; in summer, it is damp and wet. In this living tomb the child of the sunny tropic was left to die. . . .



The commandant allowed him five francs a day for food and fuel. Napoleon heard of it, and reduced the sum to three. The luxurious usurper, who complained that the English government was stingy because it allowed him only six thousand dollars a month, stooped from his throne to cut down a dollar to a half, and still Toussaint did not die quick enough. . . . Finally, the commandant was told to go into Switzerland, to carry the keys of the dungeon with him, and to stay four days; when he returned, Toussaint was found starved to death. . . . God grant that when some future Plutarch shall weigh the great men of our epoch, the whites against the blacks, he do not put that whining child at St. Helena into one scale, and into the other the negro meeting death like a Roman, without a murmur, in the solitude of his icy dungeon!

From the moment he was betrayed, the negroes began to doubt the French, and rushed to arms. Soon every negro but Maurepas deserted the French. Leclerc summoned Maurepas to his side. He came, loyally bringing with him five hundred soldiers. Leclerc spiked his epaulettes to his shoulders, shot him, and flung him into the sea. He took his five hundred soldiers on shore, shot them on the edge of a pit, and tumbled them in. Dessalines from the mountain saw it, and selecting five hundred French officers from his prisons, hung them on separate trees in sight of Leclerc's camp; and born, as I was, not

far from Bunker Hill, I have yet found no reason to think he did wrong. They murdered Pierre Toussaint's wife at his own door, and after such treatment that it was mercy when they killed her. The maddened husband, who had but a year before saved the lives of twelve hundred white men, carried his next thousand prisoners and sacrificed them on her grave.

The French exhausted every form of torture. The negroes were bound together and thrown into the sea; any one who floated was shot, — others sunk with cannon-balls tied to their feet; some smothered with sulphur fumes, — others strangled, scourged to death, gibbeted; sixteen of Toussaint's officers were chained to rocks in desert islands, — others in marshes, and left to be devoured by poisonous reptiles and insects. Rochambeau sent to Cuba for bloodhounds. When they arrived, the young girls went down to the wharf, decked the hounds with ribbons and flowers, kissed their necks, and, seated in the amphitheater, the women clapped their hands to see a negro thrown to these dogs, previously starved to rage. But the negroes besieged this very city so closely that these same girls, in their misery, ate the very hounds they had welcomed. . . .

The war went on. Napoleon sent over thirty thousand more soldiers. But disaster still followed his efforts. What the sword did not devour, the fever

ate up. Leclerc died. Pauline carried his body back to France. Napoleon met her, saying, "Sister, I gave you an army,—you bring me back ashes. . . .

Some doubt the courage of the negro. Go to Hayti, and stand on those fifty thousand graves of the best soldiers France ever had, and ask them what they think of the negro's sword. And if that does not satisfy you, go to France, to the splendid mausoleum of the Counts of Rochambeau, and to the eight thousand graves of Frenchmen who skulked home under the English flag, and ask them. And if that does not satisfy you, come home, and if it had been October, 1859,<sup>1</sup> you might have come by way of quaking Virginia, and asked her what she thought of negro courage. . . .

Hayti, from the ruins of her colonial dependence, is become a civilized state, the seventh nation in the catalogue of commerce with this country, inferior in morals and education to none of the West Indian isles. . . . Toussaint made her what she is. In this work there was grouped around him a score of men, mostly of pure negro blood, who ably seconded his efforts. They were able in war and skillful in civil affairs, but not, like him, remarkable for that rare mingling of high qualities which alone makes true greatness, and insures a man leadership among those otherwise almost his equals. Toussaint was indisputably their chief. Courage, purpose, endurance,

<sup>1</sup> John Brown's raid.

— these are the tests. He did plant a state so deep that all the world has not been able to root it up.

I would call him Napoleon, but Napoleon made his way to empire over broken oaths and through a sea of blood. This man never broke his word. *No Retaliation* was his great motto and the rule of his life; and the last words uttered to his son in France were these: "My boy, you will one day go back to St. Domingo; forget that France murdered your father." I would call him Cromwell, but Cromwell was only a soldier, and the state he founded went down with him into his grave. I would call him Washington, but the great Virginian held slaves. This man risked his empire rather than permit the slave-trade in the humblest village of his dominions.

You think me a fanatic to-night, for you read history, not with your eyes, but with your prejudices. But fifty years hence, when Truth gets a hearing, the Muse of History will put Phocion for the Greek, and Brutus for the Roman, Hampden for England, Fayette for France, choose Washington as the bright, consummate flower of our earlier civilization, and John Brown the ripe fruit of our noonday, then, dipping her pen in the sunlight, will write in the clear blue, above them all, the name of the soldier, the statesman, the martyr, TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

1813-1887

IN a book of memorial tributes to HENRY WARD BEECHER written shortly after his death in 1887, occur these words in the contribution of WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE: "To his undying fame the world and his memory stand in no need of witnesses." Of BEECHER'S forty years of public service, centering at his Plymouth Church pulpit, the venerable and conservatively wise MARK HOPKINS wrote: "No such instance of prolonged steady power at one point, in connection with other labors so extended and diversified, and magnificent in their results, has ever been known." His grand work as an apostle of freedom before and during the Civil War, his amazing oratorical control of turbulent audiences in England, where he changed the feeling of a nation toward the Union cause, and his being the chosen mouthpiece of the people and the leaders upon all great occasions in his own land, caused President LINCOLN to appoint him orator of the day for the raising anew of the flag on Fort Sumter at the end of the war.

The day was over, with its noble oration and celebration, and Mr. BEECHER with the invited guests sailed back to New York in joy, to be greeted with the stunning announcement of the President's assassination. Mr. BEECHER went to his Peekskill home, and the next Sunday, April 23, 1865, delivered in his pulpit the discourse on ABRAHAM LINCOLN which here follows. He did not trust himself to look at his audience; the swollen stream of thought and feeling must flow to its appointed end without breaking its banks: he seemingly read the whole — from a manuscript of a few sentences. And he judged well: it was more impressive than any amount of emotional rhetoric could have made it.

As an orator, who put his whole grand self into his speaking, BEECHER had no equal in that era of eloquent men, — nor has any one approaching him arisen since he departed.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

“And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.” — Deut. xxxiv. 1-5.

THERE is no historic figure more noble than that of the Jewish lawgiver. After so many thousand years, the figure of Moses is not diminished, but stands up against the background of early days distinct and individual as if he had lived but yesterday. There is scarcely another event in history more touching than his death. He had borne the great burdens of state for forty years, shaped the Jews to a nation, filled out their civil and religious polity, administered their laws, guided their steps, or dealt with them in all their journeyings in the wilderness; had

mourned in their punishment, kept step with their march, and led them in wars until the end of their labors drew nigh. The last stage was reached. Jordan, only, lay between them and "the promised land." The Promised Land! O, what yearnings had heaved his breast for that divinely foreshadowed place! He had dreamed of it by night, and mused by day; it was holy and endeared as God's favored spot. It was to be the cradle of an illustrious history. All his long, laborious, and now weary life, he had aimed at this as the consummation of every desire, the reward of every toil and pain. Then came the word of the Lord to him: "Thou mayest not go over. Get thee up into the mountain; look upon it; and die!"

From that silent summit the hoary leader gazed to the north, to the south, to the west, with hungry eyes. The dim outlines rose up. The hazy recesses spoke of quiet valleys between hills. With eager longing, with sad resignation, he looked upon the promised land. It was now to him a forbidden land. This was but a moment's anguish, he forgot all his personal wants, and drank in the vision of his people's home. His work was done. There lay God's promise fulfilled. There was the seat of coming Jerusalem; there the city of Judah's King; the sphere of judges and prophets; the Mount of sorrow and salvation; the nest whence were to fly blessings innumerable to all mankind. Joy chased sadness



from every feature, and the prophet laid him down and died.

Again a great leader of the people has passed through toil, sorrow, battle, and war, and come near to the promised land of peace, into which he might not pass over. Who shall recount our martyr's sufferings for this people! Since the November of 1860, his horizon has been black with storms. By day and by night he trod a way of danger and darkness. On his shoulders rested a government dearer to him than his own life. At its integrity millions of men at home were striking: upon it foreign eyes lowered. It stood like a lone island in a sea full of storms; and every tide and wave seemed eager to devour it. Upon thousands of hearts great sorrows and anxieties have rested, but not on one, such, and in such measure, as upon that simple, truthful, noble soul, our faithful and sainted Lincoln. Never rising to the enthusiasm of more impassioned natures in hours of hope, and never sinking with the mercurial in hours of defeat to the depths of despondency, he held on with unmovable patience and fortitude, putting caution against hope that it might not be premature, and hope against caution that it might not yield to dread and danger. He wrestled ceaselessly, through four black and dreadful purgatorial years, wherein God was cleansing the sins of his people as by fire.

At last the watcher beheld the gray dawn for the

country. The mountains began to give forth their forms from out of the darkness: and the East came rushing toward us with arms full of joy for all our sorrows. Then it was for him to be glad exceedingly, that had sorrowed immeasurably. Peace could bring to no other heart such joy, such rest, such honor, such trust, such gratitude. But he looked upon it as Moses looked upon the promised land.

Then the wail of a nation proclaimed that he had gone from among us.

Not thine the sorrow, but ours, sainted soul! Thou hast indeed entered into the promised land, while we are yet on the march. To us remain the rocking of the deep, the storm upon the land, days of duty and nights of watching; but thou art sphered high above all darkness and fear, beyond all sorrow and weariness. Rest, O weary heart! Rejoice exceedingly, thou that hast enough suffered! Thou hast beheld Him who invisibly led thee in this great wilderness. Thou standest among the elect. Around thee are the royal men that have ennobled human life in every age. Kingly art thou, with glory on thy brow as a diadem. And joy is upon thee for evermore. Over all this land, over all the little cloud of years that now from thine infinite horizon moves back as a speck, thou art lifted up as high as a star is above the clouds, that hide us but never reach it. In the goodly company of Mount Zion thou shalt

find that rest which thou hast sorrowing sought here in vain; and thy name, an everlasting name in heaven, shall flourish in fragrance and beauty as long as men shall last upon the earth, or hearts remain, to revere truth, fidelity, and goodness.

Never did two such orbs of experience meet in one hemisphere, as the joy and the sorrow of the same week in this land. The joy of final victory was as sudden as if no man had expected it, and as entrancing as if it had fallen a sphere from heaven. It rose up over sobriety, and swept business from its moorings, and ran down through the land in irresistible course. Men embraced each other in brotherhood that were strangers in the flesh. They sang, or prayed, or, deeper yet, many could only think thanksgiving and weep gladness. That peace was sure; that our government was firmer than ever; that the land was cleansed of plague; that the ages were opening to our footsteps, and we were to begin a march of blessings; that blood was stanchèd, and scowling enmities were sinking like storms beneath the horizon; that the dear fatherland, nothing lost, much gained, was to rise up in unexampled honor among the nations of the earth, — these thoughts, and that undistinguishable throng of fancies, and hopes, and desires, and yearnings, that filled the soul with tremblings like the heated air of midsummer days, — all these kindled up such a surge of joy as no words may describe.

In one hour, under the blow of a single bereavement, joy lay without a pulse, without a gleam, or breath. A sorrow came that swept through the land as huge storms sweep through the forest and field, rolling thunder along the sky, disheveling the flowers, daunting every singer in thicket or forest, and pouring blackness and darkness across the land and upon the mountains. Did ever so many hearts, in so brief a time, touch two such boundless feelings? It was the uttermost of joy; it was the uttermost of sorrow, — noon and midnight without a space between!

The blow brought not a sharp pang. It was so terrible that at first it stunned sensibility. Citizens were like men awakened at midnight by an earthquake, and bewildered to find everything that they were accustomed to trust wavering and falling. The very earth was no longer solid. The first feeling was the least. Men waited to get straight to feel. They wandered in the streets as if groping after some impending dread, or undeveloped sorrow, or some one to tell them what ailed them. They met each other as if each would ask the other, "Am I awake, or do I dream?" There was a piteous helplessness. Strong men bowed down and wept. Other and common griefs belonged to some one in chief; this belonged to all. It was each and every man's. Every virtuous household in the land felt as if its firstborn were gone. Men were bereaved,

and walked for days as if a corpse lay unburied in their dwellings. There was nothing else to think of. They could speak of nothing but that; and yet, of that they could speak only falteringly. All business was laid aside. Pleasure forgot to smile. The great city for nearly a week ceased to roar. The huge Leviathan lay down and was still. Even avarice stood still, and greed was strangely moved to generous sympathy and universal sorrow. Rear to his name monuments, found charitable institutions, and write his name above their lintels; but no monument will ever equal the universal, spontaneous, and sublime sorrow that in a moment swept down lines and parties, and covered up animosities, and in an hour brought a divided people into unity of grief and indivisible fellowship of anguish.

For myself, I cannot yet command that quietness of spirit needed for a just and temperate delineation of a man whom goodness has made great. Leaving that, if it please God, to some other occasion, I pass to some considerations aside from the martyr President's character which may be fit for this hour's instruction.

And first, let us not mourn that his departure was so sudden, nor fill our imagination with horror at its method. Men, long eluding and evading sorrow, when at last they are overtaken by it seem enchanted and seek to make their sorrow sorrowful to the very uttermost, and to bring out every drop of suffering

which they possibly can. This is not Christian, though it may be natural. When good men pray for deliverance from sudden death, it is only that they may not be plunged without preparation, all disrobed, into the presence of their Judge. When one is ready to depart, suddenness of death is a blessing. It is a painful sight to see a tree overthrown by a tornado, wrenched from its foundations, and broken down like a weed; but it is yet more painful to see a vast and venerable tree lingering with vain strife against decay, which age and infirmity have marked for destruction. The process by which strength wastes, and the mind is obscured, and the tabernacle is taken down, is humiliating and painful; and it is good and grand when a man departs to his rest from out of the midst of duty, full-armed and strong, with pulse beating time. . . .

Not they that go in a stupor, but they that go with all their powers about them, and wide-awake, to meet their Master, as to a wedding, are blessed. He died watching. He died with his armor on. In the midst of hours of labor, in the very heart of patriotic consultations, just returned from camps and counsels, he was stricken down. No fever dried his blood. No slow waste consumed him. All at once, in full strength and manhood, with his girdle tight about him, he departed; and walks with God.

Nor was the manner of his death more shocking, if we divest it of the malignity of the motives which

caused it. The mere instrument itself is not one that we should shrink from contemplating. Have not thousands of soldiers fallen on the field of battle by the bullets of the enemy? Is being killed in battle counted to be a dreadful mode of dying? It was as if he had died in battle. Do not all soldiers that must fall ask to depart in the hour of battle and of victory? He went in the hour of victory. . . .

For myself, when any event is susceptible of a higher and nobler garnishing, I know not what that disposition is that should seek to drag it down to the depths of gloom, and write it all over with the scrawls of horror or fear. I let the light of nobler thoughts fall upon his departure. . . .

Then, again, this blow was but the expiring rebellion. As a miniature gives all the form and features of its subject, so, epitomized in this foul act, we find the whole nature and disposition of slavery. It begins in a wanton destruction of all human rights, and in a desecration of all the sanctities of heart and home; and it is the universal enemy of mankind, and of God, who made man. It can be maintained only at the sacrifice of every right moral feeling in its abettors and upholders. . . . Slavery is itself barbarity. That nation which cherishes it is barbarous; and no outside tinsel or glitter can redeem it from the charge of barbarism. And it was fit that its expiring blow should be such as to take away from men the last forbearance, the last pity, and fire

the soul with an invincible determination that the breeding ground of such mischiefs and monsters shall be utterly and forever destroyed.

We needed not that he should put on paper that he believed in slavery, who, with treason, with murder, with cruelty infernal, hovered around that majestic man to destroy his life. He was himself but the long sting with which slavery struck at liberty; and he carried the poison that belonged to slavery. As long as this nation lasts, it will never be forgotten that we have one martyred President — never! Never, while time lasts, while heaven lasts, while hell rocks and groans, will it be forgotten that slavery, by its minions, slew him, and in slaying him made manifest its whole nature and tendency.

But another thing for us to remember is that this blow was aimed at the life of the government and of the nation. Lincoln was slain; America was meant. The man was cast down; the government was smitten at. It was the President who was killed. It was national life, breathing freedom and meaning beneficence, that was sought. He, the man of Illinois, the private man, divested of robes and the insignia of authority, representing nothing but his personal self, might have been hated; but that would not have called forth the murderer's blow. It was because he stood in the place of government, representing government and a government that represented right and liberty, that he was singled out.



This, then, is a crime against universal government. It is not a blow at the foundations of our government, more than at the foundations of the English government, of the French government, of every compacted and well-organized government. It was a crime against mankind. The whole world will repudiate and stigmatize it as a deed without a shade of redeeming light. . . .

The blow, however, has signally failed. The cause is not stricken; it is strengthened. This nation has dissolved, — but in tears only. It stands, four-square, more solid, to-day, than any pyramid in Egypt. This people are neither wasted, nor daunted, nor disordered. Men hate slavery and love liberty with stronger hate and love to-day than ever before. The Government is not weakened, it is made stronger. How naturally and easily were the ranks closed!

Where could the head of government in any monarchy be smitten down by the hand of an assassin, and the funds not quiver nor fall one-half of one per cent? After a long period of national disturbance, after four years of drastic war, after tremendous drafts on the resources of the country, in the height and top of our burdens, the heart of this people is such that now, when the head of government is stricken down, the public funds do not waver, but stand as the granite ribs in our mountains. . . .

Even he who now sleeps has, by this event, been clothed with new influence. Dead, he speaks to men

who now willingly hear what before they refused to listen to. Now, his simple and weighty words will be gathered like those of Washington, and your children and your children's children shall be taught to ponder the simplicity and deep wisdom of utterances which, in their time, passed, in the party heat, as idle words. Men will receive a new impulse of patriotism for his sake, and will guard a new impulse of patriotism for his sake, and will guard with zeal the whole country which he loved so well: I swear you, on the altar of his memory, to be more faithful to the country for which he has perished. Men will, as they follow his hearse, swear a new hatred to that slavery against which he warred, and which in vanquishing him has made him a martyr and a conqueror: I swear you, by the memory of this martyr, to hate slavery with an unappeasable hatred. Men will admire and imitate his unmoved firmness, his inflexible conscience for the right; and yet his gentleness, as tender as a woman's, his moderation of spirit, which not all the heat of party could inflame, nor all the jars and disturbances of this country shake out of its place: I swear you to an emulation of his justice, his moderation, and his mercy.

You I can comfort; but how can I speak to that twilight million to whom his name was as the name of an angel of God? There will be wailing in places which no ministers shall be able to reach. When, in hovel and in cot, in wood and in wilderness, in the

field throughout the South, the dusky children, who looked upon him as that Moses whom God sent before them to lead them out of the land of bondage, learn that he has fallen, who shall comfort them? Oh, thou Shepherd of Israel, that didst comfort thy people of old, to thy care we commit the helpless, the long wronged, and grieved!

And now the martyr is moving in triumphal march,<sup>1</sup> mightier than when alive. The nation rises up at every stage of his coming. Cities and states are his pall-bearers, and the cannon beats the hours with solemn progression. Dead — dead — dead — he yet speaketh! Is Washington dead? Is Hampden dead? Is David dead? Is any man dead that ever was fit to live? Disenthralled of flesh, and risen to the unobstructed sphere where passion never comes, he begins his illimitable work. His life now is grafted upon the Infinite, and will be fruitful as no earthly life can be. Pass on, thou that hast overcome! Your sorrows, O people, are his peace! Your bells, and bands, and muffled drums sound triumph in his ear. Wail and weep here; God makes it echo joy and triumph there. Pass on, thou victor!

Four years ago, O Illinois, we took from your midst an untried man, and from among the people; we return him to you a mighty conqueror. Not

<sup>1</sup> The funeral journey, conveying Lincoln's body from Washington to Illinois, was fourteen days in progress. He was buried on May 4, 1865.

thine any more, but the nation's; not ours, but the world's. Give him place, ye prairies! In the midst of this great Continent his dust shall rest, a sacred treasure to myriads who shall make pilgrimage to that shrine to kindle anew their zeal and patriotism. Ye winds, that move over the mighty places of the West, chant his requiem! Ye people, behold a martyr, whose blood, as so many inarticulate words, pleads for fidelity, for law, for liberty!

HENRY WOODFIN GRADY

1851-1889

THIS was a fine type of the man of the New South. Very many able young men of the Southern States, discouraged by the desolations of the War, the difficulties besetting life during the Reconstruction period, and the slowness of general recovery, transferred their activities to Northern cities and there prospered. Young GRADY, however, after graduation at the State University of Georgia, his native State, and post-graduate studies at the University of Virginia, went into journalism in Rome, Georgia, and by his intelligent industry there, and his uncommonly reasonable and candid articles in Northern papers upon Southern affairs, gained a strong position. By the help of friends he bought into the *Atlanta Constitution*, one of the best of the Southern journals, became its editor, and so continued as long as he lived.

In this influential position GRADY was often called upon for public addresses, and developed a remarkable oratorical power. His two most significant orations were made at the North, his subjects being the affairs of the South. At the New England Society's annual banquet in New York, December 12, 1886, he made a great impression. "There was a South of slavery and secession," he began; "that South is dead. There is a South of union and freedom; that South, thank God, is living, breathing, growing every hour," and he proceeded to depict it in glowing words that aroused the enthusiastic sympathy of his hearers. The other address was made three years later, before the banquet of the Boston Merchants' Association, December 12, 1889, and such portions of it as are here given show clearly the man of heart, of intellect, and of the orator's power. He died, ten days later, regretted by the whole country.

## THE NEW SOUTH

THE stoutest apostle of the church, they say, is the missionary, and the missionary, wherever he unfurls his flag, will never find himself in deeper need of unction and address than I, bidden to-night to plant the standard of a Southern Democrat in Boston's banquet hall, and to discuss the problem of the races in the home of Phillips and of Sumner. But, Mr. President, if a purpose to speak in perfect frankness and sincerity; if earnest understanding of the vast interests involved; if a consecrating sense of what disaster must follow further misunderstanding and estrangement — if all these may be counted on to steady undisciplined speech and to strengthen an untried arm, then, Sir, I shall find the courage to proceed.

Happy am I that this mission has brought my feet, at last, to press New England's historic soil, and my eyes to the knowledge of her beauty and her thrift. Here within touch of Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill — where Webster thundered and Longfellow sung, Emerson thought, and Channing preached — here in the cradle of American letters and almost of American liberty, I hasten to make the obeisance that

every American owes New England when first he stands uncovered in her mighty presence. Strange apparition! This stern and unique figure, carved from the ocean and the wilderness, its majesty kindling and growing amid the storms of winter, and of wars, until, at last, the gloom was broken, its beauty disclosed in the tranquil sunshine, and the heroic workers rested at its base, while startled kings and emperors gazed and marveled that from the rude touch of this handful, cast on a bleak and unknown shore, should have come the embodied genius of human liberty! God bless the memory of those immortal workers — and prosper the fortunes of their living sons — and perpetuate the inspiration of their handiwork! . . .

Far to the South, Mr. President, separated by a line — once defined in irrepressible difference, once traced in fratricidal blood, and now, thank God, but a vanishing shadow — lies the fairest and richest domain of this earth. It is the home of a brave and hospitable people. There is centered all that can please or prosper humankind. A perfect climate above a fertile soil yields to the husbandman every product of the temperate zone. There, by night, the cotton whitens beneath the stars, and by day the wheat locks the sunshine in its bearded sheaf. In the same field the clover steals the fragrance of the wind, and the tobacco catches the quick aroma of the rains. There are mountains stored with exhaust-



less treasures; forests vast and primeval, and rivers that, tumbling or loitering, run wanton to the sea. Of the three essential items of all industries — cotton, iron, and wood — that region has easy control. In cotton, a fixed monopoly; in iron, proven supremacy; in timber, the reserve supply of the republic. From this assured and permanent advantage, against which artificial conditions cannot long prevail, has grown an amazing system of industries. Not maintained by human contrivance of tariff or capital, afar off from the fullest and cheapest source of supply, but resting in Divine assurance, within touch of field and mine and forest — not set amid bleak hills and costly farms from which competition has driven the farmer in despair, but amid cheap and sunny lands, rich with agriculture, to which neither season nor soil has set a limit — this system of industries is mounting to a splendor that shall dazzle and illumine the world. That, Sir, is the picture and the promise of my home — a land better and fairer than I have told you, and yet but a fit setting, in its material excellence, for the loyal and gentle quality of its citizenship. Against that, Sir, we have New England recruiting the republic from its sturdy loins, shaking from its overcrowded hives new swarms of workers, and touching this land all over with its energy and its courage. And yet — while in the Eldorado, of which I have told you, but fifteen per cent of lands are cultivated, its mines scarcely touched, and its population so

scant that, were it set equidistant, the sound of the human voice could not be heard from Virginia to Texas — while on the threshold of nearly every house in New England stands a son, seeking with troubled eyes some new land in which to carry his modest patrimony, and the homely training that is better than gold — the strange fact remains that in 1880 the South had fewer Northern-born citizens than she had in 1870 — fewer in 1870 than in 1860. Why is this? . . .

There can be but one answer. It is the very problem we are now to consider. The key that opens that problem will unlock to the world the fairest half of this republic, and free the halted feet of thousands whose eyes are already kindling with its beauty. . . . Nothing else stands between us and such love as bound Georgia and Massachusetts at Valley Forge and Yorktown, chastened by the sacrifice of Manassas and Gettysburg, and illumined with the coming of better work and a nobler destiny than was ever wrought by the sword or sought at the cannon's mouth. . . . I thank God as heartily as you do that human slavery is gone forever from American soil. But the freedman remains, and with him a problem without precedent or parallel. Note its appalling conditions. Two utterly dissimilar races on the same soil — with equal political and civil rights — almost equal in numbers, but terribly unequal in intelligence and responsibility — each

pledged against fusion — one for a century in servitude to the other, and freed at last by a desolating war — the experiment sought by neither, but approached by both with doubt — these are the conditions. Under these, adverse at every point, we are required to carry these two races in peace and honor to the end. . . .

The President of the United States, in his late message to Congress, discussing the plea that the South should be left to solve this problem, asks: "Are they at work upon it? What solution do they offer? When will the black man cast a free ballot? When will he have the civil right that is his?" . . . Backed by a record on every page of which is progress, I venture to make earnest and respectful answer to the questions that are asked. I bespeak your patience, while with righteous plainness of speech, seeking your judgment rather than your applause, I proceed step by step.

We give to the world this year a crop of 7,500,000 bales of cotton, worth \$450,000,000, and its cash equivalent in grain, grasses, and fruit. This enormous crop could not have come from the hands of sullen and discontented labor. It comes from the peaceful fields in which laughter and gossip rise above the hum of industry, and contentment runs with the singing plow. It is claimed that this ignorant labor is defrauded of its just hire. I present the tax-books of Georgia, which show that the negro,

twenty-five years ago a slave, has in Georgia alone \$10,000,000 of assessed property, worth twice that much. Does not that record honor him and vindicate his neighbors? What other people, penniless and illiterate, has done so well? . . .

And the schoolhouse itself bears testimony. In Georgia we added last year \$250,000 to the school fund, making a total of more than \$1,000,000, and yet forty-nine per cent of the beneficiaries are black children. . . . The South, since 1865, has spent \$122,000,000 in education, and this year is pledged \$37,000,000 more for State and city schools — although the blacks, paying one-thirtieth of the taxes, get nearly one-half of the fund. Go into our fields and see whites and blacks working side by side. On our buildings in the same squad. In our shops at the same forge. Often the blacks crowd the whites from work, or lower wages by their greater need or simpler habits, and yet are permitted to do so because we want to bar them from no avenue in which their feet are fitted to tread. . . .

In the South there are negro lawyers, teachers, editors, dentists, doctors, preachers, working in peace and multiplying with the increasing ability of their race to support them. In villages and towns they have their military companies equipped from the armories of the State, their churches and societies built and supported largely by their neighbors.

What is the testimony of the courts? In penal

legislation we have steadily reduced felonies to misdemeanors, and have led the world in mitigating punishment for crime, that we might save, as far as possible, this dependent race from its own weakness. In our penitentiary record sixty per cent of the prosecutors are negroes, and in every court the negro criminal challenges the colored juror, that white men may judge his case. In the North one negro in every one hundred and eighty-five is in jail; in the South only one in four hundred and forty-six. In the North the percentage of negro prisoners is six times as great as that of native whites; in the South only four times as great. If prejudice wrong him in Southern courts, the record shows it to be deeper in Northern courts. . . . Now, Mr. President, can it be seriously maintained that we are terrorizing the people from whose willing hands come every year \$1,000,000,000 of farm crops, or have robbed a people, who in twenty-five years from unrewarded slavery, have amassed in one State \$20,000,000 of property? Or that we intend to oppress the people we are arming every day? We "deceive" them, when we are educating them to the utmost limit of our ability? . . .

But it is claimed that under this fair-seeming there is disorder and violence. This I admit. And there will be until there is one ideal community on earth after which we may pattern. But how widely is it misjudged. It is hard to measure with exactness

whatever touches the negro. His helplessness, his isolation, his century of servitude, these dispose us to emphasize and magnify his wrongs. This disposition has been inflamed by prejudice and partisanship until it has led to injustice and delusion. Lawless men may ravage a county in Iowa, and it is accepted as an incident. In the South a drunken row is declared to be the fixed habit of the community. . . .

But admitting the right of the whites to unite against this tremendous menace, we are challenged with the smallness of our vote. This has long been flippantly charged to be evidence, and has now been solemnly and officially declared to be proof of political turpitude and baseness on our part. Let us see: Virginia — a State now under fierce assault for this alleged crime — cast in 1888, seventy-five per cent of her vote. Massachusetts, the State in which I speak, sixty per cent of her vote. Was it suppression in Virginia and natural causes in Massachusetts?

The negro vote can never control in the South, and it would be well if partisans at the North would understand this. . . . You may pass force bills, but they will not avail. . . .

Meantime, we treat the negro fairly, measuring to him justice in the fullness the strong should give to the weak, and leading him in the steadfast ways of citizenship, that he may no longer be the prey of the unscrupulous and the sport of the thoughtless. We

open to him every pursuit in which he can prosper, and seek to broaden his training and capacity. We seek to hold his confidence and friendship, and to pin him to the soil with ownership, that he may catch in the fire of his own hearthstone that sense of responsibility the shiftless can never know. . . .

The love we feel for that race you cannot measure nor comprehend. As I attest it here, the spirit of my old "black mammy," from her home up there, looks down on me to bless, and through the tumult of this night, steals the sweet music of her croonings. Thirty years ago she held me in her black arms or led me smiling into sleep. This scene vanishes as I speak, and I catch a vision of an old Southern home with its lofty pillars and its white pigeons fluttering down through the golden air. I see women with strained and anxious faces, and children alert, yet helpless. I see night come down with its dangers and apprehensions, and in a big and homely room I feel on my tired head the touch of loving hands — now worn and wrinkled, but fairer to me yet than the hands of mortal woman, and stronger yet to lead me than the hands of mortal man — as they lay a mother's blessing there, while at her knees — the truest altar I yet have found — I thank God that she is safe in her sanctuary, because her slaves, sentinel in the silent cabin, or on guard at her chamber door, put a black man's loyalty between her and danger.

I catch another vision. The crisis of battle — a soldier struck, staggering, fallen. I see a slave, struggling through the smoke, winding his black arms about the fallen form, reckless of lurking death — bending his trusty face to catch the words that tremble on the stricken lips, so wrestling meantime with agony that he would lay down his life in his master's stead. I see him by the weary bedside, ministering with uncomplaining patience, praying with all his humble heart that God will lift his master up, until death comes in mercy and in honor to still the soldier's agony and seal the soldier's life. I see him by the open grave, mute, motionless, uncovered, suffering for the death of him who in life fought against his freedom. I see him when the mound is heaped and the great drama of his life is closed, turn away and, with downcast eyes and uncertain step, start out into new and strange fields, faltering, struggling, but moving on, until his shambling figure is lost in the light of a better and a brighter day. And from the grave comes a voice saying: "Follow him! Put your arms about him in his need, even as he put his about me. Be his friend as he was mine." And out into this new world — strange to me as to him, dazzling, bewildering both — I follow! And may God forget my people — when they forget these!

Whatever the future may hold for them . . . we shall give them uttermost justice and abiding friendship. And whatever we do, into whatever



seeming estrangement we may be driven, nothing shall disturb the love we bear this republic, or mitigate our consecration to its service. I stand here, Mr. President, to profess no new loyalty. When General Lee, whose heart was the temple of our hopes and whose arm was clothed with our strength, renewed his allegiance to this government at Appomattox, he spoke from a heart too great to be false, and he spoke for every honest man from Maryland to Texas. From that day to this, Hamilcar has nowhere in the South sworn young Hannibal to hatred and vengeance—but everywhere to loyalty and love. Witness the veteran standing at the base of a Confederate monument, above the graves of his comrades, his empty sleeve tossing in the April wind, adjuring the young men about him to serve as honest and loyal citizens the government against which their fathers fought. This message, delivered from that sacred presence, has gone home to the hearts of my fellows! And, Sir, I declare here, if physical courage be always equal to human aspiration, that they would die, Sir, if need be, to restore this republic their fathers fought to dissolve!

Such, Mr. President, is this problem as we see it, such the temper in which we approach it, such the progress made. What do we ask of you? First, patience; out of this alone can come perfect work. Second, confidence; in this alone can you judge fairly. Third, sympathy; in this you can help us

best. Fourth, loyalty to the republic — for there is sectionalism in loyalty as in estrangement. This hour little needs the loyalty that is loyal to one section, and yet holds the other in enduring suspicion and estrangement. Give us the broad and perfect loyalty that loves and trusts Georgia alike with Massachusetts — that “knows no South, no North, no East, no West”; but endears with equal and patriotic love every foot of our soil, every State of our Union. . . .

Our history, Sir, has been a constant and expanding miracle from Plymouth Rock and Jamestown all the way — aye, even from the hour, when, from the voiceless and trackless ocean, a new world rose to the sight of the inspired sailor. As we approach the fourth centennial of that stupendous day — when the Old World will come to marvel and to learn, amid our gathered pleasures — let us resolve to crown the miracles of our past with the spectacle of a republic compact, united, indissoluble in the bonds of love — loving from the Lakes to the Gulf — the wounds of war healed in every heart as on every hill — serene and resplendent at the summit of human achievement and earthly glory — blazing out the path and making clear the way up which all the nations of the earth must come in God’s appointed time!

WILLIAM McKINLEY

1843-1901

A GRADUATE of Allegheny College in Ohio, his native State, after a period of teaching in the public schools, in the beginning of the Civil War, at the age of seventeen, WILLIAM MCKINLEY enlisted as a private in the 23d Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and by gallant conduct was brevetted major before the end of the war. His career as lawyer, politician, and statesman, as Governor of Ohio, champion of high protection in the House of Representatives, and President of the United States, together with his pitiful but noble ending of life by assassination at the Buffalo (New York) World's Fair in 1901, has been made familiar to all since his untimely taking off.

President MCKINLEY'S last public address — terse, direct, and convincing — made at Buffalo the day before his assassination, shows the expanding view of the statesman, who was able to rise above the exclusion-theory of protection to American industries, to see the enlarging of American relations to the commercial world, and to declare that “the period of exclusiveness is past.” With JOHN HAY, his able Secretary of State, he had arranged a treaty giving the United States free hand in the Isthmus, and, as Mr. HAY said in his eloquent memorial address before Congress, “he saw in the immense evolution of American trade the fulfillment of all his dreams, the reward of all his labors.” Thus, his State Department had negotiated various reciprocity treaties with foreign nations, which would doubtless have benefited both American manufactures and American commerce; but the popular feeling that responded to this loosening of the bonds had not penetrated Congress, and they failed of confirmation in the Senate.

Yet his utterances still ring true, and are increasingly influential. Our Chinese tariff wall must be lowered, and pierced with gates for the inward and outward passage of American and foreign wealth. MCKINLEY'S prophetic sentiments may well conclude this gathering of counsels from American statesmen who have passed away, but who have left us helpful words of soberness and truth.

## WORLD-RELATIONS OF AMERICA

I AM glad again to be in the city of Buffalo and exchange greetings with her people, to whose generous hospitality I am not a stranger, and with whose good will I have been repeatedly and signally honored. To-day I have additional satisfaction in meeting and giving welcome to the foreign representatives assembled here, whose presence and participation in this Exposition have contributed in so marked a degree to its interest and success. To the commissioners of the Dominion of Canada and the British Colonies, the French Colonies, the Republics of Mexico and of Central and South America, and the commissioners of Cuba and Porto Rico, who share with us in this undertaking, we give the hand of fellowship and felicitate with them upon the triumphs of art, science, education, and manufacture which the old has bequeathed to the new century.

Expositions are the timekeepers of progress. They record the world's advancement. They stimulate the energy, enterprise, and intellect of the people, and quicken human genius. They go into the home. They broaden and brighten the daily life of the people. They open mighty storehouses of informa-

tion to the student. Every exposition, great or small, has helped to some onward step.

Comparison of ideas is always educational and, as such, instructs the brain and hand of man. Friendly rivalry follows, which is the spur to industrial improvement, the inspiration to useful invention and to high endeavor in all departments of human activity. It exacts a study of the wants, comforts, and even the whims of the people, and recognizes the efficacy of high quality and low prices to win their favor. The quest for trade is an incentive to men of business to devise, invent, improve, and economize in the cost of production. Business life, whether among ourselves or with other peoples, is ever a sharp struggle for success. It will be none the less in the future. Without competition we would be clinging to the clumsy and antiquated process of farming and manufacture and the methods of business of long ago, and the twentieth would be no further advanced than the eighteenth century.

But though commercial competitors we are, commercial enemies we must not be. The Pan-American Exposition has done its work thoroughly, presenting in its exhibits evidences of the highest skill and illustrating the progress of the human family in the Western Hemisphere. This portion of the earth has no cause for humiliation for the part it has performed in the march of civilization. It has not accomplished everything; far from it. It has simply done

its best, and without vanity or boastfulness, and recognizing the manifold achievements of others, it invites the friendly rivalry of all the powers in the peaceful pursuits of trade and commerce, and will coöperate with all in advancing the highest and best interests of humanity. The wisdom and energy of all the nations are none too great for the world work. The success of art, science, industry, and invention is an international asset and a common glory.

After all, how near one to the other is every part of the world! Modern inventions have brought into close relation widely separated peoples and made them better acquainted. Geographic and political divisions will continue to exist, but distances have been effaced. Swift ships and fast trains are becoming cosmopolitan. They invade fields which a few years ago were impenetrable. The world's products are exchanged as never before, and with increasing transportation facilities come increasing knowledge and larger trade. Prices are fixed with mathematical precision by supply and demand. The world's selling prices are regulated by market and crop reports. We travel greater distances in a shorter space of time and with more ease than was ever dreamed of by the fathers. Isolation is no longer possible or desirable. The same important news is read, though in different languages, the same day in all Christendom.

The telegraph keeps us advised of what is occur-

ring everywhere, and the Press foreshadows, with more or less accuracy, the plans and purposes of the nations. Market prices of products and of securities are hourly known in every commercial mart, and the investments of the people extend beyond their own national boundaries into the remotest parts of the earth. Vast transactions are conducted and international exchanges are made by the tick of the cable. Every event of interest is immediately bulletined. The quick gathering and transmission of news, like rapid transit, are of recent origin, and are only made possible by the genius of the inventor and the courage of the investor. It took a special messenger of the Government, with every facility known at the time for rapid travel, nineteen days to go from the City of Washington to New Orleans with a message to General Jackson that the war with England had ceased and a treaty of peace had been signed. How different now! We reached General Miles, in Porto Rico, and he was able through the military telegraph to stop his army on the firing line with the message that the United States and Spain had signed a protocol suspending hostilities. We knew almost instanter of the first shots fired at Santiago, and the subsequent surrender of the Spanish forces was known at Washington within less than an hour of its consummation. The first ship of Cervera's fleet had hardly emerged from that historic harbor when the fact was flashed to our Capitol, and the swift



destruction that followed was announced immediately through the wonderful medium of telegraphy.

So accustomed are we to safe and easy communication with distant lands that its temporary interruption, even in ordinary times, results in loss and inconvenience. We shall never forget the days of anxious waiting and suspense when no information was permitted to be sent from Peking, and the diplomatic representatives of the nations in China, cut off from all communication, inside and outside of the walled capital, were surrounded by an angry and misguided mob that threatened their lives; nor the joy that thrilled the world when a single message from the government of the United States brought through our minister the first news of the safety of the besieged diplomats.

At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century there was not a mile of steam railroad on the globe; now there are enough miles to make its circuit many times. Then there was not a line of electric telegraph; now we have a vast mileage traversing all lands and seas. God and man have linked the nations together. No nation can longer be indifferent to any other. And as we are brought more and more in touch with each other, the less occasion is there for misunderstandings, and the stronger the disposition, when we have differences, to adjust them in the court of arbitration, which is the noblest forum for the settlement of international disputes.

My fellow-citizens, trade statistics indicate that this country is in a state of unexampled prosperity. The figures are almost appalling. They show that we are utilizing our fields and forests and mines, and that we are furnishing profitable employment to the millions of workingmen throughout the United States, bringing comfort and happiness to their homes, and making it possible to lay by savings for old age and disability. That all the people are participating in this great prosperity is seen in every American community and shown by the enormous and unprecedented deposits in our savings banks. Our duty in the care and security of these deposits and their safe investment demands the highest integrity and the best business capacity of those in charge of these depositories of the people's earnings.

We have a vast and intricate business, built up through years of toil and struggle in which every part of the country has its stake, which will not permit of either neglect or of undue selfishness. No narrow, sordid policy will subserve it. The greatest skill and wisdom on the part of manufacturers and producers will be required to hold and increase it. Our industrial enterprises, which have grown to such great proportions, affect the homes and occupations of the people and the welfare of the country. Our capacity to produce has developed so enormously and our products have so multiplied that the problem of more markets requires our urgent and

immediate attention. Only a broad and enlightened policy will keep what we have. No other policy will get more. In these times of marvelous business energy and gain we ought to be looking to the future, strengthening the weak places in our industrial and commercial systems, that we may be ready for any storm or strain.

By sensible trade arrangements which will not interrupt our home production we shall extend the outlets for our increasing surplus. A system which provides a mutual exchange of commodities is manifestly essential to the continued and healthful growth of our export trade. We must not repose in the fancied security that we can forever sell everything and buy little or nothing. If such a thing were possible it would not be best for us or for those with whom we deal. We should take from our customers such of their products as we can use without harm to our industries and labor. Reciprocity is the natural outgrowth of our wonderful industrial development under the domestic policy now firmly established.

What we produce beyond our domestic consumption must have a vent abroad. The excess must be relieved through a foreign outlet, and we should sell everywhere we can and buy wherever the buying will enlarge our sales and productions, and thereby make a greater demand for home labor.

The period of exclusiveness is past. The expan-

sion of our trade and commerce is the pressing problem. Commercial wars are unprofitable. A policy of good will and friendly trade relations will prevent reprisals. Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the times; measures of retaliation are not. If, perchance, some of our tariffs are no longer needed for revenue or to encourage and protect our industries at home, why should they not be employed to extend and promote our markets abroad?

Then, too, we have inadequate steamship service. New lines of steamships have already been put in commission between the Pacific coast ports of the United States and those on the western coasts of Mexico and Central and South America. These should be followed up with direct steamship lines between the western coast of the United States and South American ports. One of the needs of the times is direct commercial lines from our vast fields of production to the fields of consumption that we have but barely touched. Next in advantage to having the thing to sell is to have the conveyance to carry it to the buyer. We must encourage our merchant marine. We must have more ships. They must be under the American flag; built and manned and owned by Americans. These will not only be profitable in a commercial sense; they will be messengers of peace and amity wherever they go.

We must build the Isthmian canal, which will unite the two oceans and give a straight line of water

communication with the western coasts of Central and South America and Mexico. The construction of a Pacific cable cannot be longer postponed. In the furtherance of these objects of national interest and concern you are performing an important part. This Exposition would have touched the heart of that American statesman whose mind was ever alert and thought ever constant for a larger commerce and a truer fraternity of the republics of the New World. His broad American spirit is felt and manifested here. He needs no identification to an assemblage of Americans anywhere, for the name of Blaine is inseparably associated with the Pan-American movement which finds here practical and substantial expression, and which we all hope will be firmly advanced by the Pan-American Congress that assembles this autumn in the capital of Mexico. The good work will go on. It cannot be stopped.

These buildings will disappear; this creation of art and beauty and industry will perish from sight, but their influence will remain to "make it live beyond its too short living with praises and thanksgiving." Who can tell the new thoughts that have been awakened, the ambitions fired, and the high achievements that will be wrought through this Exposition?

Gentlemen, let us ever remember that our interest is in concord, not conflict; and that our real eminence rests in the victories of peace, not those of war. We hope that all who are represented here may be moved

to higher and nobler efforts for their own and the world's good, and that out of this city may come not only greater commerce and trade for us all, but, more essential than these, relations of mutual respect, confidence, and friendship, which will deepen and endure. Our earnest prayer is that God will graciously vouchsafe prosperity, happiness, and peace to all our neighbors, and like blessings to all the peoples and powers of earth.



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