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# SPEECH OF JOHN P. HALE.

## ON THE STATE OF THE UNION,

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 1861.

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Mr. HALE. Mr. President, I confess that I was a good deal surprised at a remark which fell from the honorable Senator from Illinois, [Mr. DOUGLAS,] in relation to a little passage that took place between the honorable Senator from Virginia [Mr. MASON] and myself yesterday. He said he was pained at the announcement made by the Senator from Virginia, and he was pained at the approbation expressed by the Senator from New Hampshire at the utterance of the sentiments that the Senator from Virginia pronounced. Now, Mr. President, I desire to call the attention of the Senate, and of that portion of the country that cares anything about what we say here, to what did take place yesterday, because I stand by it, and I think if I could induce every member of this body, and every voter in this country, to stand by it, the difficulties that now envelop and surround us and the country would vanish like mist before the morning sun. I do not know, sir, what private interpretation the Senator from Virginia may have had, if he had any, of the sentiment which he expressed; but the sentiment which he did express, and to which I gave my cordial assent, was, that with the Constitution of the United States he and the people that he represented were satisfied; that they asked no concession. I do not remember his precise phraseology; but I think he said it would be dishonorable in them to ask, and degrading in us to make, any concession; what they wanted was the Constitution.

Mr. MASON. Will the Senator allow me an instant?

Mr. HALE. Yes, sir.

Mr. MASON. What I said, Mr. President, was not what was repeated by the Senator from Illinois. I understood the Senator from Illinois to say that I had disclaimed any demand on the part of the southern States for conciliation, or concession, or compromise.

Mr. DOUGLAS. For concession.

Mr. MASON. It was limited to the word "concession."

Mr. HALE. So it was.

Mr. MASON. And it was because that was the only term that had been used by either of the Senators from Pennsylvania, and it was a term I said that had become familiar as a household word. The newspapers

and letter writers speak of the non-slaveholding States, or some of them, being ready to make concessions. What I meant to say was this—applied to that term which has its own specific meaning: so far as I know, the South ask no concession, because a concession would imply a gratuity or a benevolence to which they were not entitled. I said that the South were satisfied with the Constitution as it stood; if its guarantees had been respected, but not being respected, we should demand such securities, in place of existing guarantees, as would be beyond dispute. Now I will instance one—one of the class presented in the speech of my honorable colleague. There is a security, leaving to the minority section its own protection by a concurrent vote on all questions affecting its interests. I instance that only as one of a class which might be resorted to; but my remarks were confined to that word “concession,” and I did say that if we could ask concessions, it would be humiliating in us to ask them, and derogatory to the other side to grant them.

Mr. HALE. My recollection and the record concur entirely with the exposition which the honorable Senator from Virginia has now given of what he said, with a single exception. I will read what the Senator said:

“We would never ask for concessions in any form. It has been the ‘uniform language of the southern States here, through their representatives, so far as I know, that they are perfectly satisfied with the Constitution; they have no complaint to make of the Constitution. Their ‘complaint is, that the Constitution has been violated and disregarded, ‘to the prejudice of the rights secured to them by the Constitution.”

That is what the Senator said. He was satisfied with the Constitution yesterday, without an “if;” and I am sorry—perhaps it was owing to the hurry with which the Senator spoke—that he put in the “if” to-day. Again, he said:

“We ask for no concession. We should be humiliated if we did ask ‘it; and they would be humiliated if they granted it. We ask for no ‘concession; we ask only for right. We are asking for no new provisions whatever.”

This is what pleased me yesterday; it pleases me to-day; and I think the honorable Senator from Illinois cannot have his moral and physical nature in a normal condition if it gives him pain to hear this expression of reverence for the Constitution, and of satisfaction with its provisions, pronounced by the honorable Senator from Virginia, and accorded to by myself.

Sir, from the very announcement of this controversy, one thing has struck me, and I will now state it to the Senate. We meet together here, and it is agreed upon all hands that something is out of joint. ~~have been met~~ by volunteer committees on the street, that they tell me



they come to appeal to me, and to ask that I will give my humble aid to settle the question. "Well," I say, "my friends, if you will tell me what the question is, I will help you with all my heart;" and I ask what the question is now? It is not dissatisfaction with the Constitution. The honorable Senator from Missouri [Mr. GREEN] made the same avowal some days, possibly some weeks, since. The Constitution is well enough; and yet, sir, this Congress meets; the country is distracted, and you all go to work to patch on amendments to that which you agree is now perfect.

I say we present a curious spectacle. Everybody—no, not everybody, but a great many people are finding fault. We come together, and men want to cure the evil by mending and patching that which they all agree needs no mending, and which is in itself perfect.

Again, sir: of what do you complain? For what are you going to break up this Government? Do you complain of its administration here by the two Houses of Congress and the Federal President? Why, sir, it was the declaration of one of the representatives of the seceding States, [Mr. TOOMBS,] on this floor last session, that in the main, from the time of the adoption of the Federal Constitution to the present time, the Federal Government had been honestly administered according to the purposes of the Constitution; and never more so than at the present time.

Then, sir, you have got a perfect Constitution, and a perfect administration of it by its organs. How is its judiciary? Do you find any fault with it? Has there been any exposition of the Federal Constitution by the chosen arbiters that are to decide what the Constitution is, that displeases you? Is there any fault found with that? None that I have ever heard of. Well, then, sir, the Constitution perfect, the legislation perfect, and the judiciary perfect, what do you find fault with? Is there anything in the constitution of any one of the States? I have not heard it suggested. It was stated by the same authority to which I have just referred, that the judiciary of all the States, with the solitary exception of the State of Wisconsin, had been sound and faithful in their construction of the fugitive slave law.

Then, sir, if you have got a perfect Constitution, a perfect administration of it by the Federal Government, and a perfect (as you regard it) construction of it by the Federal and State judiciary, what do you want? If you want anything further in a judicial line, I have no doubt you can have it when you make a case. The honorable Senator from Oregon [Mr. LANE] the other day said he had no doubt—I do not know whether he meant it as a compliment or a reproach to the Supreme Court of the United States—that if a proper case could be made out and submitted to

that court, they would decide that the election of Mr. Lincoln was unconstitutional.

**Mr. LANE.** Or any other honest court.

**Mr. HALE.** No matter about that; I am not dealing with "any other honest court"—only with one. I speak of that only to show what the honorable Senator from Oregon thinks on this matter, and no Senator rose in his place to question his statement. It may have been meant for a compliment to that court: I confess I think it a reproach. I remember hearing a piquant anecdote related by an honorable gentleman from New York, once a member of this body—I will give his name—Mr. Dickinson. Mr. Dickinson said that, on a certain occasion, there was a minister settled in one of the small towns of the State of New York, and the terms of his payment were so many bushels of rye, provided his preaching suited. He preached some time without getting any substantial evidence that his preaching was satisfactory; and he went to some of the brethren, and said, "Brethren, does my preaching suit? If it don't, I can alter it, for I am determined to have that rye anyhow." [Laughter.] Well, sir, I think if you have not got any judicial decision that suits yet you can have it. The Senator from Oregon thinks so. We agree there.

Then what is the matter? I know it is a very easy thing to repent of other men's sins, and to make confessions for other men's faults, and we have had a great deal of that piety on the other side of the Chamber——

**Mr. SAULSBURY.** I ask the honorable Senator from New Hampshire how he knows that fact?

**The PRESIDING OFFICER.** Does the Senator from New Hampshire yield the floor?

**Mr. HALE.** I do not yet. I have yielded too often. I have no more concessions to make on that subject. [Laughter.] I say, Mr. President, we have had a great many confessions made upon the other side of the Chamber, of moral and political delinquencies that have been committed, but they have been Democrats confessing Republican sins! We have not heard a word of any of their own shortcomings from their lips. They have been all pointing out wherein we have erred and sinned, and have never given the slightest attention to, nor made the least inquiry, so far as any public manifestation is concerned, nor expressed a doubt as to the propriety, the perfect propriety, of their own conduct.

Now, in regard to this matter of amending the Constitution, I appeal to you, Senators; I ask you if, in the present state of public opinion, surrounded as you are by all the excitements and passions of the hour, you



believe that this Congress, this Senate, constituted as it is, made up as it is, operated upon by these adverse and extraneous influences as it is, is more competent and better able to build a Constitution that shall endure, and that shall promote the interest, the honor, and the welfare of this great country, than was the convention that formed the Federal Constitution? I ask the wise men who sit around me, and whose patriot hearts are now beating with so much anxiety for the welfare of their country, how much do you think your wisdom exceeds that of the sages who formed this great charter of your Government, under which you live? How much wiser are you than Madison and Hamilton and Jay; or how much more patriotic than Washington and his compatriots, that you undertake, in your madness and folly, to rebuild and reconstruct that great result of their piety and their wisdom, which has come to us as the richest inheritance that we have enjoyed? Sir, I confess for myself that I am willing to abide with the old men of the Constitution; I am willing to take my lot with those who, when the wounds of the Revolution were not yet healed, met in solemn council, with patriotic hearts and pious purposes, came together to form a constitution for this country. I venerate their wisdom above that of the wisdom by which I am surrounded. I have not yet become a convert to the doctrine that we (if we ever could) are now in a situation to mend what they made. And, sir, if this sentiment gives pain to anybody, I regret it; but I tell you I think it is a wholesome pain that will work out a regeneration of the body that feels it.

Mr. President, there is another mistake, and it is a great mistake. Men speak of this Constitution and this Union as something separate from the battles by which our liberties were won. I have heard it said on this floor this session, that it is all a mistake to say that this Constitution cost any blood or any treasure. I tell you, sir, the Revolution itself was worth nothing without the constitutional Union that followed it, and you cannot separate the one from the other. They are connected by one great chain, and the experience of the men of the Revolution between the peace of 1783 and the adoption of the Constitution in 1789, the history of that time standing where all nations may read, and all time cannot efface, demonstrate this truth that they found that the Revolution itself was but a bootless effort, unless its fruits were cemented and consolidated in a Federal Union; and the Federal Union was the necessary complement to the successful Revolution; and the man that raises a parricidal hand against the Constitution of his country aims it not at the Constitution alone, but at the revolutionary and ante-revolutionary spirit that preceded in the councils of the country years and years ago.

Sir, the Constitution was no thing of a day. It was not a hot-bed plant, growing up, like Jonah's gourd, in the night ; but it was the result of influences that had been operating in nearly the two centuries of colonial history that preceded it, and centuries back in the history of the country from which we emigrated ; and to undertake to separate the Constitution from the Revolution, the Union from the independence, whatever you may say about it theoretically, is a practical absurdity.

Sir, the best hopes of mankind are freighted in this ship of the Constitution. All that was secured by the war of the Revolution is periled by every blow that is aimed at the Constitution. I have sometimes thought, when I have heard the recklessness with which men speak of breaking up this Confederacy, of an incident that I have seen recorded in some magazine, respecting an aeronaut who ventured to rise to the blue ether above in a balloon. When he had ascended to where the earth faded in the distance to a mere point, he found that his companion was a maniac. Carried away by the giddy excitement of the hour, the unhappy man began to throw over the ballast, and cut the guys and the ropes by which the balloon was guided through its course ; and the aeronaut found that his destinies were linked with those of a madman. Sir, that is our condition to-day. We are sailing over tempestuous seas ; and all of human hope for ourselves, for our posterity, or for the world, is with us ; for the men that will destroy the vessel in which so much is embarked are no better than the madman sailing in mid-air, who would lose all direction and control of the balloon which bore him.

But, sir, perhaps I ought not to speak ; I am trespassing ; I have no business to speak. New England is to be sloughed off anyhow ; she is a sore ; and even the kind and benignant Senator from Missouri, [Mr. GREEN,] whose heart is all benevolence, so full that it beams out in every expression of his countenance, could not give utterance to his sentiments without expressing the hope that, whatever reconstruction might take place, New England would be left out anyhow. Well, sir, I will tell you this : I never will beg for myself, nor for my State, nor for New England, for admission to any communion except the communion of the just made perfect in Heaven ; and if there be on this earth a State, or a confederacy, now existing or hereafter to be formed, that can dispense with New England, I say " God bless you." If you can afford it, I think we can. Why, sir, these gentlemen do not know anything about New England except that there are ice and rocks there ; that, I think, is the extent, the practical extent, of the knowledge of a great many of those men who talk about New England. I hope my colleagues from New England, who sit all around me, will forgive me if I say a word for her. Do you know anything of her history ? Her

cradle was the bark, rocked on the tempest, that finally landed amid the ice and rocks of Plymouth harbor. Her home was amid the savages<sup>s</sup> and the rocks and the ice; and when she found the soil too sterile for sustenance, she plowed the ocean, and thence dug the means of support. She has grown up against opposition; on her side she has had nothing but God. The mother country, from which she emigrated, oppressed her; she contended with savages, with wild beasts, with a sterile soil and severe climate; death took half the numbers of the little company of emigrants that landed on that ice and rock-bound shore; yet, amid all these discouragements, and against all these odds, she has gone on every day and every year, prospering and to prosper. Cut her off, throw her away, and then she may look over this whole continent—nay, sir, she may go to your cotton fields and point to the means by which she has been instrumental in so highly elevating cotton, that, from the giddy height, you proclaim him king. She may tell you that without the genius of New England, King Cotton would be a beggar. She may point the continent over, and with more than poetic truth ask, *Quæ regio in terris non nostri plena laboris?*

What land is there on this continent that has not been enlightened by her civilization? What institution of learning is there that does not receive culture from her sons? What is the great Northwest from which she is to be separated? Nothing on earth but New England spread out. I suppose, sir, that if you are going to cut her off and send her home, you will cast away everything that she has done. Well, sir, let the magician, with his talismanic wand, go forth; let him touch this Union; let him touch this confederation; nay, sir, let him touch that other confederation, who think they are beginning to see the light; and let him make everything that New England genius and New England enterprise has done for them vanish from their presence, and they will find themselves but little advanced from the savage state. You are going to cut us off from the Northwest! Good-by, my friends; but ere you go, give us back our jewels; and when you take Illinois into your embrace, let us have the illustrious Senator [Mr. DOUGLAS] and his "great principle," for he came from New England, and his colleague also. Sir, when you turn out Ohio, the empire of the West, give us back her thundering orator who sits before me, [Mr. WADE,] and her more than orator, sage, and patriot, that is to be his colleague in the next Congress, [Mr. CHASE,] if such a Congress is to be. You are to take Michigan, too! Sir, I have been many years a member on this floor, and I have always been able to recognize a son of New Hampshire in the representation of the State of Michigan. Look all over the West, and I tell you, sir, until the sons of the West have forgotten to reverence the graves of their

fathers ; until they have forgotten to cherish with affection the memory of the mothers that nourished them, you cannot sever New England from the West. Build up as many confederacies as you may ; and I tell you, sir, that when the politicians come to deal with this matter, they will find that the people of this country have got a heart, which very few politicians have, [laughter ;] and the great heart of the great West will be felt.

Now, sir, another word in this connection. The honorable Senator from Virginia said the other day that this Union is already dissolved, and we cannot help it. I tell him the Union is not dissolved, and he cannot dissolve it. I am not going to discuss either the right or the fact of secession. The British empire existed after the American colonies were severed from it ; and when you have cut off from this Union every State that wants to go, and everybody that is not satisfied with the Constitution forswears his allegiance to it and leaves it, there will be left then a Union stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, strong enough to bid defiance to the world in arms, and deal with any question that presents itself just exactly as their own sense of patriotism and duty shall require of them. A man that has his leg amputated is a man notwithstanding ; and the Union still remains, though some members of it may be cut off.

I have in my hand a document to which I want to call the attention of some gentlemen. It has been the constant effort of very many gentlemen who have spoken upon this subject to represent that there is a very deep-rooted hatred between the North and the South ; and that this manifests itself on almost every occasion. I hold in my hand a most significant report made by the city of Portsmouth, in the State of Virginia, giving the history of the pestilence that visited that unhappy city in the year 1855. I will not stop to read that report ; but in it the committee of the city of Portsmouth say that, when the terrible pestilence visited Virginia, and death was holding such a festival there as had rarely been witnessed on this continent or anywhere else, the inhabitants of that stricken city made an appeal not to the South, nor to the North, but to the country, the whole country ; and it was responded to in a manner most honorable to humanity, and most honorable to the character of the political institutions under which we live. Physicians, who knew that they were traveling the highway of death, where pestilence was to be their entertainment and death their reward, flocked in numbers from the North to minister relief to the inhabitants of that city ; contributions came in from every quarter ; and they specially mention, among those who had been foremost in their deeds of benevolence, Philadelphia, Boston, and other places in the northern States,

whose people, it has been said on this floor this session, hate the South with a hatred deep as hell. According to a table which I have here of the contributions which they received upon this appeal, amounting to nearly ninety thousand dollars, \$6,000 of which was contributed by the District of Columbia ; of the remaining \$80,000, more than one half of it was contributed by the citizens of these very free States who, you say, entertain such deep-rooted hatred for you !

Sir, when the angel of pestilence spread his wing over your land ; when the young men were falling, and the Macedonian cry for help went up, did the North hold back ? No, sir ; but with a generosity and devotion, uncalculating as the impulses of humanity ever are, they went to the rescue of this very Virginia, and left their ashes upon its soil, eternal monuments of the sympathy, the humanity, and the affection which they cherished for the citizens of a common country. And, sir whenever an occasion like that shall come again ; whenever war, pestilence, or anything else, shall indicate to your fellow-men, and citizens of the northern States, that a call is made upon them for sympathy, for aid, for money, for life, it will be poured out with as uncalculating a devotion as ever humanity laid its offering upon the altar of charity.

And now, sir, while I am up, let me say that when I declare myself to be for the Constitution, I speak it in no sense that would indicate that I mean by that to invoke, or evoke, its strong arm, to put down by force any of the manifestations of disaffection which have been exhibited in any quarter of this country. No, sir ; I am for it in the spirit in which it was formed ; I am for the whole of it, in every part ; and let me here say a word or two, in regard to those special matters which have obtruded themselves upon our attention.

What is it that you want ? You want a guarantee that this General Government never will interfere in any manner with slavery in the States. Sir, it is not in human language to give it to you stronger than you have it now. You may make it just as strong as you please, and I defy the philology of the most learned and the most astute to put any guarantee in the Constitution so strong as you have it now in that provision which says that everything that is not given and granted by the Constitution is reserved to the people and the States. The right to abolish slavery in the States not being given, it is expressly reserved by this very provision

And, sir, you want the Missouri compromise restored. That Missouri compromise is a very curious measure. It saved the Union in 1820 by being passed ; it saved it in 1854 by being repealed ; and now it has to save it again by being passed again. How long it will be before it will have to be reversed, I do not know ; but this Missouri compromise is

the eternal, unfailing medicine that is to cure all the diseases to which the body politic is subject. I remember a quack doctor in my neighborhood that had but one medicine, and he used it just as you propose to use this Missouri compromise. When he wanted a medicine to produce one effect, he scraped it down the tree, and when he wanted to produce another, he scraped it up. [Laughter.] That is just exactly the case in which you put this Missouri compromise. Sometimes the Union is in danger, and you must pass it. Then it is in danger again, and it must be repealed. Six years after, it is in danger again, and you must pass it. How long do you suppose the Union will last patched up in this manner, if the Missouri compromise, first up and then down, is the only medicine that it is ever to have?

Again, sir, I ask, what do you want? Do you want anything more than what you have got? You have got the whole, and we have not asked you to give anything back. The Supreme Court, in the Dred Scott decision, have decided all that you want. I will tell you what they say; perhaps you have forgotten. They say in so many words—I do not know that I can read it; but you will find it there—that the only power that is conferred on this Federal Government in relation to slavery in the Territories, is the power, coupled with the duty, to protect it in the Territories. That is the supreme law of the land, pronounced by the Supreme Court of the United States, for which you all have so much reverence. Gentlemen, I appeal to you—

Mr. CLINGMAN. Will the Senator allow me to ask him a single question in this connection?

Mr. HALE. Not now. The Senator can get the floor right after me.

Mr. CLINGMAN. Will the honorable Senator adopt that construction of the law and the Constitution.

Mr. HALE. Mr. President, I will say this: there is a vacancy on the bench of the Supreme Court; and if Mr. Lincoln should nominate me to that place, and the Senate should confirm me, then I will tell you, [laughter;] and then my opinion will be worth something. But, sir, the opinions of the Supreme Court do not depend on the question whether I adopt them or not; and I think the honorable Senator from North Carolina never would go home and tell his people, "My friends, this is all a sham. This Dred Scott decision is not worth a straw. It does not protect your property; for I, myself, put it to Mr. HALE in the Senate, and he would not tell whether he considered it binding or not." Now, sir, that is the law. I know that is the judgment pronounced; and I tell you, gentlemen—I am talking plainly, and I trust not unkindly—you are not backing your friends as you ought to do, by



intimating that the decisions of the Supreme Court want any bolstering up here by acts of Congress. If any member of the bar of that Supreme Court should be found in the Court giving utterance to the expression of such an opinion as that, that one of their decisions needed the sanction of this Congress, I am not sure that he would not be dealt with for a contempt. He certainly ought to be. Then, sir, you do not want any confirmation of this opinion from Congress. Do you want to give us anything? We do not want it. Do you want to concede to us anything? Do you want to give anything that you have got? You have got the whole. Keep it. Make the most of it. You have got it in the most solemn form in which you ever can get it; and if you are to get it by an act of Congress on the top of that decision of the Supreme Court, I tell you, you weaken rather than strengthen your title. Then you have got the General Government; you have got Congress; you have got the Supreme Court; you have got every State court except the court of Wisconsin; and you have got everything on earth that you want, except one thing; and that you are trying to get. It has come to that at last. You are trying to bring the majority under the minority; and I do not know but you will do that. If you do, it will be done by way of compromise.

Now, sir, let me say that I think, when I express my reverence for the Constitution, and my willingness to abide by it, and the whole of it, in every part and particle of it, I do, at least *prima facie*, give some evidence to the world that I am a Union-loving man. I tell the Senator from Illinois, he ought not to be shocked—and I think he does violence to his moral nature in allowing himself to be shocked—when the honorable Senator from Virginia gets up and speaks in commendation of the Constitution; and I give it my assent. So far from being shocked, I was rejoiced at it. I was rejoiced that the Senator from Virginia gave utterance to those sentiments; and I accord with them to the fullest extent.

But, now, as I see I have—what I do not often have—the ear of the honorable Senators from the State of Virginia, I would, if it be not arrogant, speaking here for my country, address a single word to-day to the great State of Virginia. Against the advice of some friends with whom I usually sympathize and generally follow, I was pleased that the State of Virginia had instituted and organized a meeting of commissioners to meet in this Federal Capital, on the 4th of the next month, to advise about matters relating to the common welfare. I should have been a little better pleased—but I was not consulted about that—if the time had been put off a little longer, a few days, so that we might have had a little more time for consultation. I was pleased, too, that Virginia

had not yet forgotten all the ties that bound the old thirteen States together. I was pleased that her mission was sent out not only to the slaveholding but to the non-slaveholding States, and that they were all invited to come. I will say here, what has not yet transpired to the public, and perhaps is of very little interest to the public, that when the announcement was made on this floor that the State of Virginia had initiated this measure, I, in consultation with my colleague, and our colleagues in the other House, joined in an earnest recommendation to the Governor of the State of New Hampshire, asking him to send commissioners to meet those who would be sent from the other States, telling him it was our opinion, upon the best consultation we could have in the short time allowed us, that such a measure as that would be salutary in its consequences. What effect that advice may have upon his excellency, the Governor of New Hampshire, I know not. Perhaps he may not feel authorized to take that responsibility in the absence of the Legislature.

But, sir, if there be a State in this Union that has more than any other State at issue, in the discussions which are passing to-day on the question which now agitates this country, it is the State of Virginia. I am willing to do justice everywhere, to everybody; and I recognize that it was Virginia whose philosophic statesman portrayed to the eyes of heaven and earth the story of our rights and wrongs in the Declaration of Independence with an eloquence rarely equaled, never equaled since He spake as never man spake. I recognize that it was a chosen son of Virginia who, by his patience, prudence, and his valor, led our armies through the war of the Revolution; and after all the victories which he had gained over the foes of his country had given him a place in the annals of time second to no man, he won a greater victory than all that, over himself, when he laid down the insignia of military authority and bowed in humble submission to the foot of the civil power. I recognize all that; and I know further, that among the illustrious men whose valor won and whose wisdom preserved, by the consolidation of the Constitution, the liberties of this country, there is another honored name, an ancestor of the honorable Senator from Virginia. Sir, I wish, as long as time lasts, that the fame of Virginia may be illustrated by no less illustrious names than that which is worn by the distinguished Senator from Virginia [Mr. MASON.] If he does not always speak the sentiments which best accord with my own, if his manner to an unsophisticated man, not accustomed to it, sometimes savors a little—I will not say of plantation manners, because I was on a plantation once, and I know the kindness of their manner—but if his manner does sometimes indicate to an unsophisticated observer that Virginia is not a State, but

THE State of the Union, and *He* her representative, I forgive it all, because I can never obliterate from my heart the recollection of that debt of gratitude which I, in common with all of us, owe to Virginia.

But I tell you, Senators from Virginia, if I am not trespassing on the proprieties of this place, all the fame that your glorious ancestors have won for your glorious State, all the glorious memories of the great men that have illustrated your history, will go out in that eternal darkness which shall shroud the liberties of this Republic, if Virginia leads or follows in this raid of secession. I tell you, sir, the liberties of this country, for weal or for woe, depend upon the conservation of this Union. The very preservation of its liberties depends upon the conservation of this Union; and that great sentiment, so eloquently and so ably pronounced by a distinguished Senator from Massachusetts—not now on this floors or among the living—of “Liberty and Union, one and inseparable, now and forever,” is as true now as it was then. It was true then; it is true in the present; and it will be true in the coming future.

I have trespassed upon the Senate longer than I meant to do; but I cannot close without making one more appeal—an appeal to every man that values liberty, to dispel from his imagination forever the idea that liberty is to be sought in the separation and secession of these States. I see the impatience of my friend from Texas, [Mr. WIGFALL.] He is impatient that my poor voice may be hushed, and that he may be permitted to illuminate this Chamber with the radiance of the Lone Star from Texas. He shall have the floor soon. But I tell you, gentlemen of the seceding States, your history is written. It wants no prophet to proclaim it. It is written. Do you ask where? In the history of the Republics of Mexico and South America. Go there, sir, and you will read it to-day. Ten years hence, you may read it, rewritten, on other pages; the story the same, the name only changed.

Now, sir, let me say a word in behalf of myself personally, in regard to this matter. I feel a degree of personal responsibility in connection with this subject. I am ready to concede everything that is consistent; and if “concede” is not the word, give me the word and I will use it. I am willing to do everything that is consistent with my moral duty and with a patriotic desire to serve my country, and serve it faithfully; but I tell you, sir, the difficulty does not lie there. Madness rules the hour. Reason is subverted; passion triumphant. What do we want, then? We want time, that is all. We want a little of the healing influence, of time, and we want to appeal to that sober second thought of the people of this whole Union, which a distinguished statesman of other days said was always right. We want to wait for that, and let that come in, and settle that which we, in this hour of passion, are not com-

petent to do. If there are those of these States that cannot, and will not, be satisfied, in God's name, let them go. I tell you, sir, the Union will be preserved nevertheless. Its stars and stripes shall still float in the valleys and over the mountain tops. True hearts shall rally around it. It shall preserve the literature, the learning, the liberty, and the religion of the land; and when you that have gone off, like the prodigal son, in the far country, filling your belly with the husks which the swine do eat, turn at last to this Union, then, sir, and not until then, will we kill the fatted calf, and rejoice that the lost is found and the dead alive again. [Applause in the galleries.]

*Extracts from the Report of the Portsmouth Relief Association  
to the Contributors for the Relief of the Sufferers from Yellow  
Fever in the Town of Portsmouth, during the Epidemic of  
1855.*

"It is impossible to realize what measure of distress the dire calamity which befel our town would have inflicted upon her inhabitants, without the timely aid so abundantly poured in upon us by friends everywhere. Their generous contributions alone afforded the means of keeping gaunt famine from our midst, and enabled us to supply food to appease the pangs of hunger, which otherwise could not have been alleviated."

"How sublime a eulogium on the character of our institutions and our people, did this spontaneous outpouring of benevolence in behalf of a plague-stricken city, present! The citizens of every section of our country—the old and the young, as well as little children—people of all shades of politics and religion, simultaneously and without concert, joined in the holy charity which was to furnish food and comfort to a dying community! When our wants became known—and they were by no means few, or small—there was not a day on which supplies of money, provisions, medicines, and necessities of all kinds, were not flowing in upon us."

"Assistance was not alone furnished us in provisions and money. When the call for personal help went forth, our cries were heard and nobly responded to. Intelligent and philanthropic physicians, kind and skillful nurses, and gentle, sympathizing women flocked to our relief. They knew the danger they were about to encounter, but that did not cause them to hesitate. Intent only in ministering to the wants of sick and suffering humanity, all thought of danger to self was discarded, and vigorously and nobly did they battle with the plague-fiend—some to fall, to rise no more until the sounding of the last trump! Martyrs to humanity! Exemplars of heroism! They fell more nobly than if cut down on the battle-field amid the pomp and circumstance of war. No martial strains or loud buzzas cheered them in their labors. Nothing but the shrieks of the suffering and the groans of the dying saluted their ears. Noiselessly and without applause, save that afforded by a consciousness of their holy mission, they followed in the track of the pestilence, rendering all the aid to its victims which an arduous course of theory had placed at their command."

## RECAPITULATION.

Maine	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$758 00
New Hampshire	-	-	-	-	-	-	50 00
Massachusetts	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,608 47
Rhode Island	-	-	-	-	-	-	704 66
Connecticut	-	-	-	-	-	-	350 03
New York	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,694 90
New Jersey	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,500 77
Pennsylvania	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,877 74
Delaware	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,229 60
Maryland	-	-	-	-	-	-	679 79*
District of Columbia	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,863 09
Virginia	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,216 22
North Carolina	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,790 42
South Carolina	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,635 98
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	-	227 66
Alabama	-	-	-	-	-	-	73 66
Mississippi	-	-	-	-	-	-	50 00
Louisiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	300 83
Florida	-	-	-	-	-	-	160 00
Texas	-	-	-	-	-	-	50 00
Kentucky	-	-	-	-	-	-	60 00
Indiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 00
Missouri	-	-	-	-	-	-	924 47
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,258 34
							<hr/>
							86,067 63
Expended by Mr. Watts	-	-	-	-	-	-	747 00
							<hr/>
							\$85,320 63

\* This sum is exclusive of provisions amounting to thousands of dollars, which were received from Baltimore. Provisions were also received from Richmond, Petersburg, and other localities, the amount of which is unknown.









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