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THE MISSION  
OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
TO VIRGINIA.

FROM THE PRESS OF JAMES LUCAS & SON, BALTIMORE.



*Christopher Gustavus Memminger*

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# THE MISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA TO VIRGINIA.

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[From *De Bow's Review*, December, 1860.]

[This is a fitting occasion to present to our readers a paper which has been upon our table for several months, embodying the argument made by South Carolina, through her eminent citizen, the Hon. C. G. Memminger, at the bar of the Legislature of Virginia, touching the great subject of Southern wrongs, and the proper remedy for them. The argument is powerful, and leaves little to be said in justification of any course the common perils of the South may urge upon her. We desire to preserve it in the "Review."—ED. REV.]

Referring to the resolutions of the Legislature of South Carolina, under which he acted, Mr. Memminger said, "They direct me—

"1. To express to the authorities of Virginia the cordial sympathy of the people of South Carolina with the people of Virginia, in the trial through which they have lately passed.

"2. To express our earnest desire to unite with you in measures of common defence.

"3. To request a conference of the slaveholding States, and the appointment of deputies or commissioners to the same on the part of Virginia."

## HARPER'S FERRY OUTRAGE.

The expression of our sympathy is most grateful to our own feelings. While, in common with the rest of the Union, we feel our obligation for the large contribution of mind and effort which Virginia has made to the common cause, we of South Carolina are more largely indebted to her for manifestations of particular concern in our welfare, which I shall presently notice. We had supposed that her large contributions to the Union had secured to her the respect and affection of every State of this Confederacy. Certainly there is no State to whom more kindly feelings are due. Her statesmen and soldiers had devoted their lives to the service of the country, and their honored remains now hallow her soil. There was the tomb of

the Father of his Country. There lay the ashes of Patrick Henry and of Jefferson, and of Madison, and of a host of others, whose names had given lustre to our country's glory, and the fruit of whose labors was the common inheritance of North and South; and yet all this could not preserve her from the invasion of her soil, the murder of her citizens, and the attempt to involve her in the horrors of servile and civil war. That very North, to whom she had surrendered a territorial empire—who had grown great through her generous confidence—sent forth the assassins, furnished them with arms and money, and would fain rescue them from the infamy and punishment due to crimes so atrocious.

To estimate aright the character of the outrage at Harper's Ferry, we must realize the intentions of those who planned it. They expected the slaves to rise in mass as soon as the banner of abolitionism should be unfurled. Knowing nothing of the kindly feeling which exists throughout the South between the master and his slaves, they judged of that feeling by their own hatred, and expected that the tocsin which they sounded would at once arouse to rebellion every slave who heard it. Accordingly they prepared such arms as an infuriated and untrained peasantry could most readily use.

They also expected aid from another element of revolution. They did not believe in the loyalty to the government of Virginia of that part of her population which owned no slaves. They seized upon the armory, and they expected help from its operatives, and from the farming population; and to gain time for combining all these elements of mischief, as they conceived them to be, they seized upon a pass in the mountains, well adapted to their purpose. For months had they worked with fiendish and unwearied diligence, and it is hazarding little to conjecture, that the banditti who had been trained in Kansas, were in readiness to obey the summons to new scenes of rapine and murder, as soon as a lodgment were effected.

Is it at all surprising that a peaceful village, where no sound of war had been heard for half a century, should be overcome for the moment, at midnight, by so unexpected an inroad? The confusion which ensued was a necessity; and it can only be inscribed to the superintendence of a kind Providence, that so few innocent lives were sacrificed. It is indeed wonderful that none of the hostages seized by these banditti should have suffered from the attacks which their friends were obliged to make, and that at so early a period the inhabitants recovered from their amazement and



reduced their assailants to the five who were entrenched within the brick walls of the engine-house.

The failure to accomplish their purpose cannot lessen its atrocity; neither can their erroneous calculations as to the loyalty of the citizens to the State, or of the slaves to their masters, lessen the crime of these murderers, and they have justly paid the forfeit of their lives. But such a forfeit cannot expiate the blood of peaceful citizens, nor restore the feeling of tranquil security to the families which they have disturbed. The outraged soil of Virginia stands a witness of the wrong, and the unquiet homes which remain agitated along her borders, still call for protection; and as an affectionate mother, the State feels for her children, and is providing for that protection. The people of South Carolina cordially sympathize in all these feelings. They regard this outrage as perpetrated on themselves. The blow that has struck you, was aimed equally at them, and they would gladly share in all its consequences, and, most of all, in the effort to prevent its recurrence in the future.

In this desire, they are influenced not only by a sense of common danger, but by the remembrance of former kindness, exhibited toward South Carolina by the State of Virginia, in a day of trial.

VIRGINIA'S SYMPATHY WITH SOUTH CAROLINA IN HER NULLIFICATION  
STRUGGLES.

In the year 1833, when South Carolina had nullified an unconstitutional tariff, imposed by the federal government, and was taking measures to maintain her position at every hazard, the State of Virginia, actuated by the kindest and most honorable feelings, adopted the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, By the General Assembly, in the name and on behalf of the people of Virginia, that the competent authorities of South Carolina be and they are hereby earnestly and respectfully requested and entreated to rescind the ordinance of the late convention of that State, entitled 'An Ordinance to nullify certain acts of the Congress of the United States, purporting to be laws, laying duties and imposts on the importation of foreign commodities;' or, at least, to suspend its operation until the close of the first session of the next Congress.

*Resolved*, That the Congress of the United States be and they are hereby earnestly and respectfully requested and entreated so to modify the acts laying duties and imposts on the importation of foreign commodities, commonly called the tariff acts, as to effect a gradual but speedy reduction of the resulting revenue of the general government, to the standard of the necessary and proper expenditures for the support thereof.

*Resolved*, That this House will, by a joint vote with the Senate, proceed, on this day, to elect a Commissioner, whose duty it shall be to proceed immediately to South Carolina, and communicate the foregoing preamble and resolutions to the Governor of that State, with a request that they be communicated to the Legislature of that State, or any convention of its citizens, or give them such other direction as in his judgment may be best calculated to promote the objects which this Commonwealth has in view; and that the said Commissioner be authorized to express to the public authorities and people of our sister State, in such manner as he may deem most expedient, our sincere

good will to our sister State, and our anxious solicitude that the kind and respectful recommendations we have addressed her, may lead to an accommodation of all the differences between that State and the general government."

Mr. Leigh repaired to South Carolina, and on presenting his credentials, was informed by the governor that the ordinary authorities of the government had no jurisdiction of the subject of his mission, inasmuch as the ordinance of nullification had been passed by a convention of the people. The following extracts from the correspondence will exhibit what took place :

*Extract from a letter of Hon. B. W. Leigh, Commissioner of Virginia, to his Excellency Robert Y. Hayne, Governor of South Carolina.*

"CHARLESTON, February 5th, 1833.

"I have now, therefore, to request your Excellency to communicate the resolutions of the General Assembly of Virginia, and this letter also, to the President of the Convention, confidently hoping that that officer will not refuse or hesitate to re-assemble the convention, in order that the resolutions of the General Assembly may be submitted to it, and that the Convention may consider whether, and how far, the earnest and respectful request and entreaty of the General Assembly shall and ought to be complied with."

*Extract from a letter of James Hamilton, Jr., to his Excellency Robert Y. Hayne, Governor of South Carolina.*

"CHARLESTON, February 6th, 1833.

"In reply to the reference which you have made to me, as President of the Convention of the people of South Carolina, consequent on the application on the part of that gentleman for the meeting of that body, I beg leave to communicate to him, through your Excellency, that appreciating very highly the kind disposition and the patriotic solicitude which have induced the highly respectable commonwealth which he represents to interpose her friendly and mediatorial offices in the unhappy controversy subsisting between the federal government and the State of South Carolina. I should do great injustice to those dispositions on her part, and, I am quite sure, to the feelings of the people of South Carolina, if I did not promptly comply with his wishes in reference to the proposed call."

In compliance with Mr. Leigh's request, the Convention was re-assembled. The mediation and request of Virginia was communicated. Her interference with the federal government, the other party to the controversy, had led to a modification of the tariff, and the result with South Carolina was a repeal of the ordinance of nullification, and the adoption by the Convention of the following resolutions :

"*Resolved, unanimously*, That the President of this Convention do communicate to the Governor of Virginia, with a copy of this report and these resolutions, our distinguished sense of the patriotic and friendly motives which actuated her General Assembly in tendering her mediation in the late controversy between the general government and the State of South Carolina, with the assurance that her friendly counsels will at all times command our respectful consideration.

"*Resolved, unanimously*, That the President of this Convention likewise convey to the Governor of Virginia our high appreciation of the able and conciliatory manner in which Mr. Leigh has conducted his mission, during which he afforded the most gratifying satisfaction to all parties, in sustaining toward us the kind and fraternal relations of his own State."

The other incident in the relations of the two States, to which I would ask your attention, occurred in 1851. Four years before, both States passed resolutions that they would not submit to the Wilmot Proviso. In 1849 Virginia had added to her declaration of 1847, that she would also resist the abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia. South Carolina concurred entirely in the sentiments of Virginia, and prepared to defend the position which had been taken, and which she supposed was the common position of the whole South.

The compromise measures adopted by Congress in 1850, so far from being satisfactory, in her judgment aggravated the injury. She regarded the admission of California, with a constitution prohibiting slavery, as in effect an enactment of the Wilmot Proviso; and the slave trade in the District of Columbia had been expressly prohibited by one of the compromise acts of Congress. With these views South Carolina proceeded to arm her people, and made the requisite arrangements for calling a convention to secede from the Union, or to adopt such other measures as the safety and welfare of the State might require.

VIRGINIA REGARDS THE COMPROMISE MEASURES OF 1851 AS A FINAL SETTLEMENT.

In December, 1851, the Legislature of Virginia adopted the following resolutions:

“Whereas, The Legislature of the State of South Carolina has passed an act to provide for the appointment of delegates to the Southern Congress, ‘to be intrusted with full power and authority to deliberate with the view and intention of arresting further aggression, and, if possible, of restoring the constitutional rights of the South, and, if not, to recommend *due* provision for their future safety and independence,’ which act has been formally communicated to this General Assembly.

“1. Be it, therefore, *Resolved*, by the General Assembly of Virginia, that while this State deeply sympathizes with South Carolina in the feelings excited by the unwarrantable interference of certain of the non-slaveholding States with our common institutions; and while diversity of opinion exists among the people of this Commonwealth in regard to the wisdom, justice, and constitutionality of the measures of the late Congress of the United States, taken as a whole, and commonly known as the compromise measures, yet the Legislature of Virginia deems it a duty to declare to her sister State of South Carolina, that the people of this State are unwilling to take any action in consequence of the same, calculated to destroy the integrity of this Union.

“2. *Resolved*, That, regarding the said acts of the Congress of the United States, taken together, as an adjustment of the exciting questions to which they relate, and cherishing the hope that, if fairly executed, they will restore to the country that harmony and confidence which of late have been so unhappily disturbed, the State of Virginia deems it unwise, in the present condition of the country, to send delegates to the proposed Southern Congress.”

“3. *Resolved*, That Virginia earnestly and affectionately appeals to her sister State of South Carolina, to desist from any meditated secession on her part, which cannot but tend to the destruction of the Union, and the loss to all of the States of the benefits that spring from it.”

I have introduced this history in no spirit of fault finding, and with no intention to reflect in the least degree upon the action of Virginia. She had a perfect right, as a sovereign State, to accept the Compromise of 1850; and, having accepted it, she was not bound to justify herself, except at her own pleasure. South Carolina had an equal right to refuse the compromise, and to take action to make good such refusal. But the kindly feeling which existed between the two States induced Virginia to pass the resolutions of 1851. A reciprocal feeling influenced South Carolina; and many of her citizens, influenced by the action of Virginia, proceeded to canvass the State, and persuaded the people to abandon the idea of separate secession. The South Carolina Convention met in 1852; and, although a majority had been elected of those who were in favor of secession, that majority gave way to the popular will, and all parties united in asserting the right, but desisting from the act of secession.

Thus, a second time did a convention of the people of South Carolina accede to the request of Virginia. Seven years have since elapsed; and, instead of that returning sense of justice among the Northern people, which you doubtless expected, "the assaults upon the institution of slavery, and upon the rights and equality of the Southern States, have unceasingly continued with increasing violence, and in new and more alarming forms," until now, at length, the voice of a brother's blood cries to us from the ground; and South Carolina, moved like yourselves by that cry, offers her sympathy and proposes a conference; and "earnestly requests of Virginia that she will appoint deputies and adopt such measures as in her judgment will promote the said meeting."

South Carolina, however, does not expect, neither would she desire you to do what your judgments do not approve. She feels well assured that, under existing circumstances, such a conference is the best step which can be taken; and I cannot better discharge the duty intrusted to me, than in presenting to your consideration the reasons which lead to this conclusion. To an audience so intelligent as that which now honors me with its attention, I can scarcely advance anything new; but it will lead to a just conclusion, if we refresh our memories as to some material incidents of the past.

#### THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH STAND IN HOSTILE ARRAY.

The great question which underlies all action on this subject is, whether the existing relations between the North and the South are temporary or permanent; whether they result from accidental derangement of the body

politic, or are indications of a normal condition? In the one case, temporary expedients may restore soundness; in the other, the remedy is either hopeless, or it must be fundamental and thorough.

In these aspects the invasion at Harper's Ferry is a valuable exponent. It furnishes many indications by which we may ascertain the actual condition of things. It is a sort of nilometer, by which we can measure the heights of the flood which is bursting over the land. By the providence of that God who preserved your people from the knife of the assassin, you were enabled, not only to defeat and capture your enemies, but to get possession of arms and documents which expose the design and plan of the assailants. You find that months must have elapsed in maturing their plans: that arms were manufactured, the design of which could not be mistaken; that large sums of money must have been collected. It is certain, therefore, that many persons must have known that such a blow was intended; and yet, who spoke? Who gave a single friendly warning to Virginia? One voice, indeed, distinctly uttered to the federal government a warning, but that voice was disregarded; and the catastrophe burst upon us as a thunder-storm in mid-winter.

The loyal sons of Virginia rushed to her defence, and the military arm bows to the majesty of law, and delivers the murderer to a just and impartial trial. A new incident in the history of crime is developed. Learned counsel from a distant city, once styled the Athens of America, proceed to a distant village to offer their services to defend the midnight assassin. Political offences have sometimes found voluntary defenders, but the moral sense must be absolutely perverted, when it is deemed a virtue to screen the murderer from punishment. The excitement grows, and your courts of justice cannot proceed as in ordinary cases of crime. You are compelled to surround them with military power; and when the law has pronounced its sentence, you are compelled to guard the prison-house and the scaffold, to keep at bay the confederates and sympathizers with crimes heretofore execrated by every civilized people upon earth.

The indications of this implacable condition of Northern opinion do not stop here. The sentence of death upon the criminals and their execution are bewailed with sounds of lamentation, such as would now follow a Ridley or a Latimer to the stake, and public demonstrations of sympathy exhibit themselves throughout the entire North. To the great discredit of our institutions and of our country, motions are entertained in bodies exercising political power to honor the memory of a wretched fanatic and

assassin; and, in one body, the motion failed only for the want of three votes. These are indications which you cannot disregard. They tell of a state of public opinion which cannot fail to produce further evil. Every village bell which tolled its solemn note at the execution of Brown, proclaims to the South the approbation of that village of insurrection and servile war; and the ease with which some of the confederates escaped to Canada, proves that much of the population around are willing to abet the actors in these incendiary attempts.

To view this matter in its just proportions, we must set it at a little distance from us. Familiarity accustoms us so much to things near, that we lose the perception of their magnitude. A daily observer of the Falls of Niagara may be brought to look upon them as the ordinary descent of water down a river. Let us, therefore, suppose that the attempted assassination of Louis Napoleon at the opera-house in Paris had been followed by developments showing the contribution of arms and money in England: that, upon the arrest of the detected assassins, learned counsel had crossed the Channel to volunteer a defence before the French courts; that, upon his condemnation, threats of sympathy compelled the government to surround the scaffold with arms: and, upon his execution, bells were tolled in many English villages; and, as a consummation of the whole, a motion was entertained to adjourn the Parliament in honor of the memory of the assassin, and that this motion had failed in one House only by three votes. Does any man suppose that, under these circumstances, the peace of Europe could have been preserved for a day? Unless prompt disavowal and punishment had been offered, every Frenchman would have been ready to cross the Channel as an enemy, and the civilized world would have regarded the English people as a nation of outlaws.

In our country, so far from there being any proper indication of disavowal, the indications are the other way. Elections have taken place at the North since the Harper's Ferry invasion, in which the public sentiment has been exhibited. Those who maintain the abolition views have proved stronger than they ever were before. In New York they have triumphed over the other parties combined together; and in Boston, notwithstanding an attempt to stay the tide, the same result has followed. In Congress, the same lamentable exhibition is afforded. More than one hundred members prefer to keep the government disorganized, rather than abandon a candidate whose recommendation of a book inviting a combined effort to introduce anarchy and servile war at the South, makes him obnox-

ious to the South: and of these, some sixty have signed a recommendation of the same book; and there they stand, and have stood for more than six weeks, with unbroken front, refusing any kind of concession to the outraged feelings of the South. Can any Southern man believe that these Representatives do not represent the feelings of their constituents; and that they would venture upon the measure of keeping the government disorganized, against the public opinion that is behind them.

Here, then, we have before us the North and the South, standing face to face—not yet as avowed and open enemies; but with deep-seated feelings of enmity rankling in their bosoms, which at any moment may burst forth into action. Is it wise, when we see flame shining through every crevice, and ready to leap from every open window—is it wise to close the window, and fill up every gap, and shut our eyes to the fact that the fire is raging within the building? It is not wise. We must examine the premises, and determine whether the building can be saved, or whether it must be abandoned.

We have now reached this point in our inquiry. The Harper's Ferry invasion, with the developments following it, and the now existing condition of the country, prove that the North and the South are standing in hostile array—the one with an absolute majority, sustaining those who meditate our destruction, and refusing to us any concession or guaranty—and the other baffled in every attempt at compromise or security.

CAUSES WHICH HAVE OPERATED TO PRODUCE THE RESULT, AND WHETHER  
PERMANENT OR NOT.

The inquiry which must naturally follow would be into the causes which have led to this result, and whether these causes are transient in character, or must continue to operate until they result in a final overthrow of our institutions.

To determine this question, it becomes necessary to review a portion of the history of our country.

At the termination of the Revolutionary war, there were six slaveholding States and seven non-slaveholding. The Northern section had no territory but that from which has since been formed the States of Vermont and Maine. The Southern owned the Northwest and the Southwest, and had in its possession the means of expanding itself into the numerous States which have since been formed out of this territory. The local law of slavery in the parent State would have followed in the offspring, and the

result must have been that the power of the South would have had the vast preponderance. At that time, too, the commerce of the South was equal to that of the North; and, occupying a more favorable position, both as to soil and climate, there was every reasonable prospect that she would be in the advance of all the elements of national strength.

How different a result do we this day realize! The North has grown to a degree of power and grandeur unequalled in the history of the world. They have taken possession of the magnificent inheritance of the South, and on the fertile plains which should have been ours they gather their thousands, and utter voices of denunciation against those who bestowed upon them the power and wealth which they enjoy. What are the causes of these results? How has it come to pass that the South, having in its hands the means of unlimited progress and certain preponderance, has been reduced almost to the condition of a suppliant, while the North has grown into such proportions that it assumes to give law as a master?

The more perfect union of the States was an object of great interest to the Revolutionary patriots. In 1784, Virginia led the way by ceding to the United States her magnificent domain north of the Ohio river. The terms of Virginia's act of cession required that the States to be formed from this territory shall be "admitted members of the Federal Union, having the same rights of sovereignty, freedom, and independence, as the other States." Shortly after the cession, a committee of the Congress of the Confederation was raised to frame an ordinance for the establishment of the territory. This committee, of whom Mr. Jefferson was one, reported an ordinance excluding slavery after the year 1800. This restriction on slavery, however, was struck out by the Congress on motion of North Carolina—every Southern State and every Southern delegate, except Mr. Jefferson, voting for striking out; and the ordinance was adopted without the restriction. During the several subsequent sessions of Congress, other propositions were moved; and finally, on the 13th of July, 1787, just two months before the adoption of our present Constitution, the ordinance was adopted with the restriction clause, as follows:

"ART. 6. There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted; *Provided always*, that any person escaping into the same, from whom labor or service is lawfully claimed in any one of the original States, such fugitive may be lawfully reclaimed and conveyed to the person claiming his or her labor or service as aforesaid."

Three things are apparent from this statement: the first is, that Virginia and the South made this great concession for the sake of the Federal



Union; the second is, that the concession was made upon the express condition that fugitive slaves escaping into the territory should be restored to their owners; and the third is, that at this early period, long before fanaticism had mingled in this controversy, and before the South had any apprehensions as to her equal rights, the North, with far-reaching craftiness, secured to itself a predominance of eventual power in the Union. The generous and confiding character of the South overlooked these considerations. Her statesmen were then in possession of the government. General Washington was at the head, surrounded by generous and noble spirits; and the slaveholder and the non-slaveholder had so often stood side by side in conflict with their enemy, that they still deemed each other brethren.

But what has been the effect of these cessions upon the relative condition of the North and the South? From this ceded territory nine States have grown—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi. These States, added to the six original slave States, would have increased their number to fifteen. The Northern States, having but two new States to add to their original seven, would have numbered nine in all. Hence, it would have followed that the South would now have had 30 Senators and 122 Representatives in Congress, while the North would have had only 18 Senators and 92 Representatives. The effect of the cessions, however, has been to give to the North five out of these nine States, while the South retained but four. The Northern States have, therefore, added these five to their original seven; which twelve being added to Vermont and Maine, made their number fourteen, against ten Southern States; and the distribution of power, according to the present basis, gives to the North, as the effect of these cessions, 28 Senators and 140 Representatives in Congress, while the South has only 20 Senators and 74 Representatives.

History does not afford a parallel for so magnanimous and voluntary a surrender. Virginia, which contributed the largest portion, was perhaps, more independent than any of her sisters. With a climate and soil the most favored by nature—with an extended commerce—with fine ports and noble rivers—with somewhat of a navy, and with a well-trying militia, she was quite able to stand alone. But she gave up all for the sake of union. Nay, more—the whole produce of the sales of all the land ceded by the South amounting to some one hundred and fifty millions of dollars, was thrown into the coffer of the Union—while the sales in the Northern por-

tion of the Union were reserved to themselves. Surely, if there could be created a sentiment of gratitude and brotherly love in States, that sentiment should have existed in the Northern States toward the people of the South.

The next event of importance in this history, was the purchase of Louisiana. This acquisition was made in April, 1803, under the treaty with France, and was approved by the whole Union. The territory acquired was all slaveholding. The rights of the inhabitants were expressly guaranteed to them by treaty; and the local law being that of a slaveholding country, of course attached throughout its entire extent. Ten States have been, or are about to be, formed from this purchase. At the date of the treaty, there were eight slaveholding and nine non-slaveholding States; and from the territory then belonging to the Union, the slave States could add to their number but two, to wit: Alabama and Mississippi—while five remained to be added to the North, namely, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Maine. When these should all have been admitted, the North was to have fourteen States—the South but ten. The purchase of Louisiana, by extending the local law of slavery over all its territory, added to the South this whole area, making in all twenty States; and the acquisition of Florida, under the treaty of Spain, added one more State, making twenty-one Southern States, against fourteen Northern.

Such was the condition and prospects of the Union when Missouri applied for admission. Maine had just been admitted without objection, and the Union stood at its old position—the North having one more State than the South. The admission of Missouri would only have made them equal for the time. The opposition, therefore, to the admission of Missouri was induced not by any existing preponderance of the South, but by one that was anticipated. Just as they did in 1787, the North made use of the attachment of the South to the Union to effect their scheme, and insisted that all the territory west of the Mississippi should be given up by the South. It is highly instructive to us, in our present circumstances to notice that the only motive to this refusal to admit Missouri, must have been to secure power to the North. Fanaticism had yet exercised no controlling power. Hatred had not yet been excited. The many bonds, social, commercial, and religious, which bound the country together, were yet in full vigor.

Again the adoration of the South for union prevailed. A voice from its midst, in an evil hour, proposed what is called a compromise, and the

North eagerly seized and urged it forward. The Missouri Compromise took its place on the statute-book, and graved in the soil of the Union a geographical line between the North and the South. It was called a compromise; but unfortunately it differed from the usual acceptation of the term, in that it gave all on one side of the line to the North, and secured nothing on the other side to the South. By it the North gained territory for six additional States, namely: Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, Oregon, and Washington. The South reserved but two—Missouri and Arkansas—with the chances of a third from the Indian territory. The disastrous consequences of this compromise are portrayed with the pen of a prophet, by Mr. Jefferson; and I respectfully ask to have his words read in your hearing:

*Extract from a letter of Mr. Jefferson to John Holmes.*

“MONTICELLO, April 22, 1830.

“I thank you, dear sir, for the copy you have been so kind as to send me of the letter to your constituents on the Missouri question. It is a perfect justification to them. I had for a long time ceased to read newspapers, or pay any attention to public affairs, confident that they were in good hands, and content to be a passenger in our bark to the shore, from which I am not far distant. But this momentous question, like a fire-bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not the final sentence. A geographical line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated, and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper. \* \*

“I regret that I am now to die in the belief that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of 1776, to acquire self-government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be, that I shall not live to weep over it.”

#### ACTION OF THE ABOLITIONISTS IN CONGRESS.

We will now pass down to the period when a new element was brought into this unfortunate controversy. In 1835, petitions for the abolition of slavery in places subject to the authority of the general government, began to be presented to Congress. This form of proceeding was adopted merely to adjust a lever which might reach the institution of slavery within the States; and it is hazarding little to affirm, that such was distinctly understood to be the design of the movement. Such an attempt should have been met by the prompt and stern rebuke of the common government of all the States; for it would seem to be an axiomatic truth, that where several States had entered into an alliance, there was an obligation on each to respect the institutions of the other; and that any attempt to use the alliance for the purpose of assailing the institutions of any one of the parties, was a breach of faith, and must ensue in a dissolution of the alliance.

Stern rebuke, and unyielding resistance, should have been offered by Congress to all these attempts; and such was the course advised by Southern statesmen. As far back as 1838, the dangers which are now around us were clearly foretold by Mr. Calhoun, and it may serve to convince us that the final result is not far in the future, if we see before us the antecedents which had been distinctly traced. I ask leave, therefore, to have read an extract from a speech made in 1838 :

"This was the only question of sufficient magnitude and potency to divide this Union; and divide it, it would, or drench the country in blood, if not arrested. He knew how much the sentiment he had uttered would be misconstrued and misrepresented. There were those who saw no danger to the Union in the violation of all its fundamental principles, but who were full of apprehension when danger was foretold or resisted, and who held not the authors of the danger, but those who forewarned or opposed it, responsible for consequences. But the cry of disunion, by the weak or designing had no terror for him. If his attachment to the Union was less, he might tamper with the deep disease which now afflicts the body politic, and keep silent until the patient was ready to sink under its mortal blows. It is a cheap, and he must say, but too certain a mode of acquiring the character of devoted attachment to the Union. But seeing the danger as he did, he would be a traitor to the Union, and those he represented, to keep silence. The assaults daily made on the institutions of nearly one-half of the States of this Union by the other—institutions interwoven from the beginning with their political and social existence, and which cannot be other than they are, without their inevitable destruction, will, and must, if continued, make *two people of one*, by destroying every sympathy between the two great sections, obliterating from their hearts the recollections of their common danger and glory, and implanting in their place a mutual hatred, more deadly than ever existed between two neighboring people, since the commencement of the human race. He feared not the circulation of the thousands of incendiary and slanderous publications, which were daily issued from an organized and powerful press, among those intended to be villified. They cannot penetrate our section; that was not the danger; it lay in a different direction. Their circulation in the non-slaveholding States was what was to be dreaded. It was infusing a deadly poison into the minds of the rising generation, implanting in them feelings of hatred, the most deadly hatred, instead of affection and love, for one-half of this Union, to be returned on their part with equal detestation. The fatal, immutable consequences, if not arrested, and that without delay, were such as he had presented.

"The abolitionists tell you, in so many words, that their object is to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, as but one step toward final abolition in the States. With this object, avowed by the abolitionists, what do duty and policy demand on our part? We see the end; and that, if it can be effected, it would be our destruction. Shall we yield or stand fast? That is the question. If we yield an inch, we are gone. The very ground on which we are asked to make the first concession, will be urged on us with equal force to make the second, the third, and every intermediate one, till the last is consummated. \* \* \* \* \* At every step they would become stronger, and we weaker, if we should be so infatuated as to make the first concession. \* \* \* \* \* There never was a question agitated, where the most unyielding opposition was so necessary for success.

"He ought not, perhaps, to be surprised that Senators should differ so widely from him on this subject. They did view the disease as he did. He saw working at the bottom of these movements the same spirit which, two centuries ago, convulsed the Christian world, and deluged it in blood—that fierce and cruel spirit of persecution which originated in assumed superiority and mistaken principles of duty, that made one man believe that he was accountable for the sins of another, and that he was the judge of what belonged to his temporal and eternal welfare, and was bound, at the peril of his own soul, to interfere to rescue him from perdition. Against this fell and bloody spirit it was in vain to interpose this amendment. \* \* \* \* \* An inflexible adherence to our principles and our rights, and a decided and emphatic tone, equally remote from violence or concession, only can save us. The deluded agitators

must be plainly told that it is no concern of theirs what is the character of our Institutions, and that they must not be touched here, or in the territories or the States, by them or the government; that they were under the guardian protection of the Constitution, and that we stood prepared to repel all interference or disconnection, be the consequence what it might.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately for the South, concession became again its policy. It was virtually admitted that the North had a right to assail the institution of slavery when Congress agreed to receive their petitions. Logically, this admission demanded a consideration of the matter of the petition. But, with singular inconsistency, a rule was made that the petitions should be laid upon the table, without further action. So violent a separation of premises and conclusions satisfied no one; and the result was, that the agitation continued with unabated zeal. The political parties into which the country was divided, made their court to this fanatical element, added to its strength, and gave direction to its blindness.

Its first fruits were developed in the severance of Christian fellowship in the churches. Inflamed with zeal, by imaginary wrong, and assuming as an article of the faith, that slavery was a sin, they denounced their brethren of the South as unworthy of meeting with them at the table of their common Master. The professed followers of that meek and gentle Saviour, who, from the hills of Galilee, and from the mountains of Judea, had looked down without censure upon thousands of dwellings, inhabited by slaveholders—of that Saviour, one of whose first miracles was the healing, and restoring to a Roman master, his slave, sick with the palsy, and commending that master, by declaring that he had not found faith like his in all Israel—these Northern professors of a new Christianity cannot hold communion with slave-owners.

The great apostle of the Gentiles could compass the Roman world, and preach to the thousands, and tens of thousands of slaveholders around him, without one word of reproach. He could convert to the faith the fugitive slave of one of his friends, and send back to him that slave, without the smallest imputation upon his faith or practice. Nay, more—as though the spirit of God had prepared, beforehand, the means to enlighten every Christian upon this very subject—the church of God is inspired to place in the canon of scripture, the noble and respectful letter written by St. Paul to this slaveholding master. The whole Roman world—from the Euphrates to the Pillars of Hercules—from the Danube to Mount Atlas—Goths and Ostrogoths, Vandals, Huns, Gauls and Britons, all can hold communion with each other, through the common Lord, when professing the common faith; yet here, in the same nation, under the same constitu-

tion, with the same Bible, professing one faith, the North cannot hold fellowship with the South. The great leading denominations—Methodist and Baptist—have entirely severed their connection with each other. The Presbyterian and Episcopalian still meet together, and are yet preserved from this fanaticism. But in one portion even of Presbyterian, and in many of the smaller denominations, the cords are chafed and worn so, as to be incapable of further stress; and so it results that the North acknowledges no fellowship with the South. They practically have added a new article to the Christian creed, and in all these cases the tidal wave of persecution has set in from the North, and at each flow it surges higher and higher upon the South, without any interval of ebb.

#### ADMISSION OF TEXAS AND ITS FRUITS.

The next step in our history, to which I must allude, is the admission of Texas into the Union. At this period, there were twenty-six States in the Union, evenly divided between the North and the South. Southern development had been exhausted; but in the territory remaining, five States were yet to be added to the North. The World's Convention, which met at London in 1843, had taken into its consideration the abolition of slavery in Texas. In this convention were delegates from New England; and it is a matter of history that the convention waited on the British minister, and urged upon him a government loan to Texas to be applied toward the abolition of slavery. What took place in the secret conclave of the minister, can easily be conjectured, from the following outline of a debate in the British Parliament, extracted from the London "Times:"

"TEXAS.—In the House of Lords on Friday, the 18th of August, Lord Brougham introduced the subject of Texas and Texan slavery, in the following manner:

"Lord Brougham said that, seeing his noble friend at the head of the foreign department in his place, he wished to obtain some information from him relative to a State of great interest at the present time, namely Texas. That country was in a state of independence, *de facto*, but its independence had never been acknowledged by Mexico, the State from which it was torn by the events of the revolution. He was aware that its independence had been so far acknowledged by this country, that we had a treaty with it.

"The importance of Texas could not be underrated. It was a country of the greatest capabilities, and was in extent fully as large as France. It possessed a soil of the finest and most fertile character, and it was capable of producing nearly all tropical produce, and its climate was of a most healthy character. It had access to the Gulf of Mexico, through the river Mississippi, with which it communicated by means of the Red river.

\* \* \* \* \* The markets whence they obtained their supply of slaves were Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia; which States constantly sent their surplus slave population, which would otherwise be a burden to them, to the Texan market. No doubt it was true, as has been stated, that they treated their slaves tolerably well, because they knew it was for their interest to rear them, as they had such a profitable market for them in Texas. This made him irresistibly anxious for the abolition of slavery in Texas: for if it were abolished there, not only would that country be cultivated by

free and white labor, but it would put a stop to the habit of breeding slaves for the Texan market. The consequence would be, that they would solve this great question in the history of the United States, for it must ultimately end in the abolition of slavery in America. He therefore looked forward most anxiously to the abolition of slavery in Texas, as he was convinced that it would ultimately end in the abolition of slavery throughout the whole of America. He knew that the Texans would do much, as regarded the abolition of slavery, if Mexico could be induced to recognize their independence.

"If, therefore, by our good offices, we could get the Mexican government to acknowledge the independence of Texas, he would suggest a hope that it might terminate in the abolition of slavery in Texas, and ultimately the whole of the Southern States of America."

The Earl of Aberdeen, in his reply, stated that—

"He need hardly say that every effort on the part of her majesty's government would lead to that result which was contemplated by his noble friend. He was sure that he need hardly say that no one was more anxious than himself to see the abolition of slavery in Texas; and if he could not consent to produce papers, or to give further information, it did not arise from indifference, but from quite a contrary reason. In the present state of the negotiations between the two countries in question, it would not contribute to the end they had in view if he then expressed any opinion as to the state of those negotiations; but he could assure his noble friend that, by means of urging the negotiations, as well as by every other means in their power, her majesty's ministers would press this matter."

Lord Brougham observed that nothing could be more satisfactory than the statement of his noble friend, which would be received with joy by all who were favorable to the object of the anti-slavery societies.

At this important period, the providence of that God, who holdeth in his hand the destinies of nations, set aside the powers which man had placed in authority over us, and raised up two Virginia patriots in their stead. John Tyler, and Abel P. Upshur, men of sterling character, and far-seeing statesmanship, were put in charge of the ship of state. They saw through the schemes of England. With consummate skill, and earnest zeal, they undertook to rescue Texas, and had so far succeeded, that a treaty was ready for signature between Texas and the United States, when the explosion on board the Princeton deprived the country of the valued life of Judge Upshur. Mr. Calhoun was then put in requisition by Mr. Tyler, and the unanimous vote of the Senate called him to the post of Secretary of State. In a fortnight the treaty was completed, and once more equality between the North and South was on the eve of being restored.

But here intervened one of those unfortunate canvassings for the Presidency, which are the bane of the South. Mr. Van Buren, and Mr. Clay, the candidates of the two great parties, each fearing to offend the Abolition party, or to throw it into the scale of his antagonist, simultaneously published letters against annexation, and at the ensuing session of Congress the treaty with Texas was defeated. The good sense of the country, how-

ever, assisted by that appetite for territory which seems to belong to the Anglo-Saxon race, put aside the trammels of political machinery, and declared in favor of annexation. The unfortunate managers were overwhelmed in the catastrophe, and the Southern patriots had the satisfaction of consummating the admission of Texas three days before they surrendered the reins of government to their successors.

The conditions upon which Texas was admitted into the Union, provided that from her territory five States might be created in the future. Inasmuch as at least five remained to be admitted for the Northern section, the admission of Texas gave to the South merely an equilibrium in the Senate. The majority in the House was already gone from the South forever. The electoral colleges, if arranged sectionally, would give a majority also to the North. So that all the South acquired by the admission of Texas was the power to check—a negative power. Positive power had already departed from them.

#### THE MEXICAN WAR.

At this era the Mexican war occurred. The country rushed into it with an eagerness which blinded it to all consequences. North and South freely contributed its blood and treasure, and freely shared its glories and its dangers. But before the pæans of victory had yet subsided—before the lamentations for the dead had yet ceased—before the country could yet see through the clouds of the future—the North summoned together its forces to seize for themselves the entire spoils of the war. The Wilmot proviso was brought forward during the war, in August, 1846, and so far as the House of Representatives in Congress was concerned, was adopted. By this proviso, it was declared that slavery should be excluded from all territory to be acquired from Mexico. The Southern States were informed that, although their blood and treasure had contributed to the result—although the bones of their slain lay entombed before the fortresses, and among the mountains of Mexico—although Monterey, and Churubuseo, and Buena Vista, and Chapultepec, were names sacred to the glories of North or South, yet no Southern man should stand upon the conquered territory upon the same footing with the Northern. The institutions of the North, whether Mormon or infidel, might attend them—the Chinaman, or the Lascar, or the Sandwich-Islander, or the Zambo—all might have equal protection and right, but the most valuable property of the Southern man must be left behind.



It is not surprising that the Southern States should have been fired with indignation at this attack. But what availed that? Although in 1846 the Senate checked the proviso by a manœuvre, yet in 1847 it was renewed, upon the expanded basis of excluding the South from *all territory on this continent*. This also passed the House of Representatives and was again defeated by the management of the Senate.

Forbearance could sustain no more. The legislatures of the Southern States began to speak their deep and settled indignation.

Virginia, in March, 1847, thus announced her purpose.

*Extract from Virginia Resolutions of 1847.*

"2. *Resolved unanimously*, That all territory which may be acquired by the arms of the United States, or yielded by treaty with any foreign power, belongs to the several States of this Union, as their joint and common property, in which each and all have equal rights, and that the enactment by the federal government of any law which should directly, or by its effects, prevent the citizens of any State from emigrating with their property, of whatever description, into such territory, would make a discrimination unwarranted by, and in violation of, the Constitution, and the rights of the States from which such citizens emigrated, and in derogation of that perfect equality which belongs to the several States as members of this Union, and would tend directly to subvert the Union itself.

"3. *Resolved*, That if, in disregard alike of the spirit and principles of the act of Congress on the admission of the State of Missouri into the Union, generally known as the Missouri compromise, and of every consideration of justice, of constitutional right and of fraternal feeling, the fearful issue shall be forced upon the country, which must result from the adoption and attempted enforcement of the proviso aforesaid as an act of the general government, the people of Virginia can have no difficulty in choosing between the only alternatives that will then remain, of abject submission to aggression and outrage on the one hand, or determined resistance on the other, at all hazards, and to the last extremity.

"4. *Resolved unanimously*, That the general assembly holds it to be the duty of every man in every section of this confederacy, if the Union is dear to him, to oppose the passage of any law, for whatever purpose, by which territory to be acquired may be subject to such a restriction.

"5. *Resolved unanimously*, That the passage of the above-mentioned proviso makes it the duty of every slaveholding State, and of all the citizens thereof, as they value their dearest privileges, their sovereignty, their independence, their rights of property, to take firm, united and *concerted action* in this emergency."

South Carolina uttered the same language in December of the same year; and the other Southern States responded, in such a manner as to produce a pause. The treaty with Mexico was signed in May, 1848, and an attempt was then made in Congress to arrange the territory acquired, to the satisfaction of the North and the South. The South asked no more than that their rights and property, as guaranteed by the Constitution, should be respected. The North, on the other hand, demanded the total exclusion of Southern institutions. With a view to some proper adjustment, a committee was raised in the Senate, consisting of an equal number of Northern and Southern men. The chairman was Mr. Clayton, from the nearly neutral State of Delaware. Hear his account of the proceedings of that committee :

"As soon as we assembled, a proposition was made by a member from the South to extend the Missouri compromise line to the Pacific. The vote upon it stood, four Southern members for it, and *four Northern members against it*. We renewed the proposition in every conceivable form; but our Northern friends rejected it as often as it was proposed. We discussed it—we entreated them to adopt it. We did not pretend that it was a constitutional measure, but that it had been held by many as a compact between the North and the South, and was justified as a measure of peace. We argued to show the justice of extending the line to the Pacific. I obtained a statement from the land office, showing that by such an extension of this line, the North would have the exclusive occupation of one million and six hundred thousand square miles, in the territories outside the States, and the South but two hundred and sixty-two thousand square miles, in which observe, slavery could only be tolerated in case the people residing there should allow it. The proposition being rejected by the North, there was, indeed, as the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. Calhoun) has described it, 'a solemn pause in the committee.' All hope of amicable settlement for the moment vanished, and unnatural contention seemed likely to prevail among us. It was then proposed to rest the present hope of settlement on the Supreme Court, as the ark of our safety. We came into the Senate with three-fourths of the committee in favor of it, and the other fourth not fixed against it. An appeal was provided in the bill from all decisions of the territorial judges in case of writs of *habeas corpus*, or other cases, where the issue of personal freedom should be presented. The South agreed in the Senate, with extraordinary unanimity, to submit the validity of their claims to the Supreme Court; but the North were by no means unanimous. There was, however, a majority in favor of the bill embracing this principle. Having passed the Senate, it was sent to the House, where, on the twenty-eighth day of July, 1848, it was defeated by a vote of one hundred and twelve to ninety-seven—five-sixths of the opposition to it being from the North."

The failure of this scheme left the territory without government, and in August, 1848, the Oregon territorial bill was passed; by the 26th section of which, it was enacted that the inhabitants of the said territory shall be entitled to all the privileges granted by the ordinance of 1787, and shall be subject to all the conditions, and restrictions, and prohibitions, in said articles of compact imposed upon the people of said territory." Here, then, was an enactment of the Wilmot proviso; but as it only covered territory north of 36 degrees, 30 minutes, the President approved it on that ground, and the South acquiesced again.

The conflict was still continued as to the remaining territory; and in 1849 Virginia repeated, and confirmed her resolutions of 1847, and added another as to the slave trade in the District of Columbia. The following are the resolutions:

*Extract from Resolutions of the General Assembly of Virginia, adopted Jan. 29, 1849.*

"1. *Resolved unanimously*, That the passage of the above-mentioned proviso makes it the duty of every slaveholding State, and of all citizens thereof, as they value their dearest privileges, their sovereignty, their independence, and their rights of property, to take firm, united, and concerted action, in this emergency.

"2. *Resolved*, That we regard the passage of a law by the Congress of the United States, abolishing slavery, or the slave-trade, in the District of Columbia, as a direct attack upon the institutions of the Southern States, to be resisted at every hazard.

"3. *Resolved*, That in the event of the passage by Congress of the Wilmot proviso, or any law abolishing slavery or the slave-trade in the District of Columbia, the governor of this commonwealth is requested immediately to convene the legislature of this State (if it shall have adjourned) to consider of the mode and means of redress."

South Carolina again responded, in December, 1849, and declared that the time for action had come; and she was not mistaken, for, immediately thereafter, the President of the United States sent out his military governor to organize the territory of California. At his word election districts are formed, and electoral rights conferred; and the promiscuous horde, whom war, and the spirit of adventure, had collected in California, are invested with authority to make a constitution, and by it exclude the entire South from any participation in the wealth of that whole region.

In 1850, this Constitution came before Congress, and was adopted with the other measures known as the compromise of 1850. South Carolina regarded these measures as a mere aggravation of the injuries before heaped upon the South. She considered the constitution of California, when sanctioned by Congress, to be a virtual enactment of the Wilmot proviso. Even the Missouri compromise line had been disregarded by that constitution: and the entire Pacific coast had now, by the operation of the Oregon bill, and this constitution of California, been closed to Southern emigration. One of these compromise measures enacted as follows:

"It shall not be lawful to bring into the District of Columbia, any slave whatever, for the purpose of being placed in depot, to be subsequently transferred to any other State, or place, to be sold as merchandise; and if such slave be brought into the said district by its owner, or by the authority or consent of its owner, contrary to the provisions of this act, such slave shall thereupon become liberated and free."

This law raised the issue upon which Virginia had pledged herself to act; and South Carolina, in going forward, considered herself merely as the front rank of the advancing column of her sisters. I refer again to these incidents merely as facts, with no intention to censure or impute wrong. They must be mentioned to explain and justify the course of South Carolina, and they show that in each stage of her progress she had, as she thought, the concurrence of her sister States.

In her judgment, the other compromise measure of 1850, which changed the boundary of Texas, was equally exceptionable. It withdrew territory from the State of Texas, for no other apparent purpose than to convert that territory into free soil, and brought close upon the flank of the Southern States the very instrument for their destruction which Lord Brougham had sought in 1843; and for all this, the equivalent offered to the South was a fugitive slave law, which we believed would be as persistently eluded by the Northern States, as the obligation which the Constitution and the previous laws of Congress had already imposed upon them.

Entertaining these opinions, South Carolina proceeded to arm her people. Desiring to act in concert with the South, she first sent delegates to a Southern Congress, and next prepared herself to secede from the Union. At this stage of her progress she was met by your resolutions of 1851, in which you declared your acceptance of the compromise of 1850, and your request to us to desist from our purpose of secession. We did desist. We restrained our gallant coursers, although with great straining upon the reins of State. We have stood still from that day, and almost mute. We have waited as you desired—and what have since been the results?

#### THE KANSAS CONTROVERSY.

Kansas next came upon the stage of action. A strong effort is made in Congress by those who yet believed in the virtue of reasoning with fanaticism, and of persuading the demagogue to remove the whole subject of slavery from the halls of Congress. The Kansas-Nebraska act is passed; the Missouri Compromise is repealed. At the same time the Supreme Court lends its aid, by the Dred Scott decision, and the South is congratulated that now she is to have that peace for which so many sacrifices have been made.

No sooner is this done, but the contest assumes a new and more alarming character. Throughout the North societies are organized for taking possession of Kansas. Emigrants are sent out, armed to the teeth—and the arms are furnished by the pulpit and the press. The South can do no less than defend itself—and thus civil war is waged in the territory between the North and the South; and nothing but its distance in the far West prevented it from involving the entire country. That war was crushed out by the forces of the federal government; but the bloodhounds whom it trained were kept in leash to break forth upon Harper's Ferry. It has ended in the complete delivery of Kansas to the North; and now the two sections stand front to front—the North elate with victory, in possession of both Houses of Congress, and only awaiting the Presidential election to seize upon the purse and the sword of the nation.

Heretofore each section of the Union was represented in either camp. But now both camps are sifted, and no familiar voice from either section is lifted to stay the sounds of angry vituperation. A broad geographical line is ploughed into the soil, and none may cross it but with sword and buckler. Compare this state of things with the period when a few fan-

atical followers rallied around Birney as their leader. Look at the struggle made at the last Presidential election, and consider how nearly we had reached the crisis. The Delilah of the North had already cried out, "The Philistines be upon thee, O Samson." And although, on that occasion, he burst asunder the withes and gave us respite for four years, yet now again are new bonds in preparation; and this time we have reason to fear that the locks of our strength have been shorn—and, made blind beforehand, we are about to be driven to the millstones to grind meal for our enemies.

We stand now in the Union fifteen States to eighteen; and of these fifteen we must consider at least one as neutral. The constitutional barrier which we have always had in the Senate is, therefore, gone, and with it all power to check the appointments to office. The House of Representatives has been lost to us for years. The Electoral College, when combined sectionally, must, of course, elect a sectional President; and, in a few years, even the judicial arm, with its slender protection, must follow the appointing power. As matters stand, we are virtually excluded from all the territory of the Union; and even the territorial legislature of Nebraska has ventured to pass an act excluding slavery from that territory. At every point, therefore, we are fairly at bay.

And what is the prospect before us? Is it likely that the torrent which is in motion will be stayed in its course? A few moments' consideration of its causes will inform us. The generation which now has possession of the political power of the North has been regularly trained from childhood to the course which they are now pursuing. At their mother's knee they were taught that slavery was a sin. The school then surrounded them with pictures and books, in which the lash was represented in every Southern hand, and the groans of the slave as the music of every household. Horrid spectacles of mothers separated from their children—descriptions of brutal violence and savage disregard of the kindest feelings of humanity have been set before them, and the generous sympathies of youth have been turned against their brethren of the same blood, as oppressors of the weak and ignorant African.

To these teachings the pulpit adds its religious sanction. The utterance of anathemas from the minister clothes the sentiment with the solemnity of religious truth. Slavery is denounced as a sin, and the conscience is misled to assume jurisdiction over Southern conduct. The press then advances with its thousand tongues, and nothing is heard but the contin-

uous cry of wrong, and the earnest appeal for means and votes to extinguish that wrong. And here, the party leader, with his political craft and skill, intervenes, and gives direction to the one-sided energy which, without him, would soon exhaust itself. Thus we have every element of opinion and every power which operates on mind, brought into requisition to effect one result. That result is as certain as that effect follows cause; and that effect must remain permanent, for the reason that the causes are permanent and ever acting.

THE SOUTH STANDS IN THE UNION WITHOUT ANY PROTECTION FROM THE  
CONSTITUTION.

We are brought, then, to this conclusion: The South stands in the Union without any protection from the Constitution, subject to the government of a sectional party who regard our institutions as sinful, and whose leaders already declare that the destruction of these institutions is only a question of time. The power of this party must increase from the continued operation of the causes which have given them their present strength. Thus, with the forms of the Constitution around us, we are deprived of all the benefits to secure which the Union was formed.

The preamble of that Constitution sets forth these objects in the following terms:

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Where is that more perfect union? The answer is given by the shout which hailed as a hero the murderer and the assassin. As the ancient Greeks had no name for the parricide, and imposed no punishment for an unknown crime—so the Fathers of the Constitution provided no means for repressing the unimagined invasion of a sister State. Nay, they actually disarmed each State, giving up to the federal government the army and navy, and making no provision for protection of a State from invasion by a neighboring State. This gave rise to the anomaly exhibited at Harper's Ferry, in the laws of the federal government affording no aid to the government of Virginia to protect her from invasion. This more perfect union is more strikingly illustrated in the spectacle now exhibited in the array of one half the Union against the other, urged on (as one of the speakers at a meeting in Boston most truthfully declares) by a "religion of hate," which is ready "to break down all laws, human and divine."

But the Constitution was also made to establish justice. The establishment of justice is evinced in the protection and security of life and property. The blood that cries from the ground at Harper's Ferry is witness to the security of life; and, doubtless, the spotted regions on Brown's map would, in due time, have added their solemn voices, but for the utter failure in Virginia. And if these voices do not convince, let the ease with which some of the confederates escaped through *sister* States into Canada add its testimony. Nay, more. Suppose jurisdiction of the crime had been surrendered to the federal government, and judgment had been delayed until the 4th of March next, how think you that the culprits would have fared with a Black Republican President intrusted with pardoning power?

And what protection has the Union afforded to the most valuable property of the South—that which was chiefly in view when the Constitution was made? “Thou shalt not steal,” says the word of God. “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's slave,” says the same authority. The Constitution and the “higher law” were, therefore, in agreement when it recognized property in a slave, and stipulated to return him to his owner. But what is the condition of things in this union? Eight, at least, of the States, and, I am told, as many as sixteen, have enacted laws to defeat the rendition of the slave to his master; and at this moment a controversy is pending in which even the transit of the slave with his master through a free State is declared unlawful. Associations are openly formed for the purpose of stealing and receiving the slave when stolen; and in one State the owner reclaiming his slave does so on peril of an indictment for felony. The high priest of this new religion, occupying a high place in the government, and a probable successor to the Presidency, announces to his followers that they must defend these fugitive slaves as they would their “household gods.”

And how does the Union insure domestic tranquillity? Let the necessity under which this State now is to arm her people—let that necessity answer. Let the sounds of war which are yet resounding through the streets of this capital answer. Let the restless and uneasy feeling throughout the South answer. But against whom are we compelled to arm? Who are they that threaten us with coercion and violence? Is it they who are called our brethren—they who are our rulers—they who formed with us a Constitution for common defence. They organize in their midst societies to destroy our peace, and to arm the slave against the master; they preach a crusade

against our institutions: they train up their children to hate and distrust; they abuse to our destruction the power which the government has confided to them. We have surrendered to that government our arms and our fortresses—our army and our navy—our sword and our purse—and soon we may find, to our cost, that they are in the hands of an open enemy.

Time does not permit the further elucidation of this portion of our inquiry. Enough, however, has been said to prove that we have a Union without a Constitution. The Union indeed stands, but it has ceased to effect for us at the South the great objects for which it was formed. It is but the carcase of its former self—the body without the soul. The blessings which it once conferred have departed—the glories which once surrounded it have been dimmed, and its burdens remain, pressing down upon the South without compensation. History is not without its illustrations upon this subject to teach us wisdom. Republics have, before ours, been enslaved under all the forms of free institutions. It was in the Roman Senate that Sylla sat while his soldiers were butchering the citizens of the republic. It was in the Roman Forum that Antony thrice offered unto Caesar the kingly crown, which in deference to the forms of the Constitution, he thrice refused; and it was in a vain effort to restore that Constitution that Brutus and his confederates put Caesar to death. Long after the extinction of all liberty, the edicts of the senate professed to be in the name of the Roman people, and the emperor himself exercised his absolute authority under the republican names of consul and imperator.

Are we, then, to be misled in the same manner by deceptive appearances? Is it not clear to the Southern people, that when the North have banded themselves together, and are in possession of the government, the South has become a province of the North? Are they not really in a worse condition than they were in 1775? Then, as now, a sectional line (wider indeed in extent, but not more so in effect,) separated the rulers from their subjects; then, as now, the government was in the hands of one section, the other having a choice only between submission and resistance. But now, the Southern colonies must bear these additional aggravations:

DEGRADING CONDITIONS OF FURTHER UNION BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE  
SOUTH.

1. Our rulers have been educated from childhood to denounce us and our institutions; so that, instead of the kindly sympathy with which a government should respond to the feelings of those whom it governs, our government is our enemy.



2. That government being composed of a sectional party, it is the interest of its leaders to keep alive all the elements of sectional strife; and the future, therefore, offers to us no prospect of relief.

3. The immense patronage and spoils of the government, and the large interests involved in the public expenditures, and in discriminating tariffs, bring to the aid of the dominant party every selfish interest, and enable it to rivet its fetters upon the South; while the hope held out to Southern aspirants for office is used to corrupt our leaders and confound our people.

4. The Southern States are degraded from their position of equality by the open announcement that they shall have no further expansion; while the North, flushed with victory, are seizing the whole territory of the Union, and give us plainly to understand that our institutions are already doomed, and merely await execution of the sentence.

5. And, finally, we are graciously informed that the arrangements of Southern capital and labor do not please our masters; and that an irrepressible conflict has commenced, which must end in the overthrow of Southern civilization.

Even the autocrat of Russia feels a sympathy with his Siberian serfs, and would never allow his government to be regarded as the instrument of their ruin. If we are to be provinces, better—a thousand times better—to have in our rulers, at least the prestige of an illustrious line of noble ancestry; to be governed by nature's noblemen, instead of the scum which the surges of party roll up on its surface.

But we are told that we are not in so hopeless a condition—that there are good men and true at the North who will break down this sectional tyranny—and we are referred to the meetings lately held in some of our Northern cities. I honor the magnanimity and courage of those noble spirits who have ventured to stem the torrent of prejudice and fanaticism. But their efforts have proved vain. They cannot fail to be vain because they give up the citadel to the enemy. Even the president of the Boston meeting declares that not an inch more is to be yielded to the extension of slavery. Every speaker, save one (and that one I honor for his patriotic firmness and sagacity—Mr. O'Connor of New York,) admits the justness of the Northern condemnation of slavery. This germ contains the logical sequences which the North have followed out into action. There can be no peace until they either change their opinions, or cease from taking any cognizance whatsoever of slavery. They must respect it as they would marriage, parental authority, or any other legitimate institution of a sister State; and, until our defenders take this position, they build upon the sands.

But why waste our time in surmise, when realities are thrust openly before us? Can any one mistake the roaring of the storm at Washington? Has the column of the Republican party there shown any sign of wavering? Was ever such a spectacle presented to this country before? There, are plainly exhibited the dire results of this array of sections—and there, in that conflict for the mastery, is foreshadowed that real conflict between the States to which we are soon to be summoned.

Will you undertake that conflict singly, or shall we act in concert? That is the great question which I am commissioned to ask. In 1847, and again in 1849, your judgment pronounced in favor of “concerted action.” We have adopted your judgment—and we come now to propose the conference. From the federal government, as it stands, we can expect nothing. From the Northern States we have been repelled with denunciation. Our only resource, then, is in ourselves; and among ourselves union is strength.

#### A SOUTHERN CONFERENCE DEMANDED BY THE EXIGENCIES OF THE TIMES.

The great and leading argument in favor of a conference is, that it is the proper step in any contingency. It is a measure which will preserve the Union, if it can constitutionally be preserved; and, if it cannot, it is the proper preparatory step for Southern defence. Those who desire the maintenance of the Union must perceive that nothing is more likely to drive back the aggressions of the North, and to restore to us our rights, than the exhibition of a united and determined purpose of resistance. And those who believe that the Union cannot be preserved, will equally perceive that a Southern conference is a necessary step to effective Southern defence. This measure ought, therefore, to unite all parties, excepting alone that (if there be any such) which favors unconditional submission.

And what shall be the advice which may reasonably be expected from such a conference? Certainly they will require a restoration of the Constitution and the perfect equality of the Southern States. Could any measure be more likely to effect this result than the united demand of the whole South? Say to the North, “Repeal at once all your enactments against the just rendition of our slaves; break up your underground rail roads; perform toward us your constitutional obligations; and restore to us all those rights which the comity of nations as well as the Federal Constitution guarantee to us. We insist that nations, bound to each other as we are, cannot agitate and form societies to impair the institutions recognized by the laws of either; and we demand the immediate suppres-

sion of such societies, and the return of tranquillity to our borders. If we are to remain united, we must no longer have our property stolen from us, and the thieves and stolen property protected by your laws; neither will we hear ourselves denounced as criminals and evil-doers while obeying our own laws." Surely the South may unite in declaring anew her bill of rights; and it is not yet treasonable to add that she must have equality in the Union, or she will seek independence out of it.

It is obvious to every one, that if it be possible to procure these demands, and to remain in the Union, the united voice of the whole South is the only likely mode of effecting it; and if there be a more forbearing party still, who desire to try in the Union measures of retaliation and non-intercourse, or others who hope to prevail upon the North to give us new guarantees by amendments of the Constitution of the United States, a conference of the South offers the best mode of carrying out their plans. The wisest and best men of the South will be brought together to consider them, and the wisest and best measures may reasonably be expected.

I would be wanting in the frankness and candor due to this august assemblage, if I did not plainly declare the opinions which we entertain in South Carolina. We have no confidence in any paper guarantees—neither do we believe that any measures of restriction or retaliation within the present Union will avail. But, with equal frankness we declare, that when we propose a conference, we do so with the full understanding that we are but one of the States in that conference, entitled like all the others to express our opinions, but willing to respect and abide by the united judgment of the whole. If our pace be too fast for some, we are content to walk slower; our earnest wish is that all may keep together. We cannot consent to stand still, but would gladly make common cause with all. We are far from expecting or desiring to dictate or lead.

There are, indeed, material guarantees which Southern statesmen have proposed, and which, if added to the Constitution, might restore to the South its equality in the Union. Among these may be mentioned Mr. Calhoun's suggestion of a dual executive; and although attempts have been made to detract from this suggestion as impracticable, it may be answered that the Roman republic, with its two consuls, so far from proving an impracticable government, lasted five hundred years, and under this dual executive conquered the world.

Another suggestion has been offered, of dividing the Senate into two sectional classes, and requiring a concurrence upon all sectional questions

somewhat after the plan established in the conventions of the Episcopal church in America. This plan has the advantage of actual existence in our midst.

The Governor of this State has proposed that a convention of the United States should be called to determine whether amendments may not be made to the Constitution to save the Union; and, if they cannot, then that such division be made of the government property as would tend to a peaceful and just arrangement. Such a measure would most naturally and properly be preceded by a Southern conference, to agree beforehand upon such amendments as should be proposed, and such demands as should be made by the South. If such a body should ever meet, it would be indeed unfortunate for the South to enter it with divided counsels.

Unquestionably, the South is entitled to demand, as already stated, an equal share of the territory of the Union, and the repeal of all laws obstructing the return of fugitive slaves; and it would seem to be equally unquestionable that she has a right to demand the disbanding of every society which is agitating the Northern mind against Southern institutions. These, with a surrender of the power to amend the Constitution of the United States in regard to slavery, would be proper subjects for the consideration of a Southern conference, and would all come within the purview of the measure recommended by his excellency. If any of them should be demanded of the proposed convention of the United States, they would at least serve to test the sincerity of the professions of Northern Unionists.

On the other hand, those who believe in the efficiency of measures of restriction and commercial independence must perceive that such measures would be far more effective if taken in concert. What benefit would result from non-importation into Richmond and Norfolk, if Edenton and Newbern and Beaufort received Northern goods as before? And what good effect would restrictions at Charleston serve, if Savannah should decline concurrence? The commercial independence of the South is certainly an object greatly to be desired. Is it possible to advance it more effectually than by the concerted action of the whole South?

And if a conference should do no more than to turn the eyes of the South from presidential elections and federal office, and stir up our leading men to seek position at the South, and to advance and develop the resources of our own country, we shall have made a great advance toward the solution of our difficulties. And, finally, if the worst must come, and

we must take our destinies into our own hands, a Southern conference is the necessary step to such arrangements as are requisite to take our place among the nations of the earth.

It is this last consideration that doubtless retards many from yielding to it their support. Such a meeting, in 1775, led to the Revolution; and it is objected that the meeting of 1860 may lead to the same result. To this objection I answer that a similar meeting in 1765 led to the repeal of the Stamp Act; and if the mother country had acted with justice and moderation, they might have preserved to this day their union with the colonies. The meeting of 1775 led to revolution, because tyranny and oppression could no longer be borne, and they only can object to this result who will maintain that the Revolution was wrong, and that America should have crouched beneath the paw of the British lion. So, also, now, if just and moderate counsels shall prevail over fanaticism and tyranny—if the North shall follow the wise and sagacious advice of Pitt and Camden, then the same results will follow as in 1765. But if they move forward to their unholy purposes with the rancorous blindness of Lord North and his associates, then the precedent of 1775 is the fitting example for the South; and the same catastrophe will be the fitting end of the drama. If such a result were right then, it would be right now; and if it be certain that the North will insist upon ruling us as subjects, when they have extinguished our constitutional guarantees, and refused our equal rights, then, it is true, we should at once seek our Washington to guide us through the new conflict that awaits us.

Unquestionably there is risk; but that risk is from the perseverance of our enemies in wrong. If they will do right, all will be well. Must we then accept the alternative of unconditional submission, because there is risk of revolution? Was there ever a prize to be attained without risk? It is the law of God, that everything valuable must be attained by effort. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread;" and this sentence is inwrought in all human possessions. Free institutions are among the most valuable of these, and they can only be maintained by constant and untiring effort.

"Oh, Freedom! thou art *not*, as poets dream,  
A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,  
And wavy tresses gushing from her cap.

"A bearded man,  
Armed to the teeth, art thou; one mailed hand  
Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword;"

"Thy brow,  
Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred  
With tokens of old war."

Mr. Speaker and gentlemen: I have done. I have executed my commission. I have discharged, as faithfully as I can, the high trust confided to me by South Carolina. I have delivered into the keeping of Virginia the cause of the South. You, who occupy the seats of Washington and of Henry, cannot decide this as an ordinary question of legislative duty. In your keeping is the glory of those noble spirits who have consecrated the soil upon which we stand. You cannot, you will not dim the lustre which surrounds this capitol, by extinguishing any of the lights which they have kindled; and may that God, whose blessing we invoked at the beginning, on this deliberation, now attend you to the end, and guide you to such a conclusion as will secure the welfare and happiness of our Southern country.



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