

PRESCIENCE.

SPEECH

DELIVERED BY

HON. BEVERLY TUCKER,

OF VIRGINIA,

IN THE SOUTHERN CONVENTION,

HELD AT

NASHVILLE, TENN.,

APRIL 13TH, 1850.

RICHMOND, VA:
WEST & JOHNSTON.
1862.



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#64

PUBLISHER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

That which is good, scholarly, and statesmanlike, in politics, should never be permitted to perish. That the following manly and able speech, so singularly prophetic in almost all of its theses, possess, to an eminent degree, these characteristics, it is not feared that the candid reader will question. It contains the thoughts of a Seer, robed in the elegant diction of a scholar, bravely and fearlessly uttered. The publishers feel that they need, at this crisis, offer the public no apology for the republication of such a production; but if such apology were necessary, they might plead the pressing requests to this effect, of the numerous friends and admirers of the venerable statesman, the offspring of whose genius it is.

S P E E C H .

MR. PRESIDENT :

It gives me pleasure to remember that the first time I ventured to obtrude myself on the notice of the Convention, it was done in hope of allaying excitement. I am happy to believe that my few remarks contributed to effect that object. I have now risen, sir, for a like purpose. Indeed, it is only thus that I can hope to deserve the attention of the house. It is certainly not for me, in whom time has quenched the fire of youth, and chilled the fervour of imagination, with my weak voice and lagging utterance, to pour forth those tempests of eloquence which shake the walls of this building, call down the plaudits of the galleries, and lead captive the hearts and minds of men. It can only be by "speaking forth the words of truth and soberness," such as become my gray hairs, that I can hope to secure the respect of this body to anything that I may say.

My colleague (Mr. Gholson) has asked whether any gentleman here present is prepared to say that the Union should be dissolved in case the compromise bill be passed with amendments. I shall not deny the gentleman's right to put such questions, insisting at the same time, that it rests on the discretion and taste of every other gentleman to decide for himself whether he will answer or no. For my part, sir, I am ready to answer, and shall answer, fully and frankly; and yet I apprehend that my answer will leave the gentleman just as wise as he is now. He is an able lawyer, and would hardly put such an interrogatory as that into a bill: "Would I be content with the compromise bill

amended?" Certainly sir. I should be more than content. I should be delighted. But then I must have the amending of it. I know nothing that cannot be amended but cracked egg shells and abused friendship. Give me the mending of that bill, and I will mend the breach in the constitution, and cement the Union, and restore mutual friendship and confidence, and brotherly love among all the States of this great Confederacy. Is this answer evasive because it tells nothing but what every body knows?—No sir. The gentleman did not ask whether I would go for disunion in the case of the passage of that bill without amendment. He did not intend to ask this. The form in which he has presented his interrogatory, shows that he himself is not prepared to answer that question, and he is too ingenuous to press it upon others. But I do not shrink from it, though I can say no more than that I too am not prepared to answer it. I know nobody that is, sir, and it is precisely for that reason that we are here. That there is evil in the land—that we have been wronged—that dangers hang over us—all this every body knows. But the remedy for the evil—the redress for the wrong—the security against the danger—these are the topics which we are sent here to consider and to discuss, so that, having compared thoughts and obtained light from each other's minds, we may shed that light on the minds of those who sent us. I was not sent here to represent any opinion of others, or to act on any foregone conclusion of my own. In such a state of mind, I should have been unworthy to take my place among the able, experienced, candid, and upright gentlemen by whom I am surrounded.

In one thing only do I find myself bound. Virginia has said authoritatively and almost unanimously, that she will resist the Wilmot Proviso, "at all hazards, and to the last extremity;" and what Virginia says, I am ever ready to vindicate; and what Virginia does, I, at all hazards and to the last extremity, will maintain.

Virginia never means less than she says; and the crafty politicians with whom she had to do, have sought to evade

the point of this declaration, by offering instead of the Wilmot Proviso, this California bill, which differs from it, as he who burns down his neighbor's house that he may plunder differs from the simple burglar. This assertion I shall not discuss now, I have already discussed it in a paper which is before the Convention, and will be laid before Virginia. If the Governor of Virginia thinks as I do, he will summon a Convention of the State; and if that Convention thinks so too, it will be for that body to decide on the mode and form of that resistance to which the State is pledged. That it will be "at every hazard and to the last extremity," no one can doubt.

Having answered my colleague's question, I beg leave to repeat that on the question actually before the Convention, I intend to speak with all moderation. In proof of this, I will say, sir, that had the language of the address been precisely that of the proposed amendments, I should have voted for it. Had any one proposed to amend it, so as to make it read as it now reads, I should have endeavoured privately to dissuade him from bringing forward his amendments, and should have voted against them if necessary. As the matter stands I am entirely satisfied with the address as it is; if I had had the ear of the gentleman who has brought forward the amendments, I should have endeavoured to dissuade him from introducing them, and now that they are introduced, I shall quietly vote against them. I take to myself neither shame nor praise for this.

Between the two things there is no essential difference, and I am decided mainly by the comity which is due every committee. It is enough for me that the paper before us clearly expresses our sentiments, and those of the Convention, and vindicates them ably, and had I the vanity to believe that I could make it tenfold more eloquent than it is, I would not move to cross a T, or dot an I.

But while I am thus zealous for courtesy and harmony I am not sorry that this debate has sprung up. I am glad that the trammels of order have been so completely broken to pieces as to throw open every subject, on which any

gentleman may wish to speak. We all owe our best thoughts to each other on every topic which agitates the public mind. It is for that we are here, and every thing that concerns the rights, the wrongs, the remedies, the resources, and the duties of the South, their duties to themselves, their ancestors, their children, and to God, all is before us.

I beg the Convention not to be alarmed at the thought that I propose to talk about all these various matters. No sir, I have nothing in view but to apply some sort of sedative to that excitement of the public mind which has, in some degree, manifested itself in this debate. Some gentleman seem to speak under the influence of a vague and undefinable apprehension of some great danger, the more appalling because unseen, though not more real than the fiends with which superstition peoples the night. Another sees the danger and defies it,

“Stiffens the sinews—summons up the blood,”

while every tone and every glance is that of one who exchanges looks and words of defiance with a present enemy. I do not pretend to withhold my sympathy from either of these. Fear is contagious, and men not liable to superstition have become frightened while playing on the superstitious fears of others. But he must be thrice a coward who does not catch infection from the brave men who “snuff the battle from afar,” exulting by anticipation in the *ceotaminis gaudia*. But after all is said on both sides and calm reflection resumes its functions, I see neither goblin to fly from nor enemy to fight. On the contrary, sir, I find myself in a condition which enables me alike “to cut away all *wrath and doubting*,” and to say to the one “there is nothing to fear”—to the other, “there will be no fight.”

We have a pretty epigrammatic saying about men “who know their rights, and, knowing, dare maintain them;” but I am afraid there are some who would rather not know their rights, than be obliged to defend them at all hazards and to the last extremity. Nothing so blins the mind,

disables the faculties and perverts the judgment as fear, and what fear can be more appalling than that which threatens the security of the firesides in a country which no hostile foot has trod for seventy years. I acknowledge, sir, that if I saw a danger of this, I might have some misgivings, and perhaps decide that, instead of leaving such an inheritance to the little ones that must soon be left without a protector, I would make up my mind to sneak quietly to an obscure grave, and there hide my gray head and my dishonour together.

But, sir, I have no such fear ; and I do but judge others by myself, when I say, that among all the topics which can present themselves for discussion here, there is none so important as this. If we wish the free exercises of our own reason, if we wish to act with effect on the reasons of others, we must divest our minds and theirs of fear. When you see a boy flying from his shadow and about to throw himself into the water, if you wish to stop him, don't tell him of the depth of the water. The one thing to be said to him, and the only thing he will hear, is, that the pursuer is not the devil, that it is no more than his own shadow. Make him sensible of this, and he will presently be as much alive to the evil of being drowned as you can desire. Just so, sir, if we can convince our people that the fierce philanthropy and malignant love of our northern brethren will never manifest themselves by carrying fire and sword through the borders of a Southern Confederacy, they may bring themselves to see that the loss of a thousand millions of slave property—the destruction of all value in our lands for want of labour, the necessity of destroying the negroes, or of amalgamating with them, or of succumbing to them, or of fleeing the country and giving it up to them, are really very bad things. Is it too much to suppose that they may also begin to suspect that an eternal separation from those whom pretended fanaticism and malignant rapacity would drive to this extremity, would be any thing but an evil? Let us speak to them then, not of their wrongs, for these they know, but of their remedies and their resources ; not in

the tone of dismay and despair, but with words of encouragement, in accents of hope, full of joyful expectation.

Let me not be met again, sir, with the still repeated cuckoo song, "the people are not prepared for this or that measure." I know it, sir. The people are not prepared, and therefore we are here. They are not prepared to lie down patiently under their wrongs—they are not prepared to submit to further aggression, and unfortunately they are still unprepared to decide how the wrong is to be redressed, and the aggression repelled. Just so, sir, the patient is not prepared to submit to the amputation of the gangrened limb, while the surgeons are still consulting in a hope that operation will not be necessary. But still less is he prepared to die; and when put to choose between the loss of a limb and the loss of life, we know what choice he will make. So let the people of the South once see distinctly they must choose between the Union, and all the rights and interests that the Union was intended to protect, and they will not hesitate to renounce it, even though a bloody war should be the consequence. Still there is enough of terrible and fearful in the thought of such a war, to dispose them to shut their eyes to other and greater dangers. It is that they may be thus blinded, that their enemies tell them that a peaceful separation is impossible; and it is the hope of restoring them to the use of their faculties that I undertake to show, and will proceed to show, that such an event cannot be any thing but peaceful.

It is Mr. Webster, who, of late, in his oracular way, and in his deep cavernous tones, such as might issue from the cave of Trophonius, has put forth this raw head and bloody bones declaration, "that a peaceful severance of the Union is impossible." I beseech you to consider what these words mean, as spoken by Mr. Webster. He has no right to speak for the South. We are not his clients. No part of that liberal fee which Massachusetts has paid to secure his advocacy of her peculiar interests on the floor of the senate was contributed by us. She is his country, his whole country, and for her only has he a right to speak. But when

have we said this, and who has said it for us? What motive, what means, what end could a Southern Confederacy have for making war upon the North? Sir, no man among us dreams of such a thing—no northern man apprehends it. What then mean these words of Mr. Webster? Are they anything but words of menace? When we of the South do but cry out “don’t tread on us,” we beseech you by the memories of the past and the hopes of the future, “don’t tread on us,” they call that menace. “Certainly it is menace,” say they, “for do you not mean to intimate, that if we do tread on you, you will strike? Yes, it is menace, and as such we despise it. For have we not trod on you, and you did not strike? And are we not treading on you and you do not strike, and if you attempt to elude us by secession, we will trample you into the earth.” Sir, I did not do justice to the strength of Mr. Webster’s language when I called it the language of menace. It is much more. It is outrage, it is the contemptuous spurn of one who scorns to strike a coward foe.

But it is not Mr. Webster alone who has said this. Mr. Clay echoes it, and he is a southern man. Gen. Cass, too, echoes it, and is not he a northern man with southern principles? A marvellous coincidence of opinion, sir, among men who so rarely think alike! But is there not something yet more marvellous in the triple league of amity, between these men, heretofore so hostile? An ominous conjunction, sir. Clay, Webster and Cass—Caesar, Pompey and Crassus—Augustus, Antony and Lepidus! Triumvirates all! Depend upon it, sir, this precise number three is not fortuitous. It is full of meaning, when two men of unprincipled ambition are contending for supremacy; when they put down all other competitors, and nothing remains but a division of empire, or one great final struggle for supremacy, it sometimes happens, that all things are not prepared for this division, or the final struggle. What then so convenient as to call in some third person, some “light, unmeritable man, fit to be sent on errands,” to serve as a stake-holder until the others should be ready to play out

their desperate game. So too, in France, while it was yet doubtful whether the ultimate triumph would be to the constitutional theories of Sieyes, or to the military despotism of Bonaparte, they set up a temporary consulship. The idea of consuls was taken from Rome, where there were two consuls. Now here were two men of rival parties, and something like equal consideration. What did they want with a third? They wanted him as a stake-holder—or, as Talleyrand then said, as a sort of wrapping paper between the two, to prevent collisions. Hence they took a man, never heard of before or since, who came in, he knew not how, and went out, no one else knows when.

It is an old saying that “when rogues fall out, honest men come by their own.” But what are honest men to do, sir, when men long hostile to each other; men who, for years, have spoken all manner of evil against each other, are seen to coalesce? What have these men in common? They have indeed one common object—the Presidency, and they may combine to put down every thing which cannot be made to rally to the support of some one of the three; when this is done two will combine to run off the third. Lepidus will disappear, and then comes the battle of Actium. Hence it is, sir, that this southern party is to be nipped in the bud. The nucleus of such a party is to be broken up, and its members driven back to their old positions of whiggery and democracy. Why is this, sir? The reason is plain enough to those who will analyze the question. Will a southern party follow Mr. Clay? No, sir. They have followed him far enough. They followed him in the Missouri compromise, the root of all this present evil. They followed him in the tariff compromise of ’33, which ended in the crushing tariff of ’42. They can follow him no longer.

Can they follow Mr. Webster, who says one thing to-day, and takes it back to-morrow! Great credit is claimed for Mr. Webster because he made a speech some time ago, a part of which it was thought might be displeasing to some of his constituents. “Self-sacrificing, magnanimous, Mr.

Webster!" Such was the cry. Well, sir, did he sacrifice himself? Has he lost ground? Should southern whigs take him as their candidate for the Presidency, will he lose one vote in New England. The SELF-SACRIFICE of a man whose whole life has been a sacrifice of everything else to SELF! not to the gratification of one passion only, but of all! Does he worship at the shrine of ambition only? What altar of the deities raised up by the evil passions of the ancients is not reeking with the blood of his victims? Is it Plutus? Is it Bacchus? Is it Venus? We do not indeed find him in the temple of Mars; and that for the all-sufficient reason, that he who would find acceptance there, must go prepared, if need be, to make a sacrifice of himself; and this, Mr. Webster, ever true to himself, will never do.

Shall we put up with Gen. Cass? Shall we look for the defence of our rights to one whose ideas of right and wrong are so confused, that he prates about natural rights acquired by the perpetration of wrong; a shallow pedant who, affecting to lecture on international law, and the philosophy of government, would place the lives and property of the conquerors at the mercy of a conquered province; who can see no distinction between a chance assemblage of unconnected individuals and a people; who imagines that a nation can exist where there is no family; who attributes to a multitude of adventurers sovereignty over a country, in which not one of them has a home; who recognizes their right to shut out all others from a vast region in which not one of them owns a foot of soil; and who would place the final destiny of a country, which is to be the home of millions, in the hands of a handful of marauders; whose only aim is to tear open the bowels of the land, seize upon its hidden treasures, and like the eagle returning to his eyrie, laden with his prey, to bear away their plunder to the distant lands where lie their families and their hopes? Sir, I have never much admired Gen. Cass. I have never looked upon him as much better than a claptrap charlatan. But he never could have been so silly as to believe himself while talk-

ing all this nonsense. Why did he say it? Was it not to fool us—to bamboozle us—to throw his pinch of dust into the eyes of those among us who look to him for light, while the rest are led blindfold by Clay and Webster? This is Gen. Cass's allotted function in the triumvirate. If old party lines can be re-established among us; if instead of banding together in defence of the South, we can be set to wrangling with each other about party names—if the southern democracy, thus reorganized, will take up Gen. Cass for its candidate, the northern democracy will support him too, and then——! Yes, then he may at last be president, and somebody else may be vice president, and seven more somebodies may be cabinet ministers, and a dozen more foreign ministers, to say nothing of rich collectorships, fat consulships, and a hundred other good things, all of which are bespoke in advance. But look only at those offices which are set apart for those who set up for being party leaders, and whom we, poor fools, follow and call great. Remember, sir, there are three sets of them, all duly registered, each in his order on the several rosters of Clay, Webster and Cass, and then wonder if you can, that among all these great men there is not one to say a word for the wronged, insulted, down-trodden South!

But Gen. Cass cannot be elected, sir. The South cannot elect him, and the North will not. No, sir. Let the present agitation be allayed—let the South bow the neck to the northern yoke, and Gen. Cass will be laid upon the shelf forever. Like Lepidus, his name will vanish upon the page of history; and the leaders among us who have enlisted under his banner for the campaign, will again, when it is too late, be clamorous as ever for the rights of the South, and try to negotiate terms for us, but most especially for themselves, in bargaining away the support of the South for Clay or Webster. The highest bidder of the two will have them.

But am I not afraid to speak thus lightly of the great ones of the earth? Am I not ashamed to speak evil of dignitaries? Dignity, sir! Show me true dignity. Tell me where to find the enlightened mind, the elevated sentiment,

the great purpose, the pure, brave, unselfish heart, and I will make a pilgrimage to worship before it. Yes, sir, when I bow before that shrine, I shall feel that my eye is directed toward God himself, reaching beyond the mere mortal manifestation of the Godhead, with which he sometimes blesses the earth. Such a one was vouchsafed to us in Washington, and to him, to that safe and healthy condition of the human mind in which it yields itself up to the influence of true greatness, we owe all our institutions, all that has made us great and happy. He took no part indeed in the discussions of the Convention over which he presided. But he was there, standing between every man and the highest object of ambition, himself inaccessible to selfish motives, and inapproachable by all who were not. The highest post of honour and of power was confessedly for him. The rest were to be in his gift, and in his presence ambition had to restrain its aspirations, and self-love to fear its schemes, and all had to work together as if one common aim, and that the public good, had been the aim of all.

But every good has its concomitant evil, and the blessings of God himself are curses to those who abuse them. Man ceased to look from the creature up to the Creator, whose vicegerent he was. Man worship became the established religion of the country; not the sentiment which always bows the knee of man in the presence of one who bears the impress of the Divinity, but a superstitious eagerness to find on some no better than themselves something to be mistaken for that divine seal. From that day to this, sir, we have never been easy without some divinity of flesh and blood—some Bull Apis, not distinguishable by common usage from any other calf, about whom the Priests and Hierophants pretended to discover the true marks of divinity. The genius of Jefferson, the virtue of Madison, the strong will of Jackson, served the times pretty well. Some few indeed have been found to set up a claim on behalf of every successive president, but they made few converts. The Priests of the Temple had some hopes from the

advent of a second military chieftain. But they soon discovered their mistake, and the poor old man is left to the epitaph which Tacitus prophetically wrote for him near two thousand years ago: "*Consensu omnium dignus imperio nisi imperasset.*"

But superstition must have its idols, sir. Egyptians must have their calf. Americans must have their human God—and as the spirit of party runs too high to permit us to agree in any thing, we have quite a pantheon of Gods; so that what we call politics, has come to be a sort of religious controversy between their respective votaries.

For my part, sir, I confess myself, as I have said, a little prone to this sort of worship, but it has been my misfortune through life to have met with no God in human shape. Mr. Clay does indeed look something more like it than the rest. He has genius, eloquence, a high and gallant bearing, and a prevailing influence over all that approach him, but I look in vain for wisdom, statesmanship and disinterestedness. In place of these, I find management, artifice and legerdemain—sometimes overreaching others—sometimes overreaching himself. Never falling but to rise, he never rises but to fall—always making the sacrifice of the South the stepping stone of his elevation—always, in his reverses, catching at the South in his fall, and pulling her down. The author of the Missouri compromise, and of the present scheme for robbing the South of all it professed to secure—the avowed enemy and open denouncer of John Q. Adams as a traitor and a liar, and the worker of the wires which placed him on the throne—the author of the tariff compromise of '33, to the faithful performance of which he personally pledged himself in my hearing, and the author of the tariff of '42, in open violation of that pledge, I see nothing in Mr. Clay but a sort of Jupiter Scapin, before whom I can never bring myself to bend the knee.

But Mr. Webster! The master mind of the age! He whom his admiring countrymen have already distinguished as "the Godlike man! Sir, the most devout Pagan that

ever bowed before a shrine, would not recognize the Godhead in the statue of Jupiter Tonans himself, if seen lying in a kennel, plastered over with the mire of profligacy and debauchery. There let him lie.

I will say no more of Gen. Cass. I have said too much of all these men. But when I see them, who agree in nothing else, conspiring to cheat, oppress and trample on the South—when, in their fiercest strifes, I see them “hacking each other’s daggers in the sides” of the constitution, I am tempted to forget my self-respect, and scourge in hand descend to the office of public executioner. But I have a higher and a worthier object. There are few of those whose minds I desire to influence, on whom the name of one or the other of these men is not a spell of great power. To them I say, “your Gods are no Gods.” Turn from them to the only living and true God, the God of the righteous and oppressed, and put your trust in him. Do you want leaders? Seek for them in the true spirit, and you will find them. Seek for men distinguished by virtue as well as talent—men worthy to minister between God and you, in the great concerns of duty as well as right. He will not leave himself without a witness, and even now, “there walketh among you one whom you know not, the latchets of whose shoes these men are not worthy to unloose.” Who is he? I know him not. But let your actions show you worthy of such a leader—let your determined resistance to wrong, and devotion to the right, demand him, and he will appear. When our fathers first resolved to resist the stamp act, Washington was a surveyor—Patrick Henry an obscure county court lawyer—Greene was at his forge—and even now, in the depths of your forests, are other such men, wanting nothing but a righteous cause, and brave men resolute to support it, to secure independence and freedom to you, and immediate honour to themselves.

I very much regret, sir, the time I have devoted to these men. You will remember that I undertook to show, that should the South be driven to secession, there is no reason

to apprehend that such a step would lead to war. To prepare your minds for what I have to say on this point, it was necessary to put out of my way the authority of those who have concurred in declaring a peaceful separation to be impossible. It is only with this view that I have spoken of them—I know them only as ENEMIES TO MY COUNTRY, and I could warn my countrymen against them.

And now, sir, let us look at the dangers which are to attend disunion. Let us suppose a case, and consider the influences which will be brought to bear on those on whom the peace of this continent will depend. Let us suppose but five States—the States of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama and Mississippi—to withdraw from the Union, and form a Southern Confederacy. Their policy would be clearly pacific. What would be the policy of the rest of the world? Would the manufacturing States wish to rush into a war, which, while it lasted, would shut them out from the best market in the world? Would the shipping and commercial States wish to rush into a war which would throw the carriage of our rich and bulky productions into the hands of Europe, until our own commercial marine should have become adequate to our wants? I say nothing of the fatal consequences which would attend the loss of a supply of cotton to the spindles and looms of New England, because, although war should prevail, the laws of trade will be sure to carry the needed supply to the place of demand. This indeed must be of a circuitous route, and at enormous expense; but on this I lay no stress, though it would prevent the Yankee from hoping to compete with the English manufacturer in markets open to both, while war would shut him out from this the chief and best market.

“And how long would such a war last?” asks Mr. Webster, with a scornful scowl. “How long would it be before the fleets and armies of the North would sweep the coasts, and blockade the ports, and overrun and desolate the territory of the South, and turn the knives of the slaves against their masters’ throats?”

How long? Sir, such destructive war will never be waged until Massachusetts shall have lost her senses, and be prepared to rush on self destruction. Whence, but from the Southern States, comes the cotton that keeps in activity the spindles and looms of the North? Sir, the North would not dare to prosecute war with such activity, as even to *diminish* the supply. Obtaining it, as she must do, from neutral ports, the North could only get what was left after supplying the demand of other countries, and any essential diminution would leave her nothing. But a war of desolation! Why, sir, such a war would re-act upon the North like the bursting of a cannon in a crowded ship, working ten times more mischief there than on the enemy. Do gentlemen consider the nature of great manufacturing establishments, kept in operation by what they call *free labour*? the labour of those whose daily bread is the purchase of daily toil, and who, left without employment for a week, must starve, or beg, or rob. The mind of man has not conceived the wretchedness which the failure of one cotton crop would produce. Universal bankruptcy; universal ruin; the prostration of the wealthy, and the uprising of the suffering mass, violently snatching from their beggared employers a portion of the scanty remnant of former abundance, to satisfy the wants of nature. Sir, when the overwhelming force of France threatened to invade and subjugate Holland, the Dutch cut their dykes and let in the ocean—the enemy withdrew, and all thought of again invading the soil of a people capable of defending their liberty by such sacrifices, was abandoned forever. Here was a self-inflicted suffering which did but warn the enemy, without wounding him. But what if the people of the Southern States, goaded by insult and wrong, should determine on a much less sacrifice. What if, with one accord, they should agree to make no cotton for a single season, except for their own factories, and apply all their labour to laying up a store of grain for another year? The South could bear it, sir. It would incommode many. It would enrich some. It would ruin nobody here. And

what would be the effect elsewhere? The mind of man cannot calculate it. The imagination of man cannot conceive it. *Horresco referens*. An earthquake shaking the continent from the Potomac to the Lakes, swallowing up the British isles, and overturning all that revolution has left standing in France and Germany, would be hardly more destructive. Sir, the pillars of the world would be shaken; and here stands the South grasping them in her strong arms. Here she stands, like old blind Sampson, set to make sport for these Philistines, who mock her degradation. Will she not make her prayer to God, and bow herself in her might, not like him, to die with the Philistines, but to overwhelm and stand unhurt among the ruins? No, she will not. But this is always in her power—and this she will do, if ever her loathing detestation and scorn of her oppressors equals in acrimony and malignity their fierce philanthropy and insidious friendship.

Something like this would be the consequence to the North of any war with the South. Worse if possible than this would be the consequence of a war of desolation and emancipation. In that case the mischief would not be confined to the North. It would overspread the civilized world, in aggravated horror. In New England we can calculate it. The seven hundred millions of which the South has been robbed by the unequal operation of the Federal Government, has been realized, as they call it. It has been built into ships and factories; it has been paid out for barren lands at high prices, only justified by these establishments; it has been built into palaces where merchant princes and manufacturers dwell in marble halls. There are no other objects of investment, and the boasted heaped up wealth of New England is just that—no more. Now take away the cotton and commerce of the South, and what do you see? The ships lie rotting at the wharves; the factories tumbled into ruins; and skulking in corners of their marble palaces, the merchant princes, like those of Venice, live meagrely on contributions levied on the curiosity of travellers. As to the labouring classes, the far West is

open to them. What violence and rapine they may practice for a while, under the teachings of Communism, Fourierism, Agrarianism, and other isms of the family of Abolitionism, it is not possible to say. But they will soon see that Communism is of little worth where there is nothing to divide, and that what they call the rights of labour cannot be enforced against those who have nothing to pay.—They will be off to the West, sir, there to found a new Ohio on the banks of Wisconsin and Minnesota. And Boston? Look at Venice, sir. The history of Boston is so far the history of Venice. Venice enriched herself by the oppression and plunder of her subject provinces. Boston has done the same. Venice concentrated her ill-gotten wealth on the marshes of the Adriatic. Boston has heaped up hers upon a barren rock. The poisoned chalice has been commended to the lips of Venice, and she has in turn become the victim of misgovernment, while the trade of the world has found other channels—and behold she is a wilderness of marble in a waste of waters. Even such would be the mischiefs which Boston would pull down upon herself, by the suicidal step of warring against the South.

But look across the Atlantic, and suppose the madness and malignity of the North to hurry them into a desolating war against the cotton growing States. Other countries have more various resources than New England, and might have something to fall back on. England, for example, insular as she is, has land. But England has a superabundant population, and there are not less than three millions of labourers whose very existence depends on cotton. They have no western country to fly to, and while the land of England is sufficient to feed them all, they will not starve, whether there be work for them to do or no. There is something there for Communism to divide—something for Fourierism to experiment on. Let but the loom stand still for one month, and there will not be one stone left standing on another of the whole political and social fabric of England.

The statesmen of England know this, sir, and this it is that governs the foreign policy of England, and determines her to oppose her veto to any war that might disturb her commerce, and, through that, her manufactures, on which her very existence depends. The play of the shuttle is the pulse of life to her. Let it once stop and it beats no more. Nor is this confined to her. The same cause operates on every powerful nation of Western Europe, and hence that long, unnatural peace, which, for more than thirty years, has covered Europe as with a death pall, produced and prepared more suffering and more causes of mischief than half a century of war had ever done. But the evil is upon them, and they dare not shake it off. However the angry spirit of rival nations may chafe at the restraint; however the plethora of redundant population may call for the letting of blood; the immense fixed capital invested in manufacturing establishments, and the multitudinous population whose bread depends upon them, compel the world to peace. It is indeed but a piece of suppressed hostility, of stifled envy, of insidious rivalry, and its consequences make us feel the full force of the woe denounced against those who cry "peace, peace! when there is no peace." But there is no escape from it. In the cant of the day, "the spirit of the age demands it—the spirit of the age is essentially pacific."

What then, sir, would all Europe say to any attempt on the part of the Northern States, or of any power upon earth, to lift a hand against the cotton growing region, and interrupt the production of that article. The power of wealth would oppose it—the cry of famine would forbid it—the universal nakedness of mankind would forbid it; the united voice of all the civilized world would command the peace. The Southern States of this Union are confessedly the only cotton growing country in the world, and slave labour the only means by which it can be produced. Whatever may be their spite against us, and however they may cant about slavery, they will be careful to do nothing to interfere with the production of cotton. Had Orpheus been

the only man in the world, sir, the Nymphs, however enraged, would not have killed him.

All this time I have spoken as if our dear *sister* Massachusetts, and the rest of that sisterhood, were to have the matter their own way. I have taken no notice of the fact, that although North Carolina and Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky, might not be at once prepared to join the Southern Confederacy, they would feel that their interests were identified with it, and refuse to join in a crusade against the defenders of their rights. They would have a voice in the question of peace or war. They might indeed be outvoted, but would a vote restrain them, and would the North press a measure which would be sure to force them into the Southern Confederacy? The exemplary patience of Virginia is a proof that she fondly recollects that to her, more than to any other State, this Union owes its existence. She will be the last to dissolve it violently, because she will be the last to forget the proud and endearing recollections of the past, and to lift her hand against those she has so long cherished as brothers. But let her be told she must fight somebody, and she will not be long in deciding whom she will fight. Tell her to regard and treat as enemies the Southern States, peopled mainly by herself—to imbrue her hands in the blood of her own children, and her answer is ready, in the words of Harry Percy:

“ Not speak of Mortimer !
 Forbid my tongue to speak of Mortimer !
 Yes, I will speak of him : and may my soul
 Want mercy if I do not join with him !”

Sir, Virginia did not approve the attitude assumed by South Carolina in 1833. What then? Was she prepared to lift a hand against her? On the contrary, she remembers now with pride that her Governor then declared, that before one foot should cross the Potomac on a hostile errand against South Carolina, he would lay his bones on its shores. That was old John Floyd, sir, a man “who never promised, but he meant to pay;” and, thank God, there stands another John Floyd in his father’s place, to repeat and make good his father’s words.

But suppose the few remaining Southern States not to be driven to the necessity of choosing their enemy. Suppose, as would be the case, that no warlike attempt should be made—how long would those States be content to remain under the grinding misgovernment which taxes them for the benefit of their masters in the North, while witnessing the prosperity of their Southern brethren living under a revenue tariff and enjoying the blessings of free trade? With a modest, economical government, such as a mere central agency for independent States ought to be, a moderate revenue would suffice, and nothing would prevent the acceptance of the overtures for free trade, now made by all commercial nations. These are not accepted now, sir, because mainly beneficial to the South. And who cares for the South?—What is the South? An ass of the tribe of Issachar, “bowed down between two burthens;” thirty millions to be paid into the treasury, and twice as much more to go into the pockets of the Northern manufacturers. What if Lord Palmerston should offer now, in return for a reduction of our Tariff to a revenue standard, to take off the English duty of seventy-five cents on our tobacco. Would it be accepted? No sir, no. It would but enrich the Tobacco States, and what do our masters care for them? On the other hand, let a Southern Confederacy, in adopting the free trade overture, ask a differential abatement of ten cents of this duty in their favour, and how long would Virginia and North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and even Maryland and Missouri, delay to avail themselves of the arrangement? Depend upon it, sir, such a Confederacy as I have supposed would hardly be formed before every slaveholding State in the Union would seek admission into it. The *prestige* of Union once dispelled by a partial secession, the Middle States would be at no loss to choose between union with their Southern brethren, or with their Northern enemies, persecutors and slanderers.

But the thing would not stop here, sir. Pennsylvania at this moment, with all the advantage of a protective tariff, finds her manufacturers often on the verge of bankrupt-

cy. A tariff may protect her against the competition of European manufactures, but not against the superior skill and capital of New England. Against this she contends as well as she can in the markets of the South. Take that away and she will sink at once. Even now Massachusetts grudges her the benefit of the protection which only enables her to hold up her head. But let the southern victims of that oppressive system emancipate themselves from it, and my life upon it, five years will not pass over before it is abolished. What then will be the condition of Pennsylvania, placed on the border, between a Northern Confederacy, in which she is overshadowed by superior capital and skill, and a Southern Confederacy of which she might become the workshop? A revenue tariff of ten per cent. would be worth more to Pennsylvania as a member of a Southern Confederacy, than forty per cent. is now—more than all that protection could do for her, were the South withdrawn from the Union.

Let us look a little to the West, sir. I begin with Illinois, because she reaches farthest South, because she is nearest to New Orleans and furthest from New York; and because she begins to be aware that slaves are wanted in the Southern part of the State, and seems not quite insensible to the propriety of letting such of her people have them as have need of them. Now what will be her situation? No man admires more than I that noble system of inland navigation that connects the waters of the Mississippi with the lakes. But tolls and tow-paths are expensive things, and canals are sometimes broken by floods, sometimes laid dry by drought, and winter rarely fails with his icy breath to close up the navigation of the lakes. But the Mississippi, broad, deep, and full, is ever open to bear on its flowing bosom all the bulky and weighty products of Illinois, at the lowest possible rate of expense. I am aware, sir, that the law of nations would secure to States, on the waters of that river, a free passage to the ocean. But that law would not exempt them from imports and from export duties, and from all the inconveniences which must be in-

curred by those who necessarily pass through a foreign country to get to their own. A great river, such as the Mississippi, like an iron cramp, holds together all the country penetrated by its tributaries, and no amount of human perverseness can long prevent them from blending into one "like kindred drops."

What I have said of Illinois, applies with nearly equal force to Indiana. It may, in time, apply also to Ohio. At present, sir, I see nothing in that region which we designate as Ohio, of which any sort of moral or political character can be predicated. I see a vast multitude of all kindred, tongues and nations, swept down and agglomerated like the wash of a hill side, or that from the mouth of a common sewer; heaped, as against a dam, on the north bank of the river. On such an alluvial deposit you may raise cucumbers or onions, but the majestic forest oak can find no root there—the stately edifice no stable foundation. Among such a rabble you may have temporary regulations of arbitration and police—but a *government*, strong to protect, strong to restrain, consecrated by the affection and reverence of the people, a "fortress at once and a temple"—the thing is impossible. The rock built Acropolis of Tennessee stands on yonder hill, and there it will stand. It is built of rock, for it stands on a rock; and there they will stand together till the foundations of the earth are shaken. But as well might you build such a structure on the marshes of the lower Mississippi, as to establish anything deserving the name of a free, stable and enduring government, on such a quaking bog as Ohio. The institution of domestic slavery, which, like piles driven into the earth, gives stability to government, and renders universal suffrage and perfect freedom possible to those who are free, is a resource denied to them. God forbid that I should desire to introduce slavery there. No, sir. I would not so wrong the negro. He is proud and happy in his subordination to one worthy to be his master. But servitude under such as these, differing in colour, and inferior in all besides, it would break his heart. If such servitude as this is *their*

only idea of slavery, I protest before God that their abhorrence of it must fall far short of mine. But they themselves are sensible of the negro's superiority, and they are jealous of it. They steal our slaves from us, and when they have made them what they call free, they harass them, they persecute them, they combine to shut them out from all creditable or profitable employment—they starve them out, and even drive them away? Is this disgust? No, sir. It is jealousy. The shoemaker will not sit on the same bench with the negro. But let the negro prosper in spite of persecution, and he will give him his daughter in marriage, and she too will thankfully take him to her obscene and lustful bosom. And this is Ohio; and the philanthropic abolitionist, as he floats down the river, turns his eye sadly from Kentucky, the home of a bold, high-minded, law-abiding yeomanry, the home of accomplished gentlemen and enlightened statesmen, to gaze on the prosperity of Ohio. What does he see there, sir? A fertile soil, industry, manufactures, commerce, wealth, and even some science. All the elements of civilization are there—but of civilization itself, of the refinements and courtesies of life, nothing. No, sir, without social organization there can be no civilization. It is the relation between true and acknowledged superiority, and confessed inferiority, that elevates and ennobles both where both are capable of elevation. Association will always assimilate. The Southern gentleman, studiously observing all possible courtesy in his deportment to the negro, makes a gentleman of him, while he himself becomes more a gentleman by his condescension. The man of Ohio has nobody below him but his *hog*. He cannot make the hog a gentleman, sir, and I need not say how the dead weight of the hog must operate to drag down his companion to his level.

But there is the Queen City, as they call it, "showing like a jewel on an *Æthiop's* ear." I went ashore there, the other day, sir, and, verily, I should have thought, that, like the Queen of the House of Brunswick, she had been imported from Germany; for the young princes in her

streets talked hardly any language but the German. And these are the men whose suffrages are to give law to us, whose fathers rescued the country from the domination of a German prince upon the English throne.

I speak harshly, sir. I know it. I meant to do so. I speak as it becomes every man to speak of the enemies of his country; for I speak of those who have long waged a systematic, predatory and cowardly war against Virginia, *my country*. But enough of Ohio. There let her be—a foul cess-pool—at one time green and stagnant, at another stirred up from the bottom by the strifes of the reptiles that struggle in its mud, and tainting the moral atmosphere with its stench.

The inhabitants of Ohio may one day acquire that consistency which is necessary to constitute a people, and then they may form themselves a government, or in the mean time they may find a master. It will be time enough then to consider of our relation to them. Until then, I will rest in the hope, that should such events take place as I have spoken of, they will see the necessity of paying that respect to the Laws of Nations, which they deny to the Constitution.

Mr. President, I hope I have said enough to satisfy thinking men, that those frightful consequences of disunion, at the thought of which the heart trembles and the cheeks turn pale, will not follow disunion, should the North be mad enough to drive us to that extremity. If I have succeeded in this I have accomplished all I wished. I have not spoken with a view to make men desire disunion. I have aimed at no more than to keep them from being frightened out of their senses at the bare thought of it. I wish only to bring them to hear reason, and having done this, I expect them to see at a glance that the true way to preserve the Union is to let the people of the North see that we all understand our true position, and all see the matter in this light. Let them see that even those among us (if there be any such) who would surrender every right sooner than expose themselves to the horrors of war, are

sensible that there is no danger of war, and no reason why they should submit to insult, outrage and wrong, lest a worse thing befall them. Let the North understand, sir, that such are the views and temper of the South, and the spirit of encroachment will stand rebuked, and the statesmen of the North will at once, and with anxious earnestness, acknowledge our rights, and in good faith address themselves to those who speak for us, not to cajole and bribe them to betray us, but to ascertain what will actually and permanently satisfy us. By such means the Union may be preserved, and if such a course is adopted, the Union is safe. This course of proceeding must begin with us. It must begin here, and now. That is our business here, sir. To save the Union, and to save it by showing the people of the North that by persevering in their wanton, unjust and mad career they will destroy it. If it perishes, the act will be theirs—not ours.

Mr. President, I have worn out the patience of the Convention, exhausted my strength and wasted my feeble voice without saying the tenth part of what I had to say. I have come here with my mind charged to bursting with thoughts that vainly struggle for utterance. To “unpack my heart with words,” and give voice to all I would wish to say, I would as soon attempt to drain Lake Erie through a goose quill.

I would speak of the magnificent future, and glorious destiny of a Southern Confederacy. I would speak of the various and boundless resources of a country embracing the noble Chesapeake and its waters, extending thence to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Bravo, comprehending an assortment of all things needful for agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. I would point to the region of iron, coal and water power, stretching from this spot to the eastern foot of the Alleghanies, sloping down in the east to the tide waters of the Atlantic, in the west to the rich plains that border the Mississippi, while James river, Potomac and Ohio, stretch forth their arms to encircle the whole in their embrace, and bind together the three great in-

terests of civilization with a cord twisted by the hands of Nature, in a union like that of the sexes; a union of congenial not conflicting interests. No Mezentian marriage of the living with the dead—no compact between power and weakness, simplicity and craft, generosity and selfishness! No compromise! in which, as in bargains with the devil, one party signs his name in his own blood, which all the waters of Lethe will not wash out, while the other uses a chemical compound of the newest Yankee invention, which disappears as soon as it is dry.

I would speak of the destiny and destination of the negro race—I would recite the divine decree which mitigated the curse of Canaan, by ordaining that in the tents of Shem he should dwell with Japhet as his servant, and in that school of civilization and christianity purge away his first offence, and qualify himself to be restored to his Maker's favour. These words, so long without any intelligible meaning, have found their interpretation and fulfilment here. They indicate the task to be performed, and designate us to perform it. Woe to us, if, seeking rather the praise of man than the honour that cometh from God, we shrink from it. Let us rather be thankful that he has made choice of us, unworthy as we are, to be his instruments in this great work. What have all the missionaries on earth, since the days of the Apostles, done for the spread of the Gospel among the Heathen, compared to what has been effected on behalf of the negro race in this great school of domestic slavery? The success of the teacher has not been every where the same, because all were not equally competent and equally faithful. The Frenchman who but taught his pupil to sing and to dance, and to practise his old abominations in a new way, was flogged with his own birch and barred out. The Englishman, in his serene self-complacency, contemplating his own imaginary superiority over all others, set up at last for being wiser than God himself, broke up his school and dismissed his pupils. So far we have stood manfully to our post. We have not indeed studied as we ought all the duties of our position; but we

are finding them out, and the improvement of the negro, physical, moral and intellectual, is our witness that we have not been altogether unfaithful. In this connexion, sir, I would not speak of our interest in the matter. The decree which appointed our task, appointed our wages, and unless God be false, then let us assure ourselves that so long as we perform the one, we shall receive the other. I have no fears for the results while we are true to ourselves and to Him. The institution of slavery is of his appointment, and it will endure until it shall have accomplished that to which it was appointed. Sir, I went on Sunday last to the Episcopal church, and there, in the psalm for the day, I heard the voice of God, and he put a new song into my mouth, a song of deliverance and triumph :

“Thou art my king, O God ! Send help unto Jacob.

“Through thee will we overthrow our enemies, and in thy name will we tread them under who rise up against us.

“For I will not trust in my bow : it is not my sword that shall help me.

“But now thou art afar off, and puttest us to confusion.

“Thou makest us to turn our backs upon our enemies, so that they that hate us spoil our goods.

“But although all this come upon us, yet do we forget thee.

“Up Lord ! Why sleepest thou ? Arise and help us for thy mercy's sake.

“The Lord of hosts is on our side : The God of Jacob is our refuge.”

I am far from imagining, sir, that the benevolent purposes of the Creator in favour of the African race, are limited to the small number that have been brought over to us, or that the slave trade will be continued until all Africa is dispeopled. No, sir. Civilization and christianity must be sent to those who cannot be brought to them. But how ? It has pleased the Almighty to envelope that Continent with a pestilential atmosphere, which a white man cannot breathe and live. The peculiar conformation of the negro race fits him alone for it, and it is by him that this work must be done. The Colonization Society is a feeble, premature and abortive attempt at this. The negro has learned but half the lesson necessary to qualify him for this task. But let a place be found nearer home, where a colony of free blacks may be established under a provincial government, protected, regulated and controlled by a Southern Confederacy, open to all who will go to it, and from its

proximity accessible to all. How long would it be, sir, before, exercising in a limited degree the functions of self-government, they would learn that other lesson which is necessary to qualify them, not only for personal but political freedom? Growing and flourishing under the paternal care of their former masters, we might expect nothing but good offices from them. Such a colony would be no runaways' harbour, and a time would come, (and it will come, sir,) which none of us will live to see, when established in complete independence, they will be in condition to go forth from this normal school, and settle colonies of their own on all the coasts of Africa. But where is this place near home? Sir, the folly and madness of France have prepared it. It is Hayti. And were a Southern Confederacy once formed, five years would not elapse before a cession would be obtained, there, or somewhere on the southern shores of the gulph, of territory sufficient for such a colony.

I beg pardon, sir, for these speculations. This is a subject on which it is so much the custom for those to talk most who think least, that a man who has made it the study of his whole life, is under some necessity of apologizing for the expression of his thoughts.

But all this is mere speculation, and nothing but insane folly on the part of northern men, can make it more than speculation. It rests with them at any moment to quiet all this agitation and restore tranquility, at least, though not harmony. Abused confidence and insulted friendship can never be restored. But equality between the States can be restored, and the rights of all parties being equally respected, and the interests of all parties equally cared for, a regard for these interests, the recollections of the past, and the indisposition of mankind to the sundering of old ties, and breaking up the established order of things, may even now preserve the Union. But depend upon it, that this is not to be effected by any of those cheating compromises which "keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope." We have had enough of these things, and the "false juggling fiend" who has so often arrayed himself

in the garb of an angel of light to palm them on us, can deceive us no more. We now know him in his disguise, and will have no more of his compromises. "Othello's occupation's gone." He may tamper with our representatives in Congress, and with the letter writing loafers who hang about the treasury to negotiate Galphin claims and fraudulent contracts, but their day too is gone as well as his. This battle is not to be fought at Washington. We have changed our tactics, sir. We are tired of being trampled down by the elephants and cavalry, who push themselves into the front of the army, and at the first prick of the lance, or at the first fire, turn back and break through the infantry, and throw every thing into confusion, dismay and rout. Henceforth, sir, we fight with the infantry in front, and shall not leave it to men whose valour all oozes out at their fingers' ends between January and April, to decide for us what we are to do. We are sick of compromises, and as to this thing they call a compromise, what is it? What was the matter in dispute? What was the claim set up by the Yankees? Nothing more than to exclude us from all the territory conquered by southern arms, and purchased with southern money, (for we pay all the taxes,) from Mexico. Well, sir, does this compromise propose to let us into equal participation with the North? No such thing. Not a foot of all our conquests is open to us; but then we are gravely told that if we will give some ten or fifteen millions more to bribe Texas to give up a portion of her territory equal to three large States, which, belonging to her, is now actually open to us, they will *perhaps* not exclude us from that. Smitten on one cheek, we are to turn the other! And this is compromise! Is any thing conceded to us? No. Is any demand of the other party withdrawn? No. The proposed compromise urges new demands, and they who pretend to speak for us, say that the best thing we can do is to admit them.

But it seems, sir, that Mr. Clay insists that, although we cannot understand it, this is a compromise; and in proof of it, tells us, that its advocates in the committee, that famous

majority of eight, had great difficulty in agreeing among themselves on its terms. I have little doubt of it, sir, for I can well believe that these gentlemen were as careful of their own individual interests in the matter, as they were indifferent to ours. I have heard of such cases in other countries. They happen every day in Spain.

A band of robbers when they set on a traveller, always compromise with him somewhat in this way. He is told that if he will lie on his face, put his hands behind him, and submit to be rifled and stript, they will ask no more of him. I don't know whether they call this a compromise. But if they did, sir, the captain of the gang might explain how, as plausibly as Captain Clay himself. "Compromise!" says he; "certainly we had to compromise. Some of us wished only to take the fellow's money and leave him his clothes. Others were for putting him to death; and we compromised on the middle ground of taking both money and clothes, and sparing his life. And then when we were dividing the spoil—good God! had I not to compromise and content myself with only half instead of taking the whole to myself." This last I suspect, sir, was the great difficulty with the committee. Mr. Webster and General Cass doubtless thought that they had as good a right as Mr. Clay to frame the bill so as to make political capital for themselves respectively. Mr. Foote probably would have been glad to have it a little more acceptable to the people of Mississippi. It may be doubted whether Mr. Clay was inclined to admit these pretensions.

Is not Mr. Clay the "Great Pacificator?" Did he not give peace to the country in 1820 and in 1833, and is he not the sole inventor and manufacturer of the famous patent fresh salt to be sprinkled on the tails of Southern gulls and boobies? Was it not enough for Webster and Cass to be admitted to the honour of co-operating with him?—And as to Mr. Foote, it ought to satisfy his ambition to be allowed to take the title of the "Little Pacificator." So be it, sir, worthily has he won it, long may he wear it. I am afraid indeed it may cost him dear. Æsop tells us of an

eagle, that stooping from his lofty cliff, pounced on a lamb and bore it away; at sight of which the ambition of a crow was so aroused that he tried to do the like, and alighting on the back of an old ram, tangled his feet in the wool and got his neck twisted by the shepherd. So we have all seen how the strong talons and sweeping wing of Mr. Clay, bore away old Republican Kentucky into the high latitudes of Federalism; but it requires no great foresight to decide how Mr. Foote will fare in his attempt upon the tough old ram of Mississippi. He may not care much about that, sir, for it is probably settled that, in the next Presidential ass race (horse race no longer, sir,) he is to ride behind Mr. Clay as candidate for the Vice-Presidency. What light Southern man is to ride *en croupe* behind Mr. Webster; what Northern man with Southern principles, or what Southern man with Northern principles, behind Gen. Cass, I do not care to inquire. One thing I do know, sir. Only one of the three can be President, but let who will be elected, all the five understrappers of that committee will be provided for. What then does Mr. Foote care for Mississippi? About as much as she will henceforth care for him.

But General Taylor's plan? Sir, don't talk to me about General Taylor. "What portion have we in David?—Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, oh Israel! Now see to thine own house, David." General Taylor will be pretty sure to see to that, and to his sugar plantation too. Whatever else he neglects, he will spare no pains to prevent any thing which may lead to the independence of Cuba, to her admission into this Union, and to the loss of two cents and a half in the pound in the price of his sugar, which he must submit to, whenever the sugar of the West Indies is admitted free of duty. To a man like him, considerations of this sort, are of more importance than all the rights and all the wrongs of all the world beside.

But all that I have said, all the vast interests involved in this controversy, are to be disregarded, and stern realities are to be dissipated into thin air, by the potent spell

of the magic word "Union." Sir, there is no Southern man, whose heart has not felt the power of that spell. In the South, attachment to the Union is matter of sentiment. In the North it is an affair of calculation. The conjuror, who uses the word to blind the minds and palsy the limbs of others, feels nothing of its power over himself. Had Union been to the North what it has been to us, the North would have dissolved it fifty years ago. What has it been to us? Sir, it is the old story of the Giant and the Dwarf: a partnership in which one gets all the profit, the other nothing but dry blows. Who stormed the walls of Monterey? Who scaled the heights of Churubusco? Whose blood enriches the field of Buena Vista? South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas and Texas, are here to answer—"Ours." And the prize won by such sacrifice; for whom is that? For those who "kissed my Lady Peace at home," and blessed themselves that they were not man slayers and cut throats. Judas sold his master's blood, but could not keep the wages of his crime. These men will shed no blood; not they. But the price of blood—they cannot find it in their hearts to refuse that.—When we complain of this, they say, "are we not brethren? Let there be no strife among us." Why do they not go on with the words of Abraham? "Go you to the right, and we will go the left, or go you to the left, and we will go to the right?" Why? Because of the Bible, as of the Constitution, they read just as much as suits them, no more. Do we still remonstrate? They become stern. "Are we not stronger than you? Have we not our foot upon your neck? Attempt to withdraw it, and we will trample you into the earth." In three victorious fights the Giant gained for himself a castellated palace, broad fertile lands, and a beautiful wife; the Dwarf lost an eye, an arm, and a leg.—"Come my little hero," said the Giant let us repose on our laurels; you can sit and turn the spit at my kitchen fire, you will find a warm bed in the ashes, and you shall have a sop out of the dripping pan." "That is hardly a fair division," says the Dwarf. "It is the best you can get,"

says the Giant coolly. "You'd better take it." "No," says the Dwarf, "I would rather drag my mangled carcase elsewhere, and sooner depend upon the charity of strangers than on your justice." "Turn the spit, you maimed urchin," is the reply; if you give yourself any airs I will throw you behind the fire." The story is not exactly in point, sir. In our case it is the Giant that has been maimed and crippled, and the Dwarf, taking advantage of his helpless condition, has cheated him of the purchase of his prowess and his blood.

No people ever existed more ready to sacrifice to friendship or generosity than Virginia. It is the character of individuals and of the State. She will divide her bread with the hungry; she will give her garment to comfort the naked. She will strip herself to the shirt; but when you claim that too, the instinct of self-respectful modesty is called up and supplies the place of a more sordid feeling. She says no, to that, sir. It has been said of her "that there is no more than the thickness of a bit of linen, between her and a downright fool." This may be true, sir: but woe to him, who with profane hand, ventures to touch that last safeguard of her stainless honour.

But who are we, a mere handful of deputies, who presume to speak for Virginia; Sir, we do not speak *for* her. She has sent us here to confer with you, and to speak *to* her and to the world: We speak not *for* her; but we speak of her, as she is, with filial reverence and admiring love. We are indeed but few, what of that?

"If we are marked to die, we are enough
To do our country loss, but if I do live,
The fewer men the greater share of honour."

As for me, sir, I speak only for myself, and shrink from no responsibility. Were it tenfold more, it would be only the more welcome. I wish none to divide it with me.

"I would not lose so great an honour
As one man more methinks would share from me,
For the best hope I have."

I have no fear, sir, that Virginia will disclaim me. I know the dull ass will back upon the spur and throw and kick his rider. I know the dog that has no stomach for the fight, will bite the hand that tarrs him on. But Virginia is no dull ass; Virginia is no coward cur; and however reluctant to strike for sordid interest, she will never disavow those who pledge her honour in defence of honour. I thank God that he has spared me to this day. Equality or independence is the watchword of Virginia, One of these she will have; and if I can be at all instrumental to such an achievement, I shall not have lived in vain.

But if the heart of Virginia is dead within her; if that spirit which has been to me the breath of life, is fled; if that fountain of just principles and elevated sentiments, from which as from the milk of childhood, my heart and mind have drawn their nutriment, is dried up—there is nothing left for me, sir, but to lay my head on the cold bosom of my vénéated and lamented mother, and to die *there*.





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