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War Meeting.

SPEECH

OF

L. CHANDLER BALL.

OF RENSSELAER COUNTY,

DELIVERED AT

HOOSICK FALLS,

APRIL 24, 1861.



TROY, N. Y.:
FROM THE STEAM PRESSES OF THE DAILY WHIG, COXIII RIVER STREET.
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S P E E C H.

MR. CHAIRMAN :

The South, without justification, without cause, has inaugurated civil war. Southern troops, with arms and money stolen from the Government, are marching upon the Federal Capital.

The President of the United States, in the discharge of his duty, has called for volunteers to sustain the Government, and preserve the Union.

This meeting has been called to respond to the President's Proclamation.

When Liberty, which had fled from the Old World and founded a home upon the North American Continent, was assailed by the trained warriors of England, my grandfather joined the ranks of the minute men who rallied to her defence, and fought in many a bloody battle, to secure to himself and his posterity the blessings of freedom. Two of his sons fought by his side, and helped to lay, and cement with their own blood, the foundations upon which this Republic rests.

With such an ancestry, and with a heart filled with the immortal memories which cluster round the American Union, brighten the pages of its history, and make sacred every thread woven into its starry banner, it would be impossible for me, when that Union is threatened with dismemberment, and the flag under

which my fathers fought, is torn down and trailed in the dust by traitor hands, not to respond to my country's call, and assist to preserve the Union, and plant the Stars and Stripes upon every Fort, Arsenal, Dock-yard and Custom-house in the United States.

It is for this purpose that I am here to-night—to pledge myself that if my services shall be needed, in camp or field, to sustain the Government and preserve the Union, they will be cheerfully given, and the blood which I inherited from patriot sires freely shed, to transmit to my children the blessings which I inherited from the Fathers of the Republic.

And here I take occasion to express my profound grief and shame, that one man in this community should so far forget his duty to his country, and so far dishonor the memory of his noble ancestors, as to be found upon the side of treason and rebellion. I am overwhelmed with astonishment and indignation to find that patriot blood should flow in traitor veins.

You know, Mr. Chairman, that while I have always been a Republican, and annually deposited my vote for the Republican candidates, I have been in favor of conciliation and compromise. I was in favor of exhausting every peaceful remedy before resorting to the sword. As a member of the Legislature, and one of the committee on Federal Relations, I recommended the division of the territories between the North and the South—the repeal of Personal Liberty Bills—the restoration of Fugitive Slaves—and stronger constitutional guarantees for the protection of Southern interests and Southern institutions. I believe I did sink the partisan in the patriot, for I was willing to give up all the anticipated fruits of victory to secure peace to the country, and avert the horrors of civil war.

You will ask, perhaps, why these measures were not adopted by Congress, and peace secured—Why the Territories were not divided, Personal Liberty Bills repealed, and the Constitution

so amended as to make Northern interference with Slavery in the States, impossible. I answer, simply because these concessions were not sufficient to satisfy the South. The South demanded more—it wanted the entire possession and control of the Government, and it wanted to extend its institutions over all the Territories, and, if possible, into all the States of the Union.

Some of you will remember, that in my first campaign speech last fall, I said that the question of Slavery was incidental and subordinate to another, a deeper and more important question.—I said that the contest in which we were then about to engage, was one for political power; and that the real question for us to decide, was, whether the North, with its twenty millions of people, inheritors by an illustrious lineage of the rights and blessings of freedom, should possess and administer the Government, or whether the South, with its six millions, debased and brutalized by its contact with Slavery, should retain the power which it had possessed since the organization of the Government. That was the real question, as time has abundantly proved.

Thirty years ago, Southern politicians saw with an evil and jealous eye, the North advancing in population, in wealth, and in all the elements of moral and material progress, with a rapidity which would soon leave them in a hopeless minority, and they looked forward with rage and desperation to the time when they would be compelled to yield the control of the Government, and follow where they had been accustomed to lead; and they determined, when that day should arrive, to throw off their allegiance, and fire the temple at whose shrines they could no longer officiate. This is the reason why no compromise was made, no reconciliation effected. This is the reason why the South turned thieves and traitors, and are endeavoring to destroy the best Government this side Heaven.

The Federal Government, by its long forbearance, by its re-

luctance to strike the first blow, even for its own preservation, has not only jeoparded its existence, but it has been driven to the very verge of irretrievable disgrace, and with all its reluctance to strike, it has not been able to restore those harmonious relations which this unexampled forbearance was intended to produce. The South desires no compromise, and has made no efforts to preserve peace and maintain the integrity of the Union. The South, without justification, without cause, has voluntarily chosen war. Now, I say, let her have it—let her have it. And as the whistle of Roderic Dhu covered the hills of Scotland with Clan Alpine's warriors, so let the thunder of cannon from Charleston that now reverberates over the land, call out a million men, and let them fall with the weight of an avalanche, and the swiftness of Heaven's own thunderbolts upon the traitors who have sought by treachery and theft, and by acts that would disgrace a savage, to overturn and destroy the Government. Let there be no flinching now. Let every man whose condition will possibly enable him to do so, let every man whose pulses beat in unison with the triumphant march of Liberty, let every man who would not live a coward and when he dies fill a coward's grave, buckle on his armor, and win immortal honor by fighting in the defence of his country.

The President has called for seventy-five thousand men.—Five times seventy-five thousand will be needed, and must be had, or else defeat will overwhelm those who are first in the field; and we shall suffer the burning, the blistering disgrace of letting the Federal Capital fall into the hands of the rebels.

Whether Maryland is loyal or not, Baltimore must be taken and held by troops from the Free States, and communication with Washington kept open at all hazards. Twenty-five thousand men will be needed for that service alone. Fifty thousand men should be concentrated at Washington. Fifty thousand more should

march upon Richmond, and the blood of a thousand Virginians wash out the disgrace of placing a negro—the representative of the Southern Confederacy—astride of the statue of Washington. An army in diverging columns of a hundred thousand men should carry death and desolation over the cotton States; and the Ohio river, from Pittsburgh to Cairo, should bristle with one continuous line of bayonets, to stop supplies and starve the rebels into a surrender. The whole power of the Government should be used to crush out this unjustifiable, this unnatural rebellion—and it should be accompanied with such an accumulation of horrors, that Treason will for ever stand aghast at the magnitude of its punishment, and History sicken as she writes the bloody record!

Come up, then, young men and old—Republicans and Democrats—Little Giants and Wide Awakes—come up as American citizens, and sustain the Government in this hour of its extremest peril. Let blood in rivers flow, and a hundred battle-fields be piled with the bodies of the slain; but save the country, and preserve untarnished the Flag of the Union!

“Forever float that standard sheet!
 Where breathes the foe, but falls before us;
 With Freedom’s soil beneath our feet,
 And Freedom’s banner streaming o’er us!”

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