

TWO SERMONS FOR THE TIMES.

17.

OBEDIENCE TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITY;

AND

CONSTITUTIONAL

GOVERNMENT AGAINST TREASON.

PREACHED IN THE SOUTH PRESB. CHURCH OF BROOKLYN,

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. SAMUEL T. SPEAR, D.D.,

April 28th and May 5th, 1861.

NEW-YORK :

NATHAN LANE & CO., STATIONERS AND PRINTERS,

No. 69 WALL STREET.

1861.

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BROOKLYN, 5th May, 1861.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

Having heard, with great pleasure and profit, your two admirable Sermons on the Bible Doctrine of Civil Government, and the Causes and Character of the Great Rebellion, we think it very desirable that the truth, so timely and so fitly spoken, shall, at this crisis, be placed as extensively as possible before the public mind; and would therefore respectfully ask that you will furnish us with copies of the Sermons, for publication, and much oblige,

Your friends,

J. S. T. STRANAHAN,	WALTER S. GRIFFITH,	WILLIAM JACKSON,
CHAS. PETERS,	J. MILTON SMITH,	JOSEPH H. JACKSON,
N. LANE,	FREDERICK SHERWOOD,	NATHAN STEPHENS,
C. DUNNING,	JOHN M. DOUBLEDAY,	W. R. DWIGHT,
JAS. B. THOMPSON,	S. P. BRECK,	JOHN BOYNTON,
N. G. BROWN,	HUGH AIKMAN,	W. J. ANDERSON,
M. H. BARRETT,	WM. P. COOK,	THOMAS SULLIVAN.
	GEORGE S. DWIGHT,	

To Rev. SAMUEL T. SPEAR, D.D.

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TO MESSRS. J. S. T. STRANAHAN AND OTHERS:

GENTLEMEN - Your letter, requesting copies of two Sermons recently preached by me, in reference to the state of our country, has been received. I herewith send you copies of the same, hoping that their publication may be of some service to the public at the present time.

Respectfully yours,

SAMUEL T. SPEAR.

BROOKLYN, May 7th, 1861.

## OBEDIENCE TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITY.

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LET every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation."—ROM. 13 : 1, 2.

ON the Fourth of July, in the year of our Lord 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of American Independence, as the basis alike in the principles involved and grievances alleged, upon which they appealed to the moral sense of the world for the justice of their cause, and to the God of battles for their hope of success. This was no hasty act on their part, no sudden ebullition of misguided passion. It was forced upon the Colonies by the administration of George III. They hesitated long and petitioned earnestly before sundering the political ties, which had bound them to the mother country. Posterity and history have justified their course. The growth and development of a great and powerful people furnish the commentary of fact upon the wisdom and utility of the measure. Having fought the battles of the Revolution, and gained an honorable peace, our fathers soon discovered that a stable, efficient, and well-ordered government must be invested with central powers and prerogatives adequate to the wants of a nation; and hence they called a Federal Convention, composed of the wisest and best men of the country, charged with the duty of drafting and submitting to the people a plan of national government. This plan being adopted by the people, superseded the Articles of Confederation, and became, as it has continued to be from that day to this, the Constitution of the United States of America. Under this Constitution George Washing-

ton was elected as the first President ; and to his wise and patriotic hands the ship of State was committed for eight successive years. During his administration occurred what is known as the Whiskey Rebellion, which a prompt and efficient exercise of the Federal power very soon suppressed. Aaron Burr at a later period laid a plot for the subversion of the national government. The loyalty of the country was shocked with the idea. Burr was indicted and tried for treason ; and though not legally convicted of any overt act, posterity has branded him as a traitor. John C. Calhoun, with his false doctrine of State Rights, in opposition to Federal sovereignty, led the people of South-Carolina into the attitude of nullification upon the tariff question, during the administration of General Jackson ; but when both leader and people found in the President a public officer not to be trifled with, they wisely concluded to abandon the conspiracy, and yield to the *supreme* law of the land. With a forecast almost prophetic, General Jackson said : " It is the tariff this time ; next time it will be slavery." Since this period we have heard much about dissolving the Union. Not a few Southern men have repeatedly threatened, that in certain contingencies they would dissolve this Union. They have, perhaps, thought that it would be a kind of holiday amusement ; they have accustomed their ears to this strange sound, till they have forgotten alike the enormities and the difficulties of the idea ; they have succeeded in poisoning a portion of the Southern people with doctrines as ruinous to themselves as they are false to the Constitution ; they have misrepresented the public sentiment of the Free States ; they have made issues of fact out of fancy ; they have deserted the platform and principles of the Revolutionary fathers, and demanded that the whole country should follow them in this apostacy ; and yet, not until recently have they entered openly and actively upon the work of breaking up the national government. A plan which has been slowly maturing for the last thirty years, has now culminated to its ignoble climax ; and the great struggle of national life is upon us. We are in the midst of commotions that demand our most serious thoughts. We must now *think* as well as act, and act as well as think.

In these circumstances, I appear before you this morning to

discharge the duties of a patriot to my country, of a pastor to you, and an ambassador of Christ to my God. This is the hour of the nation's trial and peril. The eye of Heaven is upon us. The spectacle we present to-day, commands the intensest meditation throughout the civilized world. We are in the midst of a great work; and if we do it well, unborn generations will bless us for the achievement. The scenes which so much excite our hearts, will be *historic* and exciting for a thousand years to come. Every thing that is vital in the structure of human society, is now placed in the providential scale that is to weigh this mighty issue. Our whole present and future national life hangs upon the questions of this momentous hour. We shall never again see such a time. Other nations have passed through similar crises, and have risen to a higher position, or gone down in dishonor and disgrace. If the fathers fought, and bled, and prayed, and planned to create the institutions of society under which we have lived so long, in which we have gloried so justly, and from which gathered such an ample harvest of national good, then Providence is calling us to the not less important task of *preserving* these institutions, and committing them unharmed to the generations that are to follow us. This is our work. This is now the great trust and duty of the American citizen. At such a moment, the pulpit would be treasonable to God as well as man, if it did not open its mouth, and cry aloud, seeking to guide the public mind to a just estimate of the crisis, and the proper remedy for those evils that now darken our political heavens. This question is not to be left exclusively in the hands of the *secular* press. The pulpit is bound to coöperate with the Government in supporting the authority of law. It did a good service in the days of the Revolution, and it can do a good service now.

There is a Christian doctrine, a doctrine of the Bible and of right reason, in respect to civil government, considered in its nature and claims upon the obedience and support of the subject, at all times important, and preëminently so at the present moment—a doctrine deeper than any written constitutions of merely human origin—a doctrine that goes back to first principles as enacted by God himself. It is only by accepting and honoring this doctrine, that I see any hope for the salvation of

this people from utter desolation and ruin. Hence my theme this morning is the doctrine of OBEDIENCE TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES.

The text, as you are aware, was addressed by Paul to the Church at Rome, composed of converted heathen and converted Jews, both living under the government of Nero, who was one of the most barbarous and cruel monarchs that ever disgraced the civil power. The magistracy was heathen, polytheistic, idolatrous, oppressive, and withal opposed in faith as well as practice to the principles of Christianity. It was doubtless very offensive to the Christians of that age. It did not at all represent their views; yet there it was, the government of the country in which they lived, the only government then existing, neither created by them, nor capable of destruction by their hands. Bad as it may have been in many respects, it was nevertheless the bond of civil and social order, and incomparably better than anarchy. Observe now, that the Apostle had in his eye this very system of public authority, when he laid down the law and testimony of God as to the claim of civil government upon the obedience of the subject, stating the true doctrine for that age and for all ages. He proclaimed the *politics* of heaven as to the relation between the sovereign and the subject in the constitution of civil society. And if thus he wrote in respect to Nero's government, what, think you, would be the character of his message if he were now to address an epistle to those deluded men—some of them misguided Christians, others base and ambitious traitors, determined to rule or ruin—who have sought, and still are seeking to overthrow the most genial and excellent system of public law which any people ever enjoyed? His language might not be essentially different from that of the text, yet the application would clothe it with an emphasis of unusual power. Let us then hear what the Apostle does say in—

THAT PART OF THE TEXT, WHICH RELATES DIRECTLY TO THE PRACTICE OF THE CITIZEN AND THE SUBJECT. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," is the language of this considerate as well as inspired man, substantially renewed in the fifth verse, when he says: "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." By "the higher powers," he meant the Civil Authority, not as a

mere abstraction of thought, but as a concrete reality embodied and set forth in a living and acting magistracy, in recognized possession of government, and performing the functions of law. Primarily, he meant Nero and all the officers who held authority under him. He told the Christians to pay *tribute* at the command of this magistracy, declaring the tax-gatherers to be "God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing." In a larger sense, the precept refers to the government of any country in which one may be living. The fact that it is a government then existing, and not the rightfulness of its origin in the outset, or its form, or the general wisdom of its measures, brings it within the circle of the Apostle's conception. As to the subject, it is the Sovereign Power. Such a Power exists in this land, and is by the Constitution of the United States committed to the National Magistracy. This Constitution and all laws enacted by Congress in conformity therewith, form the *supreme* law of the land. The plain duty then of every man existing within the territorial jurisdiction of this Government, is that of subjection, including both the spirit and the practice of obedience to the laws of the country. The "higher law" of God makes the civil statute morally binding and authoritative. Whether we occupy official positions, or move in the sphere of private life, God imposes upon us the duty of subjection unto "the higher powers." This is the divine rule of action for the citizen; and if we disobey it, except in those instances which I shall specify in due season, we sin against God. Moreover, since Government, whatever be its form, rests at last upon the bone and sinew of the people, depending upon their strong arms for the power of doing its work, whether in the infliction of penalty upon the guilty, or the resistance of aggression by foreign nations, or the suppression of unlawful assemblies of men who are disturbing the peace and order of society, or seeking to destroy the existence of the Government itself, it is clear that those who are subject to its authority, are bound to obey its call for any or all of these legal purposes. Law is nothing if it can not be enforced, and Government, nothing without the power of *coercion*; when ideas and commands cease to rule, then force must rule; and hence when the civil officer has not sufficient power to defend the State, or execute the laws, and



commands the people to help him, they must either obey the precept, or resign themselves to the reign of anarchy and confusion. If they wish to live under law, they must *support* the laws; and to do this they must be ready to lift their arms for the maintenance of that which is the organ of law—government as established and administered by its legally appointed agents. Let them, however, not take this work into their own hands uncalled. I have no sympathy with that kind or zeal of patriotism, which proposes to supersede the Civil Magistracy in the execution of law. This gives you two anarchies instead of one, and looks to me very much like doing evil that good may come. The suggestion of one or two editors of the secular press, that the people should make a way through or over Baltimore, not waiting for the President's action in the premises, was the suggestion of mob-law on the part of those who profess to be the supporters of law. Such a proposal may spring from a very patriotic impulse; but it is zeal without knowledge. I prefer to have Baltimore and every other city or State that resist the Federal authority, attended to in the dignified and legal way, as I have no doubt they will be in due season. I go for supporting the laws according to, and not against the, provisions thereof. The country can be carried safely through this contest only by the hearty coöperation of the people with their constitutional rulers.

The President of these United States has recently issued his Proclamation, declaring a portion of the people to be in a state of rebellion, and commanding them to lay down their arms, and return peaceably to their homes. Eighteen centuries ago, God issued his proclamation, directing every soul to be "subject unto the higher powers." If then these rebellious people would obey God, they must obey the nation's Chief Magistrate; and yet we are told that Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet read the President's proclamation amid roars of laughter, insulting the dignity of this Government, defying the God of heaven, and acting like men too much intoxicated with passion to be sensible of their own position. Before this contest is ended, they will perhaps learn that the authority of this nation is not to be trifled with.

As to the **EXTENT** of the precept we are now considering, I

hold it to be universally binding in all cases, and under every form of civil government, with two *exceptions*, which, though not stated in the text, lie in the very nature of things; and that I may not teach a false doctrine in the effort to proclaim a true one, I think it well to pause a moment upon these exceptions.

The *first* is that of a *conflict* between the law of God and the requirements of the civil authority. Here I admit, that we must obey God rather than men. So the apostles acted, and so we must act. There can be no doubt as to the rule of duty in such a case. Yet even here we must not pervert the rule. While we obey God, we must not add the sin of *resisting* the Civil Magistracy, when inflicting the penalty for that which the law of the land makes a crime. The true doctrine here is *obedience to God and non-resistance to man*. As to the question, which party is right, the individual or the State, in such an alleged conflict, let me say that neither party can determine this point for the other; and hence the question must go to posterity, and finally to the bar of God. On the one hand, the State can not concede, that the civil statute is in conflict with the law of God without confessing its own iniquity, and equally surrendering its own dignity and authority; and on the other, the individual can not obey that statute against the explicit testimony of his own conscience without being unfaithful to God. Hence the conscience of the State must govern the State; and the conscience of the individual must govern the individual. His conscience, however, is not the law of the land; nor must he claim, that the law shall be staid in its action, because he can not comply with it. In the issue that he makes with civil society, he must do what he regards as the will of God, and then meekly suffer for it; and whether he is a fool or a martyr, will be determined at another day. If he has not virtue enough for this, then his declinature to obey the law on the ground of conscience, is little better than a mockery. And before dismissing this point, let me seriously ask, whether those who are in open rebellion against the public authority of this land, can justify themselves to history, to posterity, and to God, on the ground of a *religious* conscience? Where is the law of God which requires this attitude on their part? Where is the statute of the National Government which they can not obey, be-

cause it conflicts with the law of God? I know not by what sophistry good men at the South may deceive themselves on this subject; yet I confess myself utterly unable to see how they can ignore the claims of the Apostle's precept. Unless they can show, that allegiance to this Government will be a sin against God, then the very law of God itself requires that allegiance. Moreover, on the theory that they can not obey the nation's law, because this would be sin as they suppose, where in the book of God is their justification for overt acts of resistance and rebellion—their justification for plotting the ruin of the Government, for stealing its property, for raising armies and employing them against the peace and good order of this Commonwealth? The apostolic theory of doing right, and then meekly suffering for the same, is manifestly neither the basis nor the spirit of this movement. There is no rebellion in that theory; but in this movement you have as glaring an exhibition of rebellion and treason, as the world ever witnessed. It is not, and it can not be, founded upon the law of God.

The *second* exception to the general rule of obedience, is derived from what is termed the inherent right of *forcible* REVOLUTION, which means the subversion of an existing government by its subjects for the purpose of creating a better one. I cheerfully concede the *reality* of the revolutionary right; yea, I go farther, and say that its exercise, in certain circumstances, may be a solemn duty to God and man; and hence I take the Apostle's precept with this qualification. But remember, my hearers, that this question of revolution has more than one side to it; and that you may see it on all sides, I propose to state as clearly as possible the *principles* that are applicable in the case. If we are to go back to first principles, meaning to reconstruct the social fabric in this country, I wish to know precisely what we are doing. Let me then say to you:

In the first place, that the revolutionary right does not belong to the individual as such, or to the minority, but only to the *majority* of the people living under a government which it is proposed to supersede and destroy. By the very terms of the case, it is a *popular* right inherent only in the majority; and hence no individual, town, county or section of a nation can forcibly make the attempt, without involving the crime of

treason. Revolutionists against the popular will are traitors, and nothing but traitors, and should be dealt with accordingly. If a few disaffected spirits or disappointed demagogues may with impunity make this experiment upon the public peace, then civil society has no security. It may be disorganized at any moment. If such spirits do not like a government which a majority of the people do like, then let them peaceably emigrate, and keep on emigrating till they find something that pleases them. I am in favor of this kind of secession. This is just the thing which the Pilgrim Fathers did.

The right of revolution, in the second place, should not be exercised even by the majority, except in what are termed *extreme* cases. It almost necessarily brings with it all the evils of *civil* war. Society is dissolved into its elements, and thrown into a state of terrible confusion, and hence this expedient is justifiable only in *extreme* cases, where government is so oppressive as to be past all reasonable endurance; where, too, the evils of revolution are likely to be less than those of submission; where also there is a fair prospect of success, and where, again, all milder and less objectionable means of redress have been tried in vain. Revolution is in itself a prodigiously serious matter. It means death, usually, on a great scale; and it should therefore be the *last*, because the most terrible, resort of an injured and outraged people. In the outset it is a *rebellion*, and if sufficiently strong, a *revolution*; and hence, whether it be the one or the other, is purely a question of strength. *Might*, after a fair trial, must fix its character. Those who try the experiment, should open their eyes to the full consideration of this question of power. They will meet it in the process, and they had better think of it beforehand. It at once inaugurates the age of bullets and contending armies. It awakens the thunders of war.

I add, thirdly, that government as such, can not recognize the existence of the revolutionary right without providing for its own death. The right can never be inserted in any written Constitution, or admitted by the administrators of law. It is itself a principle of destruction; and surely no organized civil society can exist on a basis that is fatal to its own being. Government must crush the rebellion by an armed force, or be

crushed by it. It can not reason or parley with a mob, whether that mob consist of ten men or ten thousand men. It must put that mob down, and demand unconditional submission to the forms of law, if necessary at the point of the bayonet, and by the authority of cannon-balls. Government can never concede that a rebellion is respectable by reason of the number engaged in it. The rebellion must make itself respectable, or perish under the due execution of law. The government that shrinks from meeting its own foe, is not to be trusted as the guardian of the peace and safety of human society. Brought face to face with those who repudiate its authority, it must command obedience, and enforce the command by the power of the sword. At such a moment I believe in fighting on the side of law and order, for the same reason that I believe in hanging pirates. The remedy, I know, is an awful one; yet I see no other course possible in the premises. It is fighting in a just cause, under the authority of law and the God of law. A people that will not, at any cost and at all hazards, sustain such a system of political and civil liberty as that under which we live; a people that will not respond to the call of the Government when the very life of the nation is at stake; a people that will permit anarchy and treason to stalk unpunished through the land; a people on whom the civil authority can not depend at such an hour, are either revolutionists themselves, or a nation of *cowards*, destitute of all the elements of public virtue, without the fire of patriotism, without the love of order, alike incompetent either to preserve itself or command the respect of mankind. A nation made up of such a people has no soul, no organic life, no character, no attributes of effective sovereignty. Its ship of State is a miserable old hulk, and its Government nothing but a rope of sand. God forbid that we should accept this sad and helpless condition of the State, rather than fight for our institutions till every rebellious arm is palsied, and every traitorous machination is dead! God forbid that we should, in this nineteenth century, do what no nation can do without its own destruction! If any portion of the people insist upon trying the question of force under the revolutionary right, then Government must insist upon trying the same question under the high, solemn, and majestic attributes of sovereign authority.

I remark, fourthly, that a resort to the revolutionary right, under the guidance of wicked men, is quite certain to be disastrous. In such hands, the first stage is anarchy, and the second despotism; and hence the people lose vastly more than they gain, even if they succeed in prostrating government. The spirits that apply the torch to the civil fabric, are wicked and ambitious spirits, base wretches, often perjured villains, deceiving an ignorant and infatuated multitude to their ruin, serving themselves, and having no regard whatever to the public good. They are blind guides, fanning and fostering, and for their own purposes using, the worst passions of men. It takes a great amount of moral integrity and political wisdom, added to a good cause, and combined with general intelligence and public virtue, to launch society upon the tempestuous waves of revolution, and then bring it safely into the harbor again. These conditions of success and advantage gave to our fathers their triumph, enabling them to pass through the dangerous struggle, and then construct a Government that has deservedly commanded the admiration of the civilized world. They had good leaders in such men as Franklin, Hamilton, Jay, Adams, Jefferson, and Washington. They were themselves the lovers of liberty and law; they sought to break, and not to strengthen the yoke of oppression; and for these reasons revolution in their hands became both a success and a blessing. In the absence of such reasons, it is always a failure even in its success; a curse in the beginning and a curse in the end; a fruitless and awful agony under which society bleeds at every pore, being left unprotected in every interest, trembling in every limb, yea, pierced to the very heart by the assassin's dagger. Such revolutions are inspired by the devil. A people delivered up to such convulsive movements, themselves mad, and led by others more mad and wicked than themselves, can accomplish nothing but their own destruction. It is a mercy to them to hang their leaders, and teach them, peaceably if you can, but forcibly if you must, the value of government. It is a mercy to them to put a stop to their proceedings. The conditions of a desirable success are not in them or among them; and hence they are fit neither to accomplish a revolution nor to make any good use of it. What a sad history is presented by the revolutions in Mex-

ico! Since 1820 the Mexican people have had Presidents and Dictators, wars and rumors of wars, secessions and local dismemberments, till they have lost nearly all ideas of public order. One of the finest countries in the world has been laid waste by a constant series of revolutions. Not a single one of their Presidents has served out his whole time. A Presidential election in Mexico, first conducted by the ballot, is afterwards settled by the bayonet; and in some instances the latter mode of settlement has reversed the former. Mexico is wanting in the principles that give permanency and stability to government. Look, too, at France in the days of the Jacobins, in her Reign of Terror, in the hands of such men as Marat and Robespierre; see how the scaffold groaned with the weight of its victims; see the streets of Paris drenched with blood; study this lurid and profitless scene of human woe; and then tell me, ye restless disturbers of the public peace, ye despots in the disguise of friends, what society has to expect from revolutions over which such a spirit of evil presides. Those who without just occasion, put the knife into the very soul of civil order, and draw the life-blood of the State, are the greatest criminals on earth. They deserve to die. I abhor them with an intensity I want words to express. They are more detestable than the pirate upon the high seas. No other class of men do so much mischief.

I add, fifthly, that rebellion with a view to revolution in a Republican Government, like that of these United States, must always be utterly without excuse. In the very nature of things there can be no right of revolution against such a government. It is already a *popular* government, based on the representative principle. It recognizes no hereditary sovereign clinging to his throne; the voice of the majority of the people legally expressed, is the law of the land; the rulers are chosen by the people, holding their offices for limited terms; the Constitution provides for its own amendment at the call of public sentiment; all evils and grievances may be redressed in the peaceful and legal way; every possible occasion for resorting to the revolutionary right, is fully provided for; and hence any right of revolution against such a government means, if it mean any thing, the right "to overturn *all* government, to resist any and every

law, and to dissolve society into its original elements." Whatever may be true in despotic governments, where the people have no voice in the selection of their rulers, and no voice in the enactment of their laws, and where they may be bitterly oppressed by the tyranny of a Pope or a king, without any means of redress except by violence, here in this land of freedom, and under the Constitution of these United States, the revolutionary right can have no existence. Its equivalent is furnished by the Constitution itself. Voting is here the peaceful substitute for the natural right of revolution by fighting. Rebellion here is an effort to destroy the government of the *people*—a refusal of the minority to submit to the will of the majority; and this I pronounce to be the rankest form of treason that ever offended the eye of Heaven, or cursed the abodes of earth. It can rest on nothing but simple, naked wickedness. Those who are now setting the Constitution and laws of this land at defiance, insulting the flag of the nation and seeking to prostrate the Federal authority, are the crusaders of *sin*. The work is the work of *sin*. Why can not they submit to the will of the majority? Are they to assume the character of rebels because they are outvoted? Are they to repudiate their allegiance the moment they cease to rule? Why can not the chivalry of South-Carolina yield to the popular will? Where are their grievances, either threatened or felt, that can not be redressed under the Constitution? What yoke oppresses them? None, except the will of the majority. And in contending with them, if we must do so, we are fighting for that which is not only the vital principle of *every* government, but is also the essential life of the very best government under which a people ever lived. We are simply making good the declaration of the Fathers, that the Constitution of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land. We are simply insisting that the will of the majority under this Constitution, *shall* be paramount to the will of the minority. Meaning ourselves to be *loyal* subjects, we equally mean that all others shall be loyal, or answer for their treason at the bar of the nation's justice. This is the doctrine that now comes home to the bosom of the good citizen with such a weight of interest.



Let me add once more, that when the struggle between organized revolutionists claiming jurisdiction over a *section* of the country, and the established government claiming jurisdiction over the *whole* country, is actually pending, there is an important problem of *allegiance*, which the citizen and subject must settle for himself upon his responsibility to both God and man. The question is this: When shall the subject, living in the midst of the rebellion, but at heart loyal to the Government, consider the revolution as a fact accomplished, or so certain of being accomplished, as to be practically real to him? At what particular point does his allegiance to the Government under which he has hitherto lived, cease to be a moral reality, and become transferable to that which is the product of a revolution? You may call this a very nice question; yet in revolutionary times, it is a very *practical* one, often a very difficult question, not infrequently subjecting the virtuous and patriotic citizen to the most terrible sacrifices. Of course, if the Government of his choice, and to which he has the heart of loyalty, be actually dead and gone, this ends the matter. He must then accept the fact as he finds it, however much he may regret it. But if the Government be not dead, if it be engaged in the work of suppressing the rebellion, supported by a majority of the people, evidently the stronger power, going forward and meaning to go forward in the due and proper execution of law, then I insist that as a religious duty, he owes allegiance to the Government existing, and is morally bound to do every thing in his power for its support. He does not accept the proposed revolution as legitimate, for he condemns it; and in this status of affairs he can not accept it as a fact accomplished, since it is not accomplished. The revolutionary government that disputes the authority of the established one, is to him a rebellion. His allegiance is therefore due to the powers that *be*, and not to those which are merely *trying* to be, and which as yet have no governmental character except that of sedition and lawless force. He must stand by the flag of his country till all reasonable hope of its salvation is gone. Surrounded as he is by a horde of traitors who are thirsting for his life, and ready to make loyalty a crime, his position is an awful one; yet he had better lose his life than save it at the price of dishonor. The man who is true at such

a moment, absolutely true to his convictions, who can be neither bought nor frightened by traitors, has a noble spirit. His loyalty is something that it will do to talk about. Very often, too, a bold stand on the part of such men promptly taken and firmly maintained, will roll back the rebellion, and crush it out without any great disturbance of civil society. The Union men of the South have, in my judgment, committed a grand mistake in not seasonably meeting the treasonable machinations which they now condemn and deplore. Those *so-called* Union men who are now taking sides with the new Confederacy, against protestations that have hardly yet become cold on their lips, who have abandoned the nation's flag in the hour of its peril, whose loyalty has been swept away in this hurricane of Southern treason, are equally committing a mistake. Yielding to the wild passions of the moment, they augment an evil which they might restrain, and greatly aid in removing. I know that breathing the bracing atmosphere of this political clime, it is much easier to condemn these men than to do better; but if the doctrine of the "Constitution, the Union, and the Enforcement of the laws," was a good doctrine six months ago, I am not able to see why it is not just as good to-day. The new Confederacy has not yet so changed, and as I believe, it can not so change the status of things in this country, as to make it wise or patriotic to ignore this national motto, and practically trample it under foot. It will be time enough for those who are Union men at heart, to give in their allegiance to the revolutionary government when it is really entitled to that allegiance. Let them remember that neither its constitution, nor its officers, yea, that not a single fragment of it, has yet received the popular sanction in the legal way. It is a government of despots, of usurpers, of robbers, who extemporize their own laws, whom no nation on earth has yet acknowledged as legitimately invested with civil functions, and who are now sustaining themselves in what I trust will prove to be their transient career, by military force. Such a government, thus created, and withal disputed by the national authority, has no claim to any man's allegiance. The Union men in the seceded States may not, just at this moment, have sufficient power to overcome it; yet let them be careful how they rush actively, and against their own

secret convictions, into this whirlpool of social disaster and public disorder, involving themselves in the crime of treason. They have a duty to discharge as well as the citizen in the loyal States. Take the case of Virginia, Maryland, the City of Baltimore, and let me ask, are the thousands and tens of thousands of Union men in these places passively to yield themselves to that which as yet is nothing but a *mob* on a great scale? Have they no country to save, and no Government to defend? Are the people of the Border States that do not mean to secede, so unwise, so untrue to their own interests, that they will be content with the doctrine of an armed neutrality between the Government and its enemies? Will they permit disunion leaders to cheat them into a virtual acceptance of the treason, and ere they are aware of it, make them parties to it? This doctrine of armed neutrality on the part of a State has the ring of treason in it. It is treason begun, if not intended. The Governors of the respective States are sworn officers, bound by their oath to support the Constitution and laws of the United States; and when the President, under a law of Congress passed in 1795, called for the State militia to suppress unlawful combinations of men and "cause the laws to be duly executed," it was the duty of these Governors to respond to this call, not in the language of insult, but in that of practical obedience. In refusing to do so, the Governors of the Border Slave States violated their oath of office. In declaring the President's design to be the subjugation of the Slave States, they wantonly perverted the language of the Proclamation. And in proposing to put these Border States in the attitude of an armed neutrality between the Government and the rebels, they virtually announced the purpose of resisting the authority of the Government. Armed neutrality is equivalent to rebellion against the laws of the land.

I submit then, in all candor, that honest Union men and Union Governors have something to do. This is no time for them to be talking about neutrality. They are either for the Government, or against it. I am equally of the opinion, that the Government ought to protect its friends so far as it can, and most of all, those friends that *need* the protection. It has no right to fold its arms and look on supinely, while the sons of

loyalty are bleeding and dying on the unprotected altars of the Constitution. If necessary, it is bound to march an invading army to their relief, and suppress the reign of terror which is alike their alarm and their scorn. It asks for loyalty and pledges protection, and must do all in its power to fulfill this pledge. Shall peaceful and law-abiding citizens be forced into the armies of the insurgents: shall men whose only offense is loyalty to their country, be persecuted, robbed of their property, driven from their homes and compelled to flee for their lives; and then shall the National Government say nothing, do nothing, attempt nothing in the premises? I confess, I do not so understand its duties. If it mean to recognize this rebellion as a revolution accomplished, then it ought to say so; but if it do not mean this, as it certainly does not, then it ought, at the earliest practicable moment, to stretch forth its arm and protect its own citizens against the outrages of these conspirators. They are entitled to the protection of the nation's flag. Let such enormities be perpetrated against an English subject in this country or any other, and you would soon hear the thunders of the British navy. I trust that our own Government will ere long teach rebels, that allegiance to the Constitution is not to be treated as a crime.

I have thus set before you the duty of obedience to "the higher powers," endeavoring carefully to qualify my statement of that duty, and going somewhat at large into the question of *revolution*, because of its special pertinency to the circumstances of our country at the present time. You are American citizens, and some of you Christian citizens; and to all of you permit me to say in the language of the Apostle: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." This is as much your duty as it is to pray. To decline this duty, except in those cases which I have named, and which practically have no application to the present struggle, is to sin against God. Standing in this place as a preacher of Bible doctrine, I feel no difficulty in exhorting every man that hears me, to aid and obey the Chief Magistrate, yea, to support him in the exercise of his constitutional powers, and the performance of those duties which he is solemnly sworn to discharge. The language of Senator Douglas, recently uttered before the Legislature of Illinois, expresses not only a

patriotic impulse, but equally that which God himself makes a duty. "The first duty of an American citizen," I am quoting the Senator's words, "or of a citizen of any constitutional government, is obedience to the constitution and laws of his country." Accepting this doctrine, let me now ask you to meditate for a moment upon —

THAT PART OF THE TEXT WHICH ASSIGNS THE REASON FOR THIS OBEDIENCE.—President Wayland, in his *Elements of Moral Science*, has furnished what I regard as a good philosophical argument to show that civil society, with government for its agent, is an INSTITUTION OF GOD. He derives this doctrine from "the original impulses common to all men, and from the necessities of man arising out of the conditions of his present existence." A wiser than President Wayland, made such by the gift of inspiration, has said to us: "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." This is the Apostle's reason for telling us to "be subject unto the higher powers," "not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." He calls the civil ruler "the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil," declaring, too, that "he beareth not the sword in vain."

The doctrine thus stated is not the divine right of *kings* as to their *persons*, or the perfection and wisdom of their official acts, but the divine right, authority, and appointment of civil Government *as such*, whatever may be its form, and by whomsoever administered. Some of the Revolutionary Fathers were a little jealous lest they should get Government and religion too near together; yet the Apostle seems to have had no such fear. In his view, civil society, with Government for its agent, is clothed with a *divine* prerogative. It does not exist merely by the grace, consent, and compact of the people, but rather rests upon the will and appointment of God, and derives its authority from this high source. It is an arrangement fixed in the very nature of things, through which God asserts, and intends to assert, his own authority over the children of men. It supposes human nature to be an organism of related parts, and not a mass of disconnected fragments, in the heart of which, and to

its utmost extremities, is ever beating the pulsation of civil authority in the name of God. I had no hand in making this Government. I was not a voter when the Constitution of these United States was adopted. I found it here when I was born; and let me tell you, that I am glad that I did find it; and so far as I am able, I mean to keep it here. Considered providentially, the existing Government of this country is to me *God's* system of civil authority, and not the system of the Continental Congress, or of the Federal Convention, or of the people who voted in the adoption of the Constitution. I am bound by it, not because they made it, but because it is. As to the *form*, when this question is before the people, we may choose; as to the *ruler* we may choose; but government itself is a ministry of God, whether Washington or Nero be the administrator. The civil ruler, considered in respect to his *office*, and acting in its sphere, is as truly God's minister as was Paul, considered in respect to his office. Not his *personal* character, not the perfection of his administration, not the *form* of the Government which he administers, but the fact that he *is* the ruler, makes him *officially* the minister of God; and as such, he is to be obeyed.

Proceeding on this basis, and bearing in mind the qualifications of the general rule of obedience already considered, you are prepared to accept the Apostle's inference: "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." To disregard the mandate of the civil authority, or resist the due execution of law, is a *sin*, not simply a crime against man, but a sin against God. He so regards it, and will so treat it in the final day. The rebel is as truly a sinner as was Satan when he seceded from the realms of bliss, and made a vacancy in the ranks of celestial loyalty. This fallen angel is the first secessionist of whom we have any account. His fate is the commentary of Heaven's justice upon the wickedness of the theory. And if this be the general view of the Bible, what shall we think of that form of resistance to the divine ordinance which is in itself *treasonable*, which attacks the very life of Government, and seeks to lay it in ruins? The offense is of the very highest grade, far worse than ordinary murder. I can look with some degree of allowance upon a lawless and unthinking

mob, acting without premeditation or definite end ; but the deliberate traitor against a good Government, whether living in this city or in South-Carolina, whether a Senator in Congress or a member of the President's Cabinet, I hold to be the enemy of all mankind. For such a man I have no honeyed words. Those who initiate the terrible reign of passion and anarchy, are pirates against the peace, happiness, and prosperity of society. Well did Dr. Breckinridge say, in a sermon entitled, *The Union to be Preserved*, of those who have led the people into the grievous sin of rebellion and secession, that they can "have no hope for good from coming ages, half so great as that they may be utterly forgotten." Even this is a vain hope. These men will be remembered as long as history lives to publish the inglorious deeds of other days.

What now is the plan of God for the treatment of those who set the civil authority at defiance, and thus resist his ordinance? Are they to be merely reasoned with? Shall they be met with a flag of truce? Shall Government simply address to them a moral essay upon the duty of obedience? "They that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation," says the Apostle; and the very lowest meaning that can be attached to these words is, that they shall be *punished*, as they ought to be, for this sin against God's ordinance. That he refers mainly to punishment as inflicted by the civil authority, is evident from what he subsequently says. He adds: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil." He adds again, that the ruler "beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." According to this testimony, it is the divine plan and purpose that civil Government should wield the *penal* power, and employ all the force necessary to make that power effective. It is clothed with this power, not for its own sake, but for the good of society. In the legitimate infliction of penalty, it acts as the ministration of God against the guilty. It is a divinely-appointed agency for this purpose. This is Paul's doctrine, and equally the doctrine of right reason. "Law," says an able writer, "comes from the depths of eternity, and in its sublime sway is the nexus of the universe." Law at last has its support in penalty. Without this reliance it is a dead letter.

The text in its teaching is now before you. The Bible doctrine of civil Government in its claim upon the obedience of the subject is now explained. I have supposed, too, that the circumstances of our country at the present moment, make this discussion very pertinent. Christianity is the religion of this land. As a moral power, it lies at the basis of our institutions. The American people have too much intelligence, too much virtue, and many of them too much piety towards God, to be led blindly into the great conflict that is now upon us. Not simply their patriotism, but their moral sense also, must be consulted. Hence, in placing before you the Bible doctrine of civil Government, I have endeavored to examine the *moral* merits of the question now pending between the National Authority and that portion of the people, who are in open rebellion against the Government of these United States. My mount of vision in this discourse has not been the Constitution, but the Book of God. I wish to know where we stand in respect to that book in this struggle for a nation's life.

Let me then say very distinctly, that as I view the matter, this contest is not between two independent and sovereign nationalities, fighting about a boundary line, or the interpretation of a treaty; and hence it does not involve the considerations, that are usually applicable to the question of war or peace. This is not the question now before the American people; and we should therefore not suffer ourselves to be deceived by a fallacious use of the term *war* or the term *peace*. The mere *physical* fact of fighting is not always war in the *moral* sense by any means. The police of this city are not engaged in an act of war, when fighting to suppress a rebellion in this city. And, my hearers, this illustration presents the exact issue, in kind, between the National Government and the secessionists. What is their attitude? Simply one of treason and rebellion, with a view to dissolve the Union and dismember the nation. What is the attitude of the Government? Simply that of an effort to assert its authority over its own citizens and subjects, to put down the rebellion, and restore peace to this distracted and suffering land. What is the army now marshaling under the new Confederacy? An army of traitors, called forth by traitors, and proposing nothing but the work of treason. What is the army now



gathered in the Capital, and to be gathered in other places? The military *posse comitatus* of the nation, coming forth at the President's call from their homes, from their fire-sides, from their work-shops, from their peaceful industry, not to wage an aggressive war upon an unoffending people, but to defend their own country against traitors, to protect the Capital of that country, to support Government against anarchy, to save the Union from dismemberment, the Constitution from disgrace, and society from actual dissolution. Such is the question with which we have to deal, considered in reference to its *moral* merits. The nature of the issue is as clear as the light of day. You know what it is, and I know what it is; the world understands it; and history will tell the tale to the end of time. The London *Times*, thinking for us across the water, makes the following remark: "It is quite possible that the problem of a democratic republic may be solved by its *overthrow* in a few days in a spirit of folly, selfishness, and short-sightedness."

Now, upon such an issue, with such a question up for settlement, so entirely different from the ordinary contests of war, I have no sympathy with that milk and water theology that chants peace at the expense of righteousness; that ignores the claims of God's ordinance, yea, that takes the robes of its sanctity, and rushes blindly to lay them down as a free-will offering upon the polluted altars of treason. In this place I will not preach it, for I do not believe in it. I will not ask you to act upon it in this controversy between law and anarchy, between your country's present and prospective weal and the dreadful vortex of dismemberment and disunion.

If there can be a case arising in human affairs, justifying an appeal to arms, then we have met it in this age. This nation can appeal to history, to the law of nations, to the moral sense of the world, to the scrutinies of philosophy, to the Bible, to the infinite Searcher of all hearts, that in the effort to preserve itself and transfer the blood-bought institutions of civil liberty to coming generations, it is but discharging a duty, the neglect of which would be a crime, and the failure of which would be the greatest disaster that the world has ever witnessed. Let us then in the spirit of obedience to God, of loyalty to our noble Constitution, of generous and large-hearted patriotism to our common

country, now settle this question once and forever, for ourselves and our posterity. We have met the foe, and the foe has met us; and now is the time to quit ourselves like men. Let this infamous secession theory, whose only principle is anarchy, and whose only end if successful, is ruin and national death, find its doom on the soil it has dishonored, while the stars and the stripes shall be victoriously flung to the breeze, there to wave in undisputed triumph as long as nationality on this continent shall have a mission, as long as a free and happy people shall here live to rejoice in the "Constitution, the Union, and the Enforcement of the laws."

Yes, let this question *now* be so settled that history will have nothing to do but record the fact; and posterity, nothing to do but read the record. Let it never come up again to disturb the nation's peace, to try its strength, or tax the arm of its avenging justice. We have this work to do; in the providence of God it is our present work as a nation; and if we do it well—if we suppress this rebellion—if we effectually rebuke the spirit of lawlessness and insubordination to public authority—if we cover every inch of this broad land with the motto of our national honor and safety, *E Pluribus Unum*—if we restore the seven wandering stars to their orbits, and gather them again around the central sun of the Federal power—if we teach the prodigal States both the folly and impossibility of our disintegration as a people—I say, if we do these things, we shall make this age the most illustrious in the annals of history. We shall place the question of our permanency beyond cavil or dispute. We shall solve the problem of a democratic republic not by its failure, but by its glorious success. We shall retain our prestige among the nations of the earth. We shall connect the destinies of Christianity and civilization on this continent with one permanent, indivisible, powerful, progressive nationality. We shall restrain, and ultimately, by causes as sure as the decrees of God, exterminate the furious insanity of slavery-propagandism. We shall prevent the existence of a rival Confederacy, whose only motto is the despotism of slavery. We shall save the Southern people from destruction by their own hands. We shall keep within the nation's control, and subject to its authority and uses, the grandest territorial domain on which the sun

ever shone. We shall avoid the multiplied inconveniences, perils, and wars, that will almost certainly follow, if we permit this nation to be broken into fragments. We shall leave behind us, for the blessing of our children and our children's children, a system of political institutions based on liberty regulated by law.

I believe, moreover, that the Government supported by the people, has power, all the power needful, to do this great and good work. Rather than fail in its accomplishment, I would have the Government spend hundreds of millions; I would have it employ the utmost military strength of the national arm. Yes, I would have it absolutely conquer a peace at any price, recognizing the now rebellious States as integral parts of this nation entitled to all their rights under the Constitution, but retaining them in subjection to that Constitution by force, if necessary, till reflection and bitter experience shall make them wiser, or a merciful Providence furnish a new generation of men to deplore and forsake the folly of their ancestors, or a National Convention, legally assembled and peacefully deliberating, shall think it best so to alter the fundamental law of the land as to dissolve this Union. The point to be gained in this contest, I would have the Government gain, or by the failure demonstrate its utter impossibility. I would not have the Government disgraced by any inglorious negotiation with this wicked treason. I would have it assert its authority over those, and against those, who, for no reason under heaven, have engaged in this stupendous villainy of organized rebellion against the Federal power. I would have the Government accept of no settlement of this question, short of absolute submission to the constitutionally expressed will of the majority. Any other course on the part of the Government will, in my opinion, be an ignoble desertion of duty.

May God smile upon the effort, making the people strong to think, patient to bear, determined to do, valiant for the right, till law and order, out of confusion restored, shall scatter their blessings over the entire length and breadth of this land; till anarchy and treason shall have exhausted their unhallowed fires; till the music of peaceful industry again chants the supremacy of law; till in a providence of mercy through one of wrath, we come forth from this terrible discipline an instructed, a wiser, and a better people!

# CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

AGAINST

## TREASON.

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“AND it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon: and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.”—EXODUS 17 : 11. 12.

IN a previous sermon having reference to the unhappy state of our country at the present time, I called your attention to the Bible doctrine of obedience to the Civil Authority. As a proper appendix to the train of thought then presented, I propose now to show the duty of upholding the Constitution and Government of these United States against rebellion and treason. To do this the people must do what Aaron and Hur did in respect to Moses. They must stay up the hands of those who are the authorized agents of the Government. They can not do it as a mob. The work must be done under law, and according to law. It must be clothed with the dignity and order of law. And as I have no words to waste, and you, no time to spare, I proceed at once to the subject in hand.

WHAT THEN, IN THE FIRST PLACE, IS THE QUESTION WITH WHICH WE HAVE TO DEAL? The political opinions of John C. Calhoun, a man of distinguished ability, restless ambition, and imperious purpose—a statesman too, whom South-Carolina deems it an honor to call her own—have contributed largely to the evils

we now deplore. Three of these opinions in particular have done the country great harm. The first is, that Negro Slavery is a normal institution, necessary to give to society the best form of civilization, and hence not a thing to be regretted and tolerated under existing circumstances, but a positive good to be conserved and perpetuated to the end of time—a position, which though utterly at war with the views of those who framed this Government, is now the prevalent creed of the South in both Church and State.

The second doctrine of Mr. Calhoun is, that the primary allegiance of the citizen of the United States is due to the particular State in which he lives. The national citizenship of the people is therefore based upon the Constitution and Government of the respective States, being derived from this source, and existing as a reality through this medium.

The third position is, that the Federal Constitution is nothing but a league, treaty, or compact between the several States as such, acting in their sovereign capacity, each State having the reserved right of dissolving its connection with the National Government at its pleasure, and also releasing the citizen from all the obligations of allegiance to that Government.

Such is the theory of Mr. Calhoun upon the three points now mentioned; and if he lived for any thing, it was to propagate these doctrines. I may add, that such, to a very large extent, is the present creed of leading men in the slaveholding States.

Now under the last of these principles, carrying with it the second, and designed practically to realize the first, we have the modern doctrine which is familiarly known as the *right of secession*. This means that the people of any State or any number of States may, at their own discretion and pleasure, dissolve all their political connection with the National Government, that they may set up an independent government, and that the nation has no alternative in the premises but to recognize the right and accept the fact. Such a movement, it is claimed, is not rebellion and revolution, but secession and the resumption of original sovereignty. If this be a true doctrine, I cheerfully concede that the National Government is now drifting in the wrong direction. If, however, it be utterly false and essentially disorganizing, then I think that the posture and

purpose of the Government are clearly right, and ought to be sustained, if necessary, by the whole military power of the nation. You doubtless have your own opinions upon this question. I have mine. I do not admit the right of secession ; nor do I see how any attempt to exercise such a supposed right can be made without involving civil war as the consequence. Let me then say :

In the first place, that the premise of Mr. Calhoun does not prove his conclusion. If it be granted that the Constitution of these United States is nothing but a mere partnership, compact or league between the several States, it does not follow that any State may dissolve this partnership at pleasure, unless such a principle be actually inserted in the terms of the compact. Nobody pretends that the Constitution of the United States, which by the supposition is the compact, contains any such principle of discretionary secession on the part of a State. Call the Constitution a mere treaty, if you choose ; and then I insist, that all the parties to it are morally and legally bound by the engagement, until it shall have been duly canceled or altered by the conjoint action of the whole. Secession without consulting the other parties, would then be a palpable violation of the obligations of a treaty ; and this according to the general sense of civilized nations is regarded as a sufficient cause for war. The particular State wishing to be released from this treaty, if such it be, must honorably and peacefully remit the question to all the parties whom it concerns, and whom it binds. It has no right to break the compact without their consent.

I remark, secondly, that the premise of Mr. Calhoun is palpably *false*. The Constitution of the United States is *not* a compact or treaty between the several States acting as such, but the fundamental basis or law of a *National* Government by the *direct* action of the whole people ; and hence it acts directly upon the people, and not through the medium of the States. It is the instrument by which the *whole* people have agreed to be governed, the minority always submitting to the legally expressed will of the majority for the good of the whole. That the Constitution creates such a government in the name of the people, coming *from* the people, and binding the people, appears on the very face of the instrument. " We the people of

the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America." We, the *people*, the *whole* people in the aggregate, designated by the national title of "the United States of America," and not we, the people of the *several* States, and not we, the Legislatures of the respective States, but "we, the people of the United States," do create this instrument of government, and adopt this bond of national unity and perpetuity. To make it clear, that the Constitution bears *directly* upon the people, as it came directly *from* them, you have the following provision: "This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made under the authority of the United States, shall be the *supreme* law of the land, and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any thing in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding." The people when they made this Constitution, made it the *supreme* law of the land, binding upon every individual, and binding upon all public officers. Is not the supreme law of the land, upon the very face of the proposition, the Government of the land? I should like then to know in what way a State Legislature, or a State Convention is to release the individual from his obligation of allegiance to the Federal Government. The doctrine of loyalty first to the *State*, is a great political heresy. It may make a zealous Virginian or a flaming South-Carolinian; but it does not make a good *American* citizen of the Websterian type, who knows no North, no South, no East, and no West. It is in itself a *sectional* idea; yea more, it is the treason of *thought*, and may lay the basis for the treason of *action*.

The pure and lofty patriotism of Henry Clay utterly repudiated this heresy of Mr. Calhoun. In a speech which he delivered in the Senate of the United States in 1850, we find these words: "If Kentucky to-morrow unfurls the banner of resistance, I will never fight under that banner. I owe a paramount allegiance to the Union—a subordinate one to my own

State." This is very different from that false theory of State Rights, which makes the people citizens of the United States through the medium of the Constitutions and Governments of the respective States.

I remark, thirdly, that this claim of State sovereignty involving the right of secession, is not only contrary to the Constitution, but historically a falsehood. There was no such thing known or thought of during the period of our Colonial dependence upon the mother-country. No man in his senses will pretend, that the original thirteen Colonies while subject to the British Crown, were distinct and sovereign nationalities. When under the Articles of Confederation they entered upon the war of the Revolution, and fought the battles of that memorable period, and then negotiated a treaty of peace with Great Britain, they did so as *United Colonies*, not acting independently of each other, but as one people, one nation, that had committed certain national trusts to the Continental Congress. The Declaration of Independence was itself the act of a simple and "indivisible nationality." And when the Articles of Confederation were found insufficient to meet the wants of the National Government, the people hitherto united as *one* people, entered into a "more perfect union" under the Constitution of the United States, declaring it to be "the *supreme* law of the land." The plain truth is, that these Colonies, whether as such before the Revolution, or as States afterwards, never existed as distinct nations. They have always existed as parts of a nation. Hence this idea of resuming their original sovereignty, is either a political dream, or a sheer pretense of the traitorous demagogue. They never had the thing they profess to resume. Tell me if you can, *when* South-Carolina was a nation, when she was ever so recognized in the family of nations, or when she ever exercised in a peaceful way the attributes of national sovereignty. She never existed as a State, except in the connection of her people with the United States. She never by herself did the work of a nation. She never had a national character. She never had an ambassador in any foreign court, and she never received one. She never made a treaty. She never declared a war, or concluded a peace. She absolutely has not the first frag-



ment of a national history, any more than the County of Kings, or the City of Brooklyn. She has always been what she is to-day, in point of law, and what after due reflection and proper discipline, I trust she will choose to remain — merely a *part* of a nation. As to the other States which have been formed out of the National Territory, and added to the Union, since the adoption of the Constitution, the claim of original sovereignty which secession simply resumes, is a stupidity too gross to be entitled to a serious answer. The nation itself created these States upon its own public domain, and then admitted them into the Union upon equal terms with all the other States. Their claim to secede is absurd upon its very face.

I add, fourthly, that this doctrine of secession on the theory of State sovereignty, false to the Constitution, and false to history, is utterly inconsistent with all ideas of nationality. If the people of one State may secede, then the people of every other State may do the same thing. The counties may imitate the example, and secede from the State; and thus we go on, till we come to the individual, and dissolve civil society into its primitive elements. Where then is our national character, or permanency, or reliableness? What are our obligations or treaties worth? Who would buy the bonds of such a Government? According to this theory, we have no Government, except by toleration and sufferance. It has no power over the subject any longer than he chooses to permit the exercise of that power. We are not a nation, and never were. We have been moving for nearly eighty years, and advancing from three millions to thirty-one millions of people, deceiving both ourselves and all the nations of the earth with a splendid delusion. All this time we have been simply a good-natured mob. You must see at a glance the unutterable stupidity of the doctrine. It is fatal to national life. It is the most dangerous element of disorganization that can be conceived. It is a slander upon the memory of the Fathers to say, that they have framed such a Government. For the interests of all time to come, we had better fight fifty battles and spend hundreds of millions of dollars, than for one moment to admit the truth of this theory. The idea is so palpably absurd, that the Con-

stitution as the fundamental law of the land, has wisely provided no method of getting at it. Congress can not dissolve this Union. The President can not do it. No State can do it without rebellion and treason. The whole people can not do it without first altering the Constitution itself. The intention of those who framed this instrument, was to create a Government that would stand through all time; and hence they inserted no provision of limitation or dissolution. By this instrument we are made one people, one nation, living under one political system, now and forever, unless broken and dismembered by the hand of violence. This is our fixed condition.

Let me add once more, that our geographical position and relations to each other, especially on this side of the Rocky Mountains, as well as our relations to the world, make one indivisible nationality almost a necessity, if we would be a great and prosperous people. We have tried the experiment of Free Government in this form; we have added largely to our public domain; we have wonderfully increased in population, and in all the elements of national strength; we have acquired an honorable position among the nations of the earth; we have one language; we are in the main one sort of people; we live, and must live in immediate contiguity with each other; we have a community of interests; we are indeed like the natural body, each part needful to every other; and hence we can not now divide and break up this Government, without producing a hundred evils where we shall cure one. Posterity and history would condemn the foolish experiment. Nature has given us no convenient boundaries for the work. We should thereby greatly increase the expenses of Government, multiply the causes of war, add to the occasions of mutual jealousy, and lessen the grounds of public safety. We should cease to be the great and influential Republic of this Western world. The Mississippi river, that mighty father of waters, for the control of whose outlet the nation paid millions of dollars, and which control it can never surrender, protests against secession and division. The Gulf of Mexico is equally emphatic in its remonstrance. The trading North must and will have a complete security for its commercial marine in this

Gulf. It can not afford to be dependent on treaties for this purpose. It can not consent to run the hazards that would arise in the not improbable event of war with a Southern Confederacy. There is scarcely any end to the considerations, that reveal the utter folly of this great heresy of secession and disintegration. There is nothing to be gained by it even for the interests of slavery, for be it known that slavery can not in the long run rule the destinies of this Continent, whether in or out of the Union. Willing or unwilling, it must at last fade away before the advancing march of Freedom. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the God of providence have consecrated this soil to the interests of Freedom; and for one I have no idea of having this Union dissolved to gratify a few political schemers, or furnish places for defeated and disappointed leaders. As a nation, we can not afford to try the experiment, or let any body else try it with impunity. We owe it to ourselves, and to posterity, to say that the thing *shall* not be done.

On the basis of these reasons, I place before you the proposition, that this modern doctrine of secession is not for one moment to be entertained, either by the Government, or by the people. So long as it is a mere theory, existing in a man's brain, or written on paper, it may be left to the arbitration of free discussion; but when any portion of the people undertake to put this theory into *practice*, whether by Conventions or otherwise, then the secession is a *rebellion*—that is its true title; and if successful, it is the end of the national Government. Are the people of these United States prepared to fling their Constitution to the winds, and admit this doctrine of rebellion under the title of secession? This is the question of political life or death to be settled. What say you upon this point? Having thus stated the point, I invite you—

IN THE SECOND PLACE, TO LOOK AT THE FACTS OF THIS REBELLIOUS MOVEMENT ON THE PART OF THOSE WHO CLAIM TO HAVE SECEDED FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—How have they proceeded, what have they done, and for what are they bringing this great evil upon the land? Let a candid world note the facts, and condemn the agents. The history of this period will be the strangest that was ever written or read. If I had ever

entertained any doubts as to the depravity of human nature, I think that I should never doubt again. Look a moment at the facts.

It is now abundantly evident, that a band of men secretly organized, politicians by profession, some of whom were Senators and Representatives in Congress, and others members of the Cabinet of the late President, have for a long time been plotting this atrocious rebellion. With them it is not the sudden heat of passion, but rather cool, deliberate, premeditated wickedness. They have *intended* to break up this Government at the first favorable opportunity. Some of them have perjured themselves, and used their *official* position to put the Government in the worst possible condition for its own defense, and at the same time furnish numerous facilities for the success of the rebellion. They talked treason in Congress; they threatened treason elsewhere; yet this was generally regarded as the peculiarity of their rhetoric. It now seems that they *meant* it; but the people at large did not suppose that these patriotic gentlemen and sworn officers of the Government were really in earnest. They could not believe that so foul a purpose had taken possession of their hearts.

The occasion, not the ground or motive, but merely the *occasion*, for inaugurating the rebellion, was the result of the recent Presidential election, conducted in all respects according to the requirements of the law. No sooner was this result known than the movement began to show itself by overt acts. Several of the prominent leaders have distinctly declared, that Mr. Lincoln's election to the Presidency is not their reason for secession, though they have been quite willing to use it as the means of inflaming the Southern mind. They know very well that if the South had united upon Mr. Douglas, he in all probability would have been the President; but in this event they would have lost the occasion for the result at which they were aiming. They know too, that had the South remained true to the Union, the party electing Mr. Lincoln, would have been in the minority in both Houses of Congress; and hence he could not, if he had desired to do so, usurp any despotic powers, or do a single thing inconsistent with Southern rights. All this they know. The leaders of this rebellion were not

dissatisfied, but pleased with the result of the late Presidential election. I am therefore justified in saying, that this result is merely the occasion for a plan already determined upon, and waiting for some pretense to commence the deadly work of dismembering this nation. Calculating upon a distracted and divided North, they anticipated a very speedy conquest. They meant to have taken possession of Washington, to have driven our Constitutional rulers from the Capital, and made that time-honored place the seat of Government for the new Confederacy. This was, and still is, the popular idea among the rebels, and but for the interposition of Providence and the marvelous uprising of the people, this would have been more than an idea. The plan contemplated this result; and whether it has been abandoned or not, time only can show.

So too, as to the *motive* or ground, the real *reason* for this rebellion, there can not well be a doubt in the mind of any intelligent observer of passing events. This point is made perfectly clear by the confession of Southern men. The theory set up in the somewhat famous sermon of Dr. Palmer, of New-Orleans, a Christian gentleman of whom I would not speak except in terms of courtesy, contains a true statement of the case. That sermon propounds substantially these propositions—first, that Negro slavery is identified with the best form of civilization; secondly, that the providential trust specially committed to the Southern States, is to conserve, perpetuate, and extend this institution; thirdly, that by reason of the rapid growth of the Free States, and the condition of public sentiment in those States, this duty can not be fully discharged so long as the Slave States retain their connection with the Federal Government; and finally, that the Slave States must hence secede and set up a government of their own. This is no caricature of the doctrine as laid down by Dr. Palmer. Mr. Stephens, the Vice-President of the new Confederacy, though in a speech delivered on the 14th November, 1860, he took strong grounds against secession, declaring it to be without any sufficient reason, and portraying its evils in a most vivid and truthful manner, nevertheless in another speech, subsequently made, coincides substantially with the view of Dr. Palmer. Alluding to the subject of slavery, he says: "This was the imme-

diate cause of the late rupture and the present revolution." In reference to the opinions of Jefferson and the other distinguished men of that age, he holds the following language: "The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen at the time of the formation of the old Constitution, were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically." "These ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error. It was a sandy foundation, and the idea of Government built upon it; when the storm came and the wind blew, it *fell*. Our new Government is founded upon exactly the *opposite* ideas; its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests, upon the great truth that the Negro is not equal to the white man—that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and moral condition. This, our new Government, is the first in the history of the world based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth." "This stone, which was rejected by the first builders, is become the chief stone of the corner in our new edifice." Thus Mr. Stephens puts himself on the record before the civilized world, informing us that the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the illustrious Fathers who framed these instruments, were wrong in assuming the *equality* of all men in the great elements of natural right. The correction of this error, and the establishment of government upon the opposite theory, form the special mission of the new Confederacy, based upon the natural *inequality* of men. The difficulty under which the South have been laboring, and of which complaining, is in the Constitution itself, and not in its perversions. Whether Mr. Stephens be right or wrong in his theory of human rights, is not my question. I am simply stating the theory. The reason then, the urgent necessity, for sundering the political ties which have hitherto made us one people, and destroying this Government, lies in the fact that it is a *Free* Government, containing in it too much of the poison of the principles of human liberty. What we have deemed its glory, is its defect, to be cured by secession. Let this be known to an impartial world. Yes, let the

nations of the earth understand the character of this struggle between the Secessionists and the Federal Government.

And, moreover, as to any provocation for this rebellion, let it be farther known that the Government of these United States has in no instance done a single thing, which any candid and well-informed man will regard as an encroachment upon Southern rights. I am now speaking of the Government itself. Is it not notorious that the Government has, for a long time, yea, I may say, *always*, been administered by persons exceedingly considerate of Southern views, and largely controlled by those views? The South have certainly had their full share of its patronage. Where is there an act of Congress, an act of the President, or any decision of the Supreme Court, or any policy pursued by this Government towards the North or the South, to justify rebellion against its authority by any portion of the community? Tell me, if you can, what it has done to merit such treatment. It has not touched a Southern right of any description, except to defend it. It has patiently endured wanton outrages against the persons of its Northern citizens without a word of complaint. And is such a Government to fall under the evil machinations of political traitors, whose motto is to rule or ruin? I hope not. Much, I know, has been said North as well as South, on the subject of slavery, which I sincerely regret, because of no practical service to any body; yet free speech and a free press in this land are no reasons for tearing this nation into fragments, and laying its noble Constitution in the dust.

As to the question of *overt* acts on the part of those who are in rebellion against the sovereign authority, the catalogue is appalling and serious. The series began when South-Carolina passed her ordinance of secession, and has continued from that day to this, till it has now culminated in a scene of public horror. I need not sketch these acts in detail. You all know that the property of the Government, its forts, its arsenals, and public arms have been seized. You know that lawless assemblies of men have made war upon the Government of these United States. You know that a Confederacy has been established over seven of the States, acting under a Constitution which the leaders of this movement have not dared to submit

to a fair vote of the people. You know that the President of this Confederacy refused to permit the Government to send provisions to one of its starving garrisons, and that soon after this, "the stars and stripes," the ensigns of a nation's presence and honor, furnished no protection to the inmates of that garrison against the assaults of a rebellious army. You know that Jefferson Davis has inaugurated a system of piracy against the peaceful commerce of this nation. You know that the safety of the Capital itself has been threatened by a member of his cabinet. You know that the nation's right of way to that Capital has been disputed by the hand of violence. You know that those engaged in this rebellion, have utterly refused either to consider or accept any terms of conciliation. They want no compromises. They mean to lay this fair fabric of national unity and civil liberty in the dust. They mean to set aside the Constitution. They mean to destroy that for which our fathers bled. They mean to sweep away the old landmarks, and spread a new system over this country. In short, they mean to put an end to the life of this nation in its present form; and if they do not succeed, it will not be their fault. This plot in the bosom of its movers was a deeper thing than any body but themselves had imagined.

And now as to the deportment of the Government up to the time of the attack on Fort Sumter, was there ever a nation under heaven that more patiently endured insult? Not an arm was lifted, or a single thing done forcibly to suppress this rebellion. Not a solitary provocation has been given to the passions of men. The kindest, the most careful and cautious consideration, amounting almost to weakness, has marked every step of the Government. It has done every thing that a nation could do, to give this wicked rebellion time to reflect. And mark well the fact, that the Government did not *begin* the attack upon those who were setting its authority at defiance. They fired the first gun, making an assault alike evincive of cowardice and folly; and the noble Anderson with his heroic band fought simply to defend the honor and public character of the nation.

Such, my hearers, are the facts that mark this strangest of all human movements, this scene without parallel in history,



this most unnatural and heinous offense against the best system of civil authority which the providence of God ever gave to man, this cruel and unnecessary assault upon public order and Constitutional liberty. Would to God I were dreaming! But I am not. I feel the wound. You feel it. The land feels it. The civilized world is in amazement. Is this the country of Washington? Are these the institutions his valor defended, and his wisdom helped to plan? And must they go down in dishonor, by their fall exploding the theory of self-government? If earthly excitements could reach the grave, the ashes of the sainted hero would be stirred with the terrible agonies of this awful hour. Little did I think, and little did you think, that we were born to live and breathe, to move and act in such an era of the world's history. Something, you may depend upon it, is coming to pass. This upheaving of society is not for nothing.

WHAT THEN, AS A THIRD INQUIRY, IS THE DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT AND OF THE PEOPLE IN THE PREMISES AS NOW STATED? I have reflected not a little upon this question, and am prepared to give you the results of that reflection very frankly. You may take down my words, and hold me responsible for them any where. The positions I here take I expect to meet at the bar of God.

I believe it to be the clear and obvious duty of the Government to call into its service, and employ, so much of the military strength of the nation as may be necessary to suppress this rebellion, and to do this work with great promptitude and energy, not pausing one moment till the flag of the country floats with undisputed supremacy over every inch of the public domain. I believe it to be the duty of the Government to execute the laws and conquer a peace, to assert and maintain its authority over the entire land, to put down the rebellion and then deal with the traitors by a wise and yet effective administration of public justice. The Government surely can not recognize this doctrine of secession as a constitutional right, without signing its own death-warrant: nor can it fold its arms and quietly look on while the hand of treason and violence is seeking the dismemberment of the nation. It can not do this without involving its own destruction, yea, making itself a

guilty party to that destruction. If the will of a particular part of the community, not acting according to any legal method, is paramount to national law, then we must accept anarchy and no government as our necessary condition; and for this I confess I am not prepared. In such a conflict the issue is not between two independent nations, but between the civil authority and a portion of the people who are subject to its jurisdiction. The question is, whether law shall rule, or treason shall rule. And if the sword must be drawn to vindicate the sanctity of law, then I would never return it to its scabbard again till this point is fully gained.

But will not such an enforcement of law involve a collision of *arms*? This depends upon the course which the enemies of the Government choose to take. There will be no such collision, if they will cease their resistance to the Federal authority; but if they will not, then the responsibility of the conflict is upon themselves, while the Government accepts the dreadful arbitration of the sword as the only alternative possible in the case, and also by far the least of two evils. As between the evils and risks of war on the one hand, and this doctrine of secession, nullification of Federal law, rebellion and anarchy, on the other hand, with the inevitable ruin of public and civil order, I can not hesitate a moment as to which the Government ought to choose. These being the premises, I lift up my voice for the enforcement of the laws; and if this involve war, then so be it. If for the sake of avoiding such an issue, the National Government peaceably permit either State Legislatures, or State Conventions, or State action under any form, to release its own citizens from their obligations of allegiance; if it permit these citizens to seize its property, occupy its fortresses, attack its flag, gather armies and march through the land in hostile array, without the utmost effort to assert its own authority and bring the offenders to speedy justice—I say, if actuated by a false and senseless love of peace, it quietly permit these things, then the Government itself is a traitor, and its officers perjured men, justly deserving the contempt of an outraged country. Rather than submit to this alternative, give me *war*—the war of righteous *authority* against treason.

But will not this be the *coercion* of a State? Not at all.

The Government has directly nothing to do with the State in this question. It is dealing with *individuals*, who happen to be *its own* citizens, not made such by the State, and not released from their duties as citizens by any action the State may take. This cry about coercing a State, is merely an attempt to bribe, or frighten the National Government from the discharge of its duty. It is an argument for rebellion. The Government must not touch a traitor with the strong arm of its authority for fear of State-coercion; yet that very traitor may do his utmost to coerce and destroy the Government. One who accepts this argument, is either a poor logician, or a traitor at heart. This is the kind of talk of which we have heard not a little in Virginia; and where is the Old Dominion to-day? Just where traitors meant to place her. She has lost her prestige and her glory; yea, she has lost the best opportunity she ever had, to serve both herself and her country. When I think of Virginia, the mother of Presidents, the home of Washington, the land of Jefferson and Patrick Henry; when I think of the great and good men that have distinguished her history in other days; when I think of what she *might* have done, of what she *has* done, and what she *is* doing, and then think of the bitter woes she will bring to her own bosom and help to spread over this fair land; when I think of these things, my astonishment, my sorrow, my indignation are almost insupportable. How are the mighty fallen! O Virginia! less noble and honest than South-Carolina, would to God thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace!

Is not this a Government in the name of the *people*? Exactly so. And do you mean then to *force* the people to respect and obey the laws? Is this your doctrine? Yes, it is my doctrine for the people—for *all* the people—for the people in Boston and New-Orleans—for the people from the Canadas to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast. The power of coercion lies in the very nature of Government; and wherever there is resistance to lawful authority, there I go for coercion. Whoever rejects this principle, is the advocate of anarchy.

But why not *negotiate* with these persons who have set the national authority at defiance, treat with them, accept their

ambassadors, yield to their demands, and thus settle the difficulty without resorting to the sword? This may to some seem a very *wise* method; yet to me it seems very unwise, especially as matters now stand. The *time*, if there ever were a time for such a process, is now past. Moreover, the *thing* they ask, and which must be yielded as the condition of peace, is the destruction of this Union, the dismemberment of a nation bound together by so many necessities of nature and Providence; and this is the very thing which I am not prepared to grant. The thing they want to have done, I believe to be the very *worst* thing that can be done for the interests of this land, for the interests of the world, and for the interests of unborn generations. And if I understand the pulse of national loyalty now beating in the bosoms of nineteen millions of people, the attempt forcibly to dissolve this Union will be found no child's play. I am glad to know that there is a backbone in this nation. The principle at stake is one of National authority and Constitutional liberty against anarchy and treason; and shall this principle be tamely surrendered without striking a single blow for its salvation? I answer, *no*. The precedent would be perfectly ruinous. If it may be done once, it may be done a thousand times. There is no end to the evils, to which we should expose ourselves as a nation, if this false doctrine were once established. Whatever may be the result of the struggle upon which we are now entering, we owe it to ourselves as a nation, and we owe it to the family of nations, to show that no treasonable experiment against the perpetuity and unity of our political life, can ever be made, without the most dreadful sacrifices on the part of those who hazard the awful venture. We owe it to the stability of Government to make the experiment so costly that future generations will take *warning* from the past. In such an hour we must show that we are a nation. I may add as a *prudential* consideration, that in this particular collision between the North and South, if it shall become absolutely *sectional*, as I sincerely hope it will not, we may as well now settle the question of *relative* power as to do the same thing five or ten years hence. It will have to be settled; and we can better adjust this point now than to wait for some future emergency. Be the issue what it may, I believe that

the future interests of peace and good order on this Continent require that we should understand, and that the world should understand, *who is who*. Hence I am for no patchwork in this matter. If the issue must be made between anarchy and law, then let history have a fair opportunity to tell, which is the *stronger* power, a system of civilization based on liberty, or one that is embarrassed and cursed with slavery—which is the most powerful in all the arts and elements of peace, and for this very reason the most formidable in the dreadful arbitrations of war. Let me tell you, that I have no idea of backing down from the dignity and duties of a freeman and a patriot at this appalling and responsible moment. I mean to stand by the flag of my country at all hazards, and there you mean to stand.

But once more, do you really think that the Government in this struggle will be able to conquer a peace, suppress this rebellion, and cause its authority to be respected throughout the land? May not the Government after all fail; and would it not therefore be best to consent to the dismemberment of the nation, and yield the point at once? The theory of this argument is this: If you can put down a rebellion, put it down; but if you *can not*, then let it run. How will you know whether you can put it down or not? You surely will not have the Government set out with the assumption that it has no power, or not sufficient power to maintain its authority. This question of strength can be determined only by the *trial* of strength between those who are the friends and those who are the enemies of the Government; and this trial must be made, or the doctrine of Constitutional law and order is a mere sham, practically not worth the paper on which it is written. At such a moment civil authority has no right to take counsel from its *fears*. It has no right to assume its own insufficiency. It is morally bound to use all the power it has; and hence if the sword be drawn for its destruction, then it must draw the sword for its own salvation. Government can never change this attitude, till rebellion by the naked force of strength becomes a *revolution* so accomplished as to set all successful resistance at defiance. Any other attitude is the death of law and order in every form of civil society.

Let me add, that while I am not any more competent than you are, to calculate the chances of success or failure in this great struggle, I see very decided reasons for believing that the Government will be triumphant. Its cause is one of law and order; and this is one ground of hope. I can not but think that the God of order will be on its side; and this is another ground of hope. Our national prestige is with it. The navy is in its hands. As I hope, wise, prudent, and energetic men, equal to the hour, are in charge of its interests. It is sustained, and will be sustained by the hearty coöperation of at least nineteen millions of its loyal subjects, more unanimous on this point than they ever were on any other; subjects, too, who have given every evidence that an enlightened, earnest, and patriotic people can give, that they are prepared to pour forth their treasure and their blood to maintain the integrity and perpetuity of this Union. Mark that thrill of indignant feeling which went like lightning through all the loyal States, when the nation's flag was assailed at Fort Sumter; read the countenances of men; hear them talk; see how their differences have vanished into air; look at the mass meetings which have been held; observe with what readiness the sinews of war and the soldiery of the land have responded to the call of our Chief Magistrate; estimate, too, the wealth in men and money, in the capacity to create armies and support them, spread all through the Free States; see the fixed and united determination of all the people in these States to carry the Government triumphantly through this struggle with rebellion; and let me tell you, that here is a public sentiment, and behind it a power, that *can* and *will* preserve the Union against all its foes. I believe, too, that there are multitudes of loyal men at the South, whose hearts are with us in this effort, who have no sympathy with this wicked rebellion, and who will at the earliest practicable moment help to sweep the traitors and despots from the land. If Henry Clay, and General Jackson, and Jefferson, and Madison, and Washington were living, they would in this crisis of the nation stand just where Webster, the great Constitutional expounder, would be standing were he living. They would go for the Declaration of Independence, for the Constitution of these United States,

and for the perpetuity of this glorious Union. I believe that there are men of like feelings and sympathies scattered all through the seceded States, but whose voice is for the present hushed amid the clamors of anarchy and violence. Tell me why the Constitution under which this new Confederacy proposes to work, was not submitted to a vote of the people? Tell me why such a reign of terror has been adopted by the insurgents, if the people are all of one mind? What mean the frequent though fruitless remonstrances from the South against this movement, that have in various ways reached the public ear? I have been told by a Christian gentleman who has recently traveled quite extensively in several of the seceded States, that large numbers of the better classes have no sympathy with this work of death. The thing in the judgment of this gentleman was sprung upon the people by the cunning artifice of demagogues. Maryland, Western Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, and the other Border Slave States, are very far from being united in this great plot against a nation's life. There are, I know, traitors enough in these Border States to tarnish their fame, if not to achieve their ruin; but the people are not all traitors by any means. Many of them, as I believe, will be greatly pleased as well as profited by a just and vigorous exercise of the Federal power. They do not wish to go out of this Union; and if the Lord please, we mean that they shall have the privilege of staying in it. Always keep in mind that bad men make the most noise; and this will in part explain why treason is just now the general appearance over so large a section of the South. The good men there will speak in due season, if they can have the opportunity. I think it well to give them such an opportunity.

What, on the other hand, are the resources and means of those who are to be met in this contest for a nation's integrity and life? If all the Slave States were united against the Government, which is the worst possible view of the case, you would then have a white population of seven and a half millions opposed to nineteen millions, who are determined that this Union shall be maintained. Here is quite a difference in the article of men, and an equal difference in the important article of soldiers. The insurgents have no navy, and no capa-

city to produce a navy. They are exposed on their entire sea-coast with no adequate means of protection. All their sea-ports may be so effectually blockaded by the government as to destroy their commerce. They have but little money, and no credit beyond themselves. They are not rich, and they can not be, in the means necessary to create, equip, and provision large armies for any considerable length of time. In these respects they are poor; and every day will make them poorer. Their supplies by sea and land being cut off, they must soon come to a state of helpless starvation. They have, moreover, an element of weakness and awful danger in their slave population. In the general wreck of the social system which they seem not unwilling to court, they may here find a cause of disaster among themselves, the horrors of which are not to be described. If I were a Southern man and a slaveholder, I should have great fears on this ground. I should be compelled to remember, that the strange business of war has its own necessities and makes its own laws. I should most seriously fear an uprising of the slaves, either by their own spontaneous action, or in connection with an invading army. No people having such a system in their bosom, can afford to run the hazards of war, especially on their own soil. It amazes me, that the South so devoted to the system of slavery, can not see the perils to this very system, growing out of the contest they seem so determined to wage. I can not account for it without adopting the theory, that whom the gods mean to destroy they first make mad. I confess myself perfectly amazed at their folly in this respect. They are doing the very thing, which in view of their position they ought not to do. If I could reach their ears in the character of a friend, and reason with them from their own stand-point, I would say to them: By all means stop this wicked war against a good Government, and then aid that Government in arresting and hanging those who have led the people astray. This is the best thing they can do; and they must do this, or pay bitterly for the failure.

These statements, which refer to questions of military strategy, I have made, not as the commander of an army, but rather to show that the effort of the Government to crush this rebel-



lion, is not a forlorn struggle. It is not attempting to do a thing which it can not do. As to the question of *power*, I have no fear. The public sentiment of the loyal States has decreed that this rebellion shall *die*; and the Government has nothing to do but make itself the agent of that sentiment, and the work will be done. It wants a steady arm, an earnest purpose, and a single principle, never turning for a moment from the one thing to be done. The question between law and order on the one hand, and anarchy on the other—between the false theories of Mr. Calhoun, and the true interpretation of the Constitution of these United States, is now to be settled by the force of arms; and I go for such a settlement as will make this epoch of our national life gloriously *historic* in the ascendancy and supremacy of Federal law, and leave no doubt as to the practicability and perpetuity of a government based on the doctrine of human rights. This is my doctrine for the hour; and if it take half a million of soldiers to make it good, then those soldiers are ready for the honorable service. This nation and this northern portion of the Western Hemisphere are *one—one* in peace and one in war—one for all the purposes which the God of nations has committed to our trust; and woe to the men, who undertake on this consecrated soil to repeat the scenes of unhappy Mexico, or pluck a single star from our national galaxy. With such men the Government can have no peace short of their submission. Conquer them the Government *must*, and conquer them it *will*, or it must perish in the effort. The *popular* will has decreed, that they *shall* bow to the supremacy of law, or find their graves on the soil desecrated by their treason. Happily for the good of men, such a crisis seldom arrives in the history of well-ordered Government; but when it does arrive, then a nation's work is as clear as the light of day, and her duty as imperative as the law on Mount Sinai. A puling sentimentalism that shrinks from the task, an ignoble timidity that welcomes forty evils in escaping one, a short-sighted wisdom that has no expanded views of the future, a vacillating policy that does not understand the issue or the end, political prejudices and predilections that may be very well in ordinary times, commercial considerations that so justly make men cautious—these, let me tell you, are not the

qualities that befit a great, noble, generous, and patriotic people, when the social system under which they are living, is tumbling down over their heads. At such a time they want resolute wills.

But again, what shall the Government do with these people, if victory should crown its arms? Is there any prospect that, being conquered, they will be content thereafter to live in the Union? Will not their adhesion be compulsory and reluctant on their part? I reply, that this is not now the *practical* question. It will be in order in due season, to be met at the time according to its merits. I trust that, in the event supposed, the Government will be wise, merciful, and just, amply satisfying the South that they have had no occasion for taking up arms against the Federal authority. Some of the leaders—I know not how many—ought to die on the gibbet of the nation's justice. That the people in the rebellious States are destined to a severe and mortifying humiliation, I have no doubt; they richly deserve it; yet the Government can not now accept the theory that their alienation is so fixed as to admit of no cure. It must perform its present duty in the subjugation of this rebellion; and after this, it must act according to its best wisdom in the circumstances as they may then exist. I believe, moreover, that the people, taught, by a severe and bitter experience, the folly of their course, will in the end be very glad to get rid of their leaders, and return to a peaceful allegiance to the Federal power. I believe, that there is to be a great *reïction* in the Southern mind upon this subject, leading a misguided and deceived people to see that their true interests are better promoted in the Union than out of it. I believe it a positive mercy to save this people at the present time from *themselves*, and especially from their despotic and unprincipled leaders. I do not believe in the impracticability of a complete restoration of the national and loyal spirit throughout the entire length and breadth of this land. This, I am aware, will require time and much wisdom on the part of the Federal authorities. The present generation of men will soon pass away, and a new one take their place; and, judging of human nature, by its usual impulses as well as ne-

cessities, I anticipate that the South will again be loyal to the Union of our common glory.

Such are my views upon the pending question of this eventful period. Let me say to you, in the language of the venerable Dr. Spring, uttered at the recent meeting in New-York, a man whose wisdom, piety, and prudence need no commendation from my lips: "The question now is not between Slavery and Anti-Slavery, not between Republicanism and Democracy, but between law and anarchy, between government and no government. And permit me to say, that all the other questions are evanescent; they are mere phantoms; they sink into nothingness compared with the grand question of Government or no Government in this country." What was it that brought that toil-worn man into such an assembly, and inspired this noble utterance? It was his love of a country now in peril. Let me say to you again in the language of the Hon. John A. Dix, uttered at the same meeting: "I am for supporting the Government. I do not ask *who* administers it. It is the Government of my country, and as such I shall give it in this extremity all the support in my power. I regard the pending contest with the secessionists as a death-struggle for Constitutional liberty and law—a contest, which, if successful on their part, could only end in the establishment of a despotic Government, and blot out, wherever they were in the ascendancy, every vestige of National Freedom." This is a noble and truthful utterance of one, who is entitled to the gratitude of the country for his services at a critical hour in the affairs of the late Administration. Let me say once more in the language of Senator Douglas: "It is a question of order—of the stability of government—of the peace of communities. The whole social system is threatened with destruction and disruption." Ah! my friends, this is the question to which I am calling your attention to-day—the question which has scattered all past differences to the winds in the loyal States—the question that has stirred the bosoms of the old men and the young men, the fathers and the mothers, and even the little children—the question that has put the "stars and stripes" upon the drayman's cart, upon the

public omnibus, and hung up the nation's flag to float over the sanctuary of the living God—the question that now burns like a furnace of doom to treason and death to the traitor, in the hearts of nineteen millions of men—the question that in two short weeks has set this nation forward more than half a century upon the moral dial of time. Yes, this is *the* question for you to consider. I have never more deeply felt the poverty of language to express ideas. I did not know that my own soul could be moved with such an intensity of emotion. In such a moment I will not be equivocal: and having a tongue to speak, I will not be a dead dog. I will do every thing in my power to uphold the Government, and guide the public mind in this direction. I believe that the world out of this great evil is to reap a lasting blessing. I counsel you to stand firmly in your places, each man ready to perform his whole duty—ready to speak, ready to pray, ready to fight, and ready to spill his blood upon the altar of our common country. My prayer to God is, that law and liberty may prevail, and that anarchy and treason may be so blasted that they will never be seen again on this soil in all coming time. In this hour so eventful, so solemn by reason of its duties—when the Capital itself, the archives of state, the public buildings of the Government, and the lives of its officers are menaced by the gathering hosts of a rebellious army—when the City that bears the name of Washington, is in peril—when loyal troops are rushing to our national sanctuary—when the very next news from the South may bring to our ears the dread realities of the battle-field—I say, in such an hour I would not forget, nor would I have you forget, that there is a God in heaven, and that the law of his throne is the law of order and good Government. I invite you to go to that throne and plead with the Supreme Monarch in behalf of our Chief Magistrate, in behalf of his Cabinet, in behalf of that distinguished hero who is alike skilled in war and wise in peace, in behalf of the soldiers whose strong arms and resolute wills must settle this question, praying God that victory may sit on the banner of justice. Men of prayer, this is your time! Men of action, this is your time! Lovers of your country, its institutions, and its public honor, this is your time! Adopted citizens, Irishmen, Scotchmen, Englishmen,

Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, Scandinavians, this is your time! Do your duty, your whole duty; and whether you fall in this struggle, or live to rejoice in its end, truthful history and a grateful posterity will place your names on the record of fame, there to shine in unsullied glory as long as great, and good, and noble action shall commend itself to the moral sense of man.

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