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Editor

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The call was sustained, and the roll being called, resulted as follows:


Mr. Osburn, when the name of Mr. A. M. Barbour was called, said that that gentleman was necessarily absent.

Mr. Huntz, when the name of Mr. Goodin was called, stated that he was requested by Mr. G., if the roll should be called, to state that he was unavoidably absent.

When the name of Mr. Goode, of Mecklenburg, was called, he stated that he had paired off with a friend who was absent. Under other circumstances, he would have voted "no."

Mr. Early, when the name of Mr. Saunders was called, stated that he was absent on account of illness.

Mr. Porter stated when the name of Mr. Tarx was called, that that gentleman was absent because of illness in his family.

Mr. Taylor, when called, remarked that he paired off with the gentleman from Dinwiddie [Mr. Boisseau]. He said he would otherwise have voted no.

Mr. Wilson—I would like to hear the resolution read. I was not in it when it was offered and cannot therefore vote intelligibly. If it is not in order to report the resolution while the roll is being called, I should like to hear from the Chairman the substance of the resolution.

The resolution was read, whereupon Mr. Wilson voted no.

The result of the vote was announced as follows—yeas 46, nays 60. So the motion to lay on the table was lost.

The question was then taken on referring the resolution to the Committee on Federal Relations, and decided in the affirmative.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The President—The hour of 11 has arrived.

Mr. Wilson—I move to suspend the order for the purpose of enabling the gentleman from Marion [Mr. Haymond], to finish his speech. I understand the gentleman will conclude in a few minutes.

The question was taken on the motion to suspend, and decided in the negative.

The Convention then went into committee of the whole, Mr. Southall, of Albemarle, in the chair.

Mr. Southall—When the committee rose yesterday it had under consideration the reports of the Committee on Federal Relations to it referred. Mr. Holcombe, of Albemarle, is entitled to the floor.

Mr. Holcombe—There are no doubt, Mr. Chairman, many members of the Committee who can recall the feelings of a landsman, unfamiliar with the terrors of the sea, overtaken by a night of storm and danger in the midst of the Atlantic, the ship pitching upon the waves, the fog too dense to be pierced by any human eye, the shrill tones of the alarm pipe sounding every moment in his ears, and more fearful by far, than wave, or mist, or blast, the rapid fall of the barometer indicating the close proximity of that most appalling because most irresistible enemy of the sailor, the tremendous iceberg, by whose fatal contact the most powerful vessel may be dashed to pieces in an instant of time. I only recollect an overwhelming, pervading sense of utter helplessness, a feeling that the weakness of infancy was strength itself. When compared with the ability of man, aided by all the agencies of the highest art, to contend face to face with the great elemental powers of nature.

We, sir, are tossing upon the surges of revolution; clouds and darkness cover our future track; an unerring moral instinct warns us of approaching collision between repulsive masses, in whose awful shock all that we love and value may perish.

Under such circumstances the highest statesmanship might well bow in mute despair of its own resources, and in humble submission to the direction of an invisible but all-controlling power. For myself, sir, profoundly convinced that upon this assembly depends the decision of an issue as momentous as ever devolved upon any deliberative body in the history of the world; almost sinking under a sense of public responsibility, the prayer which the oldest of poets has put in the mouth of a patriot hero on the eve of battle, recurs to my memory, the simple and sublime prayer for light. Feeble as is my arm, I would raise it in behalf of what I believe to be the cause of liberty, of peace, and of civilization, and, from the depths of my heart, reverently and fervently, the aspiration ascends to the Father of all Lights, that illumination, broad and steady, may be poured along our path of duty.
In the argument which I shall submit to the Convention, there are some general propositions underlying the whole, that I shall assume without discussion. The institution of slavery is so indissolubly interwoven with the whole framework of society in a large portion of our State, and constitutes so immense an element of material wealth and political power to the whole Commonwealth, that its subversion through the operation of any unfriendly policy on the part of the Federal Government, whether that operation is extended over a long or short period of time, would, of necessity, dry up the very fountains of the public strength, change the whole frame of our civilization, and inflict a mortal wound upon our liberties.

“The spirit of great events strides on before the events themselves,” and if there is danger to an interest of such importance, serious danger, although remote, there can be no higher duty which any Christian or any patriot owes to his country, than to resist it in its first approaches. Mr. Calhoun once declared in the Senate of the United States, “that wrongs were most sensibly felt and most easily resisted at the extreme limit of right.” He had learned this lesson, he declared, from our patriot fathers, who met wrong promptly, and repelled it in the beginning. I believe that this danger is impending; that it is of overshadowing magnitude; and that there is no rational hope of escaping from it, but in the prompt severance of the relations of this Commonwealth through the Federal Government, with the free States of the North.

In maintaining that such is the policy, the interest and the duty of the Commonwealth, I rejoice to feel that I am fortified by the approbation and stimulated by the direction and voice of my immediate constituents. The largest and most enthusiastic meeting of voters held in the county of Albemarle within the memory of living man, took place upon the very day on which at the Capitol, in Washington, a revolution in the whole principles and policy of the government was inaugurated. That meeting with most unparalleled unanimity, at the very hour when the present President of the United States was proclaiming doctrines utterly subversive to the principles of that immortal instrument dear to all Americans, but if possible, dear by an especial emphasis of affection to the people of Albemarle, in whose bosom lived and died its illustrious author; at that very moment these people were sending forth their voice in unmistakable tones for another Declaration of Independence.

I also rejoice that in the consideration of this question, we shall be so little embarrassed by Constitutional difficulties; that so large a number of the gentlemen of the Committee, as we may fairly infer, are represented by our Committee on Federal Relations, place the rights of the States and the rights of the people upon such high ground, that I feel there is no obligation upon me to vindicate either the right of secession; or, what approaches closely to an equivalent to it, the right of revolution, not in the English sense, of a right to resist a long course of oppression by forcible subversion of the public authority, but in the American sense—the right of the people to change their government, peacefully, when ever they become dissatisfied with it; in other words, the principle embodied in our Bill of Rights, that all governments rest for a legitimate foundation upon the consent of the governed.

I propose, sir, very briefly, to review the history of this slavery question so far as it is connected with the present condition of the country. I desire to ascertain, in the first instance, what course a proper regard for her own honor and duty would have pointed out to Virginia, if her decision had been in no wise embarrassed by the action of other communities, and then to inquire how far her policy should be influenced by her relations to them.

That prophetic apprehension of “a geographical line coincident with a moral principle, once held up to the angry passions of men, never to be obliterated,” which filled the last days of Mr. Jefferson, and I may add Mr. Madison, with anxiety—that apprehension has become melancholy history. That line, rendered deeper and deeper by successive irritations, has at last severed the unity of the nation, and divided us into two distinct and unfriendly people. Prior to the creation of that line in 1820, slavery in theory was condemned universally, at home and abroad; but the condemnation was a mere passive sentiment of indifference. It was a sleeping abstraction, as inoperative for any practical purpose of mischief, as if it had been a dream, instead of an opinion and sentiment. It hardly embarrassed the reclamation of the fugitive; it scarcely offered an obstruction to the transit, when it was convenient, of slaves through free territory; it suggested no offensive discrimination in private or public life; it hardly left upon any of the forms in which the thought of the age found expression, a perceptible impression of its existence. We lived together in peace and in friendship, as members of a great family of freedom. On this subject, at least, no angry discord marred what the poet calls, “the unity and married calm of the States.” Our attachment to the Union was universal, was manly, and was rational, because the blessings of the Union were solid and real. In every section an equal pride was felt in its glory, an equal participation in its benefits, an equal zeal and
interest in its perpetuity. It was a common centre of patriotic attachment and hope. This Republic of free States at that time, had fair to surpass in power and in fame, even imperial Rome itself; not only in the extent of its territory, in the beneficence of its government, but in the duration of its empire, and the fruitful immortality of its institutions. Well may the heart of her humblest citizen have kindled with a glow of noble pride at the reflection, not extravagant, that from the great light which filled his own rejoicing sky of freedom, every morning star which should herald the dawn of liberty to other lands, would gild its horns.

By the operation of a long train of causes which it is unnecessary for me here to describe, that passive sentiment of indifference, that sleeping, harmless abstraction, has been awakened and converted into a principle of active and dangerous aggression. The public conscience of the Northern people has been aroused, and pervaded with a conviction that it is within their power to suppress this institution, and that it is their duty to assail such an embodiment of moral, social and political evil, by the exercise of the public authority in every Constitutional form, and by the rebuking pressure of public opinion at every accessible point. Antagonistic forces have been working during the same period upon the hearts and minds of the Southern people, producing a revolution as complete but in another direction. It has become their universal conviction, that African slavery constitutes the wisest and most beneficent adjustment possible of the relations between the two races, and that it is to be cherished and defended to the last extremity.

Now, whatever other elements of dissatisfaction may have contributed to bring upon the country this fearful strife, there can be no doubt that the convulsive throes which are now rending its bosom, spring mainly from an irremovable conflict of opposing opinions and sympathies on the subject of slavery.

Look, sir, at the expression of this conflict, not only in the action of legislative bodies in the free States, because we might hope that such action—the action of the agents—would be corrected and rebuked by the principal; but, in popular demonstrations, in innumerable places, and in every variety of form. The old association of the people has been reduced to a mere formal intercourse on the lines of travel, and in the great centres of commerce and manufactures; the old friendship has departed; the decaying heart of the body politic scarcely throbs with one living pulsation of a comprehensive and unselfish American patriotism; the great fellowships of Church and State, which formerly embraced in one broad and unbroken communion every portion of the country, have been rent in twain; and between the people of the North and the people of the South there lies to day a moral gulf of angry and jealous passions, wider and more impassable than that by which the rivalship and feuds of a thousand years have divided the people of France from the people of England. The Northern people have covered themselves, by the repeated obstructions they have offered to the execution of the fugitive slave law, with the reproach of a standing infidelity to the most sacred compact of the Constitution. They have cherished in the bosom of their society, associations extensive in number and wealth, openly avowing their purpose to incite and aid the escape of our slaves, and not infrequently expressing sympathy with insurrection, rapine and murder. If a similar state of facts existed between any two great powers on the continent of Europe, it would instantly break the peace of Christendom. If France, for example, permitted a society to exist in that country from which money and emissaries were sent to India, to disturb the relations between the English residents and the native race, precious as is the cause of peace to both of those great nations, it would not endure for an hour. This same people, forgetting that the only bond of unity which can or ought to keep together an empire of freemen, is an equal participation of rights and privileges, have avowed the fixed and deliberate policy of excluding us from our fair and legitimate portion of the public domain, acquired by the common blood and treasure, and of localizing and discrediting an institution, which lies at the very basis of our prosperity and our civilization. Finally, sir, disregarding the solemn lessons of the Fathers of the Republic, the earnest appeal, of a patriotism not yet wholly extinguished, the warning premonitions of an outraged sentiment of liberty, they have, by a purely geographical combination, taken possession of that Federal agency which was established for the equal maintenance of the rights and honor of all, to execute this systematic injustice; thus converting the very forms of our Constitution into an instrument, for the destruction of the great ends it was ordained to accomplish. It is as complete a revolution, as that by which Augustus, uniting in his own person offices which, under the theory of the Roman Republic, were to be held by independent and distinct functionaries, acquired absolute authority. And it is a revolution as fatal to the independence and honor of the Southern people, as if their liberties had been lost in a disastrous battle with a foreign enemy.

I speak these words, Mr. Chairman, in sorrow, and not in anger. I cannot discover any ground of rational hope, upon which to expect a change in the relative feeling between the two sections. The great
masses of the Northern people are not accessible to any argument or any appeal which it is within our power to make. We are not brought into communication with them, except upon the thoroughfares of travel, and in the commercial and manufacturing cities of the seaboard; and the population of this limited section cannot control the opinions or action of the great agricultural region in the interior.

This revolution which has taken place within the last forty years in the theories, the opinions and the views of public policy, respectively entertained at the North and in the South, renders it, as I honestly believe, impossible for us any longer to live together, in peace and in prosperity, under a common government.

It is no doubt, the first wish of the people of Virginia to preserve this Union, if it can be done upon terms of equality, of honor, of friendship, and of justice to all; but not upon terms of inequality, injustice or degradation to any section. It is also true, that the public voice has declared in unmistakable terms, that the period has arrived, when the whole question must be settled forever, either by a permanent dissolution of the Union, or a solid and enduring pacification, upon which we can rely for the enjoyment of our property, for the security of our rights, and for the quiet of our society, through ages to come.

Now, what elements should enter into such a scheme of adjustment? I shall not, at this time, undertake to compare either of those competing propositions which have been submitted to the country—the Crittenden propositions as amended by the Virginia Legislature, or the Resolutions of the Peace Conference—because there is wanting in each of them, what I regard as an indispensable element of any honorable or safe arrangement. One of these schemes does recognize our right of property, does recognize our right to equality; but yet provides no securities by which that recognition is to be rendered available. It has been the habit of our race, of our English forefathers, of our American ancestors, whenever questions of liberty came up for consideration and decision, to demand appropriate guarantees of power; power in their own hands, to protect their own rights. The English Barons, when they obtained from King John the great charter at Runnymede, demanded power to secure the execution of its provisions. Twenty-five of the King's castles were placed in their possession, with the privilege of making war upon him for a violation of the rights declared in that memorable charter of freedom. It was power in another form, power over the supplies, which has gradually given emancipation and liberty, to the commons of England. It was for power—power to direct the disposition of their own property, that our fore-

fathers went into the struggle of the revolution. Power to protect themselves, was claimed and given in the Constitution to the small States, against the large States. And power was accorded, power that was deemed adequate at the time, to the slave States, in the apportionment of representation, to protect themselves against the free States. With all its securities, our fathers accepted that Constitution in fear and trembling, under a species of moral duress, to escape the anarchy of the old Confederation. Had they anticipated the facts which exist to-day, the disparity in strength of the two sections, the antagonism of principle and feeling between their respective people, they never would have formed the Union or established the Constitution, without provision, introduced into the organic law, securing an equilibrium and balance of power between the sections.

Now, I take it, sir, that the question for us to decide, is not what the North is willing to give us, but what our rights, what our honor, and the security of our property entitle us to expect and require. The necessity for this adjustment has been created by our Northern brethren; it is, in consequence of their breach of Constitutional obligations: it is because they have trampled upon the letter and spirit of the written covenant of the Union, that we are obliged to call for a revision of the fundamental law. The political equilibrium of the sections that in substance existed when the Constitution was formed has been destroyed; every year adds to the relative strength and predominance of the North; the manifestations of hostile and unfriendly feeling cannot be mistaken. Under these circumstances, we are entitled not simply to request, but to demand from their justice, the amplest security against every form of injury, which can reasonably be apprehended from their power.

I shall not, at present, undertake to discuss the details of any form of guarantee, but merely to indicate the great purposes and objects for which guarantees of power are wanted—viz: the power of expansion, and the power of protection from the danger of anti-slavery agitation, and from the humiliation and injustice of sectional ascendancy. And, first, unless we have positive power in some form placed in our own hands, for the expansion of this institution of slavery beyond its present limits, and its protection as it goes, its extinction, and that, in a comparatively short period of time, will be rendered inevitable. Can we rely upon any of the provisions suggested in either of the competing schemes of adjustment for this power of expansion? I am glad to see in one of the propositions—and it is incorporated, I believe, in the report of the Committee on Federal Relations to this body—a recognition
of the great principle of a guarantee of power, in the concurrent vote of Southern and Northern Senators, which is made necessary for the acquisition of territory. But I do not see in that proposition, any adequate security. The hostility to slavery and to its expansion in the North, will lay an interdict upon future acquisitions of slave territory—except in the barely possible case of a chance, to obtain Canada and Cuba at the same time. I can see no contingency in which we could, through this provision, make a bargain with the North. The acquisition of free territory is of slight importance to the North, when compared with the acquisition of slave territory by the South; with the former, it is a question of political strength, and extended empire—no expansion is necessary to its safety. For hundreds of years, with the largest emigration from Europe, there will be ample room in the bosom of our present free territory for its accommodation. Expansion with us, is a question of existence. The races cannot be amalgamated; they cannot be severed; their diffusion, under such circumstances, over an area which will prevent a dangerous superiority, in any section, or at any point, of the black race, is a necessity of our position, and essential to the preservation of our civilization itself.

Now, if there is any obstruction by which the natural and legitimate channels, for the overflowing of a redundant black population, are closed, the emigration of the white, or the emancipation or destruction of the black race, at some future period, are rendered certain.

This policy of ultimate extinction, by contraction, "compelling slavery, like a scorpion girdled with fire, to sting itself to death," was proclaimed by Lord Brougham and other English abolitionists, in a memorable debate in the House of Lords—a debate which led to the commencement of negotiations by the United States, resulting in the acquisition of Texas. The same views have been uniformly avowed by the leaders of the Republican party in this country, and unless we can reverse the great laws of political economy, and change principles of human nature hitherto considered as immutable, its truth and justice must be acknowledged. There are now four millions of slaves in the United States. According to the ordinary tables, indicating their ratio of increase, they will, in the short space of fifty years, amount to sixteen millions—one-third more than the entire population black and white, of all of the Southern States, at this time.

There are laws now in operation, and which will not fail, impelling the black race in mighty currents, towards the warm latitudes of the South—the pressure of the free States upon the North, and the greater productive value of black labor in the South. Whilst the slave popula-

tion is thus constantly gravitating towards the tropics, their presence discourages white emigration to that region, and the character of the climate and soil render exposure to the sun in the culture of cotton and rice, unendurable by the white man. I might add that the statistics of the census illustrate and confirm these statements. They exhibit the fact that the white is gaining upon the black population in Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and, to a slight extent, in Virginia, whilst the black is gaining on the white in all of the Gulf States and in some of them very rapidly.

What is to be the ultimate solution of this immense problem, it would be idle to inquire: for, with our limited understanding, it would be impossible to discover. We know what lies before us; we know that with the diffusion of our slaves over a large surface of country, the proportional density of the white population constantly increases; and that this diffusion is therefore an element of safety. Notwithstanding the immense superiority of the white over the black man, there is a numerical equilibrium which is essential to preserve in peace, the requisite subordination and control. To adopt any policy by which slavery would be hemmed in, within its present limits, does appear to me, when we look at the growing disparity of numbers between the races, the perpetual stimulus to dissatisfaction which will be held out to the negro, and his enlarging capacity and increasing facilities for mischief, to be providing for a renewal upon our own soil of the scenes of St. Domingo, and the destruction of the race or the relation, amid national and social convulsion.

The Southern States, especially those to the South of Virginia, are deeply interested in this policy of expansion. To them it is of more vital importance even than to us. The destruction of slavery would bring upon Virginia a blight and ruin, from which she would not emerge for centuries; yet it is possible that the lands of Virginia may be cultivated by the white man. But the question of cultivating cotton and rice with white labor does not admit of debate; in the cotton and rice States the existence of African slavery becomes a question of civilization. They could not acquiesce in any principle or policy in the administration of this government, by which the expansion of their institutions, as the exigencies and opportunities of the future might require, should be prevented, without betraying that sacred trust, the guardianship of an inferior race, which has been committed to their keeping by God himself, and purchasing an ignominious lease of security to slavery during their own lives, at the price of its ultimate extinction within the lives of their children, amid the probable horrors of
servile war. No Southern statesman under such circumstances, could, with reason, anticipate any other result, as time unrolled the curtain of the future, than one of two alternatives—either that his countrymen would be prepared in a debasing school of political degradation for civil and social equality with their emancipated slaves, or that from its darkness would burst

"Some dread Nemesis, crowned with fire,
To tread them out forever."

If the Southern people, in an exigency by which the whole course of their history and the future fortunes of this vast continent were to be determined, had not taken counsel of that wise and provident fear, which Burke describes as "the mother of safety," and resolved, whilst their destiny under Providence was in their own hands, to meet the enemy in the gate, their irresolution would have covered with undying reproach the very name of free institutions. In this great necessity of power to diffuse, and to protect slavery as it goes, we shall, as I believe, find a rock upon which all schemes of reconstruction will be wrecked.

But there are other reasons why we should require guarantees of power. We want power to put an end to this irritating strife, because it is fatal to our peace, dangerous to the security of our property, and through the sectional ascendancy which it has established, irreconcilable with every principle of liberty.

How are we to control the further agitation of this subject? If the concurrence of a majority of the Southern members of the Electoral College was rendered necessary to the appointment of the Executive (some new provision being made to meet the contingency of a failure to elect by the College), and the assent of a majority of the Southern as well as Northern members of the Senate, required whenever either of such majorities should call for a sectional vote, to the performance of any act, which under the Constitution is submitted to the Senate, whether the enactment of a law, the negotiation of a treaty, or a confirmation to office, you would go far towards rendering it impossible, to use the agency of the Federal Government in any form whatever to the prejudice of slavery, and thus strike at the very root of this political agitation.

I shall not now inquire how far these guaranties would be consistent with the practical administration of the government. In my opinion they would secure its just and would not impair its efficient action. We have in the Constitution of our own State this day a concurrent ma-

jority, requisite to the action of the Legislature, the East controlling the Senate, the West the House; and the principle of concurrent majorities for the protection of a minority runs through all the great provisions of our Federal Constitution. An amendment, such as I have indicated, to that Constitution, would take away all power of mischief from extreme men, North or South, and would place the government of the country in the hands of its moderate men. There would be a strong motive offered to ambitious men in all sections, to calm, and not to inflame sectional irritation and prejudice. No man could be elevated to any high office who rendered himself peculiarly obnoxious to the North, or to the South. If there is any adjustment under which it is possible for our people to be brought together, and their differences to be so completely removed, as to enable them to live in peace, and like the Patricians and Plebeians of Rome, when they returned from Mount Sacer, to build another temple to Concord, it must be upon the broad and enduring basis of guaranties of power.

Machiavelli, in one of his discourses, tells us that—"Liberty needs new securities every day; but as every day does not afford an opportunity for obtaining them, that the statesman is most culpable who fails to improve any occasion, upon which they may be procured." If the Northern people are not disabled from making concessions in consequence of the moral principles involved; if they will yield theoretical acknowledgments of our right of property and of our right of equality, such as are contained in some of these amendments, they will be ready or they ought to be ready to make such concessions of political power, as will render the declarations of right of practical value to us. If their objections to re-adjustment, do not arise from conscientious conviction, but considerations merely of expediency, the value of the Union to them, upon any standard of calculation, industrial or political, would repay much larger sacrifices.

Without security against the continuance of this agitation, not only will all useful legislation be obstructed; not only will the irritated passions, that now inflame the sections, be perpetuated, but a danger, already formidable to the very security of our fire-sides, will continue to increase in magnitude. Sir, the centre of anti-slavery sentiment has been brought from Chicago and Boston to the borders of our Commonwealth, and endowed with a hundred fold power by securing the express or implied countenance and sanction of a public authority—possessed of mighty and pervading energy in every State of the Union.

Have we not the best of reasons to apprehend danger? Look at the experience of the past, and take a lesson from it. The struggle between
the races in St. Domingo commenced long before the enactment of
the French Assembly, decreeing liberty to the blacks. It began with the
public discussion of the question, out of, as well as in that body. The
tragedy at Southampton, in our own State, has been traced to the in-
fluence of agitation. The John Brown raid was its offspring. Recollect
that we enjoy our slave property by a different tenure, from that which
secures to us our land and chattels. Unless these are taken by the arm
of the law, or by the strong hand of violence, we are safe; but the slave
is a man as well as his master. He is an ignorant man, and liable, there-
fore, like all ignorant men, to be misled by extravagant expecta-
tions—by false hopes held out to him; and with the noise of a mighty
movement for his emancipation sounding always in his ears, can you expect
ought else than that, from time to time, there should be outbursts of
violence in your society, which will fill the master with continual
apprehensions, and render it necessary for him to provide safeguards
so costly and so burdensome, as that the institution itself will become
intolerable? Have you any reason to think that, with a settlement of
the question as to the territories, and with amendments to the Constitu-
tion providing that the subject shall never be touched in the States or
in the District of Columbia; that the agitation would cease? Upon what
grounds do you form this expectation? Is it that there will be no op-
portunity to connect the abolition of slavery with party strife? May it
not still remain a test of qualification for the highest office in the
Republic—a test of qualification for members to either branch of the
Legislature in the free States or to either House of Congress? Will
there not be left means of assault under the forms of the Constitution
in the hands of the Northern people, and which they will be stimulated
to use by the same motives, that have prompted them to resist the
extension of slavery into the territories? Putting the government per-
petually on the side of freedom, and against the slave power; waging
an uninterrupted war upon it; concentrating the public indignation of
the world; stimulating discussion and hostility in your own community;
adapting the governmental policy to the advantage of the free States
over the slave States—are not these, objects, that will be ever present to
the Northern mind; objects, as legitimate as the contraction of the area
of slave territory, and which will associate the Northern people in party
combinations, unless you can strike at the root of the mischief, either
by taking away from them all ability to use the powers of the govern-
ment to the prejudice of slavery, or, by changing the opinion and
sentiment of duty, which now unites them in party association, to dis-
credit and destroy it. Can you do the latter? Do you expect by any
force of logic, or power of eloquence to reach the conscience of the
North, and to alter its sentiment and opinion in relation to slavery? As
I have said before, it is impossible for the Northern people to become
acquainted with the facts on which an intelligent judgment can be
framed. They do not read our newspapers; they do not hear our public
speakers; they do not meet us in personal intercourse except upon the
great highways of travel. The existing anti-slavery sentiment is en-
couraged and strengthened every year by an immense emigration from
Europe, of men imbued with still profounder ignorance of the nature
of slavery, and still more radically opposed to it. This Republican party
has not been founded upon a question of expediency, which may change
with time and circumstances; nor upon a local issue which may be ab-
sorbed in one of paramount importance; but upon convictions of right
and wrong, convictions of duty, which whenever they constitute an ele-
ment of political association must commit men to its support, until they
have accomplished their purpose. The sentiment of hostility to slavery is
more generally diffused, and is as strong in the minds of the Northern
people, as any passion with which a nation has ever been animated. It
is stronger than that love of dominion, which carried the eagles of Rome
on the wings of conquest over the globe. It is stronger than that passion
for military glory, which has precipitated France into every great war
that has taken place upon the continent of Europe, for a thousand years.
It is the irrepressible out-birth of the conscience of the North, expressing
its highest intelligence and purest virtue. Bring the case home to our-
selves. The Northern people have put on record their belief, that slavery
is a twin relic of barbarism, with polygamy. Now if Mormonism existed
in a number of the Free States, if this new and worse form of Moham-
medanism was rapidly spreading into those territories, to which we have
looked as the future seats of Christian civilization, and a great party
was once formed in our midst to prevent its wider diffusion, and to dis-
courage and suppress it as fast as this object could be accomplished by the
agency of the Federal Government, would not such a party, thoroughly organized, be invincible until its mission was
performed?

Mr. Chairman, I shall not read the platform of the Republican
party, because that platform, bad as it is, has been moderated so as to
embrace the most conservative portion of the anti-slavery element of the
North. The temper of a party is best seen in the spirit and opinions of its
representative men. I could quote from the most eminent leaders of its
conservative as well as radical wing, such as Hale, Banks, Burlingame,
Wilson and others, acknowledgments that it was not the purpose or the
wish of the party to legislate in reference to this institution in the States, but proclaiming that agitation for its ultimate removal by the action of the States themselves, was its purpose and policy.

I will not, however, fatigue myself and the Convention, by reading the extracts I had marked for this purpose. You will bear in mind the letter I read yesterday, by my friend from Richmond [Mr. Randolph], containing the sentiment of Mr. Lincoln, that no man who owned slaves ought to be free, and, under a just God would not long remain free. We all remember, no doubt, also that ferocious exhibition of fanaticism on the part of Mr. Chase, which has been recently made public in one of the papers of our city—a fanaticism displayed, too, in view of the present condition of the country, and authenticated by the testimony of a distinguished gentleman of our own State.

As regards Mr. Seward, there is nothing, Mr. Chairman, that seems to me to exhibit a more striking evidence of the infatuation which may overtake a people than that any declaration, on the part of Mr. Seward, at this time, should be accepted as an earnest or reliable pledge of safety to Southern institutions. Why, sir, he is the very apostle, not only of the irrepressible conflict, but of a law higher than the Constitution. His whole public life has been devoted to the service of this fanaticism, and there is nothing in the past which he has scurried to perform for its advancement. There is one single exhibition to which I cannot recur without the strongest feelings of resentment, not only as a lover of my country, but as a member of that noble profession against whose honor his attack was particularly levelled. When the Dred Scott decision was rendered, Mr. Seward, to impair the authority of the opinion of the Supreme Court, charged in his place in the Senate, not only without the shadow of evidence to sustain him, but in the face of facts, which have been adduced by Mr. Reverdy Johnson and Senator Benjamin, to show the impossibility of its truth; insinuated again; and scattered the charge and insinuation broadcast over the Northern States, that this decision was rendered in a sham cause, made up for party purposes, by means of a corrupt coalition between the highest magistrate of the country, and the venerable Judges of the Supreme Court. Mr. Chairman, I remember the words of a great English writer, in reference to Aristophanes, the common libeller of antiquity. He says, that he attacked all conditions of men, calumniated the magistrates, reviled the public assemblies, blasphemed the priests and even the established gods; but that he did not venture to cast one licentious imputation upon that venerable judicature, the awful Court of the Areopagus. The infamy which was spared the Athenian satirist, has been reserved to the American Senator. By insinuations false than ever emanated from the polluted pen of Aristophanes, against a Court exceeding in its purity, its wisdom and dignity, all the Courts of antiquity, in the base service of party, the Senator from New York struck a vital blow at the integrity of a free Constitution, and the unity of a great people. Mr. Chairman, it may be, that now he would retrace, in a measure, his steps; that he would not have the country plunged into that civil war, upon the verge of which it seems to stand; and he may find that, like the evil being of whom the great poet has told us as unbarring the gates,

"Which but herself, not all the Stygian powers
Could once have moved. * * *
She opened; but to shut,
Excelling her power;"

it is too late to undo the mischief, and redeem the wrong. If this controversy is ever closed in an issue of blood, if the God-given strength of freedom should ever be profaned in fraternal strife, impartial history will lay upon his head, whose life has been devoted to kindling and blowing the fires of sectional hate, all the horror and all responsibility. If such consummation should occur, well may he, as he approaches the hour of death, envy that barbaric chieftain who, in a similar moment, re-calling the provinces he had desolated and the cities he had sacked, desired that a mighty river should be turned from its channel, his remains deposited in its bosom, and then the waters turned back upon their ancient bed, and the place of his burial forever concealed from the eyes of men; and prefer the dying petition, that some overflowing tide of oblivion, might forever hide his name and memory, from the execrations of after ages. [Applause.]

But, sir, this agitation is not only attended with imminent and increasing danger to our peace, but impossible as it is, to terminate it, until the moral sentiment of the North has been changed, it will perpetuate a sectional ascendancy that is destructive of all constitutional freedom by depriving us of the great rights and privileges of self-government. That man, Mr. Chairman, has not gone beyond the horn book of liberty, who will confound parties which represent different opinions of the people, intermingled through the whole extent of a country, as to the policy which would promote common interests, with parties existing only in sections, and struggling for the triumph of sectional opinions, passions and interests. The one, into whatever excesses of faction the insolence of prosperity may lead it, although an evil, is an admitted necessity of all free governments; the other, as truly pointed out by that great French statesman, De Tocqueville, ought not
to be called a struggle of parties; it expresses a struggle between
distinct nations, a struggle by one people for the government of another.
Whenever parties become geographical under a free Constitution, gov-
ernment should also become geographical.

There is an interesting discussion by Mr. Madison in one of the most
luminous papers of the Federalist, in which he points out the securities
to which the framers of the Constitution looked against the dangers
of a sectional ascendency, through sectional majorities. The extract is
as follows:

“If a faction consists of less than a majority, relief is supplied by the
republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister
views by a regular vote. When a majority is included in a faction, the
form of popular government on the other hand enables it to sacrifice
to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of
other citizens. To secure the public good and private rights against the
danger of such a faction, and, at the same time, to preserve the spirit
and form of popular government, is then the great object to which
our inquiries are directed. * * * By what means is this object attain-
able. Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same
passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented;
or the majority having such co-existent passions or interests, must be
rendered by their number and local situation unable to concert and
carry into effect schemes of oppression. If the impulse and the oppor-
tunity be suffered to coincide we well know that neither moral nor
religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control. * * * A pure
democracy, by which I mean, a society consisting of a small number
of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person,
can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or
interest will, in almost every instance, be felt by a majority of the whole;
a communication and concert results from the form of government it-
self, and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the
weaker party. One of the great points of difference between a democracy
and a republic, is the greater number of citizens and extent of territory
which may be brought within the compass of republican than of Demo-
cratic government; and it is this circumstance principally which renders
factious combinations less to be dreaded in the former than in the latter.
* * * Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and
interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will
have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens, or, if such
common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it, to
discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other. * * *

The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their par-
ticular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration
through other States; a religious sect may degenerate into a political
faction in part of the Confederacy, but the variety of sects dispersed
over the entire face of it, must secure the national councils against any
danger from that source; a rage for paper money, for an abolition of
debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper or
wicked project, will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union,
than a particular member of it. * * * In the extent and proper structure
of the Union, therefore we behold a Republican remedy for the diseases
most incident to Republican Government.” (No. 10 of the Federalist.)

The same views are presented again in the 51st No., by Mr. Madison.

It will be observed, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Madison, in this most
interesting and philosophical paper, anticipates that a security against
factious combinations of a majority will be found in the extent of our
Federal Territory; and the difficulty which would thence arise of uniting
a sufficient number of the States, in schemes of oppression, and of
obtaining the necessary concert at the precise opportunity. For a long
time the experience of the country attested the justice and sagacity of
these anticipations. With widely different interests—manufacturing,
commercial, planting and agricultural, in different sections, their free
play and collision furnished us security, against any serious abuse by sec-
tional majorities, of the public power. But a moral principle has sub-
ordinated to itself all industrial and material considerations; a principle
embracing in its influence, the entire North, and binding together
parties, discordant in every other respect, by the powerful cohesion of
hostility to slavery. The introduction of this disturbing element into its
machinery, has rendered worthless all the checks and balances of the
Federal Constitution.

You will observe, that a party having only one idea, and that idea
not necessarily antagonistic to any industrial policy of the section in
which it prevails, holds a balance of power between parties divided
upon other questions, which will enable it, in time, to incorporate its
own dogma into one or the other of their platforms. Sir, I recollect,
fifteen years ago, hearing Mr. Chase enunciate this principle, and I
remember being struck, at the time, with its truth, and anticipating the
certainty of its triumph. He said, in substance, that the anti-slavery
party, in the State of Ohio, contained some twenty or thirty thousand
members; men who hated slavery so much that they would vote for
Whig or Democrat, would stand upon a Whig or a Democratic plat-
form, as the one or the other would take anti-slavery into its creed.
That policy has achieved its first great triumph—and that policy is invincible, unless you can bring about some re-adjustment of the Constitution, which will repress and control this fanaticism, by rendering it utterly impossible, to employ the Federal Government in any way in its service.

Shall we rely upon the good faith, the good feeling or justice of the Northern people for security against the wrong and the degradation of a sectional ascendency? Jealousy, not confidence, has been the tutelary genius of English and American liberty. Shall we believe that men are better than their principles, or shall we bind them in the chains of the Constitution? Will not the Executive patronage be prostituted in the North, to reward the active enemies of slavery; in the South, to reward those who, at least, are willing to sprinkle incense on the altars of fanaticism? In regard to the Legislative department, is there any security against the most partial and unjust laws? Prudence or fear may withhold, for a time, the heavy hand of oppression, but where the impulse, the power and the opportunity coincide, sooner or later wrong must come.

There is one result to be apprehended from this sectional domination, which has made a deep impression upon my own mind. It renders utterly worthless to a Southern freeman, the great franchise of liberty. It transfers the decision of all questions connected with the public policy of the country, from the South to the forum of the North alone. Look at the last election! What issue was decided by it? It was the exclusion of slavery from the territories, the placing of the government on the side of freedom. This policy was discussed in the North, but in the South only. It will be the same hereafter in reference to all other great questions, so long as that ascendancy continues. Unless some division should occur in the ranks of this Republican party, before the next Presidential election takes place, the North, being able to control the election, and that party having the ascendancy in the North, would not be the merest mockery to open a poll for an electoral vote in the South?

Now, sir, the great difference between the peasantry of England and the laboring men of the United States, arises from the enjoyment by the latter of the elective franchise. Look at the English peasant, and you will find him blank, stolid, uninquisitive. The English law protects his rights of property and his rights of person, as sacredly, as our Constitution guards those of an American citizen. The laboring man of our country is inquisitive, aspiring and intelligent. There is no single cause more operative in producing this difference, than the fact that the laboring man of England has no vote, and the laboring man of the United States has a vote. But this sectional ascendancy would render the vote of the Southern laboring man worthless in his hands. Sir, it has been, through the discussions addressed to the people, that the laboring men of our country have been elevated. They have learned to respect themselves as men, and as freemen: to enlarge their sympathies beyond the narrow circle of their own homes and business; and to embrace in their thoughts and affections the great interests that involve the destiny of their country and their race.

Now, I do not consider that the material blessings which Liberty brings in its train, constitute its highest claim upon the gratitude of mankind. I value it not only because it awakens all the dormant springs of peaceful industry in a country, because it embalms life with prodigal creations of taste and art, because it covers our property and our persons with an invincible shield, but because it performs a yet nobler function. It establishes a great school for the education of the people in the sentiments and principles of patriotism, justice and honor; and I would not exchange the moral discipline imparted by the exercise of the high trusts and responsibilities of a freeman, for all the material advantages it secures; and whenever we surrender it, the battles of the Revolution will have been fought in vain, the cause of the Revolution will be lost, and that power of self-government acquired by our fathers at the expense of so many sacrifices, and under so many dangers, will have perished. No future foreigner, like De Tocqueville, when he visits our Southern land, will gaze with admiration upon the grand Olympic spectacles of a free people, the enthusiasm of the immense mass meetings, the magnificent displays of the highest genius in popular oratory, the Press teeming with wit, and eloquence and logic addressed to the reason and passions of the people, on the great questions of public policy. Instead of this life, animation and enthusiasm of liberty, we should have the apathy, the torpor, the brooding, waveless calm, of a despotism.

There is yet another feature in this sectional ascendancy. It is that element which rendered so bitter the oppression of the Jew by the Christian, of the Moor by the Spaniard, of the Saxon by the Norman, the element of humiliation; not only the iron hand of oppression, but the insolent spurn of contempt. Other despotisms have frequently made compensation for the loss of liberty in the protection of property, but it is the peculiar feature of this despotism not only to rule but to ruin, not only to ruin but to degrade.

Mr. Chairman, it was the boast of Demosthenes, in reference to
Athens, that she had expended more for the common cause of Greece, than any other city for its own advantage. I take up that memorable declaration, and, looking to American history, I renew it, in all its proud significance, in behalf of our own Virginia. Heroic struggles for independence, miraculous refinements in the construction of governments and constitutions, just and liberal principles, inaugurating new eras in public law, wise, honest and beneficent administration of public affairs—miracles of liberty—upon whatever page they are recorded, is impressed the noble image of this Commonwealth. Are we so recreant to the exalted strain of our great fathers, as to be willing to endure the humiliation and ruin of a sectional ascendency, worse than colonial vassalage; to permit ourselves to be strip, or pretexts as insulting as they are injurious, of our fair proportion of the public domain; to allow that common authority established for the protection of our rights and our honor, to accumulate in the bosom of our own society, elements of danger and destruction, which at a future day must close our long line of glory in the deepest tragedy. Contemptus famae, contemptus virtutis, is a great moral law. When any people lose that self-respect which is the spring of public virtue and private honor, the public spirit and public conscience, which constitute the most valuable possession of a nation, must become extinct. And, taking up the words of the distinguished gentleman from Kanawha, I say that when this takes place, all will have been lost that is worth defence. It is wise and rational to pause on the threshold of revolution, because while man knows when and where it may begin, God only knows when and where it will end. But there is another lesson which we should also take to heart, a lesson exemplified in all history, and expressed in that great retributive law of Providence, by which, sooner or later, ruin overtakes every people who surrender their rights to their fears, and prefer their ease to their duty. Can gentlemen anticipate that living under a Union which is already the instrument of inflicting upon us such degradation—a Union which threatens our future destruction—can they expect that any strain of eulogy on this Union, however eloquent, will awaken responsive echoes from the hearts of a free people? Tell me not, sir, what our ancestors have said in their day; they delivered to us sentiments and maxims that were just and appropriate in their own time. In my opinion, true veneration is shown for our fathers, not by applying their precepts under circumstances entirely different from those which they contemplated in giving them utterance, but by acting in our day and generation, as we believe that they would have acted, had they been standing in our places. No doubt they desired this Union to endure forever. It was their wish that its links might remain as fast, and firm, and bright, as the links of that sacred chain which holds the jarring elements of nature in peace. No doubt, it was their fervent aspiration that Liberty and Union might ever be one and inseparable. But there is an inspiration in their “lives sublime,” which teaches us another and a yet higher sentiment—a sentiment which breathes in those fragments of the eloquence of Otis and Henry, which have been borne to us on the winds of tradition—a sentiment which is embodied in that glorious scene commemorated by the genius of painting, now so fitly gracing this Hall,* in which issues of liberty are to be decided—which is revealed in the majesty of that form, in the serenity of that brow, in the lustre of that eye, amid the wintry torrents of the Delaware, the Father of his Country pours into a dismayed and desponding patriotism, in its hour of darkest trial, his own unflinching act of hope—a sentiment which, from every memorial tomb of the mighty dead, through all our borders, bursts into speech—“Whenever this Union and your liberties cannot exist together, throw the Union to the winds, and clasp the Liberty of your country to your heart.”

I wish, Mr. Chairman, to express the earnest hope, that if any word has escaped or shall escape my lips which may sound harshly in the ears of any gentleman in this body, he will believe that I have no stronger desire than to treat with most respectful consideration those who may differ from me in opinion on this great question, and that he will pardon much to one who believes, most sincerely, that all in life of value to him as a man, a freeman or a patriot, is depending in a large measure upon the decision of this Convention. Momentous as is the material interest of the Commonwealth at stake, the material value sinks into insignificance, in the presence of other considerations. Appalling as would be the calamities of war between the two sections of our country, there is a profounder depth of misery and degradation towards which we are approaching, and in which we may be lost. I regard the issue as one between the enjoyment of Constitutional liberty, and the inauguration under the forms of the Constitution and the law of the most odious despotism on which the sun ever shone. I regard it as an issue between the uninterrupted reign of the arts of civilization and social order, and a frightful chaos of anarchy and of crime.

*Referring to a Painting of Washington crossing the Delaware.
I have endeavored to prove that there is now an irrepressible antagonism of feeling and opinion between the two sections of the Union: that although error ceases to be dangerous when truth is free to combat it, yet error is dangerous so long as it is inaccessible. I do not despair of the final triumph of Truth:

"The eternal years of God are hers."

Passion and ignorance and weakness may banish or discredit her for a season, but God himself will throw around Truth the shield of His Providence, and finally establish her throne upon the ages of Time. It is thus that I confidently anticipate the final vindication of the purity, and the wisdom of our institutions, and not from any power, on our part, for a century to come, to reach the hearts and minds of the Northern people. Sir, their prejudices and their passions would not only be advocates against us, but they would be witnesses against us. They would give credence to no faithful description of slavery. Here and there in their great cities, along the seacoast, may be found clergymen and statesmen who are now ready to do justice to the South. But, in the heart of the country, in the vast Northwest, in the interior of New York, and of New England, the regions where lies the seat of empire and power, it is impossible for any man to lay his finger upon any encouraging indication of an important change in public opinion, upon this subject.

I have endeavored to prove the absolute necessity to our peace and security of various forms of power—power of expansion, power of protection against constant political agitation, and the infinite humiliation and wrong of a sectional ascendancy resulting from it. I have also maintained, that, with friendship gone, equality gone, liberty gone, this Union, if it was commended to us by the ignoble dictates of prudence, would be spurned by the truer and more generous instincts of manhood. Unless it can be planted upon the everlasting rock of justice, the sooner it is overthrown the wiser, and the better. Whether the Northern people would be willing to give us the guarantees of power which I have suggested, is not, it seems to me, a question fit for discussion in this assembly. Are they necessary and just? We are entitled to claim a full measure of security against their own wrong. Our constituents expect us to exercise moderation in any demand we may make, but the only moderation they will appreciate or commend is an heroic moderation—that moderation which, whilst asking nothing more than a free people ought to expect, under a government established for the protection of their rights and their honor, will accept nothing less.

Mr. Chairman, if we stood here to-day surrounded by no complication from the action or attitude of other States, it would have been appropriate for this Commonwealth, it would have been in keeping with all her past, to have inaugurated a movement demanding full security in the Union, and declaring her fixed determination, unless it was given, at once and forever to leave the Union. That same spirit which committed our fathers, in advance of any other colony in 1765, to the principles of the revolution; that spirit which committed them, in advance of any others in 1776, to the Declaration of Independence; that same spirit which, after the formation of the Constitution, impelled them in '98-'99 to lead in a struggle for the restoration of its primitive integrity: that same spirit would have pointed us to our accustomed place, in the van-guard of a battle for Constitutional liberty. I utter these words not in the spirit of reproach, but in the spirit of regret—regret that the State has lost a great opportunity of fame—but I do not acknowledge that any reproach can be justly cast upon the principles, or the temper of her people. Her situation might well have induced her to linger longer in the Union; her own peculiar relations to it; her part in its formation; her central position; her variety of interests and population; the burthen and the misfortune of a violent party feud—all these circumstances would naturally produce greater deliberation on the part of the Commonwealth of Virginia, than of the States to the South, without justifying any reflection upon the spirit of her people—their love of liberty or their devotion to principle. Sir, the reproach will be deserved if, when the time for action comes, she does not then move with the power, and with the unity, befitting her strength and her fame.

We do not, however, sir, find ourselves in that attitude. Neither States nor individuals can isolate themselves from the consequences of events that transpire around them. It is not for Virginia to say that the Union shall be preserved upon certain terms, or dissolved, if these terms cannot be obtained.

We are standing amidst the ruins of the Union; the Union has been shattered, and there is no human architect that can rear the temple again. A number of our sister States—seven, soon in all human probability, to become eight—have not only left the Union, but have actually organized a new Union, and have established a permanent Constitution. They are frequently accused of hot haste, in not having shown proper deference to your opinions, and your feelings in changing
their Federal Relations, without appeal to you? It is more natural for man. Lord Shaftesbury remarks, to commit two errors than to retract one. Let us have the magnanimity to do justice, although it may involve our own condemnation. Let us bear in mind that it is hardly twelve months since Mississippi and South Carolina sent a mission to Virginia, and that Alabama would have taken the same course, had there been any indication that it would be acceptable received.

The object of this mission was to obtain a conference of all the slave States; a conference, by whose decision it was expressly declared that South Carolina, as well as Mississippi, would be bound, however opposite it might be to their own views of the policy to be pursued. They had previously, by Legislative resolutions, expressed their own conviction that, in the precise contingency which has since arisen, and which was then imminent, the Southern States should withdraw from the Union. That the responsibility of acting upon their own judgment in this grave crisis might not be forced upon them, they appealed to Virginia to meet them in general council.

Taking no part by reason of my official position, in the ordinary contests of party, I was invited, a short time before this mission, to address a public meeting in the county of Albemarle, composed of gentlemen of all parties. Upon that occasion I expressed the opinion that it would be wise and proper for Virginia, in anticipation of the probable election of a Black Republican President, to call together her sister slave States, that they might make a common demand upon the North for security and indemnity, or withdraw in a body from the Union. That declaration not only exposed me to personal censure, but the noble institutions with which it was my fortune to be associated, to unmerited hostility. In vindicating myself, as I felt called upon to do, from the charge of unseemly and improper interference with the politics of the day, and proclaiming my desire to restore harmony and friendship to our divided people, I also expressed the apprehension that in consequence of the division and irritation which would result from our policy, I might outlive the Union and Constitution of my country. For the prudence and patriotism of those counsels, and the reasonableness of that apprehension, I this day, claim the melancholy vindication of time. But again, Mr. Chairman, anterior to the election of Lincoln, there was not the slightest indication of public sentiment in the border States from which the people of the Gulf States could have anticipated that another proposition for conference would have been received with more favor. No alternative was left to them, but to acquiesce in our decision, or to take such course as, in their own judgment, might be requisite for the protection of their rights.

I believe it is stated in the preamble of the majority report that Virginia has more interest in this controversy, than any other State. I take issue with the report upon this point. I maintain that the cotton States are more deeply interested than Virginia. So far as the number of fugitive slaves is concerned, the statistics published recently, and said to be from official sources, show that the facilities of escape by sea, from the Atlantic coast, and by the Mississippi and its tributaries in the South-west, are such that the actual number of slaves lost this way, is about as great in those States, in proportion to white population, as in Virginia or Kentucky. But this is as dust in the balance, compared with other considerations.

The degradation of enduring a sectional ascendency, will as deeply wound their honor and liberty, as it would wound our honor and our liberty. On the great issue of expansion and future protection to slavery, they are more vitally concerned than we are. They want future acquisition of Territory, that the normal relation of the races may be preserved for all time, and that there may be no great struggle for existence or supremacy between them at any remote day. We are in no danger of such a contest in Virginia. The Southern States will receive all our slaves, but the Southern Territory with the slaves of Virginia emptied into it, will not be adequate to the peaceful accommodation of the black race, which will be ultimately concentrated in its bosom.

Agriculture may revive from the depression consequent upon a loss of your slave labor, but if you confine the slaves to the cotton States within their present limits, you will compel the white population of that region either to abandon it to the black, or to endure the debasing consequences of an admixture of races. Thus they have to decide a question both of existence and civilization, as well as of liberty; with us it is equally a question of liberty, so long as we remain a slaveholding community, but it is not a question of existence or civilization. From the position of the border States they may have more to fear from the dissolution of this Union: but the cotton States, from their position on the Gulf, have infinitely more to fear, from its duration. Delaware is nominally only, a slave State. Maryland will soon be a free State; and so it is with Missouri, and Kentucky. Is it to be expected that States, which by natural and political laws are compelled to be slave States forever, will surrender the keeping of their destiny to States, which may at no distant day, give up this institution?
If there has been any ungenerous expression of sentiment towards Virginia, from any quarter in the South, from any newspaper, from any public man, can we not recall sentiments as offensive, from sources as distinguished and presses as influential, and widely circulated in Virginia, towards the people of South Carolina? Does not every sentiment of justice and patriotism command us to cease this crimination and re-crimination? It was a solemn duty resting upon the people of the cotton States, to take an attitude which should place their vast interests beyond the reach of peril. Their Confederation has become a fixed and irreversible fact of history, and that fact is one which the sooner we realize the better.

Upon what do you ground the hope of a reconstruction of the Union? Do you think it will be voluntary on the part of the Southern people? To bring about such a reconstruction, you must not only repeal their fears but their resentments. They have been living for the last three months, in anticipation of being called upon to defend their homes and their property, from desolating invasion by a Northern army. During this time all the deadly and all the noble passions of human nature, have been aroused and inflamed. Do you think that the men who have been sleeping upon the sand banks of Charleston, expecting nightly and hourly to be brought into deadly collision with the Northern people, are ready to come back and mingle with them on terms of friendship in the administration of a common government? No, sir; the image of the poet truly describes the relative condition of these once fraternal, but now divided States; like cliffs that have been rent asunder by the thunder bolt.

"A dreary sea now rolls between."

Do you believe that the men who have organized this government, and the great popular body that has sustained it so far, can be brought back into this Union, and induced to submit to Black Republican rule, but by bloody revolution at home or subjugation from abroad? Are they not able to maintain themselves, in their independent condition? We frequently see in the public prints wholesale falsehoods, like the letter that has just appeared, purporting to be from Judge Lyons, of South Carolina; with details of enormous taxes, interference with private property, mob laws, &c., in the seceded States. I trust that the only weapons we shall use in this controversy will be those of truth and fair argument, and that we will lend no countenance, in any form, to a shameless policy which finds its appropriate counterpart in the course of that ancient Deity, who, unable to secure the aid of the heavenly powers to wreak her vengeance upon its object, turned, in her wrath, and invoked help from the furies of hell:

"Si flectere superos negueo, Acheronta movebo."

These States contain a white population larger than that of the thirteen colonies when our independence was achieved, a territory more compact and defensible, vastly superior resources in money, trained soldiers and all the muniments of war, and a great staple, which makes it almost a necessity, for every civilized nation to preserve with them relations of peace and commerce.

From the most reliable accounts, the prosperity of these States has never been greater than at this day. Their ability to maintain their government, the fact that it will be a more economical one when it has been once permanently organized, and that the taxes necessary for its support, will be actually less than the proportion which the Southern people now pay towards the maintenance of this Federal Government, can be established by indisputable evidence. Will the Government at Washington, be able to bring them back by force? How will it be attempted? It has at length discovered, that to blockade the Southern ports, and attempt to collect the revenue outside of them by armed vessels, would not only cost more than the duties would pay, but would, in all probability, involve the Government in war with foreign powers. Neither France nor England would submit for a moment to the exaction of one duty out of the port, and another in the port. To close the Southern ports as ports of entry, by an act of Congress, when the people are repudiating the Federal jurisdiction—and the Government, by its own conduct, confessing inability to maintain such jurisdiction—would be regarded by every Government in Europe, as equivalent to a paper blockade, and be resisted as a violation of the rules of public law. Can an army be collected and supported, sufficiently numerous to establish the Federal authority? I have heard a friend of mine relate a conversation which occurred in his presence, at the dinner table of a distinguished gentleman of Boston, between men who were regarded as conservative in that city, in which conversation the opinion was generally expressed, that if an attempt should be made to dissolve the Union by the Southern States, Northern capital could and would employ a force of foreign mercenaries sufficient, to subjugate them, without shedding a drop of Yankee blood. We learn from history, Mr. Chairman, that when the Persians invaded Greece, they carried with them the marble with which to build a column to Victory, and that upon the plains of Marathon, a temple was raised from that marble to avenging Nemesis; and, if necessary,
the long sleeping echoes of those warning lessons which Greece gave to Persia, which Switzerland gave to Austria, which the Netherlands gave to Spain, and which our forefathers gave to England, will be revived on many a battle field of freedom, upon our Southern soil.

No, sir, the Federal Government can neither tempt these States to return, nor can it force them to return. Without some change in its own policy, according to the reliable statement of the New York "Evening Post"—the most conservative and the ablest Republican journal in the country—without some change in its policy, in consequence of the unequal operation of the Southern and the Northern tariff, the Government will be bankrupt, before the next crop of corn is ripe. In this condition, let us enquire, what policy is suggested by the report of the Committee on Federal Relations, to Virginia? The policy recommended, is to initiate a proceeding, which cannot be consummated in less than from six to twelve and eighteen months, with the view of obtaining amendments to the Constitution, which may possibly result in a re-construction of the Union.

Now, Mr. President, every material interest of this Commonwealth is going to wreck under the uncertainty as to what is to be her future policy. Whilst we ought to exercise all the deliberation requisite for an intelligent and well considered decision of this momentous issue—yet deliberation protracted one moment beyond that period, would not only be a weakness, but a crime.

Whilst we are making a movement, hopeless in all human appearance from indications North, as well as South, as to its main object, what precious interests are we not putting in peril? We are exposing the cause of peace. If blood is shed, it is conceded by all that an inextinguishable feud, not to be healed in the lapse of generations, will be opened between the sections. The most violent and ultra organs of the Black Republican party have acknowledged, that if Virginia acceded to this Southern Confederacy; if her voice of strength and influence, called for negotiation, and recognition of independence, this fact alone, would make peace a necessity. But we have no assurance from either party, no certainty in the attitude in which the State would be placed by the action contemplated in this majority report, that hostilities might not begin in a month. And what would be our condition, if war, under these circumstances, should break out? Our own territory would in all likelihood, become the battleground. The federal authority having been employed in the meantime in concentrating troops upon our borders, if not within the State itself; every Virginian in the army and navy that could be sent to a distant territory or a foreign port, withdrawn from the call of his native Commonwealth; no organization or connection with our Confederate States, so as to secure that unity in the defence which will exist in the attack, the war would be prosecuted by us, under every disadvantage.

Why should we defer our decision, until we have more fully ascertained the opinion of the border States? The eloquent gentleman from Kanawha reminded us the other day, that we should think of Maryland lying, as it were, in the lap of Virginia, and Kentucky, leaning upon her shoulder. Will this policy of procrastination, preserve the peace of Maryland, and Kentucky? If that is the object at which you are aiming, is it not most likely to be accomplished, by a decisive expression of your purpose to associate Virginia with the States to the South of her? It is uncertainty as to our course which alone puts the peace of the country in jeopardy, and which may, and probably will, precipitate upon Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky and all the border States, the horrors of civil war.

If this Border conference will not contribute to this end, for what do you ask it? Is it that you may commit the destiny of Virginia to the decision of a majority of the Border States? It must be borne in mind that Delaware is really a free State. Maryland has little upwards of eighty thousand slaves, and, according to Mr. Chase's declaration in the letter previously referred to, the Federal Government would pay for these, rather than permit her to withdraw from connection with the North. Missouri has only one hundred thousand slaves, and in five or ten years, is likely to become a free State. Kentucky lies separated by the river only from Ohio, with an almost virgin soil, equally adapted to the growth of the staples of Ohio, with a large proportion of white population; and with a strong anti-slavery feeling in existence, is destined at a later day to lose her slaves. Are we prepared to commit the fortunes of Virginia into the keeping of States so unequally interested, in the preservation of this institution? Unless we intend to be bound by the action of the conference, it is more likely to result in division, than in union.

But, sir, the only real issue for this Convention to determine, is as to the permanent attitude of Virginia. Shall she remain in a Confederacy with the North, or associate with the States of the South? Our efforts to reconstruct the Union, will prove abortive. They may, in their consequences, involve the Commonwealth of Virginia and her sister Border States, in a war which could have been averted. But, sooner or later, you must decide with which of these Confederacies, you will link your destiny. One gentleman has said that Virginia
will go nowhere. In other words, that she will stay where she is, in connection with the North. Suppose the government pursues a pacific policy towards the Southern States, resulting in the recognition of their independence, is that the opinion of this Convention, as to our future position?

I shall not attempt to reproduce in any form the argument so luminously and so exhaustively stated, by my friend from Richmond [Mr. Randolph], as to the necessity of a union by Virginia with the Southern States, for the advancement of all her manufacturing, mining, agricultural, and commercial interests. Our customers are in the South—our rivals in the North. The manufactures and commerce that now enrich them, might enrich us. But there is one point in connection with our industrial interests not sufficiently developed, to which I will allude for a moment. If Virginia remains with the North, the uncertainty as to the security of slave property, the repugnance, moral and political, in the minds and hearts of a large portion of her people to such a connection, must be speedily followed by an immense emigration of slaves and their masters, from the Commonwealth. What effect will be produced upon all our great interests, by this loss of capital, and population? The price of land will be depreciated; the towns which depend for their prosperity upon the prosperity of the country, will languish and decay; the custom of the merchants will be reduced; the employment of the artisan and mechanic will be diminished; the pressure of the public debt will fall more heavily upon both the East and the West; private ruin and public bankruptcy, social anarchy and civil convulsion will overwhelm the Commonwealth.

Look at it, in its political aspect. It is association, without power or influence, with an unfriendly Confederacy. One of seven slave States, in a Union with twenty free States. Virginia has been accustomed to lay down the rule for the construction of the Constitution, and to fix the principles of public policy, which should guide the administration of the Government. It may not be her proud fortune to lead the procession of the States, in triumph up to the Capitol, but I wholly mistake the temper of her people, if she is ever willing to follow, a spiritless and degraded captive, in the train of the victor.

There are moral, as well as industrial and political considerations, which unmistakably point us to the South. There is to be found our own form of society; there are our nearest kindred; there are the habits and institutions of our own people; there we may wield the noblest form of power—a moral and intellectual dominion; there we may improve and perpetuate our own peculiar type of civilization; there we may build up a splendid Confederacy, homogeneous in its feelings and its interests—a Confederacy that will change the moral sentiment of the world in reference to slavery, because Europe will then cease to look at it through the discolored media of Northern prejudice—a Confederacy that will march in unity, in power, in glory and in liberty, upon that great and ample territory, which will be its own, of nearly half a continent.

The course which has been pursued by the Confederate States, so far from inducing any dependency as to the capacity of man for self-government, furnishes the most signal proof of the power and immortality of the principles of liberty. As the degree of our apprehension, in the presence of any danger, is generally measured by the value which we place upon the object that is exposed, many of our best and most patriotic citizens are filled with fear, lest all the lights of freedom and civilization should expire with the Union. My reading of history, leads me, to no such unfilial trust in Providence. I find that no great revolution has ever occurred which did not leave the world in a better condition than it found it; and I confidently expect that the great luminary of constitutional liberty, which now seems to many to be setting in darkness, will, on the morrow—

"Repair his golden ray,
And warm the nation with redoubled flood."

Why should we not form this association? The apprehension of becoming responsible for the re-opening of the slave trade, must have vanished. The permanent Constitution of the Confederate States, settles it forever. The fear of a revenue, to be derived from direct taxes, has, in the same way, been put to rest. The most serious difficulty that disturbs gentlemen, seems to be uneasiness as to the condition of the border, which Virginia, Maryland and Kentucky would then constitute. Now let us calmly inquire, what are the dangers of the border? As to the escape of fugitives, it is said the Canada line will be brought down to the Ohio. My own impression is, that the Canada line, for a long period, has been very near the Ohio, and that the security of our slaves is rather the result of our ability to keep them at home than our ability to recover them, when they reach the free States upon the border. But if the Southern Confederacy is established on a permanent footing, the Northern people will soon recognize the necessity and advantage of favorable commercial treaties with it. They will then learn that one of the terms of good neighborhood between contiguous
nations is, that neither should permit its citizens to disturb their neighbors, in the enjoyment of their property; and a refusal on the part of the Southern Confederacy to receive Northern manufactures and produce upon terms equally favorable with other foreign nations, would lead to a treaty, in which they would stipulate to pay for fugitive slaves, not delivered, their entire value.

The most serious danger arises from the exposed frontier, which the Border States would present in the event of war. Appreciation has been expressed, lest we should have the European system of standing armies, introduced upon our continent. This seems to me a phantom, which will disappear in the presence of reason and examination. Why do such armies exist on the Continent of Europe? It is simply because the people have not the control over their governments. There are standing armies in Germany, because the ambition of the Emperor of France, or of the Emperor of Austria, may disturb the peace of Europe, at any moment. If the people upon the Continent of Europe, were able to direct to the same extent, as in England, the policy of the State, not only standing armies, but war itself would soon become a barbarous anomaly. The history of the last fifty years—certainly up to the accession of Louis Napoleon—establishes the fact, that peace is being recognised more and more, as the standing interest and policy of all civilized nations. Mr. Legaré states, in a report which he made to Congress many years since, upon the propriety of establishing a tribunal to arbitrate national difficulties, that between 1815 and 1838 innumerable causes for war between the neighboring States of Europe, which in the previous century would have led to the most desolating conflict, had been closed by peaceful negotiation. This great re-action is to be attributed to the spread of humane and Christian principles, the more intelligent appreciation by the mass of men of their true interest, the multiplied relations of commerce, and, above all, the increasing influence of the people upon the policy of their government.

England within the last fifteen years would, on more than one occasion, have declared war against the United States, but for the strength and political power of the manufacturing and commercial classes which it would have prostrated. Will not these considerations apply with equal force, between the Northern and the Southern Confederacies? What will induce the Northern people to maintain large armies on their side of the border, from whence the necessity is anticipated of keeping up a similar force upon our side? They must be supported by a fund, raised from direct taxation. With the abstraction from their revenue, of an immense amount of duty now collected in Southern ports; with the injury to their manufacturing industry which must result from the permanent withdrawal of a portion, at least, of our patronage, with the expenses of the Government by no means reduced in proportion to the loss of revenue; their territory stretching from ocean to ocean, will prove a source of weakness, rather than strength. Be assured, sir, the agricultural, manufacturing and commercial people of the North will never court the burthen of sustaining upon their frontier, an immense army, to repel an invasion they have no reason to anticipate or fear, or to prosecute a war of aggression, they have no motive to undertake, and no means of rendering successful.

We have, at this moment, a standing and conclusive answer to this apprehension. We have an immense border on the North—the Canada border—between our country, and a great military power. Yet there are no standing armies collected upon either side of that border. On neither side do the people live in constant apprehension of war. They rely for security, not only upon their courage and their arms, but upon those great economical and commercial reasons, which make peace the interest, and therefore the policy of their governments.

Yet, sir, our Canada border is more exposed, or would be in the event of war, than the border of the Southern Confederacy; because the country upon that border is, to a large extent, a champagne country, through which large armies may more easily advance into the interior. Our border is, to a considerable extent, a broken and mountainous region, in which small bodies of men would be able to check the advance of an immensely superior force.

Is it expected that the spirit and scenes of the feudal age would be revived; repetitions, across the Ohio, of the plundering forays of the English and Scotch outlaws of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries? Even in old border song, it runs that "there are beves on both sides of the border." Probably, in this instance, the fittest beves would be found on the North side, and this, I imagine, in itself, would be a sufficient security that the peace would not be broken in this form, from that quarter. Again, sir, the Southern people alone that border are eminently military in their spirit and habits. They are the descendants of men who reclaimed that land from the ruthless savage; men who went serenely to their couches at night, when there was constant danger that they might be roused from their slumbers by an Indian war whoop or a blazing roof; the descendants of the men who fought at Point Pleasant, and of the men of West Augusta, to whom Washing-
ton looked in the darkest hours of the revolution. If their border was ever invaded, these proud historic memories would lend an inspiration of courage to its defence which, like the miraculous light that blazed on the crest of Diomed, would strike terror into the hearts of every foe.

Mr. Chairman, a great change has taken place, not yet sufficiently appreciated in the conditions of the world, that must render aggressive wars upon any country containing a large and brave population, almost impossible, unless by immense and well disciplined armies. I refer to the greater facilities afforded by railroads and telegraphs, for purposes of defence, than for purposes of offence. They can only be extensively employed in a friendly country. An invading army may be brought, by railroad, to the verge of the hostile border, but, when it crosses into the enemy's country, every step of its progress must be made as it was a hundred years ago. An obstruction placed upon the track by a single hand would cause the destruction of hundreds of lives. They must travel slowly, dragging a weary length of waggons, and camp equipage, and ammunition in their train. They must leave garrisons along the whole line of their route, to keep open a communication with their base of operations. But how is it with railroads and telegraphs, for defensive warfare? As soon as it could be known, that an enemy was approaching the line of Virginia, Maryland, or Kentucky, the busy lightning, in an instant of time, would proclaim the fact to the remotest frontiers of Texas or Florida, and throughout the whole South, every railroad facility would be used to concentrate an overwhelming force upon the point of attack. Under ordinary circumstances, the railroad car is a magnificent and impressive symbol of power, but our hearts would kindle with the rapture of patriot enthusiasm, when we beheld this most powerful agency of nature and art, pressed into the noble service of liberty, crowding with untrining speed by night and by day, towards the post of danger, and pouring all along the line of the border, thousands upon thousands of freemen, ready and able to cover their country with a living wall of impassable fire.

In the event of hostilities, I have always thought that the most exposed point to the enemy would be our seaboard, and not our Western border. If we ever separate, we must have a border line upon our frontier, instead of that which now separates us from Canada. Sir, I ask our friends from the West to consider this whole question, and to place themselves in imagination in our condition; look at it for a moment in the light in which we view it. The North-western district of Trans-Alleghany has, according to the statistics of the last census, about 8,000 slaves, while there are more than 400,000 in Piedmont and Tide-Water. The rest are distributed through the Valley, and the South-West. Of these 8,000 slaves in the North-West, 3,300 are in the county of Kanawha. Your people can never, therefore, be disturbed by any apprehension of present or future servile wars. The destruction of slave property, would only affect you by the re-action of our ruin. We, as a great slaveholding people, whose whole civilization is interwoven with this institution, may naturally be more sensitive to all which threatens its disgrace or its destruction. By all the hallowed associations of our common ancestry and common glory, I invoke you, gentlemen of the West, to let us march, keeping step together, through all the future, as our fathers have done in all the past. Let us ever be as ready, as they were in their generation, to cover with interlocked arms, the rights, the institutions, and the honor of the whole State. The poet tells us that liberty has two voices, one of the mountains, and one of the sea. The mingling and blended echoes of both those voices, sounded in the ears of our glorious dead. Let the West stand by the East in this hour of the greatest peril, in all its history; and with a people whose unity no trial or temptation could sever, with a territory never to be dismembered, a splendid heritage of power and fame never to be divided, the lofty strains of liberty will ascend from all our borders, in grand and unbroken chorus, so long as mountain floods shall thunder in the West, or ocean surges bellow in the East.

But, sir, suppose the policy of the Federal Government is not pacific, but coercion is attempted, where will Virginia go then? I am glad to know that the voice which says Virginia will then go nowhere, is very faint and low. If a coercive policy should be adopted, as is now, at least, probable, the question which will be presented to us, is one that must be decided by the heart, and not by the head. It is one that does not admit of debate. True, sir, every material interest we possess, would be destroyed by the subjugation of the Gulf States; all the principles of Constitutional liberty we have cherished, would be trampled in the dust; but there are stronger considerations yet, which would never permit us to stand by, and witness such a consummation—irrepressible sympathies and instincts of nature. We could never sit around the council board of the nation, with States which presented themselves in garments dripping with fraternal blood. No, sir, if this administration should be so deaf to the commanding voice of justice; so deaf to the mournful appeal of the wounded, but yet living sympathies of our ancient brotherhood; so insensible to the public opinion of the civilized world, to the common sentiments of humanity, and to the
principles of liberty, as to inaugurate this policy of coercion, upon whatever other point there may be uncertainty, there is no doubt, then, that this Commonwealth

"Like a re-appearing star,  
Like a glory from afar,  
Would head the flock of war."

History informs us that Louis XIV, in the latter part of his life, when stripped of the territory acquired by a long career of conquest, broken in spirit, humbled in his fortunes, ready to purchase peace from his adversaries by almost any concession, broke up the conference of Gertrudenburg rather than acquiesce in the suggestion, to turn his arms against his grandchild on the Spanish throne; and the native magnanimity of his hereditary enemies, subdued the insolence of triumph, and applauded his noble pride. This gleam of generous spirit shed around his closing hours a brighter lustre, than was imparted to them by all his earlier conquests.

Sir, will Virginia be found lending the sinews of war and the prestige of her name, to enable this government to execute a policy of coercion? Sir, for nations as well as individuals, there is something worse than death. Sooner than behold this glorious Commonwealth stoop to the abasement and degradation of this course, I would see her perish in some convulsion of nature, whilst a fading lustre from the parting footsteps of liberty and honor, yet lingered upon her monuments of glory. Rather let her, like that famous ship of war, the "Royal George," in the presence of assembled multitudes, in the full blaze of day, with every man at his post, and every gallant streamer flying from the mast-head, upon an anniversary of fame, go down to the depths of the ocean, and only leave a floating signal to mark the place of her disappearance. Infinitely would I rather see her fall in a glorious struggle for her own rights, and the rights of her sister States, and leave to future history the memorable response in her behalf, "deal upon the field of honor."

Sir, the gentleman from Kanawha [Mr. Summers], alluded most touchingly, most beautifully to his devotion to this old Commonwealth. The bones of my forefathers are buried, like his, in its soil. There, too, repose the more precious ashes of my own household. I cannot say, like him, that I have not been often beyond its borders, but I can say, that wherever I have wandered, I have dragged at each remove, a lengthening chain; and that my heart untraveled, has ever fondly turned to her. I can say, that whether upon the Gulf or the Lakes of our own continent, or in the cities of the old world, that sentiment has filled my bosom, which the great master of fiction puts into the mouth of his Highland hero, as he is led to execution in the dying prayer, that his head, when severed from the body, might be planted upon the North gate of the capital, and the eyes swimming in death, yet look towards the blue hills of his nativity.

But, much as I love this Commonwealth, if in this great hour of trial and temptation, she should forsake that noble course of glory which has given to her an immortal history, I, and many another worthier and better son, who could not have been induced to leave her in any extremity of adversity or misfortune, will rather abandon the ashes than the principles of our fathers, and will say, with the old Roman, that "where Liberty is, there is my country."

The President of the Convention, in his opening address, most felicitously and beautifully directed our thoughts to the flag of our country. There was a time, Mr. Chairman, when my heart leaped with enthusiasm, whenever that flag was unrolled. I saw in its glorious fellowship, of stars and stripes, a pledge of mutual friendship; a symbol of equal strength and liberty, and a type of common fame forever. It was followed by the beneficences of patriotism wherever it floated, whether in holidays of peace, or nights of tempest, or days of battle. But, when I think of that flag lending its lustre and sanction, to the mockery of free government, which now dishonors the land; when I reflect that it may soon wave over floating batteries of destruction, seeking with shot and shell to reduce to ashes Southern cities, or be borne in advance of Northern armies, carrying the desolation of fire and blood through Southern homes; the stars which beam together in light and glory, fade from my vision; I see only the emblematic stripe in the red field of blood; and, turning, pinned and ignominious from the desecrated banner, the native sentiment of liberty and patriotism comes bursting from every fountain of feeling in my bosom; "the true colors of your country are the spirit and the principles of your fathers; live under them in freedom, or perish with them in honor."

Mr. Preston—As the gentleman from Albemarle is not in very good health, and is exhausted, I will submit the motion that the committee rise.

Mr. Carlile—I take it for granted that the Convention will accommodate the distinguished gentleman from Albemarle, and not require him to go on to-day; but I ask the gentleman who has made the motion that the committee rise, to withdraw the motion for the