THE PRO-SLAVERY REBELLION.

The Threats against Fort Sumter.

ANTIPATHY TO CAPTAIN FOSTER.

Why the South Carolinians Hesitate.

They are Afraid they'll get Killed.

DISSENSION AMONG THE REBELS.

NO COMPROMISE WITH TRAITORS.

The Texas Regiment Appropriation.

A UNION-SAVING MEASURE.

GOV. HICKS AND KING COTTON.

Patriotism with Back-Bone In It.

MESSAGE OF THE GOVERNOR OF KENTUCKY.

FROM WASHINGTON.

MILITARY POSITION OF FORT SUMTER—UNION PARTY SOUTH.

From Our Special Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 19, 1861.

I wish to say a few words of the military position of Fort Sumter, as derived from sound military authorities. There is, of course, great anxiety in regard to the fort, and there are many contradictory accounts respecting it. The following are the facts, so far as they go:

Fort Sumter has as near to one hundred men, of all sorts, as need be. They have had hard work to get their guns into position from the want of hoisting apparatus, but have nevertheless done it. As to provisions, they are well enough off for three or four months. Of course, they have not the luxuries of life, but those are not usually deemed essential in such cases. They are, however, now fully prepared for whatever may come.

Can the fort be taken by the Charlestonians by an assault in overwhelming numbers, surrounding it, and scaling its walls? The opinion of military men, and the deductions of all experience, are that this cannot be done by raw troops. It might be accomplished by regulars, thoroughly drilled, used to service, strictly obedient to orders, and with perfect confidence in their officers. A force of 2,000 men of this character *might* effect its capture, but then only with a prodigious sacrifice of life. But it is confidently believed that *raw troops* are wholly incapable of the service; and, moreover, that they would be more certain to fail by a night than by a day attack, since a surprise is out of the question. As to breaching the fort from the shore, the distance is too great.

The resources of the fort for defense are numerous and vast. First, it has a highly accomplished officer of Engineers, in Capt. Foster, who is well versed in his profession, and who has made this particular question his special study for several months. He has seen service, and is known to be fully master of his position. The main defense against the suggested assault is the hand grenade. This is a most deadly instrument, thrown by hand, and deals death and destruction wherever it alights. One of them thrown into a boat tears it to pieces and destroys all on board. They can be thrown by the garrison from under cover, where the men can neither be reached nor seen. Capt. Foster is known to have been practicing his men in the practice with this weapon, until their proficiency is perfect.

But a great security against attack is the capacity of the fortress to shell and destroy the city of Charleston. It can readily do this, and it is a danger the authorities will not incur. It is better to let the fort alone than to take it at such a cost, even if this were possible. But Charleston might be destroyed and the attack fail at the same time.

Can the fort be relieved by sending supplies to its assistance by water? This does not seem possible, unless by stealth. The passage into Charleston harbor is guarded now by such formidable batteries that no vessel, not even a ship-of-war, could force its way. Ships are no match for land batteries. Ten guns on shore, with a fair chance, can sink a seventy-four. Neither can Fort Sumter do much of anything in the way of attack upon these batteries. They are, to be sure, not too far to be reached, both by shot and shell. But, notwithstanding, all that can be done would be to kill a few men, and now and then dislodge a gun. Nothing like a destructive attack can be made by the fort upon the batteries.

In what way, then, can Fort Sumter be relieved? In no way, except by investing Charleston by a sufficient force to overcome all the troops that can be brought to its defense.

In this way only can the garrison be protected against being finally starved out and compelled to surrender. Whether this course will be adopted is a question to be decided hereafter, like all other questions, in peace as well as in war, by the answer of another. Will it pay?

You will have observed that the appropriation of over a million and a quarter of dollars for a mounted regiment in Texas has passed the House. This is deemed a Union-saving measure, and as such it was supported. Whether it will receive Senatorial sanction is not so clear. But if it shall be clearly demonstrated that under no circumstances can the Secessionists reap any advantage from it, it is likely the measure will become a law. Gov. Houston is a true Union man, and must be sustained in every possible way. Until the settlement of existing disorders takes place, there can be but two parties in the country—a Union and a Disunion party. And wherever Union men in the Slave States are to be found, and especially where they are able to make head against the fanaticism of the hour, they must be heartily sustained by the present as well as by the incoming Administration. It is no time to dispute about Slavery or Anti-Slavery until the integrity of the Government is fully vindicated. These questions must be adjourned to a more convenient season. The thing to be done now is to save the country and defeat the traitors. And this is a matter of quite as much interest to the South as to the North, and a party there must be rallied and protected on this basis. J. S. P.

COMPROMISING AT A DISCOUNT—FRESH TROOPS.

From Our Special Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 1861.

The members of the various Compromise Committees here often rise and cackle, but thus far have laid no egg.

Little by little the scheme of compromising our present difficulties seems to recede, until it has just about reached the vanishing point. Yet the effort is not abandoned. Conservative gentlemen with yet undisturbed digestions, come to town and eat their dinners and drink their wines over the never-ending topic. Among those now here is Mr. Rives of Virginia. This gentleman says he does not expect anything to be done that is for the real advantage of Slavery, but wants to save the point of honor. This is so Virginiaish that men of direct method and positive ideas are not impressed. Mr. Rives thinks, I believe, his point of honor could be saved by adopting Mr. Crittenden's resolutions.

The anxiety and concern which has been felt at the secession movement is greatly lessened. There is a growing conviction that the Government and Union still firmly stand, and are likely to for a long time to come. Commodore Wilkes being lately interrogated as to his opinion of our case, replied that the sea had not even risen to the port-holes.

Several of the members of the seceding States linger about their accustomed haunts. The Union, though cracked, is still a vase of odors to them. It smells of three thousand a year, mileage, and pickings. Others have folded their tents like the Arabs, and as silently stolen away. They have gone down to the flat lands of rice and cotton, to roar where nobody shall hear or care for their noise. Mr. Jefferson Davis is still detained by an attack of ague. So we see the shaking has begun.

Another troop of our fellow-citizens, clad in gray, and bearing a cylindrical burden upon their shoulders, tramped through the city this morning at an early hour. It is understood their visit to this city will be prolonged until after the 4th of March. They are said to be desirous of a peaceable inauguration, and will give some hints to that effect if any interruption is attempted on that occasion.

Mr. Crittenden, failing in his compromise, gives decided intimation that this Union and Government must be preserved without them. It was to have been expected of his Kentucky blood.

The feeling that while no compromise that could be offered was likely to be accepted, yet that some proposition was necessary to unite the North, is passing away under the demonstration of the Free-State Legislatures. And the sentiment of upholding the Government at all hazards is now very largely in the ascendant. The public pulse evidently beats quick and vigorously on that issue. The administration of Mr. Buchanan is now on that shoot, for which the country is very much indebted to Mr. Holt and Mr. Stanton. They were both men wholly unknown to the country at the commencement of Mr. Buchanan's term, but they are now literally pillars of State. J. S. P.

FROM SOUTH CAROLINA.

INCIDENTS OF THE WAR.

From Our Own Correspondent.

CHARLESTON, S. C., Jan. 17, 1861.

The intelligence that the Government has refused to surrender Fort Sumter, but directed Maj. Anderson to hold and defend it, has created something of a sensation to-day. There is but one response, which is, "Then we will take it." Word has been sent up from the batteries on Morris Island, Fort Johnson, and Fort Moultrie, that they are ready for the work; and hundreds are anxious to be first in the assault. The plan is to play upon the fort, and engage the garrison till they are exhausted, and then make an assault in boats with scaling-ladders, &c. Floating batteries have for several days been in course of construction, which are to be brought into use in making the assault.

A vigorous defense from Fort Sumter must prove terribly destructive to the lives of the besiegers and assailants. This they know and confess. It presents no objection, seemingly, to the undertaking. On the contrary, there is a growing and almost alarming uneasiness on the part of the soldiers because they are not ordered to the undertaking. If Fort Sumter is not acquired by other means, I think Gov. Pinckens will give the order in less than one week.

A battery is being erected at Cumming's Point, where some 62-pounders have been placed in position. Cumming's Point is three quarters of a mile distant, and is the nearest battery to Fort Sumter, the battery on Morris Island being upward of one mile and a quarter distant, and Fort Moultrie a little less. Structures of Palmetto logs are being erected at those batteries for protection against the shells of Sumter. Within the last 24 hours howitzers and mortars have been planted at those batteries, with the view of shelling Sumter, which, the rumor now is, is not bomb-proof. It seems to be conceded that Sumter will make short work of Fort Moultrie, her heavy guns being in position principally on that side.

While there is a good feeling on the part of the rebels toward Maj. Anderson and the officers of his garrison generally, Capt. Foster, second in command, is the object of considerable animosity. Since the evacuation of Fort Moultrie and the occupation of Fort Sumter, that gallant officer has twice fallen into their hands, while on visits to the city. The last time he was kept for several days a prisoner in Fort Moultrie, and it was only when he assured them that they might take the alternative of letting him go or of retaining him at the expense of Fort Sumter opening on them, that he was restored to liberty. Since that time, Capt. Foster has not renewed his acquaintances in the city. He is known to have a comprehensive policy, which includes practice with the 62 columbiads on the City of Charleston, on proper provocation, of course. It could scarcely be expected that there should be an abundance of good feeling toward him here. Capt. F. informed me not long since that the shelling of the city from Fort Sumter was entirely practicable; if it was not, he preferred to know it from actual experiment.

People here begin to talk about the expense of the present state of things, and the Legislature is engaged on the annual tax bill. Pretty much everything is to be taxed—gold watches, and all sorts of luxuries and ornaments. The occupation of Fort Sumter, and the disbanding of the troops, seems to be regarded as the only way to stop the expense, and thus that perilous enterprise begins to be viewed in the light of a financial measure.

THE PREPARATIONS TO ATTACK FORT SUMTER.

From Our Own Correspondent.

CHARLESTON, Jan. 18, 1861.

The feverishness of yesterday has been increased by the intelligence that the Federal Government has decided that, under no circumstances, will Fort Sumter be surrendered to South Carolina. It appears as though the rebels really thought this important point was to be conceded to them, and affect to regard it as a new hardship that the Government has refused. If possible, the determination to take the fort has been strengthened by this refusal, and active measures are in progress for the undertaking. Soldiers continue to pour in from the country—more than are wanted—many more than they know how to bear the expense of keeping, feeding, and paying. To send them back would create discontent; to let them remain idle would be worse still. Indeed, the clamor has become loud for the order to commence operations on Fort Sumter. There is no lack of numbers or of daring. In fact, the superabundance of these is a practical difficulty which the authorities scarcely know how to meet. What gives them pause in ordering operations to be commenced on Fort Sumter is the consciousness that at best the sacrifice of life will be immense. This loss would fall largely on the first families in Charleston, over many of which even now desolation hovers at the prospect. Numerous and earnest remonstrances have been addressed to Gov. Pickens on the subject. It is this alone that causes the delay. It is known that the Carolinians are not supplied with an abundance of powder, and that they are short of other materiel generally. Measures are in progress to procure large guns from Richmond, and it is said that a gentleman has, on his own account, ordered an Armstrong rifled gun of the heaviest description from England. Probably he thinks it will be a handy thing to have in the family. As a toy it may be considered rather expensive, since the cost will be $10,000.

Castle Pinckney is not likely to prove of much service to the rebels. The casemates are found to be so unsubstantial that it is feared a few rounds of the heavy guns of Sumter will cause them to crumble in.

All is not lovely among the Revolutionists. Dissensions and cross purposes exist. The article in *The Mercury* a few days since, on the weakness of certain Southern men, was designed to hit hard somebody, not only at Washington, but here in particular. The number of those who are getting tired and disgusted with the policy and party which that journal represents is on the increase. The time will come when there will be a break in the ranks. Gov. Pickens is proving not to be the man they thought him. He lacks the high administrative qualities required for the times and place.

The measures which have been adopted designed for military defense, but which have the effect to prostrate the commerce of the port, have caused great dissatisfaction. Almost daily vessels—steam and sail craft—are fired on while making the harbor; and no craft is allowed to pass the bar before her character and cargo are fully ascertained. The hasty seizure of the Marion has had the effect to drive the Philadelphia line of steamers to Savannah, and a large number of sailing vessels have followed suit. It is impossible to procure insurance on cargoes, except at prohibitory rates, and altogether the commerce of Charleston is quite cut down. The New-York line of steamers have announced that "in consequence of the increased expense of running the steamers, fifty per cent advance will be charged on the present freight tariff." While these things will in time increase the expense of living, with diminished means to meet it, there is as yet no scarcity or increase in cost, except on a few leading articles, of which coal and wood are the most marked.

The Legislature are engaged on a bill to afford relief to debtors, which stays the enforcement of executions for the term of six months. It has many other similar necessary provisions designed to meet the emergency, and it will pass. It will be as much as the community can do to pay taxes, to say nothing of private debts.

As a specimen of the sort of stuff which *The Mercury*, the organ, *par excellence*, of the policy that now reigns here, continually puts forth, I make the following quotation from an article in the paper of to-day:

"Eighty short years have converted the people of the North into one vast mob—a ranting, reckless, lawless mob—shrieking for Liberty amid blood, and Freedom in plunder. It would be of little consequence to the rest of the world if the blood they shout for were their own, and the rapine their lawlessness would reap were among themselves. But, as we have said, their system of politics is aggressive. Might is their only test of right. To rob where they can is their political creed. Of course this robbery and aggression will first commence abroad. They must plunder and exhaust others before they begin among themselves. Thus far they have now advanced in the programme which time and human passions have marked out for them. So long as they have Southern fields upon which to make their descent and to pillage, they may keep their hands from each other's throats and pockets. But cut short this means of supply, remove this rich field from their robber devastations, shut them up in their own farms and workshops to earn among themselves their own subsistence and maintain their own rights, laws, and institutions—and how long will they stand? The second act of the drama will then be on the boards. The pillage will be transferred from other fields to their own. The third act must be one of blood—the last one of despotism."

It is argued that the opposite is the state of the case in the South, before which the Union must yield.

The latest news from Washington is, that Fort Sumter is not to be reënforced. It is a mistaken policy. If it is supposed that it will prevent a collision, never was a more fatal error committed. If reënforcements are to be withheld, so as to avoid a collision, it is likewise a mistake. The Fort will be attacked. We are going to have the collision anyway. So far as the Government is concerned, it matters little whether it comes from an attempt to reënforce Major Anderson or from keeping him in the Fort. The more men there are in Fort Sumter, the more certain the Government will be of retaining the Fort, and the less will be the bloodshed. Five hundred men in Sumter to-day would cease all talk of an attack and compel peace. Government may rest assured that there is to be a fight (unless it backs out) either with Major Anderson weak, or Major Anderson strong.

I hear nothing farther concerning the alleged understanding between Gov. Pickens and Major Anderson; and I do not doubt that the rumors were base slanders on the gallant commander of Fort Sumter.

Workmen in large force are engaged in erecting a new Battery on Sullivan's Island, about two miles beyond Fort Moultrie. On Morris Island and vicinity there are about one thousand soldiers, beside large gangs of negroes engaged in erecting batteries, practicing, drilling, &c.

FROM MARYLAND.

GOV. HICKS "GIVING IT" TO KING COTTON.

TELLING INCIDENT AT A BALTIMORE CONCERT.

Correspondence of The N. Y. Tribune.

BALTIMORE, Jan. 18, 1861.

Since my last of the 11th inst., Union meetings have been held in different parts of the State, in which Gov. Hicks has been sustained, Maj. Anderson lauded, South Carolina denounced for her indecent treason, and the Republicans particularly lampooned for daring to elect Lincoln and Hamlin. So that the Federal Government is acknowledged in these days of rebellion, it is something, and the Republicans have backs broad enough to bear the blame. How simple it would have been for the late Bell party, everywhere in the South, to have resolved they would obey the popular voice in the election of President and Vice-President, and would resist all rebellion to it! And yet, they have overlooked so transparent a duty, and gone to saving the Union with an *if*.

Gov. Hicks holds out manfully against the pressure of the secessionists. In a conversation with Mr. Chief-Justice Legrand of our Court of Appeals, a day or two ago, the Governor is represented as having addressed the Judge very animatedly, somewhat as follows: "Mr. Legrand! I would have you know that when I say No, I mean No, and not YES! And now, let me tell you, Sir, if every man, woman, and child, in the State, were to ask me to call the Legislature together, I should not do it, unless advised thereto by my conscience and my judgment!" This emphatic disposition of the question speedily terminated the Judge's argument in favor of inaugurating rebellion by a call of the Legislature, the very first act of which body would be to impeach and depose the Governor.

They tell another equally emphatic story about the Governor, greatly to his credit. It is this: When Judge Handy came on here last month, as the messenger of treason and rebellion on the part of Mississippi, he sought to influence the Governor by the lavish use of Mississippi cotton eloquence, but finding his efforts in vain, he jumped up from his chair, and, stalking across the room, exclaimed with all the theatrical force of Mr. Forrest himself: "Finally, Gov. Hicks, let me tell you that Cotton is King!" Up jumps the Governor from his chair, excited by this announcement, and lifting up his arms high in air, exclaimed at the top of his voice: "Mr. Handy—*not* Commissioner of Mississippi, but Mr. Handy—let me tell you, Sir, that I will see King Cotton in h—ll, Sir, before he shall reign over *me*!" And nine-tenths of the good people of Maryland have since responded, Amen! to their glorious old Governor's alternative. Judge Handy cut about as sorry a figure in his mission to the Governor as ever Lover's blundering Handy-Andy did.

As one of the most conclusive evidences of the state of feeling in Baltimore, let me tell you what took place a few nights ago at a concert given by the United States Marine Band, from Washington, to the Independent Greys of this city. The programme was duly printed, and at the end thereof, it wound up with the announcement, that the "Constitutional Quadrille" would be played, "with all the National airs." During the first part, a gentleman present, known as a South Carolina sympathizer, sent up a note to the band. Hissing, forthwith, began, and when the band struck up the Marseilles Hymn, in response to the gentleman's request, it was received with an avalanche of hisses throughout. The band played the "Constitutional Quadrille," but just as they closed, and were about putting up their instruments, without giving "all the National airs," a gentleman of this city, of a family which have furnished brave defenders of the country's honor on the battle-field, arose, and demanded in a stern and imperative voice, that the National airs should be played. Instantly the audience, numbering some 2,000 ladies and gentlemen, seconded the demand, and the National airs were given and received with a hearty good will, in the midst of the most stormy applause and waving of hats and handkerchiefs. The authors of this attempted indignity to the National airs, and especially to the Star-Spangled Banner, were glad to escape unnoticed amid the storm of excitement. Unless the Independent Greys disavow all connection with this affair, their 22d of February Ball will be a slim affair.

While we all think that a rebellion cannot now be attempted on the soil of Maryland, the friends of the Union as it is, are not asleep on their arms. Our Mayor is for the Union "naked," and for submission to the laws, and so is Col. Kane, the Chief of our Police, as well as the Police Commissioners; so that any outbreak in Baltimore will be speedily quelled. All the military, with here and there individual exceptions, are sound to the core. Just let the Federal Government call on Baltimore for troops, and you will see such an outpouring in defense of the laws as will do the heart good. If it were not for the conduct of *The Sun* newspaper, which is daily doing all it can to foster rebellion, both to the State and Federal Governments, there would be no excitement at all on the subject.

FROM KENTUCKY.

GOV. MAGOFFIN'S MESSAGE.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

When, in March last, the Legislature adjourned, and with kind remembrances of the Winter's association you separated for your respective homes, I did not apprehend that alarming complication of our Federal system which has rendered imperative upon me your convocation in extraordinary session. The Republic seemed then launched upon a career of limitless national prosperity, while its citizens enjoyed an aggregate of domestic and social happiness unequaled in the condition of any other people. Covering twenty-three degrees of latitude, and sixty degrees of longitude, our territory was nearly equal to that of all Europe, and embraced a soil of unsurpassed fertility, adapted by every pleasing variety of climate to all the products of the earth. Our commerce, sustained by an extended system of internal improvements reaching, through the media of turnpikes, railroads, canals, rivers, and inland seas, to the very heart of every section of the country, and finding its outlets upon the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and upon the Gulf of Mexico, may be said to have commanded the market of the world. The keels of our steamers plowed every ocean, and the seas and navigable streams of the most remote regions were whitened by the sails of our merchant vessels. Our people, numbering thirty millions of freemen of all nations and races, and realizing as the fruit of their industry $2,600,000,000 in annual productions; by their great and thriving cities, by their magnificent churches, school-houses, colleges, and charitable institutions; by their progress in agriculture, and manufactures; by their advance in the arts and sciences, gave unmistakable evidence of a degree of internal prosperity not reached by the same number of people under any other form of government. In view of those great blessings and encouraging signs, the glorious results of less than a century's growth of the Republic, I had fondly hoped the union of the States would be perpetual, and did not doubt that the next cycle of fifty years would more than realize the poet's wildest dream.

With heavy heart I turn to contemplate the present condition of our once happy country. At the very time when every industrial pursuit was yielding its highest remuneration, we have witnessed a stagnation in trade. The earth has responded with an abundant harvest to the enlightened cultivation of the agriculturists; but while the crop awaits transportation to market, commerce is paralyzed, and the laws of exchange disordered. The business of the country was never in a more healthy condition, nor our people in the main more prosperous; yet credit is destroyed, confidence lost, and financial ruin imminent. These phenomena can only find their explanation in the troubled condition of our political affairs. We, the people of the United States, are no longer one people, united and friendly. The ties of fraternal love and concord which once bound us together are sundered. Though the Union of the States may, by the abstract reasoning of a class, be construed still to exist, it is really and practically, to an extent at least, fatally impaired. The Confederacy is rapidly resolving into its original integral parts, and its loyal members are intent upon contracting wholly new relations. Reluctant as we may be to realize the dread calamity, the great FACT OF REVOLUTION stares us in the face, *demands recognition*, and will not be theorized away. Nor is the worst yet told. We are not yet encouraged to hope that this revolution will be bloodless. A collision of arms has even occurred between the Federal Government and the authorities of a late member of the Union, and the issue threatens to involve the whole country in fratricidal war. It is under these circumstances of peculiar gloom that you have been summoned. To your trust must now be committed, in great measure, the destinies of our beloved State, and upon you devolves the solemn responsibility of so wielding the accorded influence of Kentucky in this momentous crisis as shall conserve the honor and happiness of our people and promote the good of all. I can only beseech you, by all you hold dear in this sad hour of our country's peril, to cast aside old old party affiliations, and looking facts full in the face as they naturally exist, to address yourself earnestly to the great work before you. Our present unfortunate political complications are the legitimate scions of underlying causes against which all the great conservative statesmen of the age have solemnly warned their countrymen. A political organization based upon the one idea of hostility to the institution of African Slavery, and embodying as one of its material elements of strength an intolerant sectional fanaticism, has been for years steadily gathering power in the non-Slaveholding States, and has at last exhibited national ascendancy in the election of Abraham Lincoln, its faithful exponent, to the Presidency of the United States. It is true that triumph was reached through all the forms of law, but it was effected by the agency of purely sectional votes, and rests upon sectional animosity. By virtue of that election the Federal Government will be committed to the control of the Republican party, and administered upon a platform of principles destructive to our rightful equality as States and citizens, and fatal to the stability and security of our whole social organization.

Receiving the verdict pronounced on the 6th of November last as the deliberate expression of the sentiments of the citizens of the North, and as indicative of the settled purpose of the dominant party to administer the Government detrimentally to their vital interests, the people of several Southern States, immediately upon its announcement, initiated movements looking to the speedy severance of their relations with the other States and with the General Government. These movements progressed with startling rapidity, and were sustained by such unanimity of feeling in the several States as rendered all resistance idle and useless. Meantime patriotic efforts have not been wanting to effect an adjustment of the difficulties and restore the former friendly relations of the States; but I regret to say, to this hour with little hope of success.

My humble endeavors have been earnestly addressed to the work of bringing about a Convention of the slaveholding States, believing that their united voice in demanding just and reasonable guaranties against the future invasion of their constitutional rights by the dominant power would achieve the object and reunite the States. Had such a movement been early initiated in the border States, I am assured it would have been favorably responded to by the whole South, in which event I firmly believe our embarrassments would, ere this, have presented fair prospect of adjustment. But the proposition met with limited favor here, was violently assailed, and the time passed. It is now too late. The revolution has progressed beyond that point.

Soon after the election of Mr. Lincoln, in order to place Kentucky as far as I could in her true position, and in answer to continued inquiries for my views, I addressed a letter to the editor of *The Kentucky Yeoman*, which is herewith transmitted to you as embodying a more elaborate expression of my opinions.

On the 9th of December last, believing there was still a hope of bringing about united action on the part of the slaveholding States, I addressed a letter to the Governors of the Southern States, urging a conference with a view to an adjustment on the basis therein presented. That paper is herewith submitted to your consideration.

On the 27th of December, the Hon. S. F. Hale, a Commissioner from the State of Alabama, called upon me at the seat of Government, and communicated to me in writing the purpose of his commission. I responded in writing, again urging the importance of conference by the slaveholding States, and still clinging to the hope that such action would elicit a patriotic response from the Northern people, if not from the representative men of that section. That correspondence is also now transmitted to you.

A Commissioner from the State of Mississippi, the Hon. Mr. Featherstone also called upon me to December on a similar mission. I gave him verbally the same response.

In Congress, the efforts of the friends of the Union have not been more successful. Various propositions for adjustment have been made, and measures without number submitted to the Republican members for their approbation, as alternatives of a disruption of the Government. But a radical difference of principle was found to be an insurmountable obstacle to every proposed scheme. The recognition by the Government of property in slaves, its inviolability in the States, and protection in the Territories, constituted the basis of the demands of the South. The Republicans maintain toward this principle an unyielding opposition. And herein lies the great impediment to all compromise. Parties resting upon principles so directly antagonistic cannot, without material concession, unite upon any measure involving the subject of difference.

Among other propositions of compromise offered, I beg to call your attention to the constitutional amendments proposed by our own distinguished Senator, the Hon. John J. Crittenden, and ask for them an expression of your approbation. While they do not secure to the Slave States the full measure of their constitutional equality, I should be willing, in view of their practical value, to accept them rather than dissolution. Certainly, these guaranties, asked by the resolutions of Mr. Crittenden, are the least security the South can safely accept; and their distinguished author estimated aright the sentiment of our people when he expressed the opinion that Kentucky would not be content with less. But I regret to say that even these fair, just, and moderate demands have been sternly rejected by the dominant party.

Insensible to the direful calamity impending over us, crazed by power or blinded by fanaticism, the representative men of the Republican party, leaders whose words control the opinions of millions of misguided disciples, voted in a body against every proposition embodied in the amendments moved by Mr. Crittenden. They have gone even further. They announce in the halls of Congress and through the press, in public places and in private circles, that they have no compromise to make, no concession to offer, and no assurances to give other than that the Federal Government will be administered by Mr. Lincoln in accordance with the principles of the Republican (Chicago) Platform.

Thus firm in position, obstinate in spirit, and sullen in temper, the Republicans have thwarted every scheme devised to restrain the seceding States. Instead of retarding, their unsuccessful efforts at adjustment, have rather precipitated Disunion. The secession feeling has gathered every day, extended throughout the cotton and sugar growing States, and is now encroaching upon those nearer the confines of the non-slaveholding sections. On the 20th of December, South Carolina, by the unanimous vote of a Convention of Delegates fresh from the people, passed an ordinance of secession, severing her relations with the United States, and resuming her original sovereignty. On the —— day of January, the State of Mississippi, by a vote of her people approaching unanimity, assumed a like position among the nations of the world. Alabama and Florida, a few days after, announced to the world similar action. Georgia, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas have unmistakably indicated their purpose to assume like independence.

It now seems inevitable, that before your deliberations will probably close, eight States will have withdrawn from the Confederacy, and most probably will be in consultation touching the organization of a new Federative Government. It cannot be successfully responded in refutation of this presentation of facts, that the Secession Ordinances are nullities. I have no disposition at such a time to indulge in a discussion touching the abstract questions which might be raised. We have to deal with facts as actually existing, and have no use for hair splitting theories. I assume, that in a very few days eight States will have declared their sovereign independence, and that, to that extent at least, our Union will have ceased to exist, inasmuch as no power on earth can coerce their unwilling allegiance to the Federal Government. In that contingency, now so imminent as to be almost a certainty upon which you may safely project your action, what attitude shall Kentucky assume, and by virtue of what authority shall her external relations be hereafter determined?

Kentucky will not submit to the degradation of inequality in the Union. Conscious of the will and ability of her citizens to maintain their honor, their rights, and freedom, she will protect them in the Union or out of it. Kentucky has to this hour borne herself with the dignity, the forbearance, and the moderation becoming her historic character. She has borne much, and will bear much for the cause of the Union. But in my opinion the people of Kentucky will never consent to remain in this Confederacy, now abandoned by a large portion of the slave-holding members, with no guaranties of protection from the Anti-Slavery power now dominant. Kentucky will not and ought not to submit to the principles and policy avowed by the Republican party, but will resist, and resist to the death, if necessary.

But I recall the suggestive inquiry just put. In view of the partial disruption of the Union, the secession of eight or ten States, the establishment of a Southern Confederated Republic, and the administration of this Government upon the principles of the Chicago platform—a condition of our country most likely near at hand—what attitude will Kentucky hold, and by virtue of what authority shall her external relations be determined? Herein are involved issues of momentous consequence to the people. It is of vital importance to our own safety and domestic peace that these questions be solved in accordance with the will of a majority of our people. How have our neighboring States prepared to meet this emergency? Tennessee has, through the action of her Legislature, referred the whole subject to her people, to be passed upon in their sovereign capacity. Virginia and North Carolina are discussing the propriety of a similar course, and will most probably authorize the people, through sovereignty Conventions, to dispose of questions so deeply and vitally concerning their interests. Missouri seems likely to adopt a similar policy. These States wisely recognize the fact that the country is in a state of revolution, and it seems to me there is an eminent propriety, at such a time, in a direct appeal to the people. The ordinary departments of the Government are vested with no power to conduct the State through such a revolution. Any attempt by either of these departments to change our present external relations, would involve a usurpation of power, and might not command that confidence and secure the unanimity so essential to our internal safety. Thus encompassed by embarrassment, complication, and doubt, assailed by a diversity of counsels, and encountering much variety of opinion, it seems to me that the wisest, as certainly the safest mode of meeting the extraordinary emergency is to adopt the course pursued by our neighboring States, and refer these great questions to the arbitrament of the people, whose happiness and destinies they so deeply affect. We should in this mode secure unity among ourselves, and attract the cordial loyalty of all our citizens to Kentucky wherever she may cast her lot. I, therefore, submit to your consideration the propriety of providing for the election of delegates to a convention, to be assembled at an early day, to whom shall be referred for full and final determination, the future Federal and inter-State relations of Kentucky.

Meantime, I would leave no experiment untried which promises, however faintly, the restoration of fraternal relations between the States, and offers even remote hope of again reuniting the members and rescuing the Union from its present peril. We seem to be drifting in a gale upon the rocks of disunion. Let us make one more, one united, one last effort to save the old ship. Although she has never encountered such a tempest, she has weathered many fearful storms. Anchor after anchor has been thrown out to save her, but she still drifts before the swelling waves upon the fearful breakers—hull and cabin and deck are crashing and cracking, and every joint and bolt and timber is strained to its utmost tension. There should be no divided councils now. Let us throw overboard former jealousies, past party affiliations, passions, and personal ambition. Let us make one more effort to save her altogether; and if she is lost let us cling to the noble wreck, and reconstruct the vessel from the staunch old timbers of the Constitution. There is hope that an adjustment, honorable to all, may be effected through the action of the Border Slave States, including Tennessee and North Carolina. Their approval of the amendments to the Constitution proposed by Senator Crittenden, with security for their future observance, presented to Congress, to the Free States in Legislative session, and to the people if practicable, as an ultimatum, may yet secure the guaranties we require, and if possible in the end bring back all the States in one Union. To this last effort a Convention of those States is necessary. I would therefore recommend to you the adoption of resolutions inviting a conference of these States, and of such others as may choose to cooperate, at Baltimore, for an early day in February. It will then devolve upon you to provide for the appointment of Commissioners to represent Kentucky. The conjoint declaration of these States against coercion might do much to avert impending war. Their united cooperation in any event, would materially promote their future safety and peace.

The relations of the Federal Government with the seceding States have occasioned the most anxious solicitude with those who have at heart the peace and tranquility of the country. I had hoped that when the secession movement, or the revolution, had assumed its present aspect, when four sovereign States, by the almost unanimous vote of their people, had announced their purpose to close their past Federal relations, and likely soon to be joined by four others, there would be found none so mad, none so blind to the dire results, as to advise or countenance the employment of military force in futile resistance to their action. Such a proposition, whether it be called plainly coercion and subjugation, or be disguised under the specious phrases of "enforcing the laws," and protecting public property," means civil war, and war of the most frightful and abhorrent character. I can but regard the action of the Federal Government in refusing to recognize the *fact* of secession, and its proposed attempt to maintain the supremacy of its laws within the borders of the seceding States, as a policy more utterly barren of good result, and more certainly fraught with calamity, than any step yet taken in the drama. This Government stands upon the consent of the governed; its internal strength springs from the voluntary allegiance of the citizens; it is sustained by the common affection, the mutual confidence and fraternal feelings of the people. It cannot be held together by force, and the attempt so to sustain it will not only fail and fail in blood, but will destroy the last hope of reconstruction. Kentucky cannot and will not be an indifferent observer of the "force policy." The seceding States have not, in their hasty and inconsiderate action, our approval; but their cause is our rights, and they have our sympathies. The people of Kentucky will never stand by with arms folded while those States struggling for their constitutional rights and resisting oppression are being subjugated to an Anti-Slavery Government. Thousands of our gallant citizens would fly to the conflict. Moreover, the idea of coercion, when applied to great political communities, is revolting to a free people, contrary to the spirit of our institutions, and, if successfully prosecuted, would endanger the liberties of the people. I cannot believe that these threats of coercion, nor these denunciations of treason against the people of the South, coming as they do from men who have for years habitually violated the Constitution, elicit any sympathy in the hearts of Kentuckians, no matter what may be their opinions touching the abstract right or present policy of secession. I trust, therefore, you will at once declare by resolution the unconditional disapprobation of Kentucky of the employment of force in any form against the seceding States.

It becomes my duty to call your attention to another subject, if possible, affecting more nearly the safety of our people, the importance of which is suggested by the political complications heretofore presented. I allude to the subject of our State military organization. I have the gratification to communicate to you that, under the admirably drawn and well adapted "Militia Law" enacted by you at your regular session in March last, an organization of companies, battalions and regiments has been effected, than which I can recommend none more reliable and efficient. Copies of this law have been sought for by those having in charge the military organizations of other States, and it now constitutes the basis of the system in more than one State. I was peculiarly fortunate in securing the services of General S. B. Buckner, a native Kentuckian, in the responsible position of Inspector-General. He has brought to the position an amount of experience, ability, and patriotic labor, to which I attribute, in a great measure, the present highly encouraging condition of the corps. His report, giving full information on the subject, will be communicated to you, and to it your attention is invited. Our people seem thoroughly aroused to the importance of a thorough and effective military corps, sufficient for any and all emergencies. You will readily perceive the necessity of extending them all proper aid and encouragement.

An appropriation of money for the purpose of more efficiently arming, equipping, uniforming, and providing munitions of war for the corps of volunteer soldiers, now constituting the main defense of our people, will be regarded by you as among your first and imperative duties. No man can foresee the issue of our present political troubles. It becomes our duty to prepare for the worst, and look carefully to the security and safety of our citizens. But this subject is of such manifest importance as to need no argument from me. I refer to the report of the Inspector General for full information touching the condition of our military defenses at this time, and the further provision needed.

Accompanying the Message you have a statement from the Auditor, showing the financial condition of the State on the 15th day of this month. I have caused this exhibit to be made, that you may understand the necessity of providing for a revenue sufficient to meet the extraordinary expenditures likely to become unavoidable.

While I would appreciate your disinclination to [illegible]