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THE UNION OF THE STATES—ONE COUNTRY—ONE DESTINY.

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OFFICE,

Tallmadge Block—Third Story—to the Left at the Head of the Stairs.

CITY OF LANCASTER.

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SPEECH OF HON. W. H. SEWARD

IN THE U. S. SENATE,

On Saturday, January 12th, 1861.

His Views on the Existing Crisis.

MR. PRESIDENT: Congress adjourned last summer amidst the auspicies of national abundance, contentment, tranquility and happiness. It has reassembled this winter in the presence of derangement of business, and disturbance of public, as well as private credit, and in the face of seditious combinations to overthrow the Union.

GRAVE CAUSE FOR APPREHENSION.

The alarm is appalling, for the Union is not more the body than liberty is the soul of the nation. The American citizen has been accustomed to believe this Republic immortal. He shrinks from the sight of convulsions indicative of its sudden death. The report of our condition has gone over the seas, and we who have so long, and with so much complacency, studied the endless agitations of society in the old world, believing exempt from such disturbances, now in our turn seem to be falling into momentous and disastrous revolution.

THE PRESENT A TIME FOR DELIBERATE ACTION.

I know how difficult it is to decide amid so many and so various counsels, as to what ought to be done, and even what can be done. Certainly, however, it is time for every Senator to declare himself. I, therefore, following the example of the noble Senator from Tennessee, (Mr. Johnson) avow my adherence to the Union in its integrity and in all its parts.

With my friends, with my party, with my State, with my country, or without either, as they may determine; in every event whether; of peace or of war; with every consequence of honor or dishonor; of life or death; although I lament the occasion, I hail with cheerfulness the duty of lifting up my voice among distracted debaters, for my whole country and its inestimable union.

DISUNION RAMPANT.

Hitherto the exhibitions of spirit and resolution, here as elsewhere, have been chiefly on the side of disunion. I do not regret this. Disunion is so unexpected and unnatural, that it must plainly reveal itself before its presence can be realized.

I like best also the courage that rises slowly under the pressure of severe provocation. If it be a Christian duty to forgive a stranger even seventy times seven offenses, it is the highest patriotism to endure without complaint, the passionate waywardness of political brethren, so long as there is hope that they may come to a better mind.

WHAT WILL NOT SAVE THE UNION.

I think it is easy to pronounce what measures or conduct will not save the Union. I agree with the honorable Senator from North Carolina, (Mr. Clingman,) that mere eulogiums will not save it, yet I think as prayer brings us nearer to God, though it cannot move him towards us, so there is healing and saving virtue in every word of devotion to the Union that is spoken, and in every sigh that its danger draws forth. I know at least that like virtue it derives strength from every irreverent act that is committed, and every blasphemous phrase that is uttered against it. The Union cannot be saved by mutual criminations concerning our respective share of the responsibility for the present evils. He whose conscience acquits him will naturally be slow to accuse others whose co-operation he needs. History only can adjust the great account.

USELESSNESS OF DISCUSSING THEORIES.

A continuance of the debate on the constitutional power of Congress over the subject of Slavery in the Territories will not save the Union. The opinions of parties and sections on that question have become dogmatical, and it is this circumstance that has produced the existing alienation. A truce, at least during the debate on the Union, is essential to reconciliation.

The Union cannot be saved by proving that secession is illegal or unconstitutional. Persons bent on a fearful step will not stand long enough on forms of law to be dislodged, and loyal men do not need such narrow ground to stand upon.

I fear that little more will be gained from discussing the right of the Federal Government to coerce a seceding State into obedience. If disunion is to go on, this question will give place to the more practical one, whether many seceding States have a right to coerce the remaining members to acquiesce in a dissolution.

IMPROBABILITY OF PEACEFUL SECESSION AND SUBSEQUENT RECONSTRUCTION.

I dread, as in my innermost soul I abhor, civil war, I do not know what the Union would be worth, if saved by the use of the sword; yet for all this, I do not agree with those who, with a desire to avert the great calamity, advise a conventional or unopposed separation, with a view to what they call a reconstruction.—It is enough for me; first, that in this plan, destruction goes before reconstruction; and, secondly, that the strength of the vase in which the hopes of the nation are held, consists chiefly in its remaining unbroken.

COMPROMISES OF NO AVAIL NOW—CONGRESSIONAL COMPROMISES NOT LIKELY TO SAVE THE UNION.

I know, indeed, that tradition favors this form of remedy, but it is essential to its success in any case that there be found a preponderating mass of citizens so far neutral on the issue which separate parties, that they can intervene, strike down clashing weapons, and compel an accommodation. Moderate concessions are not customarily asked by a force with guns in their battery, nor are liberal concessions apt to be given by an opposing force not less confident of its own right and its own strength. I think, also, that there is a prevailing conviction that legislative compromises which sacrifice honestly cherished principles, while they anticipate future exigencies, even if they do not assume extra powers, are less sure to avert imminent evils than they are certain to produce ultimately even greater dangers.

Indeed, Mr. President, I think it will be wise to discard two prevalent ideas or prejudices, namely: First, that the Union is to be saved by somebody in particular; and secondly, that it is to be saved by some cunning and insincere compact of pacification. If I remember rightly, I said something like this here so long ago as 1850, and afterwards in 1854.

CHARACTER OF THE PRESENT CRISIS.

The present danger discloses itself in this form: Discontented citizens have obtained political power in certain States, and they are using this authority to overthrow the Federal Government. They delude themselves with the belief that the State power they have acquired enables them to discharge themselves from allegiance to the whole Republic.

CONFLICTING VIEWS.

The honorable Senator from Illinois (Mr. Douglas) says we have a right to coerce a State but we cannot. The President says that no State has a right to secede, but we have no constitutional power to make war against a State. The dilemma results from an assumption that those who, in such a case, act against the Federal Government, act lawfully as a State, although manifestly they have perverted the power of the State to an unconstitutional purpose. A class of politicians in New England set up this theory and attempted to practice upon it in our war with Great Britain. Mr. Jefferson did not hesitate to say that States must be kept within their constitutional sphere, by impulsion if they could not be held there by attraction. Secession was held to be inadmissible in the face of a public enemy.

SECESSION CONSTITUTIONALLY IMPOSSIBLE.

But if it is untenable in one case it is necessarily so in all others. I fully admit the originality, the sovereignty and independence of the several States within their sphere; but I hold the Federal Government to be equally original, sovereign and independent within its sphere, and the Government of the State can no more absolve the people residing in its limits from allegiance to the Union, than the Government of the Union can absolve them from allegiance to the State.

The Constitution of the United States, and the laws made pursuant thereof, are the supreme law of the land, paramount to all legislation of the States, whether made under the Constitution or by even their organic Conventions. The Union can be dissolved, but only by the voluntary consent of the people of the United States, collected in the manner prescribed by the Constitution of the United States.

DUTY OF CONGRESS.

Congress, in the present case, ought not to be impassive, it ought, if it can, redress any real grievances of the offended States, and then it ought to supply the President with all the means necessary to maintain the Union in the full exhibition and discreet exercise of its authority.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PEOPLE.

Beyond this, with the proper activity on the part of the Executive, the responsibility of saving the Union belongs to the people, and they are abundantly competent to discharge it. I propose, therefore, with great diffidence, to address myself to the country upon the momentous subject; asking a hearing, not less from the people within what are called the seceding, than from those who reside within the adhering States. Union is an old, fixed, settled habit of the American people, resulting from convictions of its necessity, and therefore not likely to be hastily discarded.

A LESSON FROM HISTORY.

The early States, while existing as Colonies, were combined, though imperfectly, through a common allegiance to the British crown. When that allegiance ceased, no one was so presumptuous as to suppose political existence compatible with disunion, and, therefore, on the same day that they declared themselves independent, they declared themselves also confederated States. Experience in war and in peace, from 1776 until 1787, only convinced them of the necessity of converting that loose confederacy into a more perfect, and a perpetual Union.

Moderation of our Ancestors.

They acted with a coolness very different from the intemperate conduct of those who now on one side threaten, and those on the other rashly defy disunion. They considered the continuance of the Union as a subject comprehending nothing less than the safety and welfare of all parts of which the country was composed and the fate of an empire the most interesting in the world.

Dissolution Suicidal.

I enter upon this subject of continuing the Union now, deeply impressed with the same generous and loyal conviction. How could it be otherwise, when instead of only 13, the country is now composed of thirty-three parts, and the empire embraces, instead of only four millions, no less than thirty millions of inhabitants? The founders of the constitution, moreover, regarded the Union as no mere national or American interest. On the contrary, they confessed with deep sensibility that it seemed to them to have been reserved for the people of this country to decide whether societies of men are really capable of establishing good governments upon reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitution on accident and force.

They feared, therefore, that their failure to continue and perfect the Union would be a misfortune to the nations. How much more, sir, would its overthrow now be a calamity to mankind?

Some form of Government is indispensable here as elsewhere. Whatever form we have, every individual citizen and every State must cede to it some natural right, to invest the Government with the requisite power. The simple question, therefore, is for us now to decide, while laying aside all pique, passion and prejudices, whether it conduces more to the interests of the people of this country, for the general purposes of peace and war, commerce, inland and foreign, postal communications at home and abroad, the care and disposition of the public domain colonization, the organization and admission of new States, and generally the enlargement of empire, to continue one nation under our present Constitution, than it would be to divide themselves into separate Confederacies or States. Our country remains now as it was in 1787, composed not of detached and distant territories, but of one whole well connected and fertile region, lying within the temporate zone, with climates and soils hardly more various than those of France, or of Italy. This slight diversity quickens and amplifies manufactures and commerce. Our rivers and valleys, as improved by art, furnish us a system of highways unequalled in the world.

No Irrepressible Conflict between Free and Slave Labor

The different forms of labor, if slavery were not perverted to purposes of political ambition, need not constitute an element of strife in the Confederacy. Notwithstanding recent vehement expressions & manifestations of intolerance in some quarters produced by intense partisan excitement, we are in fact, a homogenous people, chiefly of one stock, with accessions well assimilated. We have practically only one language, one religion, one system of Government, and manners and customs common to all Why, then, shall we not remain henceforth, as hitherto, one people?

Security the first object of Society.

The first object of every human society is safety or security, for which, if need be, they will and they must sacrifice every other. This security is of two kinds: one exemption from foreign aggressions and influence, the other, exemption from domestic tyranny and sedition. Foreign wars come from either violation of treaties or domestic violence.

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Disunion would Greatly increase the dangers of foreign war.

If the Union should be divided into only two Confederacies, each of them would need to make as many treaties as we have now, and, of course, would be liable to give as many causes for war as we now do. But we know, from the sad experience of other nations, that disintegration, once begun, inevitable continues until even the greatest empire crumbles into many parts. Each Confederation, that shall ultimately arise out of the ruin of the Union, will have necessity for as many treaties as we now have, and will incur liabilities for war as often as we now do by breaking them. It is the multiplication of treaties and the want of confederation that makes war the normal condition of society in Western Europe and in Spanish American.

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The safety of each of the States the safety of all.

Mr. President, no one will dispute our forefathers' maxim that the common safety of all is the safety of each of the States. While they remain united, the Federal Government combines all the materials and all the forces of the several States; organizes their defenses on one general principle; harmonizes and assimilates them with one system; watches for them with a single eye, which it turns in all directions, and moves all agents under the control of one executive head. A nation so constituted is safe against assault or even insult. War produces always a speedy exhaustion of money and a severe strain upon credit. The treasuries and credits of small confederacies would often prove inadequate. Those of the Union are always ample.

Domestic Hostilities of the Disunited States.

I have thus far kept out of view the relations which must arise between the Confederacies themselves. They would be small and inconsiderable nations, bordering on each other, and therefore, according to all political philosophy, natural enemies. In addition to the many treaties which each must make with foreign powers, and the causes of war which they would give by violating them, each of the Confederacies must also maintain treaties with all the others, and so be liable to give them frequent offenses. They would necessarily have different interests resulting from their establishment of different policies of revenue, of mining, manufactures and navigation, of immigration, and perhaps the slave trade. Each would stipulate with foreign nations for advantages peculiar to itself, and injurious to its rivals.

Incessant war the result of Disunion.

If, indeed, it were necessary that the Union should be broken up; it would be in the last degree important that the new Confederacies to be formed should be as nearly as possible equal in strength and power, that mutual fear and mutual respect might inspire them with caution against mutual offense. But such equality would not long be maintained. One confederacy would rise in the scale of political importance, and the others would view it thence forward with envy and apprehension. Jealousies would bring on frequent and retaliatory wars, and all these wars from the peculiar circumstances of the Confederacies, would have the nature and character of civil war.

The Balance of power on American Soil.

Dissolution, therefore, is for the people of this country perpetual civil war. To mitigate it, and obtain occasional rest, what else could they accept but the system of adjusting the balance of power which has obtained in Europe, in which the few strong nations dictate the very terms on which all the others shall be content to live. When this hateful system should fail at last, foreign nations would intervene, now in favor of one, and then in aid of another, and thus our country having expelled all European powers from the continent, would relapse into an aggravated form of its colonial experience, and like Italy, Turkey, India and China, become the theater of transatlantic intervention and capacity. If, however, we grant to the new confederacies exemption from complications among each other, and with foreign States, still there is too much reason to believe that not one of them could long maintain a Republican form of government.

Disunion and the Continuance of the Republican System.

Universal suffrage and the absence of a standing army, is essential to the Republican system. The world is yet to see a single self sustaining State of that kind, or even and confederations of such States except our own. Canada leans on Britain not unwillingly, and Switzerland is guaranteed by interested monarchical states. Our own experiment has thus far been successful, because by the continual addition of new States, the influence of each of the members of the Union is constantly restrained. No one, of course, can foretell the way and manner of travel, but history indicates with unerring certainty, the end which the several confederacies would reach. Licentiousness would render life intolerable, and they would sooner or later purchase tranquility and domestic safety by the surrender of liberty, and yield themselves up to the protection of military despotism.

A Military Despotism begun in the South.

Indulge me, sir, in one or two details under this head. First, it is only sixty days since this disunion movement began. Already those who are engaged in it, have canvassed with portentious freedom, the possible recombinations of of the States when dissevered, and the feasible alliances of those recombinations with European nations; alliances as unnatural, and which would prove ultimately as pestilential to society here, as that of the Tlascalans with the Spaniard who promised them revenge upon their ancient enemies the Aztecs.

The Dangers of a Servile War.

Secondly. This disunion movement arises in another view out of the relation of African slaves to the domestic population of the country. Freedom is to them as to all mankind, the chief object of desire. Hitherto, under the operation of the Union, they have practically remained ignorant of the controversy, especially of its bearing on themselves. Can we hope that flagrant civil war will rage among ourselves in their very presence, and yet that they will remain stupid and idle spectators? Does history furnish us any satisfactory instruction upon the horrors of civil war among a people so brave, so skillful in arms, so earnest in conviction, and so intent in purpose as we are?

Is it a mere chimera which suggests an aggravation of those horrors beyond endurance, when on either side there shall occur the intervention of an uprising ferocious African slave population of four, or six, perhaps twenty millions? The opinions of mankind change, and with them the policies of nations.

Growing Hostility to Slavery—Theories of Abolition.

One hundred years ago, all the commercial European states were engaged in transferring negro slaves from Africa to this hemisphere. To-day all those States are firmly set in hostility to the extension and even to the practice of slavery. Opposition to it takes two lines. One European, which is simple, direct abolition, effected if need be, by compulsion, the other, American, which seeks to arrest the African slave trade and resist the entrance of domestic Slavery into Territories where it is yet unknown, while it leaves the disposition of existing Slavery to the considerate action of the States by which it is retained.

THE UNION THE PROTECTION OF THE SLAVE OWNER.

It is the Union that restricts the opposition to Slavery in this country within these limits. If dissolution prevail, what guarantee shall there be against the full developement here of the fearful and uncompromising hostility to slavery which elsewhere pervades the world, of which the recent invasion of Virginia was an illustration?

Dissolution and Desolation.

How could our successors prosecute these noble objects in the midst of brutalizing civil conflict? What guarantees invested for such purposes have that will outweigh the premium offered by political and military ambition? What leisure will the citizens find for study, or invention, or art, under the reign of conscription? Nay, what interest in them will society feel when fear and hate shall have taken possession of the national mind?—Let the minner in California take heed, for its golden wealth will become the prize of the nation who can command the most iron. Let the borderer take care, for the Indian will again lurk around his dwelling. Let the pioneer come back into our denser settlements, for the railroad, the post-road, the telegraph, advance not one furlong further into the wilderness.

With standing armies, consuming the substance of our people on the land, and our naval and our postal steamers withdrawn from the Ocean, who will protect or respect, or who will even know by name our petty confederacies.

Liberty and Union—One and Inseparable.

Lastly, public liberty, our own peculiar liberty, must languish for a time and then cease to leave. And such liberty! Free movement everywhere—through our own land and throughout the world—free speech, a free press, free suffrage, the freedom of every subject to vote on every law, and for or against every agent who expounds, administers or executes. Unstable confederacies, constantly apprehend assaults without and treason within, formidable only to each other, and contemptible to all besides, how long will it be before, on the plea of public safety, they will surrender all this inestimable and unequaled liberty, and accept the hateful and intolerable espionage of military despotism.

No Reason for Dissolution.

And now, Mr. President, what is the cause for this sudden and eternal sacrifice of so much safety, greatness, happiness and freedom? Have foreign nations combined, and are they coming in rage upon us? No. So far from being enemies, there is not a nation on earth that is not an interested, admiring friend. Even the London Times, by no means partial to us, says it is quite possible that "the problem of a Democratic Republic may be solved by its overthrow in a few days, in a spirit of folly, selfishness and short-sightedness."

Has the Federal Government become tyrannical and oppressive, or even rigorous or unsound? Has the Constitution lost its spirit, and all at once collapsed into a lifeless letter? No; the Federal Government smiles more benignantly, and works to-day more beneficently than ever. The Constitution is even the chosen model for the organization of the newly arising confederacies.

The Election of Mr. Lincoln.

The occasion is the election of a President of the United States who is unacceptable to a portion of the people. I state the case accurately. There was no movement of disunion before the ballots which expressed that choice were cast.—Disunion began as soon as the result was announced. The justification, as assigned, was that Abraham Lincoln had been elected, while the success of either one of the three other candidates would have been acquiesced in. Was the election illegal? No; it is impeachable. Is the candidate personally offensive? No; he is a man of unblemished virtue and amiable manners. Is an election of President an unfrequent or extraordinary transaction? No; we have never had a Chief Magistrate otherwise designated than by such election, and that form of choice is renewed every four years.

Does any one even propose to change the mode of appointing the Chief Magistrate? No; election by universal suffrage as modified by the Constitution, is the own crowning franchise of the American people. To save it, they would defy the world.

Is it apprehended the new President will usurp despotic power? No; while he is of all men the most unambitious, he is by the partial success of those who opposed his election, subjected to such restraints that he cannot, without their consent, appointed a minister, or even a police agent negotiate a treaty, or procure the passage of a law, and hardly draw a musket from the public arsenals to defend his own person.

A Difference of opinion the true Ground of the Secession Movement.

What then, is the ground of discontent? It is, that the disunionists did not accept as conclusive the arguments which were urged in behalf of the successful candidate in the canvass. This is all. Were own arguments against him more satisfactory to his supporters? Of course there were not. They could not be. Does the Constitution, in letter or spirit, require or imply that the arguments of one party shall be satisfactory to another? No that is impossible.

What is the constitutional remedy for this inevitable dissatisfaction? Renewed debate and ultimate rehearshing in a subsequent election. Have the now successful majority perverted power to purposes of oppression? No; they have never before held power.

The Republicans denied a Hearing.

The Republican party, which cast its votes for the successful President candidate on the ground of that policy, has allowed practically no representative, no utterance by speech or through the press in the Slave States; while its policy, principles and sentiments, and even its temper, have been so misrepresented as to excite apprehension that it denies important constitutional obligations, and even aims at interference with Slavery, and its overthrow by State authorities or intervention of the Federal Government. Considerable masses, even in the Free States, interested in the success of these misrepresentations as a means of partizan strategy, have lent their sympathy to the party claiming to be aggrieved, while the result of the election brings the Republican party necessarily into the foreground in resisting disunion.

The Republicans Misrepresented and unaided.

The prejudices against them, which I have described, have deprived them of the co-operation of many good and patriotic citizens. On a complex issue between the Republican and the Disunionists, although it involves the direct national calamities, the result might be doubtful, for the Republican party is weak in a large part of the Union; but on a direct issue, with all who cherish the Union on one side, and all who desire its dissolution by force on the other; the verdict would be prompt and almost unanimous. I desire thus to simplify the issue, and for that purpose to separate from it all collateral questions, and relieve it of all partisan passions and prejudices.

A Cotton and a Southern Confederacy.

I consider the idea of the withdrawal of the Gulf States, and their permanent re-organization, with or without others, in a distinct confederacy, as a means of advantage to themselves, so certainly unwise and so obviously impossible of execution, when the purpose is understood, that I dismiss it with the discussion I have already bestowed upon it.

The case is different, however, in regard to the other subject which I have brought in this connection before the Senate,

The Union necessary to all Parties.

Beyond a doubt, Union is vitally important to the Republican citizens of the United States, but it is just as important to the whole people. Republicanism and Union are therefore not convertible terms. Republicanism is subordinate to Union, as everything else is and ought to be Republicanism, Democracy every other political name and thing, all are subordinate, and they ought to disappear in the presence of the great question of Union.

Mr. Seward's individual Position.

So far as I am concerned, it shall be so It should be so, if the question were sure to be tried as it ought only to be determined, by the peaceful ordeal of the ballot. It shall be so all the more since there is on one side preparedness to refer to the arbitrament of civil war. I have such faith in this republican system of ours that there is no political good which I desire that I am not content to seek through its peaceful forms of administration, without invoking revolutionary action. If others shall invoke that form of action to oppose and overthrow the Government, they shall not, so far as it depends on me, have that excuse—that I obstinately left myself to be misunderstood. In such a case, I can afford to meet prejudice with conciliation exaction with concession which surrenders no principle, and violence with the right hand of peace.

Slavery and the Constitution—the Fugitive Slave Law.

Therefore, sir, far as the abstract question whether, by the Constitution of the United States, the bondsman who was made such by the laws of a State is still a man or only property; I answer that within that State its laws on that subject are supreme, that when he has escaped from that State into another the Constitution regards him as a bondsman who may not by any law or regulation of that State be discharged from his service, but shall be delivered up on claim to the party to whom his service is due; while prudence and justice would combine in persuading you to modify the acts of Congress on that subject so as not to oblige private persons to assist in their execution; to protect freemen from being, by abuse of the laws, carried into slavery.

Repeal of Personal Liberty Laws.

I agree that all laws of the States, whether free or slave States, which relate to the class of persons, or any others recently coming from, or resident in other States, and which laws contravene the Constitution of the United States, or any law of Congress passed in conformity thereto, ought to be repealed.

Slavery in the States not to be Interfered with—Proposed Constitutional Amendment.

Secondly. Experience in public affairs has confirmed my opinion that domestic slavery existing in any State, is wisely left by the Constitution of the United States exclusively to the care, management and disposition of that State, and if it were in my power, I would not alter the Constitution in that respect. If misapprehension of my position needs so strong a remedy, I am willing to vote for an amendment of the Constitution, declaring that it shall not by any future amendment be so altered as to confer on Congress a power to abolish or interfere with slavery in any State.

Thirdly. While I think that Congress has exclusive and sovereign authority to legislate on all subjects whatever in the common territories of the United States, and while I certainly shall never, directly or indirectly, give my vote to establish or sanction slavery in such territories, or anywhere else in the world, yet the question, what constitutional laws shall at any time be passed in regard to the territories, is, like every other question, to be determined on practical grounds. I voted for enabling acts in the cases of Oregon, Minnesota and Kansas, without being able to secure in them such provisions as I would have preferred, and yet I voted wisely.—So now, I am well satisfied that, under existing circumstances, a happy and satisfactory solution of the difficulties in the remaining territories would be obtained by similar laws, providing for their organization, if such organization were otherwise practicable. If, therefore, Kansas were admitted as a State under the Wyandotte Constitution, as I think she ought to be, and if the organic laws of all the other territories could be repealed, I could vote to authorize the organization and admission of two new States, which should include them, reserving the right to effect subdivisions of them whenever necessary into several convenient States; but I do not find that such reservations could be constitutionally made. Without them, the ulterior embarrassments which would result from the hasty incorporation of States of such vast extent and various interests and character, would outweigh all the immediate advantages of such a measure.—But if the measure were practicable, I should prefer a different course, namely: When the eccentric movements of secession and disunion shall have ended, in whatever form that end may come, and the angry excitement of the hour shall have subsided, and calmness once more shall have resumed its accustomed away over the public mind; then, and not until then, one, two, or three years hence, I should cheerfully advise a convention of the people to be assembled in pursuance to the Constitution, to consider and decide whether any and what amendments of the organic national law ought to be made.

A Republican now, as I have heretofore been a member of other parties existing in my day, I nevertheless hold and cherish as I always have done, the principle that this Government exists in its present form only by the consent of the governed, and that it is as necessary as wise, to resort to the people for revision of the organic law, when the troubles and dangers of the State certainly transcend the powers delegated by it to the public authorities. Nor ought the suggestion to excite surprise. Government is a machine. This is the most complex one that the mind of man ever invented or the hand of man has ever framed. Perfect as it is, it ought to be expected that it will, at least as often as once a century, require some modification to adopt it to the changes of society, and alternations of empire.

LAWS AGAINST THE INVASION OF STATES.

Fourthly. I hold myself ready now, as always heretofore, to vote for any properly guarded laws which shall be deemed necessary to prevent mutual invasions of States by citizens of other States, and punish those who shall aid and abet them.

All is not Lost.

And now, Mr. President, what are the auspices of the country? I know that we are in the midst of alarms, and somewhat exposed to accidents unavoidable in seasons of temptuous passions. We already have disorder, and violence has begun. I know not to what extent it may go, still my faith in the Constitution and the Union abides, because my faith in the wisdom and virtue of the American people remains unshaken—coolness, calmness, and resolution are elements of their character. They have been temporarily displaced, but they are re-appearing soon enough, I trust, for safety. It will be seen that sedition and violence are only local and temporary, and that loyalty and affection to the Union are the natural sentiments of the whole country. Whatever dangers there shall be, there will be a determination to meet them; whatever sacrifices, private or public, shall be needful, they will be made.

The Nation's Mission not yet Fulfilled.

I feel sure that the hour has not yet come for this great nation to fall. This people, which has been studying to become wiser and better as it has grown older, is not perverse or wicked enough to deserve so dreadful and severe a punishment as dissolution. This Union has not yet accomplished what good for mankind was manifestly designed by Him who appoints the seasons and prescribes the duties of States and Empires.

No, sir; if it were cast down by faction to-day, it would rise again, and re-appear in all its majestic proportions to-morrow. It is the only Government that can stand here. Woe, woe to the man that madly lifts his hand against it! It shall continue and endure, and men in aftertimes shall declare that this generation, which saved the Union from sudden and unlooked for dangers, surpasses in magnanimity even that one which laid its foundations in the eternal principles of liberty, justice and humanity.

SIGNIFICANT REMINISCENCE OF FILLMORE'S ADMINISTRATION.—When about ten years ago, Millard Fillmore was President of the United States, and the frolicsome Palmettoes threatened to cut up some of their old shines, that excellent Executive Officer caused a strong body of troops to be quietly put into Fort Moultries. The gay and gallant Palmettoes, says the New York *World*, awoke one fine morning and found this awkward fact suddenly staring them in the face; whereupon their chivalric Governor waxed wroth, and applied to President Fillmore for explanation. "Sir" was the answer, "the President of the United States is not responsible for his official conduct to the Governor of South Carolina." The amiable President then in office did not effect leonine or heroic qualities; but he understood his duty to the Constitution he was sworn to support, and his vigorous mode of confronting rebellion, nipped it in the bud to the great satisfaction of every body except the combustible and explosive Palmettoes.