

**Oration delivered before the city authorities of Boston, on the fourth of July, 1863 / by Oliver Wendell Holmes.**

**Contributors**

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London NW1 2BE UK  
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# ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE CITY AUTHORITIES OF BOSTON,

ON THE

FOURTH OF JULY, 1863,

BY

✓  
OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.



BOSTON:

J. E. FARWELL & COMPANY, PRINTERS TO THE CITY,

37 CONGRESS STREET.

1863.

# CHAPTER

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## CITY OF BOSTON.

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*In Board of Aldermen, July 6, 1863.*

ORDERED: That the thanks of the City Council be, and they are hereby presented, to OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, M. D., for the highly eloquent and truly loyal Address delivered before the Municipal Authorities of Boston, on the occasion of the celebration of the Eighty-seventh Anniversary of the Declaration of American Independence, and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication.

Sent down for concurrence.

THOMAS C. AMORY, JR., *Chairman.*

*In Common Council, July 9, 1863.*

Concurred.

GEORGE S. HALE, *President.*

Approved July 10, 1863.

F. W. LINCOLN, JR., *Mayor.*





## ORATION.

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MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMON COUNCIL,  
FELLOW-CITIZENS AND FRIENDS :

IT is our first impulse, upon this returning day of our Nation's birth, to recall whatever is happiest and noblest in our past history, and to join our voices in celebrating the statesmen and the heroes, the men of thought and the men of action, to whom that history owes its existence. In other years this pleasing office may have been all that was required of the holiday speaker. But to-day, when the very life of the nation is threatened, when clouds are thick about us, and men's hearts are throbbing with passion, or failing with fear, it is the living question of the hour, and not the dead story of the past, which forces itself into all minds, and will find unrebuked debate in all assemblies.

In periods of disturbance like the present, many persons who sincerely love their country and mean to do their duty to her, disappoint the hopes and expectations of those who are actively working in her cause. They seem to have lost whatever moral force they may have once possessed, and to go drifting



about from one profitless discontent to another, at a time when every citizen is called upon for cheerful, ready service. It is because their minds are bewildered, and they are no longer truly themselves. Show them the path of duty, inspire them with hope for the future, lead them upwards from the turbid stream of events to the bright translucent springs of eternal principles, strengthen their trust in humanity, and their faith in God, and you may yet restore them to their manhood and their country.

At all times, and especially on this anniversary of glorious recollections and kindly enthusiasms, we should try to judge the weak and wavering souls of our brothers fairly and generously. The conditions in which our vast community of peace-loving citizens find themselves, are new and unprovided for. Our quiet burghers and farmers are in the position of river-boats blown from their moorings out upon a vast ocean, where such a typhoon is raging as no mariner who sails its waters ever before looked upon. If their beliefs change with the veering of the blast, if their trust in their fellow-men, and in the course of Divine Providence seems well-nigh shipwrecked, we must remember that they were taken unawares, and without the preparation which could fit them to struggle with these tempestuous elements. In times like these the faith is the man; and they to whom

it is given in larger measure, owe a special duty to those who for want of it are faint at heart, uncertain in speech, feeble in effort, and purposeless in aim.

Assuming without argument a few simple propositions, that self-government is the natural condition of an adult society, as distinguished from the immature state, in which the temporary arrangements of monarchy and oligarchy are tolerated as conveniences; that the end of all social compacts is or ought to be to give every child born into the world the fairest chance to make the most and the best of itself that laws can give it; that Liberty, the one of the two claimants who swears that her babe shall not be split in halves and divided between them, is the true mother of this blessed Union; that the contest in which we are engaged is one of principles overlaid by circumstances; that the longer we fight, and the more we study the movements of events and ideas, the more clearly we find the moral nature of the cause at issue emerging in the field and in the study; that all honest persons with average natural sensibility, with respectable understanding, educated in the school of northern teaching, will have eventually to range themselves in the armed or unarmed host which fights or pleads for freedom, as against every form of tyranny; if not in the front rank now, then in the rear rank by-and-by; assuming these



propositions, as many, perhaps most of us, are ready to do, and believing that the more they are debated before the public, the more they will gain converts, we owe it to the timid and the doubting to keep the great questions of the time in unceasing and untiring agitation. They must be discussed, in all ways consistent with the public welfare, by different classes of thinkers; by priests and laymen; by statesmen and simple voters; by moralists and lawyers; by men of science and uneducated hand-laborers; by men of facts and figures, and by men of theories and aspirations; in the abstract and in the concrete; discussed and rediscussed every month, every week, every day, and almost every hour, as the telegraph tells us of some new upheaval or subsidence of the rocky base of our political order.

Such discussions may not be necessary to strengthen the convictions of the great body of loyal citizens. They may do nothing towards changing the views of those, if such there be, as some profess to believe, who follow politics as a trade. They may have no hold upon that class of persons who are defective in moral sensibility, just as other persons are wanting in an ear for music. But for the honest, vacillating minds, the tender consciences supported by the trembling knees of an infirm intelligence, the timid compromisers who are always trying to curve the straight



lines and round the sharp angles of eternal law, the continual debate of these living questions is the one offered means of grace and hope of earthly redemption. And thus a true, unhesitating patriot may be willing to listen with patience to arguments which he does not need, to appeals which have no special significance for him, in the hope that some less clear in mind or less courageous in temper may profit by them.

As we look at the condition in which we find ourselves on this fourth day of July, 1863, at the beginning of the Eighty-eighth Year of American independence, we may well ask ourselves what right we have to indulge in public rejoicings. If the war in which we are engaged is an accidental one, which might have been avoided but for our fault; if it is for any ambitious or unworthy purpose on our part; if it is hopeless, and we are madly persisting in it; if it is our duty and in our power to make a safe and honorable peace, and we refuse to do it; if our free institutions are in danger of becoming subverted, and giving place to an irresponsible tyranny; if we are moving in the narrow circles which are to engulf us in national ruin; then we had better sing a dirge and leave this idle assemblage, and hush the noisy cannon which are reverberating through the air, and

tear down the scaffolds which are soon to blaze with fiery symbols; for it is mourning and not joy that should cover the land; there should be silence, and not the echo of noisy gladness in our streets; and the emblems with which we tell our nation's story and prefigure its future, should be traced not in fire but in ashes.

If, on the other hand, this war is no accident, but an inevitable result of long-incubating causes; inevitable as the cataclysms that swept away the monstrous births of primeval nature; if it is for no mean, unworthy end, but for national life, for liberty everywhere, for humanity, for the kingdom of God on earth; if it is not hopeless, but only growing to such dimensions that the world shall remember the final triumph of right throughout all time; if there is no safe and honorable peace for us but a peace proclaimed from the capital of every revolted province in the name of the sacred, inviolable Union; if the fear of tyranny is a phantasm conjured up by the imagination of the weak acted on by the craft of the cunning; if so far from circling inward to the gulf of our perdition, the movement of past years is reversed, and every revolution carries us farther and farther from the centre of the vortex, until, by God's blessing, we shall soon find ourselves freed from the outermost coil of the



accursed spiral; if all these things are true; if we may hope to make them seem true, or even probable, to the doubting soul, in an hour's discourse, then we may join without madness in the day's exultant festivities; the bells may ring, the cannon may roar, the incense of our harmless saltpetre fill the air, and the children who are to inherit the fruit of these toiling, agonizing years, go about unblamed, making day and night vocal with their jubilant patriotism.

The struggle in which we are engaged was inevitable; it might have come a little sooner, or a little later, but it must have come. The disease of the nation was organic and not functional, and the rough chirurgery of war was its only remedy.

In opposition to this view, there are many languid thinkers who lapse into a forlorn belief that if this or that man had never lived, or if this or that other man had not ceased to live, the country might have gone on in peace and prosperity until its felicity merged in the glories of the millennium. If Mr. Calhoun had never proclaimed his heresies; if Mr. Garrison had never published his paper; if Mr. Phillips, the Cassandra in masculine shape of our long prosperous Ilium, had never uttered his melodious prophecies; if the silver tones of Mr. Clay had

still sounded in the senate chamber to smooth the billows of contention; if the Olympian brow of Daniel Webster had been lifted from the dust to fix its awful frown on the darkening scowl of rebellion, we might have been spared this dread season of convulsion. All this is but simple Martha's faith, without the reason she could have given: "If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

They little know the tidal movements of national thought and feeling, who believe that they depend for existence on a few swimmers who ride their waves. It is not Leviathan that leads the ocean from continent to continent, but the ocean which bears his mighty bulk as it wafts its own bubbles. If this is true of all the narrower manifestations of human progress, how much more must it be true of those broad movements in the intellectual and spiritual domain which interest all mankind? But in the more limited ranges referred to, no fact is more familiar than that there is a simultaneous impulse acting on many individual minds at once, so that genius comes in clusters, and shines rarely as a single star. You may trace a common motive and force in the pyramid builders of the earliest recorded antiquity, in the evolution of Greek architecture, and in the sudden springing up of those wondrous cathedrals of the twelfth and the following centuries,



growing out of the soil with stem and bud and blossom, like flowers of stone whose seeds might well have been the flaming aerolites cast over the battlements of heaven. You may see the same law showing itself in the brief periods of glory which make the names of Pericles and Augustus illustrious with reflected splendors; in the painters, the sculptors, the scholars of "Leo's golden days;" in the authors of the Elizabethan time; in the poets of the first part of this century following that dreary period, suffering alike from the silence of Cowper and the song of Hayley. You may accept the fact as natural, that Zwingli and Luther, without knowing each other, preached the same reformed gospel; that Newton, and Hooke, and Halley, and Wren, arrived independently of each other at the great law of the diminution of gravity with the square of the distance; that Leverrier and Adams felt their hands meeting, as it were, as they stretched them into the outer darkness beyond the orbit of Uranus in search of the dim, unseen planet; that Fulton and Bell, that Wheatstone and Morse, that Daguerre and Niepce, were moving almost simultaneously in parallel paths to the same end. You see why Patrick Henry, in Richmond, and Samuel Adams, in Boston, were startling the crown officials with the same accents of liberty, and why the Meck-



lenburg Resolutions had the very ring of the protest of the Province of Massachusetts. This law of simultaneous intellectual movement, recognized by all thinkers; expatiated upon by Lord Macaulay and by Mr. Herbert Spencer among recent writers; is eminently applicable to that change of thought and feeling, which necessarily led to the present conflict.

The antagonism of the two sections of the Union was not the work of this or that enthusiast or fanatic. It was the consequence of a movement in mass of two different forms of civilization in different directions, and the men to whom it was attributed were only those who represented it most completely, or who talked longest and loudest about it. Long before the accents of those famous statesmen referred to ever resounded in the halls of the Capital; long before the "Liberator" opened its batteries, the controversy now working itself out by trial of battle, was foreseen and predicted. Washington warned his countrymen of the danger of sectional divisions, well knowing the line of cleavage that ran through the seemingly solid fabric. Jefferson foreshadowed the judgment to fall upon the land for its sin against a just God. Andrew Jackson announced a quarter of a century beforehand that the next pretext of revolution would be slavery. De Tocqueville recog-

nized with that penetrating insight which analyzed our institutions and conditions so keenly, that the Union was to be endangered by slavery, not through its interests, but through the change of character it was bringing about in the people of the two sections; the same fatal change which George Mason, more than half a century before, had declared to be the most pernicious effect of the system, adding the solemn warning now fearfully justifying itself in the sight of his descendants, that "by an inevitable chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins by national calamities." The Virginian romancer pictured the far-off scenes of the conflict which he saw approaching, as the prophets of Israel painted the coming woes of Jerusalem; and the strong iconoclast of Boston announced the very year when the curtain should rise on the yet unopened drama.

The wise men of the past, and the shrewd men of our own time who warned us of the calamities in store for our nation, never doubted what was the cause which was to produce first alienation and finally rupture. The descendants of the men "daily exercised in tyranny," the "petty tyrants," as their own leading statesmen called them long ago, came at length to love the institution which their fathers had condemned while they tolerated. It is the fearful realization of that vision of the poet where the lost



angels snuff up with eager nostrils the sulphurous emanations of the bottomless abyss, — so have their natures become changed by long breathing the atmosphere of the realm of darkness.

At last, in the fulness of time, the fruits of sin ripened in a sudden harvest of crime. Violence stalked into the senate chamber, theft and perjury wound their way into the cabinet, and, finally, openly organized conspiracy, with force and arms, made burglarious entrance into a chief stronghold of the Union. That the principle which underlay these acts of fraud and violence should be irrevocably recorded with every needed sanction, it pleased God to select a chief ruler of the false government to be its Messiah to the listening world. As with Pharaoh, the Lord hardened his heart, while He opened his mouth as of old He opened that of the unwise animal ridden by cursing Balaam. Then spake Mr. "Vice-President" Stephens those memorable words which fixed forever the theory of the new social order. He first lifted a degraded barbarism to the dignity of a philosophic system. He first proclaimed the gospel of eternal tyranny as the new revelation which Providence had reserved for the western Palestine. Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! The corner-stone of the new-born dispensation is the recognized inequality of races; not that the strong

may protect the weak, as men protect women and children, but that the strong may claim the authority of Nature and of God to buy, to sell, to scourge, to hunt, to cheat out of the reward of his labor, to keep in perpetual ignorance, to blast with hereditary curses throughout all time the bronzed foundling of the New World, upon whose darkness has dawned the star of the occidental Bethlehem !

After two years of war have consolidated the opinion of the Slave States, we read in the "Richmond Examiner": "The establishment of the Confederacy is verily a distinct reaction against the whole course of the mistaken civilization of the age. For 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,' we have deliberately substituted Slavery, Subordination, and Government."

A simple diagram, within the reach of all, shows how idle it is to look for any other cause than slavery as having any material agency in dividing the country. Match the two broken pieces of the Union, and you will find the fissure that separates them zigzagging itself half across the continent like an isothermal line, shooting its splintery projections, and opening its re-entering angles, not merely according to the limitations of particular States, but as a county or other limited section of ground belongs to freedom or to slavery. Add to this the official statement made in 1862, that "there is not one regiment or



battalion or even company of men, which was organized in or derived from the Free States or Territories, anywhere, against the Union;" throw in gratuitously Mr. Stephens's explicit declaration in the speech referred to, and we will consider the evidence closed for the present on this count of the indictment.

In the face of these predictions, these declarations, this line of fracture, this precise statement, testimony from so many sources, extending through several generations, as to the necessary effect of slavery *a priori*, and its actual influence as shown by the facts, few will suppose that anything *we* could have done would have stayed its course or prevented it from working out its legitimate effects on the white subjects of its corrupting dominion. Northern acquiescence or even sympathy may have sometimes helped to make it sit more easily on the consciences of its supporters. Many profess to think that Northern fanaticism, as they call it, acted like a mordant in fixing the black dye of slavery in regions which would but for that have washed themselves free of its stain in tears of penitence. It is a delusion and a snare to trust in any such false and flimsy reasons where there is enough and more than enough in the institution itself to account for its growth. Slavery gratifies at once the love of power, the love of money, and the love of ease; it finds a victim for



anger who cannot smite back his oppressor, and it offers to all, without measure, the seductive privileges which the Mormon gospel reserves for the true believers on earth, and the Bible of Mahomet only dares promise to the saints in heaven.

Still it is common, common even to vulgarism, to hear the remark that the same gallows-tree ought to bear as its fruit the arch-traitor and the leading champion of aggressive liberty. The mob of Jerusalem was not satisfied with its two crucified thieves ; it must have a cross also for the reforming Galilean, who interfered so rudely with its conservative traditions ! It is asserted that the fault was quite as much on our side as on the other ; that our agitators and abolishers kindled the flame for which the combustibles were all ready on the other side of the border. If these men could have been silenced, our brothers had not died.

Who are the persons that use this argument ? They are the very ones who are at the present moment most zealous in maintaining the right of free discussion. At a time when every power the nation can summon is needed to ward off the blows aimed at its life, and turn their force upon its foes, —when a false traitor at home may lose us a battle by a word, and a lying newspaper may demoralize an army by its daily or weekly *stillicidium* of poison,

they insist with loud acclaim upon the liberty of speech and of the press; liberty, nay license, to deal with government, with leaders, with every measure, however urgent, in any terms they choose, to traduce the officer before his own soldiers, and assail the only men who have any claim at all to rule over the country, as the very ones who are least worthy to be obeyed. If these opposition members of society are to have their way now, they cannot find fault with those persons who spoke their minds freely in the past on that great question which, as we have agreed, underlies all our present dissensions.

It is easy to understand the bitterness which is often shown towards reformers. They are never general favorites. They are apt to interfere with vested rights and time-hallowed interests. They often wear an unlovely, forbidding aspect. Their office corresponds to that of Nature's sanitary commission for the removal of material nuisances. It is not the butterfly, but the beetle, which she employs for this duty. It is not the bird of paradise and the nightingale, but the fowl of dark plumage and unmelodious voice, to which is entrusted the sacred duty of eliminating the substances that infect the air. And the force of obvious analogy teaches us not to expect all the qualities which please the general



taste, in those whose instincts lead them to attack the moral nuisances which poison the atmosphere of society. But whether they please us in all their aspects or not, is not the question. Like them or not, they must and will perform their office, and we cannot stop them. They may be unwise, violent, abusive, extravagant, impracticable, but they are alive, at any rate, and it is their business to remove abuses as soon as they are dead, and often to help them to die. To quarrel with them because they are beetles and not butterflies, is natural, but far from profitable. They grow none the worse for being trodden upon, like those tough weeds that love to nestle between the stones of court-yard pavements. If you strike at one of their heads with the bludgeon of the law, or of violence, it flies open like the seed-capsule of a snap-weed, and fills the whole region with seminal thoughts which will spring up in a crop just like the original martyr. They chased one of these enthusiasts who attacked slavery, from St. Louis, and shot him at Alton in 1837; and on the 23d of June just passed, the Governor of Missouri, Chairman of the Committee on Emancipation, introduced to the Convention an Ordinance for the final extinction of slavery! They hunted another through the streets of a great Northern city in 1835, and within a few weeks a regiment of col-

ored soldiers, many of them bearing the marks of the slave-driver's whip on their backs, marched out before a vast multitude tremulous with newly-stirred sympathies, through the streets of the same city, to fight our battles in the name of God and Liberty!

The same persons who abuse the reformers, and lay all our troubles at their door, are apt to be severe also on what they contemptuously emphasize as "sentiments" considered as motives of action. It is charitable to believe that they do not seriously contemplate or truly understand the meaning of the words they use, but rather play with them, as certain so-called "learned" quadrupeds play with the printed characters set before them. In all questions involving duty, we act from sentiments. Religion springs from them, the family order rests upon them, and in every community each act involving a relation between any two of its members implies the recognition or the denial of a sentiment. It is true that men often forget them or act against their bidding in the keen competition of business and politics. But God has not left the hard intellect of man to work out its devices without the constant presence of beings with gentler and purer instincts. The breast of woman is the ever-rocking cradle of the pure and holy sentiments which will sooner or later steal their way into the mind of her sterner companion; which



will by-and-by emerge in the thoughts of the world's teachers, and at last thunder forth in the edicts of its lawgivers and masters. Woman herself borrows half her tenderness from the sweet influences of maternity ; and childhood, that weeps at the story of suffering, that shudders at the picture of wrong, brings down its inspiration "from God, who is our home." To quarrel, then, with the class of minds that instinctively attack abuses, is not only profitless but senseless ; to sneer at the sentiments which are the springs of all just and virtuous actions, is merely a display of unthinking levity, or of want of the natural sensibilities.

With the hereditary character of the Southern people moving in one direction, and the awakened conscience of the North stirring in the other, the open conflict of opinion was inevitable, and equally inevitable its appearance in the field of national politics. For what is meant by self-government, is that a man shall make his convictions of what is right and expedient regulate the community so far as his fractional share of the government extends. If one has come to the conclusion, be it right or wrong, that any particular institution or statute is a violation of the sovereign law of God, it is to be expected that he will choose to be represented by those who share his belief, and who will in their wider sphere



do all they legitimately can to get rid of the wrong in which they find themselves and their constituents involved. To prevent opinion from organizing itself under political forms may be very desirable, but it is not according to the theory or practice of self-government. And if at last organized opinions become arrayed in hostile shape against each other, we shall find that a just war is only the last inevitable link in a chain of closely-connected impulses of which the original source is in Him who gave to tender and humble and uncorrupted souls the sense of right and wrong, which, after passing through various forms, has found its final expression in the use of material force. Behind the bayonet is the lawgiver's statute, behind the statute the thinker's argument, behind the argument is the tender conscientiousness of woman, — woman, the wife, the mother, — who looks upon the face of God himself reflected in the unsullied soul of infancy. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies."

The simplest course for the malcontent is to find fault with the order of Nature and the Being who established it. Unless the law of moral progress were changed, or the Governor of the Universe were dethroned, it would be impossible to prevent a great uprising of the human conscience against a

system, the legislation relating to which, in the words of so calm an observer as De Tocqueville, the Montesquieu of our laws, presents "such unparalleled atrocities as to show that the laws of humanity have been totally perverted." Until the infinite selfishness of the powers that hate and fear the principles of free government swallowed up their convenient virtues, that system was hissed at by all the decent members of the old-world civilization. While in one section of our land the attempt has been going on to lift it out of the category of tolerated wrongs into the sphere of the world's beneficent agencies, it was to be expected that the protest of Northern manhood and womanhood would grow louder and stronger until the conflict of principles led to the conflict of forces. The moral uprising of the North came with the logical precision of destiny ; the rage of the "petty tyrants" was inevitable ; the plot to erect a slave empire followed with fated certainty ; and the only question left for us of the North, was whether we should suffer the cause of the Nation to go by default, or maintain its existence by the argument of cannon and musket, of bayonet and sabre.

The war in which we are engaged is for no meanly ambitious or unworthy purpose. It was primarily,



and is to this moment, for the preservation of our national existence. The first direct movement towards it was a civil request on the part of certain Southern persons, that the Nation would commit suicide, without making any unnecessary trouble about it. It was answered with sentiments of the highest consideration, that there were constitutional and other objections to the Nation's laying violent hands upon itself. It was then requested, in a somewhat peremptory tone, that the Nation would be so obliging as to abstain from food until the natural consequences of that proceeding should manifest themselves. All this was done as between a single State and an isolated fortress; but it was not South Carolina and Fort Sumter that were talking; it was a vast conspiracy uttering its menace to a mighty nation; the whole menagerie of treason was pacing its cages, ready to spring as soon as the doors were opened; and all that the tigers of rebellion wanted to kindle their wild natures to phrensy, was the sight of flowing blood.

As if to show how coldly and calmly all this had been calculated beforehand by the conspirators, to make sure that no absence of malice aforethought should degrade the grand malignity of settled purpose into the trivial effervescence of transient passion, the torch which was literally to launch

the first missile, figuratively, to "fire the southern heart" and light the flame of civil war, was given into the trembling hand of an old white-headed man, the wretched incendiary whom history will handcuff in eternal infamy with the temple-burner of ancient Ephesus. The first gun that spat its iron insult at Fort Sumter, smote every loyal American full in the face. As when the foul witch used to torture her miniature image, the person it represented suffered all that she inflicted on his waxen counterpart, so every buffet that fell on the smoking fortress was felt by the sovereign nation of which that was the representative. Robbery could go no farther, for every loyal man of the North was despoiled in that single act as much as if a footpad had laid hands upon him to take from him his father's staff and his mother's Bible. Insult could go no farther, for over those battered walls waved the precious symbol of all we most value in the past and most hope for in the future,—the banner under which we became a nation, and which, next to the cross of the Redeemer, is the dearest object of love and honor to all who toil or march or sail beneath its waving folds of glory.

Let us pause for a moment to consider what might have been the course of events if under the influence of fear, or of what some would name



humanity, or of conscientious scruples to enter upon what a few please themselves and their rebel friends by calling a "wicked war;" if under any or all these influences we had taken the insult and the violence of South Carolina without accepting it as the first blow of a mortal combat, in which we must either die or give the last and finishing stroke.

By the same title which South Carolina asserted to Fort Sumter, Florida would have challenged as her own the Gibraltar of the Gulf, and Virginia the Ehrenbreitstein of the Chesapeake. Half our navy would have anchored under the guns of these suddenly alienated fortresses, with the flag of the rebellion flying at their peaks. "Old Ironsides" herself would have perhaps sailed out of Annapolis harbor to have a wooden Jefferson Davis shaped for her figure-head at Norfolk, — for Andrew Jackson was a hater of secession, and his was no fitting effigy for the battle-ship of the red-handed conspiracy. With all the great fortresses, with half the ships and warlike material, in addition to all that was already stolen, in the traitors' hands, what chance would the loyal men in the Border States have stood against the rush of the desperate fanatics of the now triumphant faction? Where would Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, — saved, or looking to be saved, even as it is, as by fire, — have been in the day of

trial? Into whose hands would the Capital, the archives, the glory, the name, the very life of the Nation as a nation, have fallen, endangered as all of them were, in spite of the volcanic outburst of the startled North which answered the roar of the first gun at Sumter? Worse than all, are we permitted to doubt that in the very bosom of the North itself, there was a serpent, coiled but not sleeping, which only listened for the first word that made it safe to strike, to bury its fangs in the heart of Freedom, and blend its golden scales in close embrace with the deadly reptile of the cotton-fields. Who would not wish that he were wrong in such a suspicion? yet who can forget the mysterious warnings that the allies of the rebels were to be found far north of the fatal boundary line; and that it was in their own streets, against their own brothers, that the champions of liberty were to defend her sacred heritage?

Not to have fought, then, after the supreme indignity and outrage we had suffered, would have been to provoke every further wrong, and to furnish the means for its commission. It would have been to placard ourselves on the walls of the shattered fort, as the spiritless race the proud labor-thieves called us. It would have been to die as a nation of freemen, and to have given all we had left of our rights into



the hands of alien tyrants in league with home-bred traitors.

Not to have fought would have been to be false to liberty everywhere, and to humanity. You have only to see who are our friends and who are our enemies in this struggle, to decide for what principles we are combating. We know too well that the British aristocracy is not with us. We know what the West End of London wishes may be the result of this controversy. The two halves of this Union are the two blades of the shears, threatening as those of Atropos herself, which will sooner or later cut into shreds the old charters of tyranny. How they would exult if they could but break the rivet that makes of the two blades one resistless weapon! The man who of all living Americans had the best opportunity of knowing how the fact stood, wrote these words in March, 1862: "That Great Britain did, in the most terrible moment of our domestic trial in struggling with a monstrous social evil she had earnestly professed to abhor, coldly and at once assume our inability to master it, and then become the only foreign nation steadily contributing in every indirect way possible to verify its pre-judgment, will probably be the verdict made up against her by posterity, on a calm comparison of the evidence."

So speaks the wise, tranquil statesman who represents the nation at the Court of St. James, in the midst of embarrassments perhaps not less than those which vexed his illustrious grandfather, when he occupied the same position as the Envoy of the hated, new-born Republic.

“It cannot be denied,” — says another observer, placed on one of our national watch-towers in a foreign capital, — “it cannot be denied that the tendency of European public opinion as delivered from high places, is more and more unfriendly to our cause;” — “but the people,” he adds, “everywhere sympathize with us, for they know that our cause is that of free institutions, — that our struggle is that of the people against an oligarchy.” These are the words of the Minister to Austria, whose generous sympathies with popular liberty no homage paid to his genius by the class whose admiring welcome is most seductive to scholars has ever spoiled; our fellow-citizen, the historian of a great Republic which infused a portion of its life into our own, — John Lothrop Motley.

It is a bitter commentary on the effects of European, and especially of British institutions, that such men should have to speak in such terms of the manner in which our struggle has been regarded. We had, no doubt, very generally reckoned on the sym-  
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thy of England, at least, in a strife which, whatever pretexts were alleged as its cause, arrayed upon one side the supporters of an institution she was supposed to hate in earnest, and on the other its assailants. We had forgotten what her own poet, one of the truest and purest of her children, had said of his countrymen, in words which might well have been spoken by the British Premier to the American Ambassador asking for some evidence of kind feeling on the part of his Government :

“ Alas! expect it not. We found no bait  
To tempt us in thy country. Doing good,  
Disinterested good, is not our trade.”

We know full well by this time what truth there is in these honest lines. We have found out, too, who our European enemies are, and why they are our enemies. Three bending statues bear up that gilded seat, which, in spite of the time-hallowed usurpations and consecrated wrongs so long associated with its history, is still venerated as the throne. One of these supports is the pensioned church; the second is the purchased army; the third is the long-suffering people. Whenever the third caryatid comes to life and walks from beneath its burden, the capitals of Europe will be filled with the broken furniture of palaces. No wonder that our ministers find the privileged

orders willing to see the ominous republic split into two antagonistic forces, each paralyzing the other, and standing in their mighty impotence a spectacle to courts and kings; to be pointed at as helots who drank themselves blind and giddy out of that broken chalice which held the poisonous draft of liberty!

We know our enemies, and they are the enemies of popular rights. We know our friends, and they are the foremost champions of political and social progress. The eloquent voice and the busy pen of John Bright have both been ours, heartily, nobly, from the first; the man of the people has been true to the cause of the people. That deep and generous thinker, who, more than any of her philosophical writers, represents the higher thought of England, John Stuart Mill, has spoken for us in tones to which none but her sordid hucksters and her selfish land-graspers can refuse to listen. Count Gasparin and Laboulaye have sent us back the echo from liberal France; France, the country of ideas, whose earlier inspirations embodied themselves for us in the person of the youthful La Fayette. Italy,—would you know on which side the rights of the people and the hopes of the future are to be found in this momentous conflict, what surer test, what ampler demonstration can you ask than the eager sympathy of the Italian patriot whose name is the hope of the toiling many,



and the dread of their oppressors wherever it is spoken; the heroic Garibaldi?

But even when it is granted that the war was inevitable; when it is granted that it is for no base end, but first for the life of the nation, and more and more, as the quarrel deepens, for the welfare of mankind, for knowledge as against enforced ignorance, for justice as against oppression, for that kingdom of God on earth which neither the unrighteous man nor the extortioner can hope to inherit, it may still be that the strife is hopeless, and must therefore be abandoned. Is it too much to say that whether the war is hopeless or not for the North, depends chiefly on the answer to the question whether the North has virtue and manhood enough to persevere in the contest so long as its resources hold out? But how much virtue and manhood it has can never be told until they are tried, and those who are first to doubt the prevailing existence of these qualities, are not commonly themselves patterns of either. We have a right to trust that this people is virtuous and brave enough not to give up a just and necessary contest before its end is attained, or shown to be unattainable for want of material agencies. What was the end to be attained by accepting the gage of battle? It was to get the better of our assailants, and

having done so, to take exactly those steps which we should *then* consider necessary to our present and future safety. The more obstinate the resistance, the more completely must it be subdued. It may not even have been desirable, as Mr. Mill suggested long since, that the victory over the rebellion should have been easily and speedily won, and so have failed to develop the true meaning of the conflict, to bring out the full strength of the revolted section, and to exhaust the means which would have served it for a still more desperate future effort. We cannot complain that our task has proved too easy. We give our Southern army, — for we must remember that it is our army, after all, only in a state of mutiny, — we give our Southern army credit for excellent spirit and perseverance in the face of many disadvantages. But we have a few plain facts which show the probable course of events; the gradual but sure operation of the blockade; the steady pushing back of the boundary of rebellion, in spite of resistance at many points, or even of such aggressive inroads as that which our armies are now meeting with their long lines of bayonets — may God grant them victory! — the progress of our arms down the Mississippi; the relative value of gold and currency at Richmond and Washington. If the index hands of force and credit continue to move in the ratio of the past two years, where will the Confederacy be in twice or thrice that time?



Either all our statements of the relative numbers, power and wealth of the two sections of the country signify nothing, or the resources of our opponents in men and means must be much nearer exhaustion than our own. The running sand of the hour-glass gives no warning, but runs as freely as ever when its last grains are about to fall. The merchant wears as bold a face the day before he is proclaimed a bankrupt, as he wore at the height of his fortunes. If Colonel Grierson found the Confederacy "a mere shell," so far as his equestrian excursion carried him, how can we say how soon the shell will collapse? It seems impossible that our own dissensions can produce anything more than local disturbances, like the Morristown revolt, which Washington put down at once by the aid of his faithful Massachusetts soldiers. But in a rebellious state dissension is ruin, and the violence of an explosion in a strict ratio to the pressure on every inch of the containing surface. Now we know the tremendous force which has compelled the "unanimity" of the Southern people. There are men in the ranks of the Southern army, if we can trust the evidence which reaches us, who have been recruited with packs of blood-hounds, and drilled, as it were, with halters around their necks. We know what is the bitterness of those who have

escaped this bloody harvest of the remorseless conspirators ; and from that we can judge of the elements of destruction incorporated with many of the seemingly solid portions of the fabric of the rebellion. The facts are necessarily few, but we can reason from the laws of human nature as to what must be the feelings of the people of the South to their Northern neighbors. It is impossible that the love of the life which they have had in common, their glorious recollections, their blended histories, their sympathies as Americans, their mingled blood, their birthright as born under the same flag and protected by it the world over, their worship of the same God under the same outward form, at least, and in the folds of the same ecclesiastical organizations, should all be forgotten, and leave nothing but hatred and eternal alienation. Men do not change in this way, and we may be quite sure that the pretended unanimity of the South will some day or other prove to have been a part of the machinery of deception which the plotters have managed with such consummate skill. It is hardly to be doubted that in every part of the South, as in New Orleans, in Charleston, in Richmond, there are multitudes who wait for the day of deliverance, and for whom the coming of "our good friends, the enemies," as Beranger has it, will be like the advent of the angels to



the prison-cells of Paul and Silas. But there is no need of depending on the aid of our white Southern friends, be they many or be they few ; there is material power enough in the North, if there be the will to use it, to overrun and by degrees to recolonize the South, and it is far from impossible that some such process may be a part of the mechanism of its new birth, spreading from various centres of organization, on the plan which Nature follows when she would fill a half-finished tissue with blood-vessels, or change a temporary cartilage into bone.

Suppose, however, that the prospects of the war were, we need not say absolutely hopeless, — because that is the unfounded hypothesis of those whose wish is father to their thought, — but full of discouragement. Can we make a safe and honorable peace as the quarrel now stands ? As honor comes before safety, let us look at that first. We have undertaken to resent a supreme insult, and have had to bear new insults and aggressions, even to the direct menace of our national capital. The blood which our best and bravest have shed will never sink into the ground until our wrongs are righted, or the power to right them is shown to be insufficient. If we stop now all the loss of life has been butchery ; if we carry out the intention with which we first

resented the outrage, the earth drinks up the blood of our martyrs, and the rose of honor blooms forever where it was shed. To accept less than indemnity for the past, so far as the wretched kingdom of the conspirators can afford it, and security for the future, would discredit us in our own eyes and in the eyes of those who hate and long to be able to despise us. But to reward the insults and the robberies we have suffered, by the surrender of our fortresses along the coast, in the national gulf, and on the banks of the national river, — and this and much more would surely be demanded of us, — would place the United Fraction of America on a level with the Peruvian guano-islands, whose ignoble but coveted soil is open to be plundered by all comers!

If we could make a peace without dishonor, could we make one that would be safe and lasting? We could have an armistice, no doubt, long enough for the flesh of our wounded men to heal and their broken bones to knit together. But could we expect a solid, substantial, enduring peace, in which the grass would have time to grow in the war-paths, and the bruised arms to rust, as the old G. R. cannon rusted in our State arsenal, sleeping with their tom-pions in their mouths, like so many sucking lambs? It is not the question whether the same set of



soldiers would be again summoned to the field. Let us take it for granted that we have seen enough of the miseries of warfare to last us for a while, and keep us contented with militia musters and sham-fights. The question is whether we could leave our children and our children's children with any secure trust that they would not have to go through the very trials we are enduring, probably on a more extended scale and in a more aggravated form.

It may be well to look at the prospects before us, if a peace is established on the basis of Southern independence, the only peace possible, unless we choose to add ourselves to the four millions who already call the Southern whites their masters. We know what the prevailing,—we do not mean universal,—spirit and temper of those people have been for generations, and what they are like to be after a long and bitter warfare. We know what their tone is to the people of the North; if we do not, De Bow and Governor Hammond are school-masters who will teach us to our heart's content. We see how easily their social organization adapts itself to a state of warfare. They breed a superior order of men for leaders, an ignorant commonalty ready to follow them as the vassals of feudal times followed their lords; and a race of bondsmen, who, unless this war changes them from

chattels to human beings, will continue to add vastly to their military strength in raising their food, in building their fortifications, in all their mechanical work of war, in fact, except, it may be, the handling of weapons. The institution proclaimed as the corner-stone of their government, does violence not merely to the precepts of religion, but to many of the best human instincts, yet their fanaticism for it is as sincere as any tribe of the desert ever manifested for the faith of the Prophet of Allah. They call themselves by the same name as the Christians of the North, yet there is as much difference between their Christianity and that of Wesley or of Channing, as between creeds that in past times have vowed mutual extermination. Still we must not call them barbarians because they cherish an institution hostile to civilization. Their highest culture stands out all the more brilliantly from the dark background of ignorance against which it is seen; but it would be injustice to deny that they have always shone in political science, or that their military capacity makes them most formidable antagonists, and that however inferior they may be to their Northern fellow-countrymen in most branches of literature and science, the social elegancies and personal graces lend a singular charm to the best circles among their dominant class.



Whom have we then for our neighbors, in case of separation, — our neighbors along a splintered line of fracture extending for thousands of miles, — but the Saracens of the Nineteenth Century; a fierce, intolerant, fanatical people, the males of which will be a perpetual standing army; hating us worse than the Southern Hamilcar taught his swarthy boy to hate the Romans; a people whose existence as a hostile nation on our frontier, is incompatible with our peaceful development? Their wealth, the proceeds of enforced labor, multiplied by the breaking up of new cotton-fields, and in due time by the re-opening of the slave-trade, will go to purchase arms, to construct fortresses, to fit out navies. The old Saracens, fanatics for a religion which professed to grow by conquest, were a nation of predatory and migrating warriors. The Southern people, fanatics for a system essentially aggressive, conquering, wasting, which cannot remain stationary, but must grow by alternate appropriations of labor and of land, will come to resemble their earlier prototypes. Already, even, the insolence of their language to the people of the North is a close imitation of the style which those proud and arrogant Asiatics affected toward all the nations of Europe. What the “Christian dogs” were to the followers of Mahomet, the “accursed Yankees,” the

“Northern mudsills” are to the followers of the Southern Moloch. The accomplishments which we find in their choicer circles, were prefigured in the court of the chivalric Saladin, and the long train of Painim knights who rode forth to conquest under the Crescent. In all branches of culture, their heathen predecessors went far beyond them. The schools of mediæval learning were filled with Arabian teachers. The heavens declare the glory of the Oriental astronomers, as Algorab and Aldebaran repeat their Arabic names to the students of the starry firmament. The sumptuous edifice erected by the Art of the Nineteenth Century, to hold the treasures of its Industry, could show nothing fairer than the court which copies the Moorish palace that crowns the summit of Granada. Yet this was the power which Charles the Hammer, striking for Christianity and civilization, had to break like a potter’s vessel; these were the people whom Spain had to utterly extirpate from the land where they had ruled for centuries!

Prepare, then, if you unseal the vase which holds this dangerous Afrit of Southern nationality, for a power on your borders that will be to you what the Saracens were to Europe before the son of Pepin shattered their armies, and flung the shards and shivers of their broken strength upon



the refuse heap of extinguished barbarisms. Prepare for the possible fate of Christian Spain; for a slave market in Philadelphia; for the Alhambra of a Southern Caliph on the grounds consecrated by the domestic virtues of a long line of Presidents and their exemplary families. Remember the ages of border warfare between England and Scotland, closed at last by the union of the two kingdoms. Recollect the hunting of the deer on the Cheviot hills, and all that it led to; then think of the game which the dogs will follow open-mouthed across our Southern border, and all that is like to follow which the child may rue that is unborn; think of these possibilities, or probabilities, if you will, and say whether you are ready to make a peace which will give you such a neighbor; which may betray your civilization as that of half the Peninsula was given up to the Moors; which may leave your fair border provinces to be crushed under the heel of a tyrant, as Holland was left to be trodden down by the Duke of Alva!

No! no! fellow-citizens! We must fight in this quarrel until one side or the other is exhausted. Rather than suffer all that we have poured out of our blood, all that we have lavished of our substance to have been expended in vain, and to bequeath an unsettled question, an unfinished conflict, an unavenged

insult, an unrighted wrong, a stained escutcheon, a tarnished shield, a dishonored flag, an unheroic memory to the descendants of those who have always claimed that their fathers were heroes; rather than do all this it were hardly an American exaggeration to say, better that the last man and the last dollar should be followed by the last woman and the last dime, the last child and the last copper!

There are those who profess to fear that our Government is becoming a mere irresponsible tyranny. If there are any who really believe that our present Chief Magistrate means to found a dynasty for himself and family, — that a *coup d'etat* is in preparation by which he is to become ABRAHAM, DEI GRATIA REX, — they cannot have duly pondered his letter of June 12th, in which he unbosoms himself with the simplicity of a rustic lover called upon by an anxious parent to explain his intentions. The force of his argument is not at all injured by the homeliness of his illustrations. The American people are not much afraid that their liberties will be usurped. An army of legislators is not very likely to throw away its political privileges, and the idea of a despotism resting on an open ballot-box, is like that of Bunker Hill Monument built on the waves of Boston Harbor. We know pretty nearly how much of sincerity there is in



the fears so clamorously expressed, and how far they are found in company with uncompromising hostility to the armed enemies of the Nation. We have learned to put a true value on the services of the watch-dog who bays the moon, but does not bite the thief !

The men who are so busy holy-stoning the quarter-deck, while all hands are wanted to keep the ship afloat, can no doubt show spots upon it that would be very unsightly in fair weather. No thoroughly loyal man, however, need suffer from any arbitrary exercise of power, such as emergencies always give rise to. If any half-loyal man forgets his code of half decencies and half duties so far as to become obnoxious to the peremptory justice which takes the place of slower forms in all centres of conflagration, there is no sympathy for him among the soldiers who are risking their lives for us ; perhaps there is even more satisfaction than when an avowed traitor is caught and punished. For of all men who are loathed by generous natures, such as fill the ranks of the armies of the Union, none are so thoroughly loathed as the men who contrive to keep just within the limits of the law, while their whole conduct provokes others to break it ; whose patriotism consists in stopping an inch short of treason, and whose political morality has for its safeguard a just respect for the jailer and the hangman ! The

simple preventive against all possible injustice a citizen is like to suffer at the hands of a government which in its need and haste must of course commit many errors, is to take care to do nothing that will directly or indirectly help the enemy, or hinder the government in carrying on the war. When the clamor against usurpation and tyranny comes from citizens who can claim this negative merit, it may be listened to. When it comes from those who have done what they could to serve their country, it will receive the attention it deserves. Doubtless there may prove to be wrongs which demand righting, but the pretence of any plan for changing the essential principle of our self-governing system is a figment which its contrivers laugh over among themselves. Do the citizens of Harrisburg, or of Philadelphia, quarrel to-day about the strict legality of an executive act meant in good faith for their protection against the invader? We are all citizens of Harrisburg, all citizens of Philadelphia, in this hour of their peril, and with the enemy at work in our own harbors we begin to understand the difference between a good and bad citizen; the man that helps and the man that hinders; the man who, while the pirate is in sight, complains that our anchor is dragging in his mud, and the man who violates the proprieties, like our brave Portland brothers, when they jumped on board the



first steamer they could reach, cut her cable, and bore down on the Corsair, with a habeas corpus act that lodged twenty buccaneers in Fort Preble before sunset!

We cannot, then, we cannot be circling inward to be swallowed up in the whirlpool of national destruction. If our borders are invaded, it is only as the spur that is driven into the courser's flank to rouse his slumbering mettle. If our property is taxed, it is only to teach us that liberty is worth paying for as well as fighting for. We are pouring out the most generous blood of our youth and manhood; alas! this is always the price that must be paid for the redemption of a people. What have we to complain of, whose granaries are choking with plenty, whose streets are gay with shining robes and glittering equipages, whose industry is abundant enough to reap all its overflowing harvest, yet sure of employment and of its just reward, the soil of whose mighty valleys is an inexhaustible mine of fertility, whose mountains cover up such stores of heat and power, imprisoned in their coal measures, as would warm all the inhabitants and work all the machinery of our planet for unnumbered ages, whose rocks pour out rivers of oil, whose streams run yellow over beds of golden sand, — what have we to complain of?

Have we degenerated from our English fathers, so that we cannot do and bear for our national salvation what they have done and borne, over and over again, for their form of government? Could England, in her wars with Napoleon, bear an income tax of ten per cent., and must we faint under the burden of an income tax of three per cent.? Was she content to negotiate a loan at fifty-three for the hundred, and that paid in depreciated paper, and can we talk about financial ruin with our national stocks ranging from one to eight or nine above par, and the "five-twenty" war loan eagerly taken by our own people to the amount of nearly two hundred millions, without any check to the flow of the current pressing inwards against the doors of the Treasury? Except in those portions of the country which are the immediate seat of war, or liable to be made so, and which, having the greatest interest not to become the border states of hostile nations, can best afford to suffer now, the state of prosperity and comfort is such as to astonish those who visit us from other countries. What are war taxes to a nation which, as we are assured on good authority, has more men worth a million now, than it had worth ten thousand dollars at the close of the Revolution, — whose whole property is a hundred times, and whose commerce, inland and foreign, is five



hundred times what it was then? But we need not study Mr. Stillé's pamphlet and "Thompson's Bank Note Reporter," to show us what we know well enough — that so far from having occasion to tremble in fear of our impending ruin, we must rather blush for our material prosperity. For the multitudes who are unfortunate enough to be taxed for a million or more of course we must feel deeply, at the same time suggesting that the more largely they report their incomes to the tax-gatherer, the more consolation they will find in the feeling that they have served their country. But — let us say it plainly — it will not hurt our people to be taught that there are other things to be cared for besides money making and money spending; that the time has come when manhood must assert itself by brave deeds and noble thoughts; when womanhood must assume its most sacred office, "to warn, to comfort," and, if need be, "to command" those whose services their country calls for. This Northern section of the land has become a great variety shop, of which the Atlantic cities are the long-extended counter. We have grown rich for what? To put gilt bands on coachmen's hats? To sweep the foul sidewalks with the heaviest silks which the toiling artisans of France can send us? To look through plate-glass windows, and pity the brown soldiers,—

or sneer at the black ones? to reduce the speed of trotting horses a second or two below its old minimum? to color meerschaums? to flaunt in laces, and sparkle in diamonds? to dredge our maidens' hair with gold-dust? to float through life, the passive shuttlecocks of fashion, from the avenues to the beaches, and back again from the beaches to the avenues? Was it for this that the broad domain of the Western hemisphere was kept so long unvisited by civilization? — for this, that Time, the father of empires, unbound the virgin zone of this youngest of his daughters, and gave her, beautiful in the long veil of her forests, to the rude embrace of the adventurous Colonist? All this is what we see around us, now, — now, while we are actually fighting this great battle, and supporting this great load of indebtedness. Wait till the diamonds go back to the Jews of Amsterdam; till the plate-glass window bears the fatal announcement, *For Sale or to Let*; till the voice of our Miriam is obeyed, as she sings,

“Weave no more silks, ye Lyons looms!”

till the gold-dust is combed from the golden locks, and hoarded to buy bread; till the fast-driving youth smokes his clay-pipe on the platform of the horse-car; till the music-grinders cease because none will



pay them ; till there are no peaches in the windows at twenty-four dollars a dozen, and no heaps of bananas and pine-apples selling at the street-corners ; till the ten-flounced dress has but three flounces, and it is felony to drink champagne ; — wait till these changes show themselves, the signs of deeper wants, the preludes of exhaustion and bankruptcy ; then let us talk of the Maelstrom ; — but till then, let us not be cowards with our purses, while brave men are emptying their hearts upon the earth for us ; let us not whine over our imaginary ruin, while the reversed current of circling events is carrying us farther and farther, every hour, beyond the influence of the great failing which was born of our wealth, and of the deadly sin which was our fatal inheritance !

Let us take a brief general glance at the wide field of discussion we are just leaving.

On Friday, the twelfth day of the month of April, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and sixty-one, at half-past four of the clock in the afternoon, a cannon was aimed and fired by the authority of South Carolina at the wall of a fortress belonging to the United States. Its ball carried with it the hatreds, the rages of thirty years, shaped and cooled in the mould of malignant deliberation. Its wad

was the charter of our national existence. Its muzzle was pointed at the stone which bore the symbol of our national sovereignty. As the echoes of its thunder died away, the telegraph clicked one word through every office of the land. That word was WAR!

War is a child that devours its nurses one after another until it is claimed by its true parents. This war has eaten its way backward through all the technicalities of lawyers, learned in the infinitesimals of ordinances and statutes ; through all the casuistries of divines, experts in the differential calculus of conscience and duty, until it stands revealed to all men as the natural and inevitable conflict of two incompatible forms of civilization, one or the other of which must dominate the central zone of the continent, and eventually claim the hemisphere for its development.

We have reached the region of those broad principles and large axioms which the wise Romans, the world's lawgivers, always recognized as above all special enactments. We have come to that solid substratum acknowledged by Grotius in his great Treatise : "Necessity itself, which reduces things to the mere right of Nature." The old rules which were enough for our guidance in quiet times, have become as meaningless "as moonlight on the dial



of the day." We have followed precedents as long as they could guide us; now we must make precedents for the ages which are to succeed us.

If we are frightened from our object by the money we have spent, the current prices of United States stocks show that we value our nationality at only a small fraction of our wealth. If we feel that we are paying too dearly for it in the blood of our people, let us recall those grand words of Samuel Adams :

"I should advise persisting in our struggle for liberty, though it were revealed from heaven that nine hundred and ninety-nine were to perish, and only one of a thousand were to survive and retain his liberty!"

What we want now is a strong purpose; the purpose of Luther, when he said in repeating his Pater Noster, *fiat voluntas MEA*, — let *my* will be done; though he considerately added *quia Tua*, — because my will is Thine. We want the virile energy of determination which made the oath of Andrew Jackson sound so like the devotion of an ardent saint that the recording angel might have entered it unquestioned among the prayers of the faithful.

War is a grim business. Two years ago our women's fingers were busy making "Havelocks." It seemed to us then as if the Havelock made half

the soldier ; and now we smile to think of those days of inexperience and illusion. We know now what War means, and we cannot look its dull, dead ghastliness in the face unless we feel that there is some great and noble principle behind it. It makes little difference what we thought we were fighting for at first ; we know what we are fighting for now, and what we are fighting against.

We are fighting for our existence. We say to those who would take back their several contributions to that undivided unity which we call the Nation ; the bronze is cast ; the statue is on its pedestal ; you cannot reclaim the brass you flung into the crucible ! There are rights, possessions, privileges, policies, relations, duties, acquired, retained, called into existence in virtue of the principle of absolute solidarity, — belonging to the United States as an organic whole, — which cannot be divided, which none of its constituent parties can claim as its own, which perish out of its living frame when the wild forces of rebellion tear it limb from limb, and which it must defend, or confess self-government itself a failure.

We are fighting for that Constitution upon which our national existence reposes, now subjected by those who fired the scroll on which it was written from the cannon at Fort Sumter, to all those chances



which the necessities of war entail upon every human arrangement, but still the venerable charter of our wide Republic.

We cannot fight for these objects without attacking the one mother cause of all the progeny of lesser antagonisms. Whether we know it or not, whether we mean it or not, we cannot help fighting against the system that has proved the source of all those miseries which the author of the Declaration of Independence trembled to anticipate. And this ought to make us willing to do and to suffer cheerfully. There were Holy Wars of old, in which it was glory enough to die, wars in which the one aim was to rescue the sepulchre of Christ from the hands of infidels. The sepulchre of Christ is not in Palestine! He rose from that burial-place more than eighteen hundred years ago. He is crucified wherever his brothers are slain without cause; he lies buried wherever man, made in his Maker's image, is entombed in ignorance lest he should learn the rights which his Divine Master gave him! This is our Holy War, and we must fight it against that great General who will bring to it all the powers with which he fought against the Almighty before he was cast down from Heaven. He has retained many a cunning advocate to recruit for him; he has bribed many a smooth-tongued preach-

er to be his chaplain; he has engaged the sordid by their avarice, the timid by their fears, the profligate by their love of adventure, and thousands of nobler natures by motives which we can all understand; whose delusion we pity as we ought always to pity the error of those who know not what they do. Against him or for him we are all called upon to declare ourselves. There is no neutrality for any single true-born American. If any seek such a position, the stony finger of Dante's awful Muse points them to their place in the antechamber of the Halls of Despair,

— "with that ill band

Of angels mixed, who nor rebellious proved,  
Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves  
Were only." —

— "Fame of them the world hath none

Nor suffers; mercy and justice scorn them both.  
Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by."

We must use all the means which God has put into our hands to serve Him against the enemies of civilization. We must make and keep the great river free, whatever it costs us; it is strapping up the forefoot of the wild, untamable rebellion. We must not be too nice in the choice of our agents. *Non eget Mauri jaculis*, — no African bayonets wanted, — was well enough while we did not yet know



the might of that desperate giant we had to deal with ; but *Tros*, *Tyriusve*, — white or black, — is the safer motto now ; for a good soldier, like a good horse, cannot be of a bad color. The iron-skins, as well as the iron-clads, have already done us noble service, and many a mother will clasp the returning boy, many a wife will welcome back the war-worn husband, whose smile would never again have gladdened his home, but that, cold in the shallow trench of the battle-field, lies the half-buried form of the unchained bondsman whose dusky bosom sheaths the bullet which would else have claimed that darling as his country's sacrifice !

We shall have success if we truly *will* success, — not otherwise. It may be long in coming, — Heaven only knows through what trials and humblings we may have to pass before the full strength of the Nation is duly arrayed and led to victory. We must be patient, as our fathers were patient ; even in our worst calamities we must remember that defeat itself may be a gain where it costs our enemy more in relation to his strength than it costs ourselves. But if, in the inscrutable providence of the Almighty, this generation is disappointed in its lofty aspirations for the race, if we have not virtue enough to ennoble our whole people, and make it a nation of sovereigns, we shall at least hold in undying honor

those who vindicated the insulted majesty of the Republic, and struck at her assailants so long as a drum-beat summoned them to the field of duty.

Citizens of Boston, sons and daughters of New England, men and women of the North, brothers and sisters in the bond of the American Union, you have among you the scarred and wasted soldiers who have shed their blood for your temporal salvation. They bore your Nation's emblems bravely through the fire and smoke of the battle-field; nay, their own bodies are starred with bullet-wounds and striped with sabre-cuts, as if to mark them as belonging to their Country until their dust becomes a portion of the soil which they defended. In every Northern graveyard slumber the victims of this destroying struggle. Many whom you remember playing as children amidst the clover blossoms of our Northern fields, sleep under nameless mounds with strange Southern wild flowers blooming over them. By those wounds of living heroes, by those graves of fallen martyrs, by the hopes of your children, and the claims of your children's children yet unborn, in the name of outraged honor, in the interest of violated sovereignty, for the life of an imperilled Nation, for the sake of men everywhere and of our common humanity, for the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom on earth, your Country



calls upon you to stand by her through good report and through evil report, in triumph and in defeat, until she emerges from the great war of Western civilization, Queen of the broad continent, Arbitress in the councils of earth's emancipated peoples; until the flag that fell from the wall of Fort Sumter floats again inviolate, supreme, over all her ancient inheritance, every fortress, every capital, every ship, and this warring land is once more a United Nation!