

ording to the South Carolina Ordinance, may be rightfully annulled, unless it be so framed as no law ever will or can be framed. Congress have a right to pass laws for raising revenue, and each State have a right to oppose their execution—two rights directly opposed to each other—and yet is this absurdity supposed to be contained in an instrument drawn for the express purpose of avoiding collisions between the States and the General Government, by an assembly of the most enlightened statesmen and purest patriots ever embodied for a similar purpose.

In vain have these sages declared that Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises—in vain have they provided that they shall have power to pass laws which shall be necessary and proper to carry those powers into execution, that those laws and that Constitution shall be the “supreme law of the land, and that the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any thing in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.” In vain have the people of the several States solemnly sanctioned these provisions, made them their paramount law, and individually sworn to support them whenever they were called on to execute any office. Vain provisions! ineffectual restrictions! vile profanation of oaths! miserable mockery of legislation!—if a bare majority of the voters in any one State may, on a real or supposed knowledge of the intent with which a law has been passed, declare themselves free from its operation; say here it gives too little, there too much, and operates unequally; here it suffers articles to be free that ought to be taxed; there it taxes those that ought to be free; in this case the proceeds are intended to be applied to purposes which we do not approve; in that the amount raised is more than is wanted. Congress it is true are invested by the Constitution with the right of deciding these questions according to their sound discretion: Congress is composed of the representatives of all the States and of all the people of all the States; but we, part of the people of one State, to whom the Constitution has given no power on the subject, from whom it has expressly taken it away; we, who have solemnly agreed that this Constitution shall be our laws; we, now abrogate this law and swear, and force others to swear, that it shall not be obeyed. And we do this, not because Congress have no right to pass such laws; this we do not allege, but because they have passed them with improper views. They are unconstitutional from the motives of those who passed them, which we can never with certainty know; from their unequal operation, although it is impossible from the nature of things that they should be equal; and from the disposition which we presume may be made of their proceeds, altho’ that disposition has not been declared. This is the plain meaning of the Ordinance in relation to laws which it abrogates for alleged unconstitutionality. But it does not stop there. It repeals, in express terms, an important part of the Constitution itself and of laws passed to give it effect which have never been alleged to be unconstitutional. The Constitution declares that the judicial powers of the United States extend to cases arising under the laws of the United States, and that such laws, the Constitution and treaties, shall be paramount to the State Constitutions and laws. The judiciary act prescribes the mode by which the case may be brought before a Court of the United States, by appeal, when a State tribunal shall decide against this provision of the Constitution. The Ordinance declares there shall be no appeal, makes the State law paramount to the Constitution and laws of the United States; forces judges and jurors to swear that they will disregard their provisions; and even makes it penal in a suitor to attempt relief by appeal. It further declares that it shall not be lawful for the authorities of the United States, or of that State, to enforce the payment of duties imposed by the revenue laws within its limits.

Here is a law of the United States not even pretended to be unconstitutional, repealed by the authority of the voters of a single State. Here is a provision of the Constitution which is solemnly abrogated by the same authority.

On such expositions and reasonings the Ordinance grounds not only the assertion of the right to annul the laws of which it complains, but to enforce it by a threat of seceding from the Union if any attempt is made to execute them.

This right to secede is deduced from the nature of the Constitution, which they say is a compact between sovereign States, who have preserved their whole sovereignty, and therefore are subject to no superior: that because they made the compact, they can break it, when, in their opinion, it has been departed from by the other States. Fallacious as this course of reasoning is, it enlists State pride, and finds advocates in the honest prejudices of those who have not studied the nature of our Government sufficiently to see the radical error on which it rests.

The people of the United States formed the Constitution, acting through the State Legislatures in making the compact, to meet and discuss its provisions, and acting in separate conventions when they ratified those provisions: but the terms used in its construction, show it to be a government in which the people of all the States collectively are represented. We are ONE PEOPLE in the choice of the President and Vice President. Here the States have no other agency than to direct the mode in which the votes shall be given. The candidates having the majority of all the votes are chosen. The electors of a majority of States may have given their votes for one candidate and yet another may be cho-

sen. The people, then, and not the States, are represented in the Executive branch.

In the House of Representatives there is this difference, that the people of one State do not, as in the case of President and Vice President, all vote for the same officers. The people of all the States do not vote for all the members, each State electing only its own representatives. But this creates no material distinction. When chosen, they are all representatives of the United States, not representatives of the particular State from which they come. They are paid by the United States, not by the State; nor are they accountable to it for any act done in the performance of their legislative functions; and however they may in practice, as it is their duty to do, consult and prefer the interests of their particular constituents when they come in conflict with any other partial or local interests, yet it is their first and highest duty, as representatives of the United States to promote the general good.

The Constitution of the United States then forms a government, not a league, and whether it be formed by compact between the States, or in any other manner, its character is the same. It is a government in which all the people are represented, which operates directly on the people individually; not upon the States—they retained all the power they did not grant. But each State having expressly parted with so many powers as to constitute jointly with the other States a single Nation, cannot from that period possess any right to secede, because such secession does not break a league, but destroys the unity of a Nation, and any injury to that unity is not only a breach which would result from the contravention of the compact, but it is an offence against the whole Union. To say that any State may at pleasure secede from the Union, is to say that the United States is not a Nation, because it would be a solecism to contend that any part of a Nation might dissolve its connexion with the other parts, to their injury or ruin, without committing any offence. Secession, like any other revolutionary act, may be morally justified by the extremity of oppression; but to call it a constitutional right, is confounding the meaning of terms, and can only be done through gross error, or to deceive those who are willing to assert a right, but would pause before they made a revolution or incur the penalties consequent on a failure.

Because the Union was formed by compact, it is said that the parties to that compact may, when they feel themselves aggrieved, depart from it: but it is precisely because it is a compact that they cannot. A compact is an agreement or binding obligation. It may by its terms have a sanction or penalty for its breach or it may not. If it contains no sanction, it may be broken with no other consequence than moral guilt: if it have a sanction, then the breach incurs the designated or implied penalty. A league between independent nations, generally, has no sanction other than a moral one, or if it should contain a penalty, as there is no common superior, it cannot be enforced. A Government, on the contrary, always has a sanction, express or implied; and in our case it is both necessarily implied and expressly given. An attempt by force of arms to destroy a Government, is an offence, by whatever means the constitutional compact may have been formed; and such Government has the right, by the law of self-defence, to pass acts for punishing the offender, unless that right is modified, restrained or resumed by the constitutional act. In our system, although it is modified in the case of treason, yet authority is expressly given to pass all laws necessary to carry its powers into effect, and under this grant provision has been made for punishing acts which obstruct the due administration of the laws.

It would seem superfluous to add any thing to show the nature of that Union which connects us; but as erroneous opinions on this subject are the foundation of doctrines the most destructive to our peace, I must give some further development to my views on this subject. No one, fellow citizens, has a higher reverence for the reserved rights of the States, than the Magistrate who now addresses you. No one would make greater personal sacrifices, or official exertions, to defend them from violation; but equal care must be taken to prevent on their part an improper interference with, or resumption of, the rights they have vested in the nation.

The line has not been so distinctly drawn as to avoid doubts in some cases of the exercise of power. Men of the best intentions and soundest views may differ in their construction of some parts of the Constitution: but there are others on which dispassionate reflection can leave no doubt. Of this nature appears to be the assumed right of secession. It rests, as we have seen, on the alleged undivided sovereignty of the States, and on their having formed in this sovereign capacity a compact which is called the Constitution, from which, because they made it, they have the right to secede. Both of these positions are erroneous, and some of the arguments to prove them so have been anticipated.

The States severally have not retained their entire sovereignty. It has been shown that in becoming parts of a nation, not members of a league, they surrendered many of their essential parts of sovereignty. The right to make treaties—declare war—levy taxes—exercise exclusive judicial and legislative powers—were all of them functions of sovereign power. The States, then, for all these important purposes, were no longer sovereign. The allegiance of their citizens was transferred in the first instance to the government of the United States. They became American citizens, and owed obedience to the Constitution of the United States, and to laws made in confor-

mity with the powers it vested in Congress. This last position has not been, and cannot be denied. How then can that State be said to be sovereign and independent whose citizens owe obedience to laws not made by it, and whose magistrates are sworn to disregard those laws when they come in conflict with those passed by another? What shows conclusively that the States cannot be said to have reserved an undivided sovereignty, is that they expressly ceded the right to punish treason, not treason against their separate power, but treason against the United States. Treason is an offence against sovereignty, and sovereignty must reside with the power to punish it. But the reserved rights of the States are not less sacred because they have for their common interest made the general government the depository of these powers.

The unity of our political character (as has been shown for another purpose) commenced with its very existence. Under the royal government we had no separate character; our opposition to its oppressions began as united colonies. We were the United States under the confederation, and the name was perpetuated and the Union rendered more perfect by the Federal Constitution. In none of these stages did we consider ourselves in any other light than as forming one nation. Treaties and alliances were made in the name of all. Troops were raised for the joint defence. How then, with all these proofs, that under all changes of our position we had, for designated purposes and defined powers, created national governments—how is it that the most perfect of those several modes of union should now be considered as a mere league that may be dissolved at pleasure? It is from an abuse of terms. Compact is used as synonymous with league, although the true term is not employed, because it would at once show the fallacy of the reasoning. It would not do to say that our Constitution was only a league; but it is labored to prove it a compact, (which in one sense it is,) and then to argue that as a league is a compact, every compact between nations must of course be a league, and that from such an engagement every sovereign power has a right to recede. But it has been shown that in this sense the States are not sovereign, and that even if they were and the national Constitution had been formed by compact, there would be no right in any one State to exonerate itself from its obligations.

So obvious are the reasons which forbid this secession, that it is necessary only to allude to them. The Union was formed for the benefit of all. It was produced by mutual sacrifices of interests and opinions. Can those sacrifices be recalled? Can the States, who magnanimously surrendered their title to the territories of the west, recal the grant? Will the inhabitants of the inland States agree to pay the duties that may be imposed without their assent by those on the Atlantic or the Gulf, for their own benefit? Shall there be a free port in one State and onerous duties in another? No one believes that any right exists in a single State to involve all the others in these and countless other evils contrary to engagements solemnly made. Every one must see that the other States, in self-defence must oppose it at all hazards.

These are the alternatives that are presented by the Convention: A repeal of all acts for raising revenue, leaving the Government without the means of support; or an acquiescence in the dissolution of our Union by the secession of one of its members. When the first was proposed, it was known that it could not be listened to for a moment. It was known if force was applied to oppose the execution of the laws, that it must be repelled by force—that Congress could not, without involving itself in disgrace and the country in ruin, accede to the proposition; and yet, if this is not done in a given day or if any attempt is made to execute the laws, the State is, by the Ordinance, declared to be out of the Union. The majority of a Convention assembled for that purpose have dictated these terms, or rather this rejection of all terms, in the name of the people of South Carolina. It is true that the Governor of the State speaks of the submission of their grievances to a Convention of all the States; which, he says, they “sincerely and anxiously seek and desire.” Yet this obvious and constitutional mode of obtaining the sense of the other States on the construction of the federal compact, and amending it, if necessary, has never been attempted by those who have urged the State on to this destructive measure. The State might have proposed the call for a General Convention to the other States; and Congress, if a sufficient number of them concurred, must have called it. But the first Magistrate of South Carolina, when he expressed a hope that, “on a review by Congress and the functionaries of the General Government of the merits of the controversy,” such a Convention will be accorded to them, must have known that neither Congress nor any functionary of the General Government has authority to call such a Convention, unless it be demanded by two-thirds of the States. This suggestion, then is another instance of the reckless inattention to the provisions of the Constitution with which this crisis has been madly hurried on; or of the attempt to persuade the people that a constitutional remedy had been sought and refused. If the Legislature of South Carolina “anxiously desire” a General Convention to consider their complaints, why have they not made application for it in the way the Constitution points out? The assertion that they “earnestly seek” it is completely negated by the omission.

This, then, is the position in which we stand. A small majority of the citizens of one State in the Union have elected delegates to a State Convention: that

Convention has ordained that all the revenue laws of the United States must be repealed, or that they are no longer a member of the Union. The Governor of that State has recommended to the Legislature the raising of an army to carry the secession into effect, and that he may be empowered to give clearances to vessels in the name of the State. No act of violent opposition to the laws has yet been committed, but such a state of things is hourly apprehended, and it is the intent of this instrument to PROCLAIM not only that the duty imposed on me by the Constitution “to take care that the laws be faithfully executed,” shall be performed to the extent of the powers already vested in me by law, or of such others as the wisdom of Congress shall devise and entrust to me for that purpose; but to warn the citizens of South Carolina, who have been deluded into an opposition to the laws, of the danger they will incur by obedience to the illegal and disorganizing Ordinance of the Convention—to exhort those who have refused to support it to persevere in their determination to uphold the Constitution and laws of their country, and to point out to all, the perilous situation into which the good people of that State have been led—and that the course they are urged to pursue is one of ruin and disgrace to the very State whose rights they affect to support.

Fellow citizens of my native State!—Let me not only admonish you, as the first Magistrate of our common country, not to incur the penalty of its laws, but use the influence that a father would over his children whom he saw rushing to certain ruin. In that paternal language, with that paternal feeling, let me tell you, my countrymen, that you are deluded by men who are either deceived themselves or wish to deceive you. Mark under what pretences you have been led on to the brink of insurrection and treason, on which you stand! First a diminution of the value of your staple commodity, lowered by over production in other quarters and the consequent diminution in the value of your lands, were the sole effect of the Tariff laws. The effect of those laws were confessedly injurious, but the evil was greatly exaggerated by the unfounded theory you were taught to believe, that its burthens were in proportion to your exports, not to your consumption of imported articles. Your pride was roused by the assertion that a submission to those laws was a state of vassalage, and that resistance to them was equal, in patriotic merit, to the opposition our fathers offered to the oppressive laws of Great Britain. You were told that this opposition might be peaceably—might be constitutionally made—that you might enjoy all the advantages of the Union and bear none of its burthens. Eloquent appeals to your passions, to your State pride, to your native courage, to your sense of real injury, were used to prepare you for the period when the mask which concealed the hideous features of DISUNION, should be taken off. It fell, and you were made to look with complacency on objects which not long since you would have regarded with horror. Look back to the arts which have brought you to this state—look forward to the consequences to which it must inevitably lead! Look back to what was first told you as an inducement to enter into this dangerous course. The great political truth was repeated to you, that you had the revolutionary right of resisting all laws that were palpably unconstitutional and intolerably oppressive—it was added that the right to nullify a law rested on the same principle, but that it was a peaceable remedy! This character which was given to it, made you receive with too much confidence the assertions that were made of the unconstitutionality of the law and its oppressive effects. Mark, my fellow citizens, that by the admission of your leaders the unconstitutionality must be palpable, or it will not justify either resistance or nullification! What is the meaning of the word *palpable* in the sense in which it is here used?—that which is apparent to every one, that which no man of ordinary intellect will fail to perceive. Is the unconstitutionality of these laws of that description? Let those among your leaders who once approved of the principle of protective duties, answer the question; and let them choose whether they will be considered as incapable, then, of perceiving that which must have been apparent to every man of common understanding, or as imposing upon your confidence and endeavoring to mislead you now. In either case, they are unsafe guides in the perilous path they urge you to tread. Ponder well on this circumstance, and you will know how to appreciate the exaggerated language they address to you. They are not champions of liberty emulating the fame of our revolutionary fathers, nor are you an oppressed people, contending, as they repeat to you, against worse than colonial vassalage. You are free members of a flourishing and happy Union. There is no settled design to oppress you. You have indeed felt the unequal operation of laws which may have been unwisely, not unconstitutionally passed; but that inequality must necessarily be removed. At the very moment when you were madly urged on to the unfortunate course you have begun, a change in public opinion had commenced. The nearly approaching payment of the public debt, and the consequent necessity of a diminution of duties, had already produced a considerable reduction, and that too on some articles of general consumption in your State. The importance of this change was underrated, and you were authoritatively told that no further alleviation of your burthens was to be expected at the very time when the condition of the country imperiously demanded such a modification of the duties as should reduce them to a just and equitable scale. But, as if apprehensive of the effect of this change in allaying your discontents, you were precipitated into the fearful state in which you now find yourselves. (continued on the 4th page.)

☞ The Charleston (S. C.) Mercury says: To the questions propounded to us by a friend in the country, we reply—that the U. S. troops stationed here are not quartered in the city, but in the forts. There number is about 600 or 700.

☞ The Fayetteville Observer of Tuesday last says:—A second express passed through this place on Friday night last, with despatches from the Secretary of the Treasury—it returned on Monday last about noon.

☞ The Governor of Georgia has pardoned the Missionaries who have been so long confined in the Penitentiary.

☞ The citizens of Richmond, Va. have decided, by a vote of 285 to 8, to subscribe \$400,000 to the James river and Kenawha improvement.