SECTIONALISM

By JOHN B. KNOX
President of The Constitutional Convention of Alabama of 1901.

The point of view of a Southern man sincerely presented in a letter to a friend in the North.

I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against an whole people. The question is not whether you have the right to render your people miserable, but whether it is not your interest to make them happy. * * If you mean to please any people you must give them the boon which they ask, not what you may think better for them, but of a kind totally different.—Edmund Burke.
MR. DEFOREST PAINE,
Detroit, Michigan.
Dear Mr. Paine:

Some think there is nothing in mental telepathy, but I've had a few experiences which lead me to believe there must be something in it. When it operates and how it operates I do not know. It must be, however, something like wireless telegraphy. These instruments, you know, will not receive messages unless they are attuned to each other.

For several days, I have been thinking about you and reflecting on the same subject you touch upon in your letter, and wondering how I could get your present address, with the view of writing you.

I.

You put the issue, as most folks in your section seem to persist in putting it, as an issue between the North and the South, whereas, it seems to me, the decisive issue in this campaign was one of conservatism versus liberalism. Your map is very impressive, but if you will examine a map of the result of the Presidential election in 1912, similarly shaded, you would see a somewhat decided verdict the other way. You no doubt remember that in the Presidential campaign of 1916 I was emboldened to write Mr. Wilson himself in protest against the marked tendencies he was exhibiting, and which I predicted would land the Democratic party, which heretofore and from its birth had been distinctively conservative, into the lap of the radicals, not to say into Bryanism.

I have had occasion before this to say that the country needs, and must have, two great parties, not sectional, but national, the one a check on the other, the principles and policies of which are openly stated and sincerely advocated before the bar of public opinion. Our danger is not in constitutional government, but in personal government, backed by secret organizations, which in our day seem to multiply with remarkable rapidity. Our danger is not in party control, but in secret group control. Secret group control is a menace to good government, without regard to whether it proceeds from labor unions, Catholic unions, Protestant unions, brewery unions, anti-saloon league unions, or anarchistic or auto-
cratic unions! The truth ought never to be afraid of the daylight, never afraid to confront full, frank, and free discussion and examination out in the open.

It is some symptom in favor of a demand for openness of discussion of public questions when Mr. Barrett, editor and proprietor of the Birmingham Age-Herald, a leading Democratic paper in this state, in a signed editorial the other day, declared that for four years this country has been governed by two men—Mr. Wilson and Mr. Gompers!

Those of us who have felt some hesitation as to the surrender of American liberty and American independence, which might be involved in the creation of a super-state, with a majority interest against us, and the adoption of the covenant for the League of Nations, just in the form as presented by Mr. Wilson, will find some support in the attitude of Lord Beaconfield's government in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, when Mr. Gladstone, it was charged, would have imperiled the British Empire to alleviate the condition of Christians in Armenia and in Constantinople. Combatting this idea in his Guildhall address, Lord Beaconfield said: "Cosmopolitan critics, men who are friends of every country save their own, have denounced this policy as a selfish policy. My Lord Mayor, it is as selfish as patriotism!" His Lordship might have further enforced his argument by showing that Mr. Gladstone, as a member of Lord Aberdeen's Government in his Manchester speech (1853) on the issue which led to the Crimean War, had openly advocated the identical position which he now condemned, namely, that England's Empire in India forced her to defend the independence of Turkey and defeat Russia's efforts to seize Constantinople.

Pending the debate in the senate, Mr. Wilson in his letter to Senator Hitchcock expressed the view that there could be no difficulty about the meaning of Section "X", since it was understood between him, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Orlando, that the United States was not to be bound by the obligations of Section "X" of the covenant, except in case of approval by Congress in each instance as the occasion for action arose, albeit no such condition or qualification is embodied in the covenant either by direct expression, or necessary implication. If this was his real view, for the life of me, I have been unable to comprehend how he
could say it would destroy the life of the covenant to so change it as to make it mean what he said it did mean!

Every lawyer knows, or ought to know, of course, that a solemn covenant among nations, as well as an agreement in writing among individuals, is to be construed from the four corners of the paper, and that mutual understandings and verbal negotiations not embodied in the agreement become nugatory, and will not even be received in evidence to explain, add to, or take from the obligations which are expressed.

Again, any question as to the authority of the government agent to bind the government to the full extent of the covenant as written, would seem to be satisfied and put at an end when the government accepts and ratifies the covenant as written without amendment, qualification, or reservation. Besides, such a covenant as this might continue in force for many years, and who is to prove secret understandings and verbal agreements de hors the record, when the witnesses, who alone have knowledge of the facts, have passed to the great beyond!

To illustrate, I engage you to draw a deed conveying a farm containing a thousand acres, upon which is the family cemetery, where all who are dear to me are buried, and which I wish to reserve. The deed when drawn covers the entire tract and without exception or reservation, but you explain to me that you have an understanding with the purchaser that the cemetery is not included! Would I not be warranted in saying: "Put your understanding in the deed, or I'll never sign it while the world stands!"

And finally, in this connection, one word as to the alleged right of withdrawal which is supposed to be safeguarded by the terms of the covenant. You see in the original instrument as it came from Paris, and which Mr. Wilson and the Council at Paris called a constitution of the League of Nations, and which we now call a covenant, and which means the same by whatever name called, there is no right of withdrawal! But Mr. Wilson corrected this defect, it is claimed, on his return to Paris. He did nothing of the kind. He granted a qualified right of withdrawal which stipulated that no nation could withdraw without first discharging all of its obligations to the League, a question presumably which the
League itself was left to decide! To safeguard American liberty and American independence, you must have something better than Mr. Wilson has expressed a willingness to concede, and which he defines as *clarifying interpretations*!

In the adoption of our Federal Constitution the State of Virginia, and I believe other states, in the act of ratification embodied a distinct reservation of the right to withdraw at pleasure—a right which Mr. Lodge, in his life of Webster, admits was generally conceded at the North as well as at the South—but the attempted exercise of which, we know, culminated in our great Civil War!

This is no mere idle apprehension. I would be untrue to my own most earnest convictions should I hesitate to say now, as I have said before: Establish this new government, make it as Mr. Wilson says he has made it “a vehicle in which power may be varied at the discretion of those who exercise it”—continue it until the majority and dominant interests come to realize what a world power, what a profitable power they possess—and you are likely to find that your alleged right of withdrawal, upon which you so much depended, has become “a mere scrap of paper!”

“You are,” says Alexander I to Tallerand, “always talking to me of principles. As if your public law were anything to me; I do not know what it means. What do you suppose that all your parchments and your treaties signify to me?”

II.
Answering your inquiry, I must say that little shifting of political allegiance may be expected in the South until the dominant element in the North realize the necessity and the duty of assuming a more conciliatory attitude towards our section.

At the close of the Civil War General Grant was sent South to investigate and report upon conditions here. In his report he says: “The citizens of the Southern States are anxious to return to self-government within the Union as soon as possible;” that “during the process of reconstruction they want and require protection from the government;” that “they are in earnest and wish to do what they think is required by the government not humiliating to them as citizens;” and that “if such a course were pointed out they would pursue it in good faith.” “The question,” continued
General Grant, “heretofore dividing the people of the two sections—slavery and the right of secession—the Southern men regard as having been settled forever by the tribunal of arms. I was pleased to learn from the leading men whom I met that they not only accepted the decision as final, but now that the smoke of battle has cleared away and time has been given for reflection, that this decision has been a fortunate one for the whole country.”

Here was an opportunity to treat the people of the South as England treated the impoverished farmer in the Transvaal. But this was not to be. General Grant’s recommendations were rejected, and Mr. Schurz was sent South to investigate and make a different report. In his report he was duly shocked to find that the Southern people, after being defeated in their effort to withdraw from the Union, were exhibiting a disposition to resume control of their affairs! This evil result, in the opinion of Mr. Schurz, as shown in his report, “can be prevented by continuing the control of the national government in the states lately in rebellion until free labor is fully developed and firmly established. This desirable result may be hastened by a firm declaration on the part of the government that national control in the South will not cease until such results are secured.” About the same time and in the same spirit, Senator Boutwell of Massachusetts, announced in the Senate: “We will take the child of the black man and place him side by side with the child of the white man in the Public Schools of the South, and we will bend them to our way of thinking on this subject.”

The policy recommended by Mr. Schurz was adopted, and so far as we can see, has been the policy of the dominant element in the North towards the South from that day down to this. In a cause which she believed to be just and one of self defense, the South had fought to complete exhaustion. In four bloody years she had lost the flower of her youth and those who survived, returned to ruined and devastated homes. General Sheridan made good his promise that he would leave it so if a crow flew over the district, he would have to take his rations with him! The slaves, of course, were liberated without compensation, thereby destroying a property valuation, as estimated by Mr. Blaine, of five thousand million dollars, besides overthrowing our entire labor system which made resuscitation a work of generations!
That slavery should have been abolished no enlightened Southern man will deny, though he may and will have a good deal to say as to the plan adopted for its accomplishment. It became fastened upon the colonists by the tyranny of George III, who resisted all appeals for the suspension of the slave trade. Slavery existed at the North as well as at the South, and was recognized in the Federal Constitution at the formation of our Government. In the North it proved unprofitable, so much so that in New England, as stated by a writer in the American Encyclopedia, the young of slaves were given away. In the South, however, where under the lead of Mr. Jefferson slavery had been most actively resisted, with the invention by Whitney of the Cotton Gin, conditions were reversed, our friends in the North surrendered their slaves to us at the market price and the institution became fastened upon us! But not only were more than four million slaves liberated, they were enfranchised, and by the aid of Federal troops throughout our section, placed in control of practically every state government in the South, when was inaugurated, under the guide of unscrupulous white adventurers from the North, a decade of riot, corruption, and confiscation, which your historians omit to mention and an account of which your publishers hesitate to print!

Crushed and devastated France in 1870, bruised and bleeding under the heel of the Iron Chancellor, although confessedly wrong in precipitating the war, excited the sympathy of the civilized world! The same is true with Belgium and France today, though the plans and the purposes of the despoiler, by allied assistance, were turned into defeat. Without assistance and with little sympathy from any quarter, the people of the South were left to restore their devastated districts, to repair their ruined homes, to recover control of their own affairs, to establish and maintain good government for white and black alike, and if any of them have ever squealed, history makes no record of it. General sympathy is extended to the people of California against the admission of a few Japanese, which they consider a menace to good government in that state, whereas the people of the South have been compelled to live, and still continue to live, under a living menace of millions of the black race, which, should it ever again become dominant, would not only endanger good government for us and for them, but which might endanger our civilization, and convert the South into a veritable San Domingo!
Self preservation is the first law of nature. I led the movement for constitutional reform and for restricted suffrage in this state establishing an educational and property test of qualification, so that our people could safely divide on public questions, and so that, whichever party prevailed, we might feel assured of the maintenance of good government, capably managed and economically administered. This, I feel sure, will come in time, but the end desired has been long deferred by outside interference and the insistent demand of the dominant element in the North that our colored brother, without regard to training or fitness, should be restored to control in this section! Be assured the unanimity with which they press this demand is as difficult for us to understand as it seems difficult for them to understand the unanimity with which we resist it!

Mr. Foraker, in his Reminiscences, unwittingly makes an admission which may shed some light upon the real animus of some people in the North on this question. Speaking not only of his own state, but of other middle Western states, and some Eastern states as well, he says: “The negro vote was so large that it was not only an important, but an essential factor in our consideration. It would not be possible for the Republican party to carry the state if that vote should be arrayed against us.”

And so you see, there is a race problem in the Balkans, in California, in the North, as well as in the South. Any race, anywhere, voting in solido is a menace in popular government. Our fathers resisted the abolition of slavery under the sincere belief that the races could not live side by side peaceably in any other relation. That during these years they have been able to do so in the South, in spite of every effort to embitter their relations politically and personally, is due to the fact that the Southern white man understands the negro and the negro understands him. The relation is one more of affection and appreciation rather than one of oppression. The Southern negro knows that the Southern white man is his best friend, and with the withdrawal of outside interference there will be, it is hoped, little danger but that they may continue to live in peace and harmony. In accordance with what is known to have been Mr. Lincoln’s policy, as he equips and qualifies himself to discharge the responsible duties of citizenship, he should and will be permitted to vote, when it is hoped that he will, here and
elsewhere, vote, *not in solid*, but will divide, as it is hoped the women will divide, and as white men should divide as conscience, principle, and intelligence, and not as sex and racial instinct may direct!

III.

What of the remedy? History repeats itself: “It is a condition and not a theory which confronts us,” and I do not profess to be the master diagnostician! One thing would help some: Let the North cease to condemn the South, and let the South cease to condemn the North. Madame de Remusat records the great Napoleon as saying, that “political hatred is like a pair of spectacles—one sees everybody, every opinion or every sentiment, only through the glass of one’s passions.” Let Republicans show the errors of Democrats, and let Democrats show the errors of Republicans, and both will thereby render a service to the country, but let us all unite to smite sectionalism whenever and wherever it lifts its hydra head! This may cause a few first class funerals in the South, but if you will not take me too seriously, I will warn you in advance, the mortality will be very much greater in the East. He is not a Statesman, he is not a Patriot, he is not a Christian who would perpetuate sectionalism in this country! What is needed is not one section selfishly and brutally seeking to *dominate* another, but high principle and love of country *dominating* every section.

Look at Ireland. Of all the Governments of which we have any knowledge, none has met its great responsibility with more fidelity or greater efficiency than the English Government, and yet it has failed, disastrously failed, in two notable instances, namely, in the course pursued towards its American Colonies and in its attitude towards Ireland. Picture in your mind if you will, what the English speaking people would have been with the colonies retained and Ireland pacified and assimilated! England lost her American Colonies and has made Ireland a reproach to her because she did not understand them, and apparently, as Viscount Morley observes never made any adequate effort to understand them. (1)

Centuries of failure but serve to confirm the wisdom of Lord John Russell when he said: “The true key to our Irish debates was this: that it was not properly borne in mind that as England is inhabited by Englishmen, and Scotland by Scotchmen, so Ireland

(1) Since this letter was written the British Government has adequately met and discharged its duty to Ireland.
is inhabited by Irishmen!” I doubt not, too, that Lord North and George III had time to realize the Statesmanship voiced in Edmund Burke’s great speech on Reconciliation of the American Colonies when he said: “I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against an whole people. The question is not whether you have the right to render your people miserable, but whether it is not to your interest to make them happy.”

Any Statesman with vision enough to see as far as the end of his nose, whether he be democrat or republican, liberal or conservative must recognize that when we come to face the foreign aggressor the robust, breezy, optimistic West, the able and efficient but cold calculating dollar mark East, the brave temperamental and bighearted South, united in justice as brothers upon terms of mutual self respect, is essential to our common safety, essential to the discharge of a sacred trust committed to us by the fathers—the fathers who settled at Jamestown as well as the fathers who settled at Plymouth—to build and establish here in this Western Hemisphere a great Nation which should be second to none in the great family of Nations!

It is in no spirit of acrimony that I venture to inquire if the nature of the Puritan, in England and in America, could have exercised any influence in producing inharmony?

Lord Macaulay, who was not unfriendly to the Puritan, said of him, you know, that “the Puritan hated bearbating, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators.” “Indeed,” he says, “he (the Puritan) generally contrived to enjoy the double pleasure of tormenting both spectators and bear.”

The Puritan will not consent for any one to be happy not even himself, and Wendell Phillips who ought to know as he was one of them, is quoted as saying, that “a Puritan’s idea of hell was a country where every man was permitted to attend to his own business!”

The Yale College Review furnishes another glimpse of the Puritan as he stands upon his native heath. “A visitor to a New England village, wishing to meet and know the Pastor of the village
church, approached a clerical looking person near the church with the inquiry: ‘Do you serve here?’ ‘I rule here’” the Pastor answered.

More than two generations have passed since our War of the Roses was settled at Appomattox, in which both sides fought well in a cause which each was constrained to believe to be just and righteous. Since then, the White Rose and the Red Rose have fought side by side in two wars against a common enemy, and who is it who would question the courage, honor, or patriotism, of our splendid boys in either of these wars without regard to the section from which they came? But sad to relate it is to be feared it is to prove true with us in our War of the Roses, as it proved true with our English ancestors. “Two aristocratical factions, headed by two branches of the royal family,” says Lord Macaulay, “engaged in a long and fierce struggle for supremacy. As the animosity of those factions did not really arise from the dispute of the succession, it lasted long after all ground of dispute about the succession was removed.”

IV.

The provision in our Federal Constitution for equal representation of the States in the Senate of the United States is one of tremendous importance, since it preserved the equality of the Sovereign States forming the Union. Without that supreme condition the Union could not have been formed and would not have lasted long had it been formed. But this provision did not and could not preserve the equality of the sections. Our fathers in forming a Government and in framing a Constitution did not expect a war of sections! In this it seems they failed to take into account the nature of the Puritan. And so we see the first note of discord, the first issue of sectionalism was made by New England, long before any question of slavery arose, over the Louisiana purchase.

The Union of thirteen Sovereign States, united for the general welfare of each and all alike in America, formed, so far as I am advised the first League of Nations. Some American editors attach much importance to expressions by certain delegates to the League of Nations, in session at Geneva, as defining and limiting the nature and extent of the powers of the league, and in the minds of some, such expressions are considered as conclusive, forgetting,
it would seem, that the rights of the parties to the league are declared and fixed by the terms of a written Constitution, which cannot be changed or altered save through the orderly process of amendment.

In view of the great and widespread interest in the subject, it may be of some historical interest, and perhaps of some practical benefit to notice the divergence of view which has been held from time to time by different public men, and different sections, as regards the intent and meaning of the charter of our own League of Nations, as expressed and defined in the Federal Constitution.

The acquisition of Louisiana in 1803, was resisted by New England, as explained by an eminent citizen and United States Senator from the State of Massachusetts, (Mr. Cabot) who said: "The influence of our (the North-eastern) part of the Union, must be diminished by the acquisition of more weight at the other extremity." Had it been England selling us Canada instead of France selling us Louisiana, presumably there would have been hearty approval, or at least no objection! Mr. Pickering, also in the Senate, from the same State about the same time, is bitter, and even threatens secession from the Union: "I will not despair," he said, "I will rather anticipate a new Federation, exempt from the corrupt and corrupting influence and oppression of the Aristocratic democrats of the South. There will be (and our children at farthest will see it) a Separation."

In 1811, pending the discussion of the bill for the admission of Louisiana as a State of the Union, Hon. Josiah Quincy, a member of Congress from Massachusetts, said: "If this bill passes, it is my deliberate opinion that it is virtually a dissolution of the Union; that it will free the States from their moral obligations; and as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, definitely to prepare for a separation—amicably if they can, violently if they must!"

Again, we find, during the war of 1812, when this beloved Union of ours was engaged in a hand to hand conflict with Great Britain, the greatest maritime commercial and military power in the world—engaged in a struggle to vindicate the liberty of our citizens and our right to be recognized as an independent government—we are confronted with the Hartford Convention, when the
States of New England, including delegates from the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, including the territory of Maine not yet admitted as a State, met in Convention to consider measures preparatory to a withdrawal from the Union. And why? Because, in the exercise of an express and undoubted power the Congress of the United States had declared war with England, to vindicate the honor of the country, and the dignity of our common government.

They did not secede, it is true, but the right of secession is asserted with emphasis. They say: “Whenever it shall appear that the causes are radical or permanent, a separation by equitable arrangement will be preferable to an alliance by constraint among nominal friends, but real enemies!”

Great contumely and contempt is sought to be heaped upon Mr. Calhoun and the State of South Carolina because of the doctrine of State interposition commonly called the doctrine of Nullification interposed for the protection of a minority of the States against the protective tariff—1826-1832. State interposition as thus asserted was in no sense a disunion measure. Mr. Calhoun’s idea was that the Federal Government was the creature of the States; that it had no powers except what it acquired from the States. All powers not expressly delegated by necessary implication were reserved to the States respectively, or to the people; that our Government was a union of separate States, and that the Federal Government, which was the creature of the States, did not have the right, in the last resort, to determine the question as to what power was, or was not delegated.

It was argued in opposition to this view that it was within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of the United States to decide such questions; but Mr. Calhoun pointed out, that in the convention which framed the Constitution when it was proposed to invest the Court with this authority, the proposition was defeated. When again it was objected, that, to allow a single state a virtual veto against an act of Congress would in practice wholly undermine the authority of the general Government, Mr. Calhoun pointed out that the power of veto, in the nature of things, could and would be exercised only in extreme cases, and that the resistance of the State, must yield to the action of a convention of three-fourths of the
States in declaring against the construction, or in so amending the Constitution as to invest Congress with power in case of doubtful authority. Mr. Calhoun is sustained in these views in the Virginia Resolutions prepared by Mr. Madison, and in the Kentucky Resolutions prepared by Mr. Jefferson.

When this question came before the Senate it involved not only the action of South Carolina in this case, but the force bill introduced in the Senate to coerce her into submission, and the rights of all the states as they existed at the formation of the Union, and as they existed at the time of the discussion, so far as these rights were qualified by the terms of the Federal Constitution.

Mr. Calhoun came to the Senate to defend South Carolina. He introduced a series of resolutions, asserting what he conceived to be the rights of the States, and a proper construction of the Federal Constitution. The first is sufficient to show the principle asserted: “Resolved, that the people of the several States composing these United States are united as parties to a constitutional compact to which the people of each state acceded as a separate and sovereign community, each binding itself by its own particular ratification; and that the union of which the said compact is the bond, is the union between the states ratifying the same.”

The bill introduced, at the instance of the President, and known as the force bill, was pending before the Senate for consideration, when Mr. Calhoun introduced his resolutions declaratory of his view of the Constitution. Mr. Webster, as was naturally to be expected under the circumstances, supported the administration. Mr. Calhoun, as he himself explained, waited for several days to hear from Mr. Webster, but, Mr. Webster failing to take up the discussion, Mr. Calhoun addressed the Senate in opposition to the administration measure. He purposely refrained from anything but a general reference to his resolutions, holding himself in reserve to reply to Mr. Webster. It was justly regarded as a meeting of the Giants of Debate. Mr. Webster followed Mr. Calhoun, and, instead of addressing himself to the pending bill, directed his attention to the resolutions offered by Mr. Calhoun. He made his main attack upon what he was pleased to characterize as the unconstitutional phraseology of the resolutions, offered by Mr. Calhoun, and objected especially to the terms “constitutional compact”
and "accede" which formed the basis of the resolution, and made a very able argument in support of his position. Thereupon, Mr. Calhoun arose to speak to his resolutions, and delivered what was regarded at the time, and what Mr. Stevens characterizes as, one of the greatest arguments ever delivered in the Senate of the United States. In referring to the terms against which Mr. Webster had directed his main attack, he said he had an authority for the use of these terms, which he hoped would commend itself to the Senator from Massachusetts, since his authority was none other than the Senator himself. He then read from a former speech of Mr. Webster, on the Foote resolutions, where Mr. Webster said: "I go for the Constitution as it is, and for the Union as it is, but I am resolved not to submit in silence to accusations either against myself individually or against the Union, wholly unfounded and unjust—accusations which impute to us a disposition to evade the CONSTITUTIONAL COMPACT, and to extend the power of the Government over the internal laws and domestic concerns of the States."

Senator Lodge, who has written perhaps the best life of Webster, after the lapse of many years, says: "It was probably necessary—at all events, Mr. Webster felt it to be so—to argue that the Constitution at the outset was not a compact between the States, but a national instrument, and to distinguish the cases of Virginia and Kentucky in 1799, and of New England in 1814, from that of South Carolina. The former point he touched upon lightly, the latter he discussed ably, eloquently, ingeniously, and at length. Unfortunately, the facts were against him, in both instances. When the Constitution was adopted by the votes of the States at Philadelphia, and accepted by the votes of States in popular conventions, it is safe to say that there was not a man in the country, from Washington and Hamilton on the one side, to George Clinton and George Mason on the other, who regarded the new instrument as anything but an experiment entered upon by the States, and from which each and every state had the right peaceably to withdraw—a right which was very likely to be exercised."

Mr. Calhoun prevailed. Permit me to quote to you what Mr. Lamar, who had himself been a member of the United States Senate, who was then a member of the cabinet, and became a member of the Supreme Court of the United States, said of Mr. Calhoun, as he appeared in this debate. It is a tribute of one great
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man to another great man, expressed in terms which could scarcely be improved upon. He said:

"Strong in his own conviction of the justice of his cause; self poised in the counsels of his own mind, doing nothing rashly, and yet nothing timidly or doubtfully; ready to immolate himself for the right which his State had entrusted to his defense, this noble, brave man, on whose brow God had set the seal of truth, whose eye beamed bright with the devotion that fired his soul—courage, manliness, sincerity, truth in every tone and look, greatness in every lineament of his countenance—stood alone and prevailed. Yes, prevailed! For the controversy, when closed, was closed by the compromise act which repealed the law that his State had nullified. The very Congress which passed the force bill to coerce South Carolina into submission to the tariff of 1828 and 1832, at the same session repealed those two laws; and Andrew Jackson, the man of iron will and pitiless purpose, in the face of his proclamation, signed the act that swept from the statute book the enactment which South Carolina in her asserted sovereignty had declared unconstitutional, null and void, and inoperative in her limits."

It has not been and is not my purpose to discuss the right or wrong of secession or nullification. I am trying to consider the question dispassionately; I hope, in its historical aspect, as some guide to us, in determining the question as to uniting in the new proposed League of Nations, and if we should unite in it, to emphasize the care with which the rights and independence of this Government should be guarded. At the same time I am also considering the sectional bitterness which began almost with the formation of our Government, and which, unfortunately still exists, with a view of discovering, if possible, some means whereby the evil may be cured, or eradicated.

Nevertheless, I confess, it is difficult for me to understand if it was wrong for South Carolina to take the position she took with reference to the protective tariff of 1826-1832, how it could be right for Massachusetts to take the position which she took, with reference to the annexation of Texas. Notice, if you please, what Mr. Webster's own state has to say on this subject, a little more than ten years after this great debate, to which I have made reference. It says:
“The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, faithful to the COMPACT between the people of the United States, according to the plain meaning and intent in which it was understood by them, is sincerely anxious for its preservation; but that it is determined, as it doubts not other states are, to submit to undelegated powers in no body of men on earth,” and that, “the project of the annexation of Texas, unless arrested at the thresh-hold, may tend to drive these States into a dissolution of the Union.”

The truth is that while one state in the South offered to nullify one provision of the Federal Constitution, seventeen states in the North not only offered to, but actually nullified another provision of the Constitution, equally important, including an act of Congress and the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, upholding the same. Justifying their action, strange to say, practically in the same terms used by Mr. Calhoun in defense of South Carolina. See how Wisconsin expresses herself as late as 1859:

“Resolved, That the government formed by the Constitution of the United States was not made the exclusive or final judge of the extent of the powers delegated to itself, but that, as in all other cases of compact among parties having no common judge, each has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of infractions as of the mode and manner of redress.”

All of which led Mr. Webster, broad and big brained man as he was, to say in his Capon Springs speech, June 28th, 1851:

“I do not hesitate to say, and repeat, that if the Northern States refuse willfully and deliberately to carry into effect that part of the Constitution which respects the restoration of fugitive slaves, and Congress provide no remedy, the South would no longer be bound to observe the COMPACT. A bargain broken on one side is broken on all sides.”

And finally, and without multiplying expressions, permit me to quote what Mr. Wendell Phillips said at a meeting in Boston, in May 1849:

“We confess that we intend to trample under foot the constitution of this country.” And later he declared:
“There is merit in the Republican party. It is this: It is the first sectional party ever organized in this country. * * * It is not national; it is sectional. It is the North arrayed against the South. * * The first crack in the iceberg is visible; you will yet hear it go with a crash through the centre.”

V.

Mr. Lincoln at the Hampton Roads conference said, he recognized that the people of the South were no more responsible for the existence of slavery in this country, than were the people of the North. He said, he personally thought, the South should receive some compensation for its slave property, and that he knew of some in the North, who thought as he did on this subject, but that he could speak for no one but himself. You cannot follow him, however, through all the steps taken in this great controversy, without discovering that he was always troubled in his conscience, over the destruction by force of arms, of five thousand millions of dollars of property, legally and constitutionally acquired, and held, without compensation, and without the offer of compensation.

Of course, the first move for the destruction of slavery was the movement to restrict it to the South proper, by keeping it out of the territories which were the common property of the nation, for, as Dr. Lord, in his Beacon Lights of History, says, Mr. Lincoln believed and contended, “that if slavery could be excluded from the territories it would gradually become extinct as both unprofitable and unjust!”

Of course, if you would confine slavery to the original Southern States, if you kept slavery out of the North West Territory acquired from Virginia, out of the property acquired by the Louisiana purchase, out of Texas, out of the property acquired by our treaty with Mexico at the conclusion of the Mexican war—if you would open all this property, which was acquired under Southern leadership, to emigrants from the North and exclude from it all emigration from the South, you would destroy slavery, just as effectually by indirection and without compensation, as you afterwards destroyed it directly, by force of arms.

The slaves would multiply as they have multiplied from four million to more than ten million, and within such restricted terri-
tory you would neither support them, sell them, nor give them away—they would have been like General Weylers Reconcentrados!

The only just remedy for this great evil of course would have been that adopted by England in the West Indies; namely, gradual emancipation with a measure of compensation.

Dr. Rhodes devotes an entire volume of his history to the discussion of the question of slavery, and he too, seems not a little troubled in conscience over the destruction of the system by force of arms, without compensation, and without the offer of compensation, and finally falls back upon the explanation, that it would not have been accepted, had it been offered. This is perhaps true, but the same justification could be offered, and is sometimes offered by those opposed to foreign missions, for not carrying the Gospel to the heathen! And, please observe that Dr. Rhodes, who is by nature a fair-minded man, winds up his discussion with this admission: “Nor, if we suppose the Puritan to have settled Virginia and the Cavalier Massachusetts, it is not inconceivable that, while the question would have remained the same, the Puritan should have fought for slavery and the Cavalier for liberty.”

Mr. Beecher went over to England and delivered some remarkable lectures, which perhaps, no other living man of the time could have delivered, in presenting the Northern view of our Civil War. Shortly, after the war, he returned to England, and in the course of his address, before a vast audience, he was interrupted with this inquiry: “Mr. Beecher, did you not tell us, about the beginning of the Civil War, that the North would reduce the South in six months?” “Yes,” said Mr. Beecher, “I did.” “Then, tell us now, why you didn’t do it?” “If they had been Englishmen, we would,” said Mr. Beecher, “but we had to fight Americans!”

Those Southern men who have assumed an apologetic attitude and who have come after the manner of the Eastern people prostrating themselves, have generally received a hearing in the North, but I have yet to find where a Southern man, speaking courageously from the standpoint of the interest of his own people, has received any consideration from the dominant faction in that section.
In the South a new generation has been born and has grown to manhood since the issues which divided the country in 1860. As an humble representative of this class, I am not infected with the bitterness which naturally results from that great conflict, but I will say that the people of the North have no idea how intensely our people, old and young, feel concerning acts of aggression the tendency of which is to disorganize their system of labor, disturb the peace and harmony, and unjustly reduce the representation of our section in our common government.

With our opponents it seems of no weight that those of their own number who come among us have, without regard to former political affiliations, when they come face to face with the problems which confront us, uniformly agree with us as to the proper mode of handling these questions.

Slavery is dead. There is not one among us, who has the good of the State at heart—whether he be of this or another generation—who would restore it if he could. The right of secession, as upheld and maintained by our fathers, no longer exists. That, too, was settled by the arbitrament of arms. But our love of country, our fidelity to the Union as it now exists, our character as citizens, will not be strengthened by viewing with complacency a construction of the conduct of the illustrious men who led the thought of the South in that great struggle, which will subject them to unjust censure, and will lead future generations to turn from them with reproach and condemnation.

Service to the State, I take it, next to service to God, is man's most exalted station. Each generation must make its own contribution—ye historian, ye editor, ye public man, ye representative citizen, ye leaders of thought of whatever station, must make your contribution, and in this high service—in the discharge of this sacred duty, if you measure up to it, you must needs “follow truth as blind men long for light!"

Some partisan history of our civil war and the causes which produced it, is like a case tried in one of the Counties of East Tennessee, when a bachelor of large means having died intestate, a woman of great charm of manner and beauty of person came into court to establish a secret marriage and a claim to the Estate. Every-
thing seemed to be going her way, when Colonel Henderson, a superb trial lawyer, took her upon cross examination. At the climax of the examination he produced her own identified letters which effectively disproved her claim, whereupon she became hysterical, began to weep and wiped her eyes with such violence as that one of them fell out and rolled down in front of the court and jury! Colonel Henderson arose and said: "If the court pleases, this seems to be a case not only of suppressio veri, but also a case of suggestio falsi!

God grant that the time may come, if it has not already come, when deeds of valor, heroism, and masterly generalship on both sides, may be viewed as shedding honor and glory, in which every true American is entitled to share.

When my own brother, a gallant officer, was leading with his regiment a charge on the bloody field of Franklin, Tennessee, he fell mortally wounded and lay all night on the field of battle. A wounded Union Soldier crawling his way back to his camp wrapped him in his own blanket and left with him, his canteen of water. Prejudice, hate, meanness, finds no lodging place in the hearts of the fighting men of the Nation. When word of this noble deed came to us from the place where he died, we could but feel that this Union Soldier, and all his brave comrades who were like him, deserved to be enrolled among the "Heroes, martyrs, sages, The Noblest of all ages, Whose deeds crown history’s pages, And time’s great volume make!

VI.

In conclusion, and referring again to the subject touched upon in the first paragraph of this letter, it seems to me, that any student of government ought to be able to see, that conditions in this country, in the North, as well as in the South, are abnormal, and that the government is not functioning normally. The fundamental difficulty, whether the fault is ours, or theirs, is SECTIONALISM. Under conditions of normalcy, among English speaking people, there has never been, by whatever name called, but two political parties. In France, in Spain, in Italy, in Germany, we find the party of the right, the party of the left, and the party of the center, the party of the right center, and the party of the left center. Here and in England, automatically, we become either
conservative or progressive, according to our natures. Some want to go too fast, others persist in going too slow. In the conflict between these two forces, in the debates between these two parties, error is exposed, and the truth is brought forth into its clear light.

You may take it from me that without two well balanced parties, each well organized and on guard, having an interest to subserve in holding the other in check, in calling the other to account before the bar of public opinion, popular government will not function, government by the people will and of necessity must be a failure.

Overwhelming Democratic ascendancy of Tammany in New York City will produce no different result from overwhelming Republican ascendancy in the City of Philadelphia.

Lord Macaulay, in speaking of the two great parties, into which the English speaking people were divided, says:

"In the sentiment of both there is something to approve. But of both the best specimens will be found not far from the common frontier. The extreme section of one class consists of bigoted dotards; the extreme section of the other consists of shallow and reckless empirics." And in a subsequent paragraph he says:

"It is true, too, though both parties have often seriously erred, England could have spared neither."

The Country is confronted with the singular anomaly of being dominated by sectionalism—of the normal functioning of party government being defeated for more than half a century by sectionalism—while each section in turn vociferously denies the very existence of any such feeling among its people!

We have Mr. Gladstone's authority for the statement that this same condition, in a somewhat different form, has existed between England and Ireland for more than six hundred years, without any present promise of solution.

In both kingdoms it might help some to find out where the liars are! (1)

(22)

(1) See note on page 22.
The secret foes which menace us from within, as well as from without, should admonish every patriotic liberty loving citizen, that self interest and self protection should draw us closer together, and before we go too far in unsettling other governments, as witness its effect upon Russia, for instance—too far in remaking the map of Europe, to make the world safe for democracy, ought we not to be sure we have made democracy safe for the world!

Give each section a chance. Reestablish in the hearts of the people a new love, a new reverence for the constitution, for the Federated System as framed by the fathers, to the end, that we shall be one united government against foreign interests, with local self government at home. Let conservatives from the North, East, South and West consort and pull together. Let the liberals or progressives do the same.

In popular government, in all government by the people, there can be but one true standard applicable alike to the voter, to the public man in or out of office, to the press, and to the political party; namely, the good of the country, the maintenance of the government, and the supremacy of law and order.

"Man fears the lions stately tread
The tigers fangs of terror,
But man himself is most to dread,
When mad with social error.

No torch though lit by heaven illumes the blind,
Why place it in his hand?
It lights not him it but consumes,
The city and the land!"