

erly hate—national debt—the din of battle—and a series of wars and national calamities unparalleled in the history of the ages which have gone by, I ask myself involuntarily what fell spirit has the God of Mercy for a time permitted to satiate its revenge for some wise but unseen purpose? What spirit, like the divinity which in wrath attended Æneas, the representative of national power, has exclaimed, Shall I wage war for so many years with one section of this Confederacy? What spirit cried out, Who, if I satiate not my revenge—if I maintain not the government—if I wipe not out *slavery through footsteps of blood*—will any longer adore the divinity of Anti-Slavery, or as a suppliant honor the political shrines reared in my service? Was it not the spirit of Northern Fanaticism which I may personate as the goddess of Abolitionism?

And when I ponder over the agonizing picture which this land now presents, wasted by civil war, I feel like exclaiming

“Great God! what do I see and hear?”

The end of things created?”

And yet pursuing a train of thought consonant with the final safety of Æneas through his many perils until at last he founded a mighty people, I gather hope that in some form and at some time, through peace, national safety and national deliverance will be reached. Otherwise—if there is to be no peace, no cessation to brother shedding brother's blood, no security for *constitutional freedom* and good government, no accents of reconciliation, I would repeat in the same suppliant tones the prayer of Æneas, or say as Manfred implored:

“Ye toppling crags of ice!

Ye avalanches! whom a breath draws down  
In mountainous overwhelming, come and  
crush me.”

But it seems, Mr. President, that in the midst of this national revolution, men are not content to struggle if perchance they may safely steer through it. We must have a *State revolution—peaceful* though it may be, through force of circumstances, yet none the less *thorough* in upturning our social system, and all the elements of our domestic life, than if accompanied by battles and fire and sword. An institution—that of slavery of the negro—co-existent with our State life—is to be suddenly destroyed—and unconditionally—without a provision for the negro, whether

too old or too young to provide the necessary means of sustenance—and without a single guarantee or promise of any compensation to the owner for a species of property which was secured by stronger safeguards under the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State, than any other species of property. I might be excused, therefore, if under these circumstances I dealt with this subject more under the inspirations of passion or feeling, than under the guidance of sober reason: I shall, however, endeavor to bring with me to the discussion of the theme of emancipation, calm argument and the application of just principles, rather than tirades of abuse or exhibitions of temper.

Parties must exist in every government where power is derived from the people. And a wholesome party feeling is the best safeguard for the preservation of free governments. Parties will always divide themselves on *principle*, whatever may be their designation for the time being, into *radical* and *conservative* elements. And when I first read Macauley's History of England, I was struck with the philosophical truth contained in this passage. Speaking of the distinction which divided the political elements of the English people at the period of sixteen hundred and forty-one, he says:

“Not only in politics, but in literature, in art, in science, in surgery, in mechanics, in navigation and agriculture, nay, even in mathematics, we find this distinction. Everywhere there is a class of men who cling with fondness to whatever is ancient, and who even when convinced by overpowering reasons that innovation would be beneficial, consent to it with many misgivings and forebodings. We find also everywhere another class of men sanguine in hope, bold in speculation, always pressing forward, quick to discern the imperfections of whatever exists, disposed to think lightly of the risks and inconveniences which attend improvements, and disposed to give every change credit for being an improvement. In the sentiments of both classes 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.”

I shall aim, Mr. President, in the discussion of this subject to avoid being classified