

others, fraught with the elements of danger and disaster to the Republic; and of which, it was anxiously hoped by the friends of the Union, the "Compromise Measures" adopted by Congress in 1850, would prove a *final* adjustment. Gladly, therefore, as Maryland would have permitted this exciting question, with all its reminiscences of aggression and injury unatoned for, to have passed into the tomb of oblivion, she cannot—after the occurrence of the case which is the basis of this investigation—*she dare not do it.*

This renewed outrage upon the guarantees under which she entered the Federal Union, and upon the constitutional rights of her citizens, imperiously requires that her voice should be heard through her organized government, reciting the story of her wrongs, her sufferings and her forbearance through a long series of years, whilst the blood of her murdered son, crying to her from the soil of a sister State, as imperatively demands that she shall proclaim to the people of the United States, that the period has arrived *when these aggressions must cease.*

Whatever of evil may be alleged as being connected with the institution of slavery, it is not our province here to discuss. It will only be necessary to advert to the fact that this evil was not of our own choosing. It existed long anterior to the formation of the federal compact, and the Fathers of the Republic, with all their wisdom, were unequal to the task of devising for it a remedy; they had, therefore, to confine themselves to the effort of averting, if possible, the calamitous results that might grow out of it. In framing our present unequalled system of government, our revolutionary sires encountered difficulties of no ordinary character. The confederated States, spread out over a vast extent of territory and presenting every variety of climate, soil and productions, naturally possessed diversified and conflicting interests.

To reconcile and harmonize these conflicting interests, and the various sections they represented under one grand controlling national head, without wresting from the States the attributes of individual sovereignty, required a degree of skill in statesmanship, united with a spirit of conciliation and compromise in their deliberations, only to be found in the men of that day—men who had almost without resources carried the infant Republic through the trials and sufferings and bloodshed of a seven years war with the mightiest nation of the globe, whose resources were boundless, and whose power unequalled.

But of all the difficult and intricate questions that demanded the consideration of the framers of the Constitution, that which presented the most formidable aspect, (and which, indeed, threatened an insurmountable obstacle to the successful issue of their deliberation,) was the question of domestic slavery. Although at that period, the institution existed in nearly all the States of the confederacy, it needed not the aid of prophetic vis-