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Address of Mr. Crisfield.

PRINCESS ANNE, Oct. 10, 1863.

To the Voters and People of the First Congressional District:

Below we give the address of Hon. John W. Crisfield, in answer to a speech made by Col. John A. J. Creswell, at Elkton a short time since. We are unable, for the want of space, to publish the whole address, but we have excluded nothing except the introductory remarks and a short portion towards its close, none of which however, interferes with the points of argument:

"I did not vote against the issue of Treasury Notes. I voted for every bill authorizing their issue, until the Legal Tender clause was thrust in. I believed it was unconstitutional; I still think so. Col. Creswell and the Court of Appeals of New York, to the contrary notwithstanding. And I am sustained by the highest authority. Mr. Madison thought there was no power under the Constitution to make anything but gold and silver a tender in payment of debts. Mr. Webster, in his speech on the renewal of the charter of the United States Bank, in 1862, said:

"No State, *not even Congress itself*, can make anything a tender, but gold and silver, in the payment of debts." And again in 1836, in his speech on the Specie Circular he said:—"Most unquestionably *there is no legal tender* in this Country *under the authority of this Government*, or any other, but *gold and silver*." and further on in the same speech he said: "I am certainly of opinion then, that gold and silver, at rates fixed by Congress, constitute the legal standard of value in this country; and that *neither Congress* nor any State has authority to establish any other standard or to displace this." Judge Collamer, the Republican Senator from Vermont, a fast friend of the Administration, in discussing this identical clause said: "My honest opinion is, the Constitution never intended to invest Congress with any such power;" and he made a most elaborate and conclusive argument to prove it, and in my judgment did prove it.

I will quote another authority, which Col. Creswell will not fail to respect more highly than any I have yet mentioned. The Colonel, in his new born zeal in the great "crusade for freedom" will respect the apostle of human rights, and concede both his orthodoxy and loyalty. Owen Lovejoy, of Illinois, in speaking of this very clause said.

"I will simply say in regard to the question of constitutionality, that there has not been a respectable argument advanced in defence of the constitutionality of this bill; and in as much as great talent and eminent ability have been brought to bear upon it, I take it, that no respectable argument can be made in vindication of the constitutionality of this bill. I would admit the plea of necessity, if I believed it, and I think it is more manly to confess, as Jefferson did, that the thing was necessary, but unconstitutional, than it is to attempt to torture the constitution into the support of a measure which every body must see is unconstitutional.

Authorities to the same effect, without number might be quoted, but enough has been said. I should imagine, to satisfy even Col. Creswell, that if the bill is not unconstitutional, I should be pardoned for erring in such company, and that my loyalty is not to be damaged by the error, if it be one.

But Col. Creswell betrays some little doubt, that my vote on the bill was not quite conclusive evidence of my disloyalty, and so he attempts to help out his proof by informing his auditors that I voted with Vallandigham, the Copperhead, against the bill, on its final passage.—This is a magnificent specimen of logic! Vallandigham and I voted together on the passage of the bill; he is a Copperhead, and therefore I must be! It would be just as logical to say, I am a Union man, ergo so must Vallandigham be!—But Lovejoy and Sedgwick, noted abolitionists, and *par excellence* according to Col. Creswell's new catechism, of unstained loyalty, voted with us against the bill. Now how do we stand?—Two abolitionists, a Copperhead, and a Union man, associated on the same side in the same lobby! Col. Creswell's logic is sound, it will prove us all abolitionists, all of us copperheads, and all of us proslavery Unionists! What nonsense!

Now just let me say to Col. Creswell that I am not one of those versatile or weak knee'd gentlemen, who must look who goes ahead, and follows, before they vote. I have no admiration for that class of patriots no matter where found, whether they be followers of Vallandigham or Lovejoy, or Winter Davis, or "gentlemen eminent for patriotism in the leading counties of the Eastern Shore." They are unworthy of public confidence; their consistency and firmness are only safe in the absence of temptation. I respect Mr. Vallandigham's talents but have as little affinity with his politics as Col. Creswell. I am not his follower, and never shall be. I follow no one; think and act for myself, and never inquire how Mr. V. or Mr. anybody else is going to vote, with a view to govern my vote. And I am not to be deterred from voting as I think right because Mr. Vallandigham or Mr. Lovejoy happens to vote with me or against me. It is in vain that Col. Creswell assails me with any such insuendoes. They are beneath the dignity of debate.

The second and only remaining specification which Col. Creswell adduces in support of the charge, that I have opposed the financial policy of the Administration is, that I voted against the Bank Bill. I did vote against it, and as I expressed at the time with very great doubt. I did not feel quite certain I ought to vote for it, and knowing as I did that it would pass without my vote in the negative. The bill did pass, and if my vote was wrong it did no harm. I was then and still am inclined to think favorably of the measure; but it is too new a subject, and we have not had experience enough to put a final opinion of its safety and practical value.

Now I submit that these specifications utterly fail to establish Col. Creswell's proposition, that I have opposed the financial policy demanded by the public exigency; and when viewed in the light of my votes for loans and taxes, Col. Creswell is left in the unenviable attitude of making a charge against an adversary not simply without proof but against conclusive proof staring him full in the face that it is wholly untrue. So much for the first charge.

The second intimation, rather than charges is, that I have failed to sustain the policy of the Administration "in reference to traitors at home" and he cites my vote on what he calls the Indemnity Bill, as the only specification and proof to sustain it. But Indemnity Bill, I suppose is meant the bill entitled, "An Act relating to Habeas Corpus, and regulateng judicial proceedings in certain cases." If so I voted against it. I had many and substantial objections to this, which went both to its constitutionality and expediency; but I will only name one. The fourth section is in the following words:

"SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That any order of the President, or under his authority made at any time during the existence of the present rebellion, shall be a defence in all the courts to any action or prosecution, civil or criminal, pending or to be commenced, for any search seizure, arrest or imprisonment, made, done or committed, or acts omitted to be done, under and by virtue of such order, or under color of any law of Congress, and such defence may be made by special plea, or under the general issue.

This makes the President a Dictator. It invests him with unlimited power, in derogation of the Constitution, dangerous to public liberty, and wholly unnecessary for any exigency now existing or likely to arise, at least in the States loyal to the Constitution and the Union, and withholds from the injured party, all possibility of redress, however causeless, violent or severe the wrong and oppression to which he may be subjected. It is a power I would not have granted even to the Father of his Country and I submit to you, whether I ought to have voted for it. I think the President should have all just and reasonable power to prevent treason and treasonable machinations against the safety of the Government. I am not disposed to view harshly any act done in good faith for these objects. I was willing then, and am still, to provide ample indemnity for the President and every officer of the Government down to the humblest, for all loss or damage sustained by him or them, for acts done in the *bona fide* performance of official duty although in excess, or even in error of law; but the indemnity should come from the Treasury of the Nation, for whose benefit the act was done, and not from the victim who has suffered the wrong.

So much for the second "of the three fold duties of the Administration which I am supposed to have interfered with. Upon the third branch of these "three-fold duties" "with reference to traitors in the field," Col. Creswell, makes no charge against me, unless it be in the following sentence, which he does not classify, among the "three fold duties;" and I cannot.—He says, "but these are not all the votes of Mr. Crisfield, to which sound Union men object.—Upon every proposition for confiscation, upon every proposition to take the property of Rebels to pay the expenses of war, upon every proposition to recruit colored men in the army, upon every proposition for Emancipation, Mr. Crisfield has shown himself bitterly and violently hostile to the whole policy of the Government."

Col. Creswell does not adduce any proof of these charges or argue them, except the last.—They are simply averments unsustained by proof, and nothing more. It ought not be expected, I should do more than simply to traverse the indictment, and leave him to his proof. But I will not do that, I will meet them fully and answer them fairly.

First as to the proposition for confiscation; and this I suppose includes the proposition to take the property of Rebels to pay the expenses of the war. I know of no proposition to take the property of Rebels, except that included in the Confiscation Bills. I did vote against the Confiscation bill, and chiefly because the forfeiture prescribed was entire, and not merely for the life of the guilty party. I thought it unconstitutional. The Constitution declares "no attainder of Treason shall work corruption of blood, or forfeiture except during the life of the person attained." The bill forfeiting the property absolutly, I regarded as a palpable violation of this provision. I made a speech on the subject, in which this objection is alleged and insisted upon; and I am fully sustained and justified for this vote by the President himself, who vetoed this bill for the same reason. His veto message, may be found on page 2406 Con. Globe. 2d Sess. 37 Con., Part 4. I will quote a single passage. "That to which I chiefly object." said the President, "pervades most part of the Act, but more distinctly appears in the first, second, seventh and eighth sections. It is the same of those provisions which results in the divesting of title forever. For the causes of treason and ingredients of treason, not amounting to the full crime, it declares forfeiture extending beyond the lives of the guilty parties; whereas the Constitution of the United States declares that 'no attainder of treaon shall work corruption of blood or forfeiture except during the life of the person attained.' True there is to no formal attainder in the case; still I think the greater punishment cannot be constitutionality inflicted, in a different form, for the same offense. With great respect I am constrained to say I think this feature of the act unconstitutional."

This is administration policy, and Col. Creswell, on his theory, is disloyal unless he admits it.

I certainly was opposed to the proposition to recruit colord men for the army, for the reason, that, in my judgment, it hindered rather than helped the return of National tranquility. I believed with the venerable Kentucky patriot, whose words I quote, that "A negro army is a weakness to your country. It unnerves the white man's hand; it unnerves the white man's heart." But the policy has been adopted, and I most fervently pray that my fears may prove groundless, and the country may have no cause to lament it.

Col. Creswell next proceeds to the question of emancipation, and charges that I am bitterly opposed to the whole policy of the Government on that subject. What is the policy of the Government on that subject? Col. Creswell would have shown himself a better criminal pleader and a fairer prosecutor, if he had framed a count on each specific clause of that policy, and charged on me a violation of that particular clause. I might now demur to his indictment for uncertainty, and be pretty certain of a judgment in my favor; but I hate technicalities, and will not resort to them even in my own vindication. What is the whole policy of the Government on emancipation? In what particular measure is it to be traced? Is the war a part of it? The Copperheads and other disloyal persons, its enemies, I know so charge, and pertinaciously insist; but I never believed them, and have stoutly maintained the real object of the war was the suppression of the rebellion, and not the liberation of slaves. I have been very honest in this, and still am. But suppose I am wrong, and the war is really an abolition war, and forms a part of the emancipation policy of the Administration, then still I am not guilty on this account, for I have sustained the war from the beginning, and voted all the men and all the money asked for to carry it on, and even more.

Are the proclamations of September and January parts of the emancipation policy of the Government? The President thinks they are war measures. They are said to be a proper exercise of the power vested in the Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the Republic and an efficient means for public defence; and that this is the sole object of their promulgation. If this be so, they do not form part of the emancipation policy of the Government; and any hostility I have exhibited to them, is not hostility to the emancipation policy of the Government, but only to one of the means devised for carrying on the war; which in the estimation of many, and possibly of Col. Creswell, is an offence of much lower grade. But however that may be, I did, and do, dissent from those proclamations. I have publicly assigned my reasons for such dissent. I shall not disavow them. I am content to stand or fall, as the judgment of my countrymen shall sustain or repudiate those reasons.

Is the abduction of slaves, for military service, of late so liberally practised in portions of this District, a part of the emancipation policy of the Government? If so, I dissent from it, as a violation of all law and propriety; and I very cheerfully submit to your judgment, whether I am right or wrong. But I do not believe this is part of the policy of the Government, but only of some super-serviceable subordinate; for the President, as soon as it was brought to his notice, ordered it to be stopped. And here, again, I am on the side of the President, while Col. Creswell is in the opposition.

Now in what other measure, save that for compensated emancipation, is the emancipation policy of the Government to be discovered? Is it in the confiscation bills? I have already disposed of them? Is it in the bill to emancipate the slaves of the District of Columbia? Col. Creswell as a member of the Legislature condemned that measure and instructed me to oppose it—*See Journal of the House of Delegates, pages 460 and 475.* Is it in the habit of enticing slaves within the camps, and refusing access to owners to regain them? This habit has never received countenance from the President, as far as I know, and is not recognized, by him at least, as part of his policy. Then there is nothing but the scheme of compensated emancipation. As far as I know this is the only recognized policy for the emancipation of slaves which the Government avows; all the rest is, by it at least, alleged to be merely matters of war, and dealing with enemie's property.

It is true I failed to see in this proposition the good which the President supposed he had discovered, and I have frankly said so. In the correspondence between the Border States' representatives and the President in July 1862, largely circulated at the time, and not yet forgotten, the reasons which influenced my judgment are stated; and I rest my justification on that correspondence.

So far as Maryland is concerned, this subject never came to a vote; but on the 25th of February last, five working days only before the close of the Congress, a bill was reported appropriating ten millions of five per cent. bonds to the State of Maryland, to induce her to emancipate her slaves, within two years from its passage. I was opposed to that bill, and for substantial reasons, some of which I will proceed to give. Time and space permit me to mention only one or two.

The first objection I make to the bill is, that the compensation proposed is inadequate. The bill proposes to appropriate $10,000,000 of five per cent. bonds to induce the State to emancipate all the slaves therein, and to prohibit slavery, &c. If we convert these bonds into six per cents. (the legal rate of interest in this State,) we have $8,333,333, as the sum offered for all the slaves in Maryland. At the last census, according to the official report there were in Maryland 87,189 slaves, and I suppose there are quite as many now; and if we divide the sum appropriated, converted into six per cents. by the number of slaves, it will give an average of $95.58 or thereabouts for each slave.

But this is not all: at the time the bill was before the House gold was selling for 70 and 75 per cent. premium, and most articles of property had risen in the same proportion when sold for currency. These bonds, converted into six per cents and exchanged for green backs equalled at that time $4,901,960 in gold; which would give an average of about $56 in gold for each slave! This is less than the hire of a single year!—The sum proposed to be appropriated was wholly inadequate; it did not approximate the spirit of the President's offer; it was a ridiculous caricature of his proposition. It was a mockery of the State. She had better let her slaves go voluntarily than to receive such; a *douceur* for then she would have preserved herself from insult, and saved her honor.

Again, the bill, in my opinion, was not warranted by the Constitution, and was an improper interference in the domestic affairs of the State; it created a large debt; and if the principle be extended to all the other States a huge unmanageable debt; it demanded immediate emancipation; and lastly it would have in my judgment no influence in restoring harmony and peace to our bleeding country, but pushed both further off.

Fellow-Citizens, I am a slaveholder and have been from my youth up. I see no sin in slavery; and I think for the black man it is the best condition as long as he remains in the presence of a superior race. But I have never regarded it as a corner stone of the Republic, or that it was a blessing to the white man. I believe we should be better off, if we had never had it.—I have always looked forward to a period, indefinite in point of time, when it shall end. I am infinitely more anxious about the time and manner of its extinction, than I am about the extinction itself. I am opposed to all schemes of immediate emancipation, because it would be hurtful, if not ruinous to both races. I should not consider any scheme of gradual emancipation fit to be adopted, which did not, 1. Protect existing rights of property; 2. Provide for the protection and support of young and infirm slaves; 3. Allow time for the business of the State to adjust itself, and to prepare the public mind and the slave himself for the change; 4. Insure the seperation of the races, and afford a reasonable hope of the welfare of the slaves after they become free.

A scheme embracing all these can be devised, both practicable and practical, without the interference of the National Government, and without expense to the State Treasury. In due time it will be produced; but now it would not be appreciated, or even considered. I consider this whole subject is a Maryland question, we are entirely competent to settle it for ourselves. For one, I do not want any outside interference or help to enable us to reach a wise and just settlement of the question. As to any compensation from the National Treasury, it is all a delusion. It will never be given; he is a simple man who thinks it will. The last Congress never intended to give it; nobody was in earnest but the President; and the next will be still less inclined. And it is quite time the people of Maryland should know this fact.

"Having now disposed of his speech, I will give some attention to Col. Creswell himself. He too has a record, and following his example, I will lay it before you. If the Colonel suffer by this exposition he has only to blame his own temerity and imprudence for provoking it. My comments will be confined to a period of less than three years, commencing at the present time; and my proofs are such as he will not venture to controvert; they are his own writings, and the public records of his own works. Borrowing an expression of his own, I will exhibit him in the "three fold" character.

1st. of Black Republican and Abolitionist; of Conservative Constitutional Union man; and 3rd. of Anti-Coercion Southern Rights Revolutionist.

First—Of his character as a Black Republican and Abolitionist.

Col. Creswell in his letter of acceptance says: "I am unequivocally in favor of the platform and principles of the Unconditional Union Convention."

To see what that platform and those principles are, let us turn to the Address of the "Unconditional Union State Central Committee," and quote a few passages. Observe the following:

"The policy of Emancipation ought to be inaugurated in Maryland.

"The slaveholders must not suppose their rejection of the Nation's offer will leave them where they are now even—still less restore them to their condition before the rebellion. Their choice is between that offer and worse. From an industrial interest which excited no hostility, *but many scruples of conscience*, Slavery became a political power, and has so borne itself as to provoke, if not to deserve intense hostility. It was controlling, domineering, dictatorial, exclusive and intolerant. Defeated, they who spoke in its name rebelled, and the rebellion has destroyed it as a power.

"It has passed from a dominant and favored to a discredited and depressed interest. In the face of contingencies, before such arbitrators the possessors of an interest which, in the minds of the great mass of loyal people of the nation is believed to have inspired the rebellion, waged in its name, are not likely to improve their condition by delay or opposition, nor are they *wise if they higgle on the terms;* and the height of imprudence would be to suggest the value of the slave before the rebellion as the measure of indemnity or the condition of their acceptance."

These, by adoption, have become the sentiments of Col. Creswell. And further in his speech now before me he says:

"In years gone by there was a power here that ruled with a rod of iron. I was under the influence of it, I admit, and so were you. We never dared even to dispute its supremacy.—Slavery, then was not a question of political economy; it was a question of political power; and we all, cowards as we were, shrank before it. That day has passed in Maryland. The white men of Maryland have been emancipated, and *we dare now say to the world that our proud old State, though bleeding and torn, shall come out of this fearful contest*, like a Goddess disenthralled, with a *crown of freedom* upon her brow,"

"Maryland *must be a free State!*"

Here is a full fledged Abolitionist! Maryland must be a free State, though it cost her civil war! Though she may *bleed* at every pore; though her society shall be convulsed and *torn*, she shall come out of this *fearful contest*, with a crown of freedom on her brow! Wendell Phillips never indulged in words of more fearful import.

And the speech of Col. Creswell now before me, abounds in declarations of the same import. He especially takes me to task for not voting for the Indemnity Bill, which by its fourth section made the President's order, no matter for what, the law of the land, and a justification for anything, as I have already shown.

Here then, is the Republican fully developed: His principle is, consolidation of all power in the hands of the President and his Cabinet. The States are nothing; Congress is nothing; the Judiciary is nothing; the Executive everything. He makes the Government practically a dictatorship.

Secondly.—Observe him as a Constitutional Union man. A little more than three months before he wrote his letter of acceptance, he was a member of the UNION State Convention, and, so such, is believed to have assented to its resolutions; at least nothing in the account of proceedings of that body as published in the Balt. American, shows to the contrary. He appears to have been present and it does not appear that he objected. He dissented from the expediency of making a nomination, at that time, but he expressed no dissent from the doctrines then advanced. He was understood to approve of them, for he was afterwards named one of the Central Committee, which would not have been done if he had expressed dissent from the principles of the body. And I never heard he declined the place assigned him on the Central Committee, which he should have done, if he dissented from the policy. In the absence then of all the proof to the contrary, he must be considered as committed to those resolutions. They are strongly conservative, and the very reverse of the faith now professed by Col. Creswell.

In one of these resolutions I find this sentiment avowed:

"This Convention ignores all issues, local or National, but those of war, until treason shall succumb before the sagacity of an offended people."

This resolution was intended to ignore the agitation of the slavery question for the present, yet Col. Creswell is the herald of a new faith in less than four months, and, what is more, an extremist.

Again, Col. Creswell was a member of the Legislature in the winter of 1861 and '62, and as such, took a leading part in the proceedings. He voted for Mr. Donelson's resolutions, which placed him square on the platform of Constitutional Unionism. I would print these resolutions in full, but I have not space. I make a syllabus of part, and print the residue entire.

The 1st Resolution recognizes the supremacy of the Constitution of the United States; denounces secession, and denies the existence of any cause to justify revolution; the 2nd Resolution, declares it the duty and interest of Maryland not to take part in the rebellion; the 3rd pledges the resources of Maryland to support the war; "so long as the war is conducted in accordance with the Constitution, and so long as the purpose of those in power is the maintenance of the Union, with the rights guaranted to the States, unimpaired."

4. "Resolved, That the loyalty of the people of Maryland to the General Government, established by the Constitution, is untouched by any shade of servility, and they must ever regard with jealousy all attempts, from whatever quarter, to make the present war for the restoration of the Union the means of interfering with the domestic institutions of the States; and they solemnly protest against all schemes, the object or tendency of which is to excite insurrection among the Slaves; declaring the same illegal and calculated if put in practice, to produce results too horrible to contemplate."

5. "Resolved, That this Legislature is gratified to know the true principles on which the war should be conducted have been expressed in most emphatic language by both Houses of the present Congress, in their extra session of July last, that they have been declared by the President in his latest message; and that they have been conspicuously illustrated in the proclamation of Major General Dix to the people of the Eastern Shore of Virginia."

6. "Resolved, That although in the immediate presence of armies, when the war or insurrection exists, it cannot be expected that the civil power should at all times maintain its supremacy, and there may be cases of extreme necessity where the safety and preservation of the Government would excuse a resort to extraordiny measures. Yet the dangers of a departure from the form of law, which are the protection of individual rights, should never be forgotton, and all irregular proceedings should be abandoned as soon as it is clear that the extreme necessity which gave rise to them has passed away."

7. "Resolved, That the Governor be requested to transmit copies of the foregoing resolutions to the President of the United States and to our Senators and Representatives in Congress."

Col. Creswell voted for these resolutions. They contain sound doctrine, and have been great helps to me in the discharge of my official duties. In them may be found the principle which has controlled nearly every vote I have given; yet Col. Creswell is ungenerous enough to condem me for doing just what he advised me to do.

But this is not all. Mr. Harris, of St. Mary's offered a preamble and resolutions on the District emancipation bill, from which I extract the following:

"Be it Resolved, &c., That this General Assembly witnesses with great regret the efforts which are now making for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. The agitation of the subject is calculated to disturb the relation of master and slave within this State; and the success of the agitators in this scheme would strike a serious blow at the interests of the people of Maryland and impress them with the belief that the Government of the United States have not a due regard for their rights, institutions and feelings."

And this too was sent to me to guide me in my course.

Col. Creswell voted for this resolution. How strangely it sounds, when contrasted with the speech now before me! Then he shrunk almost with horror from anything "calculated to disturb the relation of master and slave;" now, in less than two years, he assails that relation with unrelenting fury, and vows its destruction, though Maryland should "come bleeding and torn out of the great contest." This resolution received his vote on the 18th of February, 1862, on the 10th or 11th of March following, only twenty days afterwards, I voted against the resolution sent in by the President for compensated emancipation, even now calculated to disturb that relation; and he now assails me for it! Beautiful consistency!

Third.—Now let us turn to his character as an Anti-Coercion Southern-Rights Revolutionist. On the 14th of February 1861, a meeting of the citizens of Cecil county favorable to the Constitutional Union of the States, and OPPOSED TO COERCION and civil war, was held at the Court House in Elkton, at which Col. Heckart presided and Mr. H. C. Mackall was secretary. It will be remembered that, at that time, the seven Cotton States had gone out; the Confederate States government had been organized; the Arsenals and Forts had been seized; the Star of the West had been fired into, and Forts Sumter and Pickins, the only posts then held by the Government, were closely invested by the insurgents. War actually existed. It was under these circumstances, the Elkton Meeting was held. Col. Creswell attended it, and was a leading and active member. He was placed on the Committee "to report resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting" and actually made the report. The official account of the proceedings was published in the Cecil Democrat of the 16th of February, 1861. I insert the material parts as follows.

"The committee on resolutions through John A. J. Creswell, Esq., reported the following among other resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That we most solemnly protest against any attempt at coercion, believing that such an attempt would precipitate us into civil war with all its untold horrors; would render nugatory all efforts for a satisfactory adjustment; and would certainly cause a permanent dissolution of the Union.

"*Resolved*, That the delegates appointed to the Conference Convention have no power to bind the State, to any course of action except only *to submit to the people of the State the question of holding a convention and the necessary arrangements, or a session of the sovereign convention, if a majority of the whole number of the legal voters of the State shall determine to hold one.*"

Here is the revolutionist without disguise! Here is the Disunionist avowed? The people of seven States were in revolt; they proclaimed their independence and organized a government, displaced the United States authorities, seized the public arms and fortifications, marshalled armies; fired on a ship in the national service, and were at the time besieging with armed forces the only forts still remaining in the possession of the Government; and all this with the avowed purpose of overthrowing the Government and dissolving the Union. In this state of things, Col. Creswell has no word of reproof for the insurgents; but is overflowing in sympathy for their cause, and by these resolutions, he in effect said, they are right and the Government wrong; they must be let alone, not coerced nor resisted; their demands must be submitted to; and if they are not, and if disunion comes, Maryland must range herself with the revolutionists, and cut loose from her Northern sisters! If this is not giving aid and comfort to the enemy, I cannot perceive what is. The natural and legitimate consequences of these doctrines, thus formally promulged by Col. Creswell, were witnessed in the bloody streets of Baltimore on the 19th of April, and have ever since embarrassed the State, by affording her enemies a pretext for assailing her loyalty. Col. Creswell is fortunate in the time selected for these utterances; if they had been made a few months later, he would have found an asylum in Fort Warren, and I, with all my respect for habeas corpus, and devotion to personal liberty, and free speech, which the Col. thinks is a fault so great, as to make me unfit to be a Representative, should have been unable to advance a solid reason for his discharge.

Mr. Crisfield then refers to Col. Creswell's present association with Hon. H. Winter Davis, as being inconsistent with the position he held in 1861, and closes as follows:

"Fellow-citizens, we are before you; judge between us.

This paper has been written with great rapidity, and the printers allow me no time for review. I think I have mistaken no fact, nor in any way violated the limits of dignified debate. I shall be pained if I find that I have. I certerly have not designed to do so; and I shall be especially grieved, if anything I have said, shall be understood as reflecting on Col. Creswell's personal character. In this respect I have heard nothing but good of him. I have spoken only of his public acts, I have nothing to say of motives, still less to the prejudice of his social worth.

REPLY TO THE ADDRESS OF THE Hon. JOHN W. CRISFIELD.

Fellow Citizens of the First Congressional District of Maryland:

The address of the Hon. John W. Crisfield, dated Princess Anne, Oct. 10, 1863, was handed me by a friend a day or two ago. I am greatly surprised to find Mr. Christfield in this production at one moment indulging in the most libellous assertions, and at the very next talking about the "dignity of debate," and claiming that he has misstated no fact. With a total disregard not only of courtesy but even of truth, he has charged that I am a revolutionist without disguise, a "Disunionist avowed," and after covertly insinuating that within the next three years I shall become a Red Republican, or perhaps an Imperialist—he closes a paper, distinguished only for its unfairness, by saying that "I shall be especially grieved if any thing I have said shall be understood as reflecting on Colonel Creswell's personal character." Then, to be a Disunionist and a Revolutionist is like slavery in the eyes of Mr. Crisfield—"no sir." To conspire against one's country, or to engage actively in the destruction of the best of all Governments, is, in his opinion, no discredit. To assert that I am a traitor is to offer me, according to his blunted sensibility, no indignity. My opinion is altogether different. In my judgment, no greater personal indignity can be offered me than to charge me with the adoption, or even the encouragement of the Secession heresy. I am indeed thankful that Mr. Crisfield is not the guardian of my honor.

In attempting an answer to this very long, if not very discreet address, I shall begin with a consideration of the resolutions adopted at the Elkton meeting of the 14th of February, 1861, and in order that a better understanding may be arrived at, it is proper that some account should be give of the metteing itself, and of the object sought to be accomplished. Long before the assembling of the meeting alluded to I had publicly announced my uncompromising hostility to the doctrine of Secessin, and in conversation with gentlemen then like myself, members of the Democratic party, I had stated distinctly that if it should ever be incorporated into the creed of that party I would be obliged to withdraw my support. I was known then even to be decidedly hostile to the whole programme of the Secessionists. Early in the month of February, 1861, I was called upon to take part in a meeting of the citizens of Cecil county favorable to the Constitutional Union of the States and opposed to coercion and civil war. I was assured it was not to be a meeting of any party but a meeting of the whole people for the avowed porpose of promoting harmony and preserving peace.

Mr. Chrisfield says, "at that time war actually existed," and he endeavors to make the impression that no hope of a settlement was left.—I deny it. It is true that the Star of the West had been fired into, and that some of the arsenals and forts had been *seized*; but everywhere throughout the land the good and true were still actively engaged in the effort to avoid a war. The Peace Conference was then in session at Washington. The memorable Committee of Thirty-three was still engaged upon a plan of compromise.

Jeff. Davis was not inaugurated until February 18, 1861. The members of his Cabinet were not appointed until February 21st. The Peace Convention submitted to the United States Senate a plan of adjustment on February 26, 1861.

Mr. Corwin's report from the Committee of Thirty-three came up for final passage in Congress on February 28, and in the language of the Commercial of that date: "It was agreed to amid thunders of applause from the galleries and the floor. As the vote proceeded the excitement was intense, and on the announcement of the result the inexpressible enthusiasm of the members and the crowded galleries found vent in uproarous demonstrations. All feel that it is the harbinger of peace."

On the 4th March, 1861, President Lincoln was inaugurated, and in his Inaugural Address he said:

"If it were admitted to you, who are dissatisfied, and who hold the right side in the dispute, there is still no reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken the favored land, are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulties.

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war—the Government will not assail you. I am loath to close. We are not enemies; we must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not *break our bonds* of affection. The mystic cords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be by our better nature."

On the 8th of April, 1861, the State Department, at Washington, replied to the so-called Confederate State Commissioners, declining to receive them in their official capacity, but expressing deference for them as gentlemen. The Secretary expressed a *peaceful policy* on the part of the Government, declaring a purpose to defend only when assailed. On the 9th of April, 1861, the Charleston Mercury announced war as declared. On the 12th of April, 1861, at 4.30 A. M., fire was opened on Fort Sumter, and on the next day Fort Sumpter surrendered. On April 15, 1861, the President of the United States called, by proclamation, for 75,000 volunteers, to suppress insorrectionary combinations, and commanded the persons composing the combinations aforesaid to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes within twenty days. Is it then true "that war actually existed" on the 14th of Febtuary, 1861? The President said in his Inaugural, on the 4th of March, that there could still be an adjustment. He said to the dissatisfied:

"We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies." The Secretary of State at Washington, on the 8th April, 1861, expressed "a peaceful policy." Mr. Lincoln himself did not then expect a war, and it was not until the 15th April, 1862, that, on a failure of all efforts to reconcile matters, the President resolved on war and issued his proclamation for 75,000 troops. When Mr. Crisfield asserts otherwise, he defames the President, and descends to misrepresent, in order that he may deceive. Then on the 14th February, 1861, I attended the meeting at Elkton, and offered the original draft of the resolutions, cited from 1 to 12 inclusive, all which, with perhaps some slight alterations, were adopted by the Committee. The 13th resolution was prepared by a distinguished Judge. I have still the original in his hand writing, and it was handed by him to some members of the committee. When offered in committee, I objected to it, though a majority of the committee afterwards adopted it. After the report of the committee was made, I spoke in the meeting, and then and there denounced the whole scheme of Secession, and expressed an unalterable attachment to the Union, and my determination to assist in the maintenance of it. Now then, what were the sentiments embodied in the first twelve resolutions. The 1st is laudatory of the Constitution and Union, and pledges the most zealous and untiring exertions in their behalf. The 2d recommends a settlement by further amendments to the Constitution. The 3d denounces the Personal Liberty Bills, and recommends their appeal. The 4th says Maryland should be the mediator, and pledges the meeting to aid by every possible means in bringing about a happy settlement of all vexed questions. The 5th expresses confidence in the people of the North. The 6th congratulates Rhode Island on the repeal of her Personal Liberty Bills. The 7th reciprocates the Union loving sentiment of the people of Virginia and Tennessee. The 8th expresses a willingness to adopt the Crittenden Compromise. The 9th protests against coercion.

The 10th endorses Hon. E. H. Webster, who was then the representative in Congress from the Second District, of which Cecil then formed a part. The 11th recommends that on failure of the Peace Conference to agree upon some plan of speedy adjustment, a resort should be had to a National Convention.

The 12th asserts that we should demand nothing from the people in a spirit of unreasonable exaction.

I have not seen these resolutions for more than two years, yet among the above I find none objectionable except the 9th. That resolution was expunged by the act of the Rebels on 12th April, 1861, when they opened fire on Fort Sumter, and from that time to the present I have always advocated the exercise of all the power of the Government in crushing out the rebellion. For the 13th resolution the distinguished Judge above alluded to must be held responsible. The supplementary resolution is chargeable to some volunteer. I might add here with some point that the "distinguished Judge" who framed the 13th resolution, so reasonable in the estimation