

political necessity; it is a juncture in which it is inconsistent with logic and truth to speak of constitutional rights. It is just precisely that political position where original rights take their origin.

I wish to speak for one moment longer upon this branch of the subject, in regard to this doctrine of coercion, and then I shall conclude. My notes are rather voluminous on that branch of the subject, because it is one that appeals very strongly to my sense of justice. I will only state that the first result of this consolidation theory is this: We have lived for seventy-two years under the States' rights theory of government; we have lived three years under the consolidation theory—I am willing to risk the comparison of the two extremes upon the events to which each have given birth. For seventy-two years this government was administered upon the theory that the Federal Government was not to coerce; it never in fact did coerce. For the three years last past, it has pursued the policy of coercion, as one of the powers conferred upon it, under the consolidated theory of its powers, and observe the change.

This course brings us to some consideration of the origin of the present strife in the country, which it was my intention to avoid if possible. But I will say that I hold this in reference to the war: that there was no occasion for its origin; that there was no justification for its commencement; that its prosecution ought not to have been begun, and that it ought now to cease. That is where I stand; that is the view I hold. And I hold it without offense to anybody else, because as long as I have the protection of the government under which I live, I shall pay proper obedience to it and acknowledge its authority. And I do not want to offend the government or anybody who maintains the power of the government.

Now look at the condition of this country during these seventy-two years that the States' rights theory prevailed. Was ever such a spectacle of happiness and prosperity presented for the consideration of mankind? Not to enter into further detail; take what I regard as the very exemplification of the beauty that sprang from the States' rights theory of administering this government; the administration of Franklin Pierce, which, in my judgment, was the crowning point of the greatness we attained under the old system. In the time of Mr. Pierce, you beheld then States bound together by what at that time was justly called this rope of sand; this Constitution under the States' rights theory, holding the States together not by force, but merely upon the principles of fraternity, the principle upon which it was founded. We beheld a country composed of those distinct sovereign communities overloaded with wealth, and with a population whose in-

crease history could furnish no parallel to; with an industry surpassing anything ever before recorded in the annals of mankind; with an energy that burst from every pore, and with a creative wealth that drew its sustenance from every quarter of the globe, and expanded itself upon all branches of industry; with a material grandeur and power such as no other people have ever achieved in any quarter of the world since history began. That was our material condition.

Then in reference to our political condition. These States existing, their rights acknowledged, each one a sovereignty, the Federal Government practically a mere agent. There stood the Federal Government under the Presidency of Franklin Pierce, with practically no national debt, because the \$17,000,000 were not paid off because there was no law authorizing the payment of the premium that would call it in; no national debt, and almost a quarrel in Congress as to what should be done with the seventy or eighty millions of surplus money in the treasury. The people, like the government, owing nothing and millions ahead; no taxes; the Federal power not known to the people; nobody dreamed of Federal excises. You had the protection of the Government within its proper sphere, as against foreign powers, and as regards the exercise of any other powers it possessed you had it without feeling it; for ought you know there was no government, but the Government of Maryland, which you daily felt in its operations.

And there was Mr. Pierce, the President of this great, glorious and grand country. And I speak now of a period which I regard both in theory and in fact as the very culminating point of all that civil government ever achieved among men. There sat Mr. Pierce, the President of this great confederation, practically the head of this great nation. He sat there, but instead of arrogating power we found him, from day to day, exercising his constitutional prerogative to veto bills passed by Congress, in which they assumed power to build hospitals, relieve the sick, establish agricultural colleges, aid railroads, &c. Those bills he vetoed because, upon the theory upon which he voted, he was unwilling to depart from the old and popular line of conduct, even to arrogate to the Government such trifling powers as those. The condition of this people, the splendor and greatness of this Government, as it stood at the close of the administration of Franklin Pierce, is without parallel or approach in the annals of mankind. It stood there and justified itself. I do not speak of it in connection with Franklin Pierce in the mere partizan aspect of the subject. Some of the earlier administrations of course were admirable. But here the results of their earlier trials were all embodied. Here the wealth, prosperity, material of the people coincided with