

In January, 1862, the Legislature of Maryland adopted a preamble and resolutions in reference to the war. They declared, "this war is prosecuted by the Nation with but one object, that, namely: of a restoration of the Union just as it was when the rebellion broke out. The rebellious States are to be brought back to their places in the Union without change or diminution of their constitutional rights. In the language of the resolution adopted by both Houses of Congress, at its extra session in July last, with remarkable unanimity, this war is declared to be prosecuted not in any spirit of oppression, or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the right, or established institutions of those States; but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union with all the dignity, equality and rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as those objects are accomplished, the war ought to cease." And resolved as follows, viz: "IV. Resolved, that Maryland is ready to fulfil all her constitutional obligations to the General Government, as a loyal State of the Union, and desires that the integrity of the Union may be preserved and the supremacy of the Constitution restored."

Subsequently, during the progress of the war, its object was modified so as to include the abolition of slavery by constitutional amendment. The amendment was proposed by two-thirds of both Houses of Congress, as then constituted, eleven States having by their own act withdrawn their representatives. Those States, after the close of the war, and the re-organization of their State governments, by their Legislatures, ratified the amendment. The thirty-ninth Congress, recognized those State governments as legal by accepting the ratification of the amendment by their Legislatures, and claiming and exercising the power to pass "the civil rights bill," and "Freedman's Bureau bill," in virtue of that amendment.

The faith of the Federal Government and of the State of Maryland was thus most solemnly pledged to the Southern States and to the world, down to the close of the war, that its object was "to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union, with all the dignity, equality and rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as those objects should be accomplished, the war ought to cease."

Whatever view of their duty in this regard, may be taken by those now entrusted with the power of the Federal Government, the Legislature of Maryland cannot hesitate to assert the purpose of the State, to the utmost of her ability, to maintain her faith inviolate before the world.

We are therefore clearly of the opinion that the amendment in question having been proposed by two thirds of a