

bers that have fallen victims in this strife; cities in flames; homesteads sacked; lands laid waste; penury and starvation usurping the abodes of affluence and comfort; the old and infirm flying in despair before the ravages of contending armies; the very foundations of free government shaken to their base—we turn with horror from the just penalty which their wickedness has provoked.

The heresy of State Rights furnished the excuse, but not the cause, for this rebellion. The institution of slavery, dating its origin from the early settlement of the colonies, sustained by the sanction of the British Crown, in the encouragement held out to the African slave trade, had become a dangerous element of power as far back as the date of the Federal Constitution. The Slave States came into the Union on condition that its existence should be recognized; and it has heretofore received the protection of the laws. It continued to flourish and increase under the countenance thus accorded to it. Such was the growth of its power that it engrossed the legislation of Congress from the date of the Missouri Compromise to the breaking out of the rebellion. Not content with the triumphs which it had achieved, and the guards thrown around it from time to time, it sought admission into the Territories subjected to the National control, and even threatened the peace of contiguous and friendly Powers in the effort to enlarge the area of its influence. But the guarantees of the Constitution were becoming every day more and more impotent to withstand the progressive developments of the age. Slavery had no disinterested advocates on either side of the Atlantic. The Southern States viewed with alarm these evidences of inherent and certain decay. They clamored for new guarantees. The Union was a failure, because the Union could not protect slavery in its defiant and aggressive policy. The doctrine of Secession gave them hope of formidable combinations, and eventually a stronger and more absolute government. They threw themselves upon their assumed theory of State Rights, in the vain expectation that twenty millions of freemen, banded together in the interest of republican institutions, would suffer the destinies of a whole continent and the last hope of free government to be thwarted by an effort to conciliate three hundred thousand owners of slave property, claiming the absolute control over more than four millions of bondmen. In the attempt to obstruct the march of civilization and progress—to provoke causeless dissension, and to ignore the natural impulses of Christian philanthropy, they have brought ruin—hopeless ruin—upon the institution, which it was their object to perpetuate by waging war upon the Constitution and Government from which they had received protection in the past, and to which alone they could look for safety in the future.