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By M. Fields.

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The National Crisis.

From the Richmond Examiner.

ADDRESS OF HON. J. C. BRECKINRIDGE

TO THE PEOPLE OF KENTUCKY.

BY THE PEOPLE OF KENTUCKY.

By your representatives in the last

Legislature you conferred on me the com-

mission of Senator in the Congress of the

United States. In March last when war

was declared by the rebellion of the

States, which the policy of secession had

increased to twelve States. At that

time a majority of the people of Kentucky

still cherished the hope of a peaceful re-

union. Soon afterwards, when the Gov-

ernment at Washington commenced that

series of usurpations which has now left

nothing of the Federal Constitution, and

resolved on a war of subjugation against

the withdrawing States to secure union

and brotherhood, you determined to take

no part in the war, but to protect your

liberty by a position of armed neutrality.

This decision was expressed by a large

majority of the people at the election in

May.

I had proposed this policy before the

election, but afterwards, in common with

the great mass of those with whom I had

acted, I acquiesced in your expressed

will, and have maintained it as the fixed

attitude of Kentucky. In obedience, as

I suppose, to your wishes, I proceeded to

Washington, and at the special session of

Congress, in July, spoke and voted

against the war policy of the Presi-

dent and Congress, demanding, in ad-

dition, for Kentucky, the right to refuse

to send men, but money also to the war.

For I would have blushed to meet you

with the confession that I had purchased

your exemption from the perils of the

battlefield, and the shame of waging war

against your Southern brethren by hiring

others to do the work you shrank from

performing. During that memorable

session, a very small body of Senators

and Representatives, beneath the shadow

of a military despotism, resisted the us-

urpations of the Executive, and with what

degrees of dignity and firmness, they will

willingly submit to the judgment of the

world.

Their efforts were unavailing—and they

may prove valuable hereafter as another

added to former examples of manly pro-

test against the progress of tyranny.

On my return to Kentucky, at the

close of the late special session of Con-

gress, it was my purpose immediately to

resign the office of Senator. The verbal

and written remonstrances of many friends

in different parts of the State induced me

to postpone the execution of my purpose

but the time has arrived to carry it into

effect, and accordingly I now, hereby re-

turn the trust into your hands.

And in this connection, since the Gov-

ernment at Washington has thrown a

drag-net over the whole surface of soci-

ety, to collect proof against individuals of

connection with the Government of the

Confederate States, and since a portion of

the Northern press has charged that cer-

tain private correspondence, recently

seized at Philadelphia by the Federal au-

thorities, will convict me of political

crimes, I deem it due to you and to my-

self to declare that I have, not done or

said anything inconsistent with the rela-

tions I have borne to the State, and to

the Federal Government, or which could

reflect a stain upon the commission which

I now surrender.

I do not resign because I think I have

misrepresented you. On the contrary, I

believe that my votes and speeches in the

Senate have expressed your deliberate

will as attested through the ballot-box.

Resign because there is no place

where a Southern Senator may sit in

council with the Senators of the North

to truth, there is no longer a Senate of

the United States within the meaning

and spirit of the Constitution.

The United States no longer exists.

The Union is dissolved. For a time af-

ter the withdrawal of the Southern States

and while there was a hope that the rup-

ture might be healed, it might be as-

sumed that the Union was not yet dis-

solved, and such was the position of

Kentucky in declaring her neutrality and

offering her mediation between the con-

tending parties. But time has now

elapsed, and mighty events have occurred

which banish from the minds of reason-

able men all expectation of restoring the

Union. Cohesion has been tried, and has

failed. The South has mastered in the

field nearly as many combatants as the

North, and has been far more victorious.

The fields of Manassas and Bethel, of

Springfield and Lexington, have worked

with a terrible and sanguinary line the

division between the old order of things

and the new.

It is the right of Kentucky and her

peculiar duty to recognize these great

facts and to act on them. The constitu-

tional compact which created and upheld

the old Union is at an end. A large

number of the original and additional

parties have withdrawn from it. So large

a number that its stipulations can no

longer be executed, and under such cir-

cumstances no court has ever decided

a contract to be binding between the re-

maining parties, or attempted to enforce

its execution. The Constitution requires

positively that each State shall have at

least one representative in Congress, but

now twelve States have none; that each

State shall have two Senators, but now

twelve States have none; that all duties,

imports and excises shall be uniform

throughout the United States, but now

in more than one-third of them none are

or can be collected. Commerce cannot

be regulated between the respective

States. Uniform rules of naturalization

and bankruptcy cannot be adopted. Post-

offices and post-roads, in nearly half the

States, have been given up, and a prefer-

ence is given to the ports of one State

over those of another. Even the election

of a President has become impossi-

ble. The Constitution is mandatory on

all the States to appoint electors, and re-

quires a majority of the latter to elect;

but more than one-third of the States re-

fuse to appoint, and hence no election

can be made by the people. If the elec-

tion goes to the House of Representatives

the Constitution requires that at least

two-thirds of the States shall be rep-

resented in that body. The Constitution

can no longer be amended; for it re-

quires three-fourths of the States to con-

cur, and more than one-third of the

States have withdrawn from the Confed-

eracy. All the safeguards provided for

by the States in the instrument, will

farther to secure public and personal

liberty, have been destroyed. The three

departments of the Federal Government,

which were carefully separated and their

boundaries defined, have been merged

into one, and the President, sustained by

a great army, wields unlimited power.

The exemption of persons from arrest

without judicial warrant, the right of a

citizen to have his body brought before a

judge to determine the legality of his

imprisonment, the security provided

against searches and seizure without

warrant of law, the sanctity of the home,

the trial by jury, the freedom of speech

and of the press—these and every other

precious rights which our fathers guaran-

teed them have been torn from it and

buried beneath the bill of military power.

The States made the Constitution, placed

the Executive, and the Legislature, and

expressly reserved to themselves all

powers not delegated. They did not

delegate to the Federal Government the

power to destroy them—yet the Executive

has set itself above the Creator. The

arrogant doctrine is announced by the

President and acted upon that the Fed-

eral Government, and may be suppressed

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