

shall the act be enforced within the particular state, or be abandoned by Congress? If enforced, there is a civil war; if abandoned, without being repealed, a virtual dissolution of the Union. As the successful exercise of the power of resisting an act of Congress by one state, would naturally stimulate other states, disapproving other acts of that body, to similar resistance, the practical result would be, that Congress could adopt and enforce no measure whatever, to which any one of the twenty-four states might be opposed. It is in vain to say that the Tariff is characterized by the most enormous injustice. Who is to be the judge of that enormity? Who is to prescribe the limits of enormity, which will authorize resistance, and that which falls short of conferring that right? History and the nature of man demonstrate, that when his prejudices are aroused and his passions inflamed, it is not difficult to persuade him, that mild and equitable laws, are fraught with the most adominable injustice.

Nor can the state of South Carolina derive the smallest aid, in sustaining its doctrine of resistance to the federal authority, from the manner in which the constitution was formed; whether it was the work of the people of the United States collectively, or is to be considered as a compact between sovereign states, or between the people of the several states with each other, there is, there can be, there ought to be, but one rule, which is, that the majority must govern.

Of course, the General Assembly does not now mean to speak of, or to deny, that there may be acts of government of such extreme oppression, as to justify, if there be no other remedy, an appeal to arms. When such cases unhapily—and it is fondly to be hoped they never will—arise, they furnish their own laws; and it is the bonnden duty of those who believe in the existence of such extreme oppression, to estimate well the probabilities and the perils of forcible resistance. The state of South Carolina is not supposed to have intended to assert, that the system of measures denominated the Tariff, or the American System, presents a just cause of civil war; but that without producing civil war, that state may lawfully resist the execution of the system within its jurisdiction. It is, therefore, the ordinary rule of the federal government, and not the extraordinary cases referred to, which should form the subject of our present inquiry.