

policy of annexing Louisiana was under discussion. We there witness another of those innumerable instances of which all history is full, wherein the passions, prejudices, and personal rivalries of those who direct the destinies of States, blind the judgment to the clearest proofs, that they are resisting measures of the most salutary tendencies for the people whose confidence they enjoy, and whose interests it is their duty to promote. Who, at this day, would consent to have the millions of human beings who are to make their homes on the broad lands drained by that great river, the Mississippi, and its tributaries, dependent upon treaty stipulations with a foreign power for the privilege of passing with the productions of those fertile fields out to the markets of the world? Yet forty years ago, wise men, patriotic men, even whole States, threatened to dissolve the Union unless the policy of annexing Louisiana was abandoned, with as much earnestness as they now resort to the same means of intimidation against the proposed introduction of Texas into the Confederacy. There was a stronger apology then than there is now for doubting the policy of enlarging our boundaries. The power of a mild government like ours, acting mainly upon the opinions, and but little, for political purposes, upon the persons of its citizens, had not then been illustrated. Experience and theory now combine to demonstrate, confines of our Confederacy of Republics may be placed at any distance from the centre that is not too remote for those temporarily entrusted with the management, or personally interested in the Legislative, Executive, or Judicial departments, to resort conveniently to the seat of the General Government. Tested by this principle, the extreme southern or western boundary of Texas is a much more convenient confine for the Confederacy now than were the northern boundaries of Maine or Wisconsin at the adoption of the Federal Constitution. In the mode of travelling sixty years ago, there were in a thousand miles, more impediments to be overcome by the traveller, than are presented, at this day, in a distance of three thousand miles, when the power of steam propels the boat over the surface of our lakes and rivers, and drives the car along our rail roads, at the rate of twenty miles an hour. We live in an age of progress. And we owe it to ourselves, and our posterity, not to impede, from unworthy motives, that advance to perfection in the science of Government, as in every other science, which daily experience proves to be attainable. What force of imagination could depict the miseries to which the people of the old world have been subjected, under received opinions as to Government, inculcated by their selfish and ambitious rulers. For many ages England, with a territorial surface less than that of Virginia, was divided into no less than seven paltry Governments, kept asunder, that their feeble Heptarchs might each have his court, his army and his civil list. For a much longer period England, Scotland and Ireland separated, were engaged in perpetual border wars, sweeping away their population, preventing the progress of civilization, and inflicting an untold amount of human misery. In fact, every page of the history of