

Transcription

Sectionalism is "the dark cloud that is now overhanging the country"

Another danger to which I shall refer as threatening the country, is, *the spirit of sectionalism*.

This is the dark cloud that is now overhanging the country; and it becomes every man who loves the land of his birth, and his race, to dwell with the deepest solicitude upon this, the most fearful evil with which we are threatened. A new spirit has begun to show itself, both in the Northern and Southern sections of the land. Our fathers when they devised their measures for promoting their country's welfare, had reference to *every* section. It was literally true of them that they knew no North, no South, no East, no West. They did not interfere with the peculiar institutions of any part of the Union. They did not indulge in invective language that was only calculated to embitter one portion of the Union against the other. Their object was to bind together in indissoluble bonds the entire country. They knew that every part was dependent upon the other, and that the strength of each was derived from the Union of all.

How different it is now with many of their descendants! In the North, under the influence of a wretched fanaticism, men are found who glory in the idea, that this Union may soon be dissolved. They would rather that *every* strand should be broken, and the country be deluged in blood—brother warring against brother—than that domestic servitude should continue to exist in the South. They have violated the known obligations of the constitution, disregarded its plainest provisions by opposing a law, enacted to carry out the spirit and letter of the constitution, and without which constitutional provision, it is well understood, that this Union of States could never have been formed. Others, professing love for the Union, at the same time indulge in the most bitter invective against the peculiar institution of the South, and those who countenance it. They exhaust the vocabulary of language in expressing their deep detestation of their brethren of the South for sustaining a relation, which is as clearly recognized in the Word of God to be an *innocent* relation, as the marriage, or parental, or any other relation in life. To carry out their idea of the sinfulness of this Southern institution, they have made ecclesiastical judicatories, as well as the halls of Congress, the theatre for exhibiting their opposition to what they consider the great sin of the South. They have divided Churches, destroyed the peace and unity oftentimes of families, converted the pulpit into an engine of destruction, instead of making it the great



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instrument for promoting truth and harmony in the community. They have finally brought their power to bear upon the political state of the country, and through the ballot-box, by a purely sectional vote, have elevated to the highest office in the gift of the people one with no other special recommendation than his avowed hostility to the domestic institution of the South.

This exhibition of malignity and fanaticism has excited a corresponding degree of feeling and dissatisfaction with the Union on the part of many in the South. Nor is it surprising, in the present state of human nature, that it should have such an effect. When one portion of the country deliberately tramples upon the constitution by which all profess to be bound, it is natural that the other section should feel that all obligation on its part to maintain the Union, has ceased;—in other words, that the compact once broken by either party cannot be binding upon the other. Hence it is, that in our Southern country the spirit of sectionalism has increased to a most alarming extent. Under the goadings of Northern fanatics, our people, to a very considerable degree, are agitating the question as to the value of this Union of States. What was once considered our richest inheritance is beginning to be looked upon only as the source of detraction and embittered feeling. Confidence between the two sections of the country seems to be destroyed. Crimination and recrimination are now distinguishing both sections. War-notes of preparation for a coming conflict are borne to us through the telegraph and the press. Past associations and glory seem to be forgotten amid the intense excitement produced by a sense of inflicted wrong. To all human appearance nothing but a divine interposition will avail to our deliverance from the appalling calamities that threaten us.

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