

Transcription

"There is no affinity between Eastern and Western Virginia"

There is a very wide spread and spreading sentiment in Western Virginia in favor of a division of the State at the Blue Ridge. The people of Western Virginia know very well, and it is useless longer for demagogues to try to blind them or reconcile them to the fact, that they have been used as so many vassals by Eastern Virginia, and that, in the language of our Clarksburg contemporary, "Western Virginia has suffered more from the oppressive doctrines of her Eastern brethren than ever the Cotton States all put together have suffered from the Northern Personal Liberty bills." This is so. Any one who doubts it has but to turn to the 22d and 23d clauses in our State Constitution, where he can see the iniquitous discrimination that is made against us. It is there provided that "all property, *other than slaves*, shall be taxed in proportion to its value." And it is also provided that slaves under twelve years of age shall not be taxed—no odds what their value may be, whether five hundred or five thousand dollars—and that all over twelve years of age shall be only taxed at the value of three hundred dollars worth of land, or in other words, at the bare pittance of *one dollar and twenty cents*.— Readers who are curious about the assertion made by the Clarksburg paper can satisfy themselves not only by turning to the State Constitution, but by referring to the course of Legislation at Richmond for the last twenty-five years. It will be seen that we have been treated and regarded as a separate people. And such indeed we are. There is no affinity between Eastern and Western Virginia. There never was, and while geography and climate holds sway there never can be, assuming that Eastern Virginia remains as she is, and that she is correct in her notions of her true policy. We are a great deal more distinct as a people, than the populations of Upper and Lower Canada. We are about to each other as are North and South Carolina—the one being a slave State against the grain of nature, and the other in accordance with nature. The slave population of Western Virginia is only nominal, while her white population is some hundred and twenty-five or thirty thousand in excess of Eastern Virginia. The consequence is, that we suffer all the evils, without any of the benefits, of the system. We pay for the music that others are dancing to. The price of that music would be doubled, trebled, quadrupled on us, were we so insane as to consent to be hitched on to a Cotton Confederacy. Then, indeed, would our troubles be as were the troubles of Israel under Solomon and Rehoboam. The effect would be to depopulate Western Virginia of her best and most enterprising citizens. The population of this city in the next decade, would retrograde



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one-third. Make us a foreign city to Ohio and Pennsylvania, and grass will grow in every street in this city next summer. We will sink, sink, and sink, until we become a sort of an old, dull, moneyless Mexican town, that subsists by catching a copper once and awhile from a traveler, and eking out a miserable little trade with the country immediately about it. This will be our condition— And it will be that of every town and hamlet in Western Virginia. In view of these facts, then is it not time that we wakened up to our true interest. Is it not time that we responded to this suggestion of the *National Intelligencer* correspondent in Ritchie county, and give Eastern Virginia to understand that, if she goes into a Cotton Confederacy, she goes alone, and without Western Virginia.

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