Rev. Dr. Boardman
with the respects of the
Author

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WILLIAM T. BRANTLY'S THANKSGIVING SERMON.

CORRECTED BY THE AUTHOR FOR PUBLICATION IN PAMPHLET.

OUR NATIONAL TROUBLES.

A THANKSGIVING SERMON

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DELIVERED IN THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,

BEFORE THE

First and the Tabernacle Baptist Congregations of Philadelphia,

ON THURSDAY MORNING, NOV. 29, 1860.

BY WILLIAM T. BRANTLY,

MINISTER OF THE TABERNACLE BAPTIST CHURCH.

PHILADELPHIA:

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, 306 CHESTNUT STREET.

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1860.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Philadelphia, November 30th, 1860.

Rev. Wm. T. Brantly, D.D.

Rev. and Dear Sir:

The sentiments of your discourse, delivered on Thanksgiving Day, the 29th inst., in the First Baptist Church of this City, seem to us to be eminently judicious. Believing that the wider circulation of this Discourse, at the present juncture of our National affairs, will contribute to allay sectional excitement, to restore harmony, and to re-establish confidence in the value and perpetuity of The Union, we respectfully ask a copy for publication.

We are Dear Sir very sincerely yours,

Wm. S. Hansell,
Thos. Wattson,
Jno. O. James,
John C. Davis,
Washington Butcher,
Of the First Baptist Congregation.

Jno. W. Sexton,
Levi Knowles,
Park Cassady,
Henry Croskey,
Wm. L. Maddock,
Of the Tabernacle Baptist Congregation.

REPLY.

Philadelphia, November 30th, 1860.

GENTLEMEN:

The discourse which you request was hastily prepared, the day before Thanksgiving, without the remotest reference to publication. I could wish it were more worthy of preservation in the permanent form in which your partiality seeks to embody it. Meagre and imperfect, as I feel it to be, I am not at liberty to withhold it, if, in the judgment even of partial friends, it may contribute to the peace of the Country.

Very truly your friend and servant,

W. T. BRANTLY.

To Messrs. Hansell, Wattson, James, Davis, Butcher, Sexton, Knowles, Cassady, Croskey, and Maddock.

OUR NATIONAL TROUBLES.

A THANKSGIVING SERMON.

ECCLESIASTES, VII., 14.

IN THE DAY OF PROSPERITY BE JOYFUL, BUT IN THE DAY OF ADVERSITY CONSIDER: GOD ALSO HATH SET THE ONE OVER AGAINST THE OTHER, TO THE END THAT MAN SHOULD FIND NOTHING AFTER HIM.

THE history of every man who completes the ordinary term of human existence, or any considerable portion of it, supplies a fresh confirmation of the trite remark, that life is a checkered scene. Days of prosperity and days of adversity are constantly intermingled. It is true, that in the history of most of us, the occasions of gratitude are far more numerous than those of sorrow. Were we to look over the past to-day, and to strike the balance between our times of sickness and those of health,—times when we were pinched with want and those in which we had enough and to spare; between the number of our friends and the number of our enemies; between

those things which we must call mercies and those which we must regard as judgments;—the result would compel us all to say, we have abundant cause for responding to the proclamation of the Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth, which summons us to give thanks to-day. There is not one of us but would feel constrained, in view of the past, to ask, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"

We have not been without our days of adversity—times, it may be, when our sky was so utterly overcast that there was not even light enough to produce the bow of hope to span our pathway. Whether this adversity came in the shape of conviction for sin, when the Holy Spirit taught you that you were in the gall of bitterness, whilst as yet He furnished no relief; or in the form of disappointments and reverses, when you were obliged to witness the failure of enterprises on which you had made very sanguine calculations; or in the distress of those with whom you were in the closest sympathy; or in the calumny which sought to impeach your motives and blacken your reputation; or in the bereavement of some object very dear to your hearts—perhaps a child who seemed to be a part of your own existence—or a parent tenderly beloved—or a companion on whose strong arm you had been accustomed to lean in the pilgrimage of life;—whatever the circum

stances under which the calamity occurred, you were obliged to feel that it was a day of adversity. If in this day you have paused to consider the lesson which it was so well fitted to supply, you have already perceived that what seemed to be only trouble, was the Providence of a Father who chastens whom He loves, or your faith assures you that such will be the discovery when the great Interpreter makes all things plain to the comprehension of those who put their trust in him.

These days of adversity, which we find in the lives of individuals, must be looked for in the history of nations and of states. For as these are but the aggregates of individuals, it is reasonable to expect in the whole those alternations of sunshine and of shade which are found in every part. No nations, however prosperous, have been without their times of trial; and whilst in some instances these trials have resulted in their ruin, in others they appear to have imparted strength for more energetic life. When the Persian monarchy rose under Cyrus, and achieved an empire wider and more powerful than the world had ever known before, men began to think that the government was at last organized which would be indestructible. But the jubilee of triumph was yet fresh upon the tongue when its integrity was threatened from within and without. In a short time the glory of Cyrus pales before the more splen-

did exploits of Alexander; and the Macedonian monarch wielded over peoples and territories a power which eclipsed utterly the dominion of all who had preceded him. Never, it was believed, could Ichabod be written over so powerful a throne. But internal dissensions, fomented by the fierce quarrels of ambitious leaders, induced divisions which made the country an easy prey to invaders, and destroyed all the work of the warrior who had "conquered the world." As we descend the stream of time, we find at length an empire which, it would seem, could never be overthrown. With the most skilful generals in the field, and men distinguished for their eloquence, patriotism and probity in her councils; harmonious at home, and no enemies to dread from abroad; surely, we are ready to conclude, this is a consolidation which must be enduring. As successive centuries roll on, and the mistress of the world strengthens her grasp on the nations whom her eagles overshadow, and the conservative element of Christianity begins to take effect among her citizens, and to adorn the diadem of the Cæsars, we are confirmed in the conviction that the government has at last been inaugurated which is destined to know no decay whilst earthly kingdoms remain. But the history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire has been written.

National calamities do not of necessity, however,

involve national ruin. In the history of States as of persons, days of adversity are often succeeded by the most prosperous periods. How strikingly is this illustrated in the annals of the two most powerful governments of the old world, at the present day. I speak of England and France. They have known times in which it seemed that their national existence must be destroyed, and the historian compelled to do for them, what had been done for their illustrious predecessors. But hitherto, they have emerged triumphantly from the ruin which seemed inevitable. Sixty years ago, France was convulsed with a revolution so fierce, that at one time it was judged impossible for the nation to survive its terrible throes. Says an eye-witness of the scene, "Multiplied cases of suicide; prisons crowded with innocent persons; permanent guillotines; perjuries of all classes; parental authority set at defiance; debauchery encouraged by law; thousands of divorces granted in one year in the single city of Paris; whilst there prevailed throughout the country whatever is most obscene in vice, or dreadful in ferocity." It was a day of adversity for that people. But in a few years, the country which appeared to be on the brink of ruin, has risen to the very summit of political prosperity. Her victorious emperor has made her name formidable in all Europe. Kings it would seem kept their thrones by his sufferance, whilst he was the great arbiter of disputes.

At one time men were predicting that the French authority would be established over the whole continent, and the sway of Napoleon, become co-extensive with the authority of the most illustrious of the Cæsars. But in a few short months after the prophecy, the sceptre was wrested from the grasp of the conqueror, and so complete was the humiliation of the proud empire, that she was almost thrown upon the indulgence of her enemies, for her independent national existence. Rising again from her temporary degradation, she has continued to ascend amid all her vicissitudes, until to-day she holds an eminence which makes her conspicuous among the powers of the earth. If we look to England, we shall discover that with all her greatness, she has not been without her days of adversity. She has suffered disastrous defeats by land and sea; her kings have been beheaded, or exiled or confined in dungeons; civil wars have arrayed her citizens against each other, in the most deadly strife, and revolutions have threatened her with dismemberment and ruin. Was it not a time of adversity with her, when eighty-four years ago, her oppressed subjects in this country rose up in their might, and after years of fighting, tore from her crown these fair western possessions, confessedly the brightest jewel which ever glittered in her diadem. Scarcely six months have passed away, since all England was trembling under the dread of an assault from her ally of the

Crimea. Her Prime Minister, was calling for military appropriations. The people were busy organizing troops, and constructing defences. They knew not at what moment the invasion would come. It was a time of gloom—a day of adversity. Such was the consternation which prevailed, that the Emperor, from whom the assault was apprehended, felt called upon to allay, by an official disclaimer, the disquietudes of his English friends. But, this, like other days of adversity, passed away, and amidst her varying fortunes, England has been advancing from strength to strength, until now, "the sun never sets on her possessions, and her morning drum-beat is heard around the world."

Nations, however powerful and prosperous they may subsequently become, cannot expect to escape their time of trial. We may not look for exemption from this common lot. We have had our sunshine of prosperity. It has been most marked and extraordinary. As we look over the past we are ready to say with the sacred historian, when speaking of God's dealings with another people, "He hath not dealt so with any nation; as for his judgments, they have not known them." Our Union has been to us all a "copious fountain of individual, social and national happiness." But we are not so free from sins, individual and national; our country is not so eminent for virtue and piety that we can hope to escape the

troubles which have hitherto marked the history of man under all governments. Days of adversity will come. I do but give utterance to what every person of ordinary discernment must perceive, when I say that such times are actually upon us. Men of all creeds and of all parties in all sections of the country, however widely they may differ either as to the cause or the remedy, must recognize the present as a day of adversity. It was only a few evenings ago that the most influential politician of the State of New York, addressing a company who had come to congratulate him on the result of the recent election, was constrained to say among other things: "Gentlemen, our political atmosphere is filled with dark and murky clouds." A prominent statesman* of New Hampshire writes that "men are now compelled to open their eyes upon a full view of the nearness and magnitude of impending calamities."

If we turn toward the South, there is an occasional ray of light, as we hear the voice of her conservative patriots, but the gloom preponderates fearfully. One State, I fear, has already dissolved her connection with the government, so far as the intention of her citizens can do it; and in a few days, what has already been done in spirit, may be executed in united and solemn action. Other States are calling their conventions; the advocates of immediate and unconditional secession are crying with their too eloquent tongues, "give us the sword;" hundreds of thousands of dollars are already appropriated for the purchase of death-dealing weapons; the people everywhere are thoroughly aroused and all are acting as if they believed that some fearful crisis was at hand. Whether a revolution occurs or not, it is certain that there are the prognostics of trouble. As I look on, I am filled with the most painful apprehensions. I am distressed at the mere possibility of the destruction of a country around which there cluster so many treasured memories and fond anticipations. I am not indeed without hope. I trust that there are intelligence and patriotism and piety enough in the sections which now seem to be so fiercely arrayed against each other to ride out the storm. I have not yet been able to believe that the merciful Providence which has given to this country so many men eminent in the field and in the cabinet, which has watched over our interests at a time when they seemed to be desperate, and which in subsequent periods has brought us safely through other crises which were alarming, will now abandon us to dismemberment and ruin. My hope and prayer are that existing troubles may result in such explanations and pledges as will cement in a firmer bond those who are already united by many strong and sacred ties. My hope and prayer are that when this angry tempest subsides,

* Ex-President Pierce.

it will leave the sky all the more bright: exhibiting not a lone star here, and there, and yonder, twinkling in the firmament with their feeble and isolated light, but our national constellation, without one star eclipsed, shining with a new splendor after the temporary obscuration through which it has passed.

But passing these general observations, I proceed to mention two or three of the causes which in my view have contributed to our present troubles. Our national troubles are doubtless due to two classes of causes, the moral and the political. The latter belong to the domain of the politician, and may not be discussed in a place which is sacred to other themes. No circumstanccs can justify the introduction of mere party politics into the pulpit. In the present case, I am aware, that the different causes to which I have referred, unless very sharply defined, must be confounded with each other. I shall confine myself to those which affect the moral aspect of the question; and your time allows me to do little more than advert to two or three of the more obvious considerations.

I. One cause of our present adversity is found in the *national idolatry* to which we have been addicted. Love of country, I am aware, is a duty not merely of patriotism, but of religion. Many have insisted, and very wisely too, on cherishing this as a bond of union. When the love of country dies out, the

country will die out with it. "It is sweet and glorious," said the Roman, "to die for one's country;" and our Christianity has fully endorsed this pagan sentiment. We honor the patriots who shed their blood in achieving our independence; we love to speak of their noble deeds to our children: the memory of their patriotism can never perish. At the same time, a devotion which is allowable, and even dutiful, when restrained within proper bounds, becomes mischievous when immoderate and excessive. "Husbands love your wives," is an apostolic command, but when affection erects the wife into an idol, which takes that place in the heart which the Creator claims for himself, it is pernicious and sinful, and exposes him who is guilty to the judgments of Heaven. If I mistake not, we have been disposed to love our country with an undue affection. Never, I apprehend, did there exist a government on earth, embracing a population of so many millions of people, with such heterogeneous tastes and pursuits, where contentment and unanimity have so generally prevailed. With the exception of a very few extreme men in the North, who have openly and unblushingly denounced the constitution of their country as a covenant with death and a league with hell, together with a very small company in the South, who have for many years gloried in the unpatriotic name of Disunionists *per*

se, the great mass of the people have been devotedly attached to the Union of the States.

We have eulogized the Union until we have begun to think that it was some deity worthy of our homage. We have thought that there was such magic in that word "Union," that no assault made upon it could be successful. Our poets have sung praises to the Union in their most glowing numbers; our orators have employed their best rhetoric in painting its glories; and our philosophers have written volumes in exhibition of its excellencies. We have loved to unfurl the stars and the stripes from our private dwellings, as well as from our public buildings; to display them in the valley and on the mountain-top; and to flaunt them in our most crowded thoroughfares, so that the most inattentive passer-by must see them. Our ships, as they plow the seas of the world, fling our national emblem to the breeze from their most conspicuous masts. Our children use miniature flags for their toys. On our public holidays, our locomotives and our horses, as they drag their living freight through street and country, are adorned with the Star-Spangled Banner. If any one had asked one of those Japanese who visited our city recently, what was the religion of the American people, had he no other means of forming an opinion than from what he observed whilst

in the country, he must have said they worship a deity represented by the stars and the stripes. For wherever they went these met their eye; when they paused at their hotels, this was always a prominent object, and when they journeyed this was always a part of the company. They knew nothing of any other object of worship. They were carefully restrained from visiting our sanctuaries, or reading our bibles, or from hearing anything by which they could conjecture that the Americans did not worship a God who was visible through the omnipresent banner. Our spread-eagle rhetoricians have described the American eagle perched on the highest peak of the Western mountains, with one wing touching the Atlantic and the other the Pacific waters, as if about to take the whole North American continent under his shadow. In this general jubilee we have hardly allowed ourselves to think that the wing of our national bird could ever droop, or that our "glorious banner" could be superseded by another ensign. May not God, in this adversity be rebuking us just at that point where he has seen that we have been unduly proud and boastful?

We know that in his dealings with nations he adapts the judgments which he inflicts, to the moral delinquencies of those whom he punishes. How strikingly is this illustrated in those chastisements which he laid on the ancient Egyptians. "The Nile was adored in Egypt, and the Nile was turned into

blood. Then it produced frogs, by the touch of whose dead bodies the Egyptians were considered as defiled, and so, by the laws of their own superstitions, were prevented from approaching their altars. Next the dust was turned into vermin, one of which alighting on a sacrifice, polluted it. Thus was the idolatrous worship of Egypt suspended. The Egyptians worshipped the fly, and the flies were the fourth plague. They worshipped cattle also, (the goat was consecrated to Pan, the heifer to Isis, and the bull to Osiris,) and the fifth plague was on these. The ashes of the sacrifices scattered abroad, were thought to produce blessings where it lighted, but from the hand of Moses it inflicted a curse—even blains, on every man. Again, the Egyptians worshipped the elements; hence tempests of hail spread destruction over the land, and locusts, carried by their god, the wind, destroyed every remaining plant. They believed light and darkness were independent principles, but they saw a darkness which the sun could not disperse." Now, as in his dealings with the nations of antiquity, the chastisements which God laid upon them, were of such a nature as were fitted to remind them of the transgressions for which they were visited, may we not find in our national boasting, and in our national pride and arrogance, an explanation of our present troubles? A few weeks since, we were saying that this Union is too powerful to be broken; that it could withstand

all the shocks of the future, as it has sustained those of the past; that all the threatenings of dissolution were but the political subterfuges of the designing, or the idle gasconade of the ambitious. But we begin to see the weakness of what we had judged to be impregnable. It is our national existence which is threatened.

Our Union, which we have loved, perhaps too inordinately, is now in danger of dismemberment, and of destruction.

II. Another cause of our present troubles is found in the eager contentions for supremacy, which have marked the history of opposing parties. In a free government like ours, where the people are called upon to elect officers of some kind at intervals of only a few months, it is quite impossible to avoid the existence of parties. There will be a variety of opinions about measures and men, and this will give birth to antagonistic organizations. Washington had been in the Presidential chair but a short time when there arose an Anti-Federal party, whilst he and his supporters were called Federalists. As the former claimed to come more directly from the people, they were called Democrats. In 1793, France declared war against England, and immediately sent a messenger to this country, to secure our co-operation. The messenger, Mr. Genet, receiving no encouragement from Washington, appealed to the people. Many of these, dis-

senting from the President, held that we were bound by every consideration of duty and of gratitude, to make common cause with the people who had so liberally poured out their blood and their treasure in our service. Those imbibing these opinions were generally of the Democratic party, and the young organization, gaining strength from their devotion to the French cause, and subsequently from the unpopularity of the Alien and Sedition Laws, were able, in a few years, to instal Jefferson in the Presidential chair, over his opponent, John Adams. Since that day we have had sundry political parties, with diverse principles, and under various titles. Until recently these parties have had their supporters, indiscriminately, in all parts of the Union. Latterly, however, a new element has entered the political arena, and parties have been determined by geographical lines. So long as these organizations were not restricted to particular sections, the peace of the country was not imperilled; but since each has derived its strength from one particular locality, the inevitable tendency has been to foment the jealousies and ill-blood which now, alas, so fearfully prevail. We have just seen a President and Vice President elected solely by the votes of Northern States, the vote of every Southern State being cast against them. You remember how faithfully our own Washington, in his Farewell Address, has cautioned us against what has now occurred. I could but think, as I yesterday read

that remarkable document, that had he been gifted with the faculty of prescience, he could not have described more accurately the troubles which must flow from sectional organizations. "In contemplating," says Washington, "the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs to me, as matter of serious concern, that any ground should be furnished for characterizing parties by geographical distinctions, as Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western, whence designing men may excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views." Are there not designing men to-day in the North, as in the South, who, as if in fulfilment of this prophecy, are seeking to create the impression that the conflict between the two is so irrepressible as to preclude all harmony? Washington saw that in a Government like ours, there was but one condition of peace: that there be no South nor North, no East nor West, but *our country, our whole country.* Departing from this advice, we are plunged into our present unhappy embarrassments.

III. Another cause of our present national adversity is the misunderstanding which prevails with regard to each other's motives and designs. We all know how much hostility is excited between individuals by a simple misconception. I have known persons indulge in the most vehement vituperation of each other, and threaten the most serious violence,

when, in fact, there was no real ground of dispute between them;—the whole difficulty originating in a misapprehension of each other's intention. What is true of individuals in this respect may be true of States. One would suppose that with the printing-press so constantly at work, with railroads running in unbroken connection from the granite hills of New England down to the plantations of Alabama, with the electric wire reporting at our breakfast tables the transactions of the preceding day in the capitols of the most distant Southern States, and with the constant communication of our merchants personally, and by letter, that the two sections ought fully to understand each other's views and sentiments on every important subject. But there is very little true conception of the real state of feeling of each to the other. With twenty years of my life equally divided between the North and the South, and with an extensive personal acquaintance in both, and at no time an indifferent spectator of what was transpiring about me, I have often observed how frequently even good men in these different portions of the country have misjudged each others real character and designs. This is owing in a great measure, doubtless, to the many agencies which are constantly at work to awaken mutual suspicion and distrust. Political demagogues who have identified their fortunes with different localities, conceiving that their peculiar

triumphs must be won from fraternal discord, have been actively at work to fan into a flame animosities already too violent. Sensation newspapers, in both sections, pandering to a prurient curiosity, and feeding a vitiated appetite, now with the obscene details of our courts of justice, and again with the exaggerated recital of the angry words and deeds of men of heated passion, have been fearfully active in keeping alive the baleful excitement. Covetous men, seeking to gratify their avarice, have distorted facts, and invented falsehoods for the accomplishment of their nefarious schemes. And then because it has been popular among some classes at the North to indulge in maledictions of the South, and in some circles at the South to villify the North, lecturers in both sections in quest of money and of popularity have resorted to this dishonorable expedient to secure their object. When residing in Athens, Georgia, I saw a statement in the northern papers, that a box containing copies of Uncle Tom's Cabin, destined for Alabama, had been seized while passing through Athens, and burned in the public streets. The story was a gross fabrication, but it was extensively circulated in the Northern States as an illustration of the barbarism of slavery. Those of you who are acquainted with the railroad communications of the country know that Athens is a terminus of a railroad, and that no goods intended for Alabama are ever sent

through that place. At the very time when this burning is alleged to have occurred, the book was on sale in Athens, and was freely purchased and discussed by some of its citizens. They agreed that with some things that were true, it contained also much that was false. And now living at the North, I sometimes see in the Southern newspapers, reports in circulation of transactions here quite as fabulous as the story to which I have now referred. The result is just what might have been expected from such distortions and misrepresentations. How could it be otherwise? How long could amicable relations exist even between intimate friends were some spy to report every expression, which in an unguarded moment the one might make against the other—at the same time so coloring his statements as to work the greatest mischief? Would not such a "whisperer soon separate chief friends?" Is it surprising, then, that those who have been so diligently employed in arraying against each other, by every means, foul and fair, the different sections of the country, should have succeeded at last in involving us in such bitter strife? The distortions and exaggerations, the falsehood and the calumny so long uncorrected and unrebuked by a wholesome public opinion are bearing their terrible fruit: threatening with overthrow the noblest government on earth. Hear Washington on this point. I trust it is not yet too late to be profited by the counsels of the first and greatest of the Presidents. "One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is, *to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts.* You cannot shield yourself too much against the *jealousies and heart-burnings* which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection."

There are, doubtless, other reasons than those to which I have referred, which have contributed to our unhappy feuds. No enumeration possible, within the brief limits of this discourse, would be exhaustive of this subject. Allow me, in conclusion, a few suggestions as to the remedy for our existing troubles. In the day of adversity it is useful to consider the cure, if there be any, as well as the cause of the sorrow by which we are oppressed.

1. If we have been idolatrous in our love of country, we must dislodge this usurper, and invite to the shrine Him who claims our hearts. We must learn to lean less on our boasted and powerful Union, and more on that unseen but almighty Hand whence our real strength must be derived. During the convention, which, seventy-three years ago, sat in this city for the purpose of forming a Constitution, the delegates found themselves, at one time, so seriously embarrassed that it was

feared they would be compelled to adjourn without accomplishing the object for which they had convened. Various propositions were made by their wisest counsellors, but none could harmonize conflicting opinions. After several days debate, and when many had begun to despair of adjusting their difficulties, a member suggested that they should ask direction from above. The suggestion was favorably received. The first prayer was heard in the convention. The members confessed their ignorance, and sought Divine wisdom; light soon broke in upon their counsels; and the difficulties, which had so recently appeared to be insuperable, vanished. Could we, as a people, humble ourselves before the Lord, confessing our sins, whether personal, social or national, and seek pardon through our Lord Jesus Christ, we might hope that the judgments which now threaten us would be averted; that "Peace would be once more established within our walls and prosperity in our palaces."

2. As our troubles spring from the prevalence of a sectional spirit, we must revive that spirit of mutual forbearance and concession on which our national organizations were originally founded. Said Henry Clay, in one of the most eloquent speeches which I ever heard from human lips, "My friends, our constitutional history began in a compromise. If each section had insisted rigidly and unconditionally on its own cherished views, no government could have been formed. It was only when each became willing to concede something for the general good that a constitution could be adopted. The confederation which was born in a spirit of concession can only be preserved by a like temper." Men of the North must be willing to make sacrifices, if need be, to conciliate the men of the South. Though they cannot compromise their consciences they may forego their preferences. There must be that forbearance and amity which are the glory of an enlightened and free people. And on the other hand such concessions can only be effective where they are met by a similar spirit in those to whom they are offered. Let the men of the South deal with those of the North as with brethren of the same blood, and fellow citizens whose interest in the republic is common with their own. When this sentiment prevails harmony will again return and angry criminations give place to cordial fellowship.

3. We must observe fully and honorably all the requisitions of the Constitution of the Union. If, as is generally conceded, our present disturbances are due in no small measure to a disregard of the provisions of that instrument, it is idle to hope for peace until its authority is re-established. Men have insisted that there was a "higher law"—a law

above the Constitution, and under the impulse of a blind passion they have perverted a doctrine, true within proper limits, and have trampled on the constitution of the country. Complying with those stipulations which conflict with no prejudices, they have too often evaded or resisted those which militated against their cherished views. We boast that we have no king, but when we make laws they must be king, or discord and strife must follow. Hear Washington again: "The basis of our political system is to make and to alter our constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people is *sacredly obligatory upon all.*" Let this doctrine be respected by the people, and, with the blessing of God, the nation is safe.

As I stand in this pulpit to-day, I am reminded of the words of a former pastor of this church, ardently attached to his country, and now gone to his reward on high. "If,"* said the patriot and the christian, to whom I now refer, "our happy country ever bleeds by self-inflicted wounds, ambition will drive the dagger. Should this great republic of brothers ever feel the convulsive throb of discord, and fall distained in its own gore, it will be through the workings of this baleful passion. It will then have accomplished

* Sermons of the late Dr. Brantly, page 224.

the ruin of the noblest superstructure ever raised on earth, will have effected the frustration of the fairest hopes that Heaven ever vouchsafed his creature man. Of all the blessings conferred on the human race, that only of redemption excepted, THE CONSTITUTIONAL UNION OF THESE STATES IS THE GREATEST." Well said, sainted man of God! Though dead, may these burning words in which you still speak to us, be graven indelibly on our minds. May the spirit which prompted them, breathe in the hearts of all by whom you have been known and loved! I would place them side by side with the prayer of the gifted statesman, whose requiem old ocean is chaunting to-day; and I would have every American citizen feel as did he, in giving utterance to those well known, but ever-thrilling words, "When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent,—on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full, high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, or a single star obscured—bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as—What is all this

worth? nor those other words of delusion and folly—*Liberty first, and Union afterwards*—but every where, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its folds as they float over the sea, and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—Liberty *and Union*, now and forever, one and inseparable." God grant that the patriotism which inspired these noble sentiments, may once more pervade our entire country, and to His name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be all the glory.

THE END.