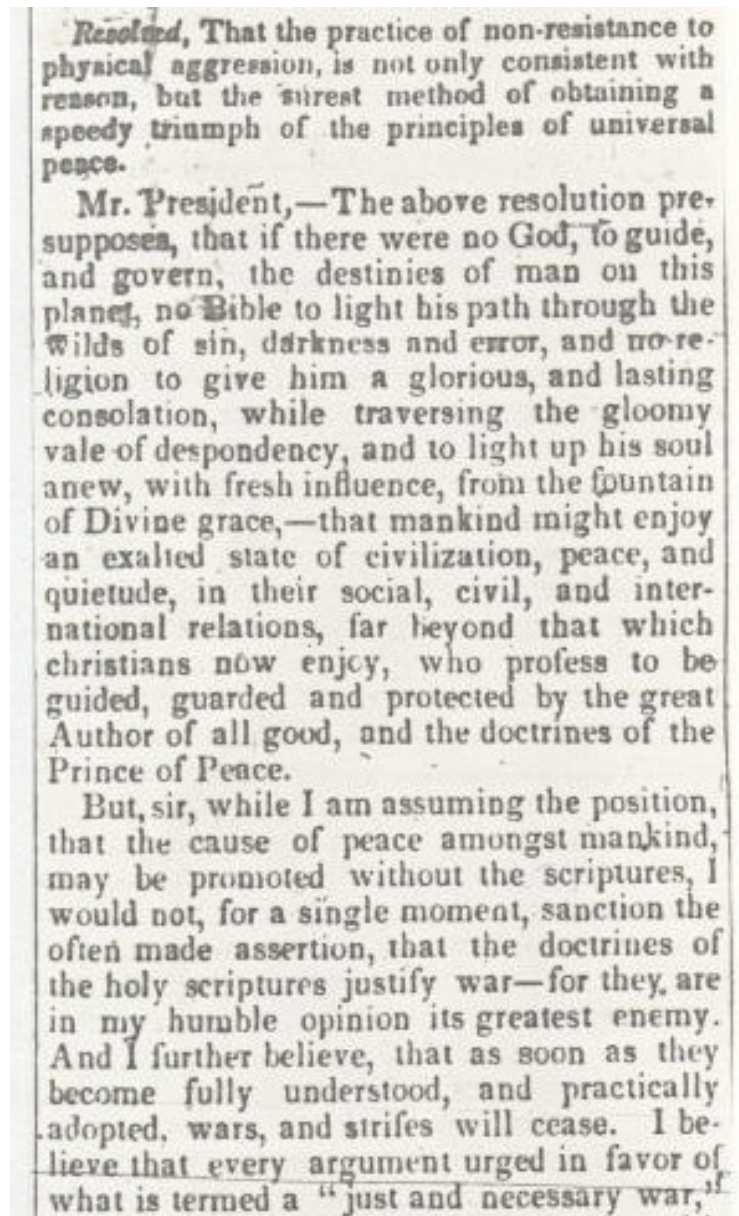


[*Resolved*, That the practice of non-resistance to physical aggression, is not only consistent with reason, but the surest method of obtaining a speedy triumph of the principles of universal peace.]

Mr. President,—The above resolution presupposes that if there were no God, to guide, and govern, the destinies of man on this planet, no Bible to light his path through the wilds of sin, darkness and error, and no religion to give him a glorious, and lasting consolation, while traversing the gloomy vale of despondency, and to light up his soul anew, with fresh influence, from the fountain of Divine grace,—that mankind might enjoy an exalted state of civilization, peace, and quietude, in their social, civil, and international relations, far beyond that which christians now enjoy, who profess to be guided, guarded and protected by the great Author of all good, and the doctrines of the Prince of Peace.

But, sir, while I am assuming the position, that the cause of peace amongst mankind, may be promoted without the scriptures, I would not, for a single moment, sanction the often made assertion, that the doctrines of the holy scriptures justify war—for they are in my humble opinion its greatest enemy. And I further believe, that as soon as they become fully understood, and practically adopted, wars, and strifes will cease. I believe that every argument urged in favor of what is termed a “just and necessary war,”



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of physical self defence, is at enmity with the letter, and spirit of the scriptures, and when they emanate from its professed advocates should be repudiated, as inimical to the principles they profess, and a reproach to christianity itself. I have said this much in favor of the influence of the scriptures, on the subject of peace. It is neither my intention, nor my province, under the present resolution, to give proofs for my belief by quotations from holy writ. That portion of the discussion, I shall leave to the minister of the *altar*, and the learned and biblical theologian. Though I may make a few incidental quotations hereafter, I shall now pass on for a few brief moments to the resolution under consideration, viz:

The resolution asserts, that the practice of non-resistance to physical aggression is consistent with reason. A very distinguished man asserts, "that reason is that distinguishing characteristic that separates man from the brute creation," and that this power was bestowed upon him by his Maker, that he might be capable of subduing all subordinate intelligences to his will." It is this power when exerted in its full force, that enables him to conquer the animals of the forest, and which makes him lord of creation. There is a right, and a wrong method of reasoning. The latter is governed by our animal impulses, and wicked desires, without regard to the end to be attained. The former

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fixes its premises, in great fundamental, and unalterable truths—surveys the magnitude of the objects, and the difficulties to be surmounted, and calls to its aid the resources of enlightened wisdom, as a landmark by which to conduct its operations.

It is self evident, that when the greatest difficulties surround us, we should summon our noblest powers. “Man is a being formed for action as well as contemplation;” “For this purpose there are interwoven in his constitution, powers, instincts, feelings, and affections, which have a reference to his improvement in virtue, and which excite him to promote the happiness of others.” When we behold them by their noble sentiments, exhibiting sublime virtues and performing illustrious actions, we ascribe the same to the goodness of their hearts, their great reasoning powers and intellectual abilities. For were it not for these high human endowments, we should never behold men in seasons of calamity, displaying tranquillity and fortitude in the midst of difficulties and dangers, enduring poverty and distress with a noble heroism, suffering injuries and affronts with patience and serenity—stifling resentment when they have it in their power to inflict vengeance—displaying kindness and generosity towards enemies and slanderers—submitting to pain and disgrace in order to promote the prosperity of their friends and relatives, or the great interests of the human

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race.

Such acts may be considered by persons of influence and rank as the offspring of pusillanimity, because they themselves are either incapable of conceiving the purity of the motives from which they emanate, or are too deeply engulphed in the ruder passions of our nature, to allow them to bestow a just tribute to the efforts of enlightened reason.

It is happy for us to contemplate, that every age, both of the pagan and the christian world, has been blessed, that they always have fastened their attention on the noblest gifts of our nature, and that they now still shine as ornaments to the human race, connecting the interests of one generation with that of another. Rollin, in speaking of Aristides the Just, says "that an extraordinary greatness of soul made him superior to every passion. Interest, pleasure, ambition, resentment, and [justice were] extinguished in him by the love of virtue and his country," and just in proportion as we cultivate our intellectual faculties, we shall strengthen our reasoning powers, and be prepared to become his imitators.

Our country and the world have become the munificent patron of many powerful, existing evils, that have spread their devastating influence over the best interests of the human race. One of which is the adopting of the savage custom of wars, and fighting

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as a redress for grievances, instead of some means more consistent with reason and civilization.

The great law of love forbids our doing aught against the interests of our fellow men. It is altogether inconsistent with reason and common sense, for person when they deem themselves insulted, by the vulgar aspersions of others, to maltreat their bodies for the acts of their minds. Yet how frequently do we observe those that are blest by nature and education, (and if they would but aspire to acts that bear a parallel to their dignified minds, they would shine as illustrious stars, in the created throngs.) that degrade themselves by practicing this barbarous custom, suited only to tyrants – because in this they may be justly ranked with the untutored savages or the animals of the forest, that are impelled only by instinct.

Another fatal error arises from the belief that the only method of maintaining peace is always to be ready for war. The spirit of war can never be destroyed by all the butcheries and persecutions the human mind can invent. The history of all the “bloody tragedies,” by which the earth has been drenched by human blood, cannot be justified in the conclusion, for it is the spirit of conquest that feeds it—Thomas Dick, after collecting the general statistics of those that have perished by the all desolating pestilence of war, says “it will not be overrating the

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destruction of human life, if we affirm, that one tenth of the human race has been destroyed by the ravages of war,"—and if this estimate be admitted, it will follow that more than fourteen thousand millions of beings have been slaughtered in war since the beginning of the world, which is about eighteen times the number of its present inhabitants. This calculation proceeds from a geographical estimate, "that since the Mosaic creation one hundred and forty-five thousand millions of beings have existed."

But, sir, it is not my intention to give a dissertation on the subject of national wars, although it appropriately belongs to my subject. I decline it only for the simple reason, that it would be inapplicable to us as a people, while we may be more profitably employed in inveighing against the same evil as practiced by ourselves, although it exists under another form, but equally obnoxious to the principles of reason and christianity. My reason for referring to national wars, was to exhibit by plain demonstration, that the war principle, which is the production of human passions, has never been, nor can ever be, conquered by its own elements.—Hence, if we ever expect the word of prophecy to be fulfilled—"when the swords shall be turned into plough-shares, and the spears into pruning-hooks, and that the nations of the earth shall learn war no more," we must

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seek the destruction of the principle that animates, quickens, and feeds it, by the elevation of another more powerful, and omnipotent, and preservative; or mankind will continue, age after age, to march on in their mad career, until the mighty current of time will doubtless sweep thousands of millions more into endless perdition, beyond the reach of mercy, and the hope of future bliss. Thus the very bones, sinews, muscles, and immortal mind, that God, in his infinite mercy has bestowed on man, that he might work out his own glory, and extend the principles of "Righteousness, justice, peace on earth, and good-will to their fellow men," are constantly employed in protracting the period when the glorious millenium shall illumine our world, "and righteousness cover the earth as the water of the great deep."

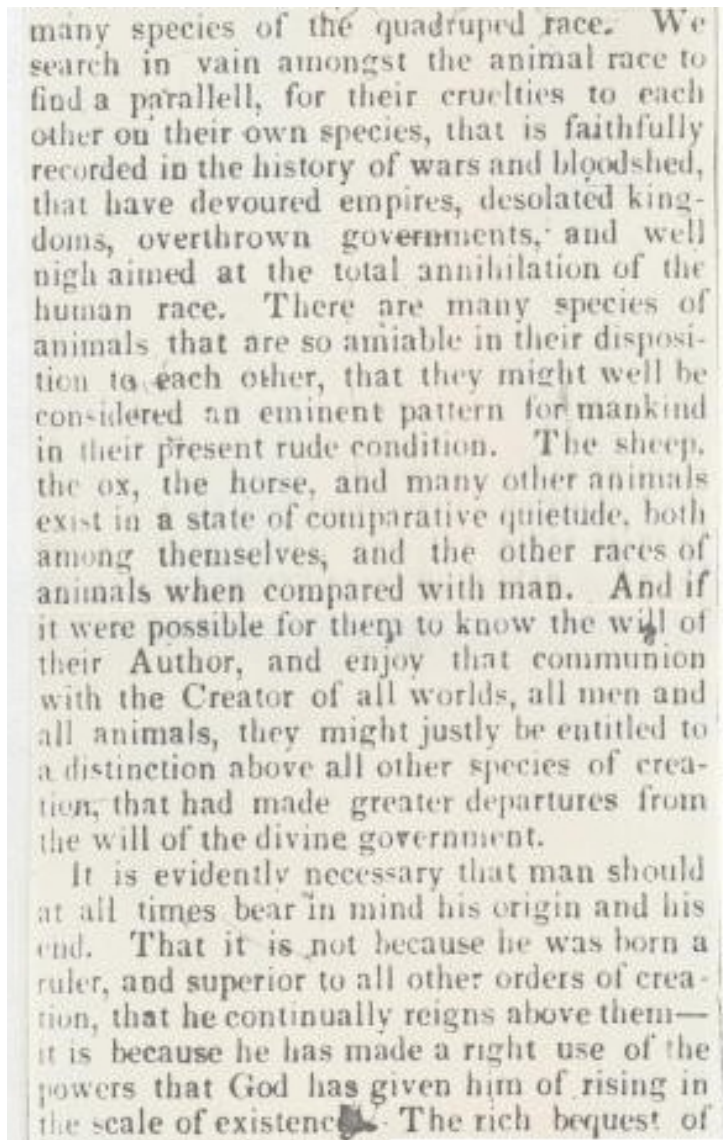
Now let us solemnly ask ourselves, Is it reasonable, that for the real or supposed injuries that have been inflicted on mankind from the beginning to the present day, that the attempted redress of the same should have cost so much misery, pain, sweat, blood, and tears, and treasure? Most certainly not; since the very means used has measurably entailed the evil a thousand fold, on coming generations. If man's superiority over the brute creation consists only in his reasoning powers and rationality of mind, his various methods of practising violence towards his fellow creatures, has in many cases placed him on a level with, and sometimes below

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many species of the quadruped race. We search in vain amongst the animal race to find a parallel, for their cruelties to each other on their own species, that is faithfully recorded in the history of wars and bloodshed, that have devoured empires, desolated kingdoms, overthrown governments, and well nigh aimed at the total annihilation of the human race. There are many species of animals that are so amiable in their disposition to each other, that they might well be considered an eminent pattern for mankind in their present rude condition. The sheep, the ox, the horse, and many other animals exist in a state of comparative quietude, both among themselves, and the other races of animals when compared with man. And if it were possible for them to know the will of their Author, and enjoy that communion with the Creator of all worlds, all man and all animals, they might justly be entitled to a distinction above all other species of creation, that had made greater departures from the will of the divine government.

It is evidently necessary that man should at all times bear in mind his origin and his end. That it is not because he was born a ruler, and superior to all other orders of creation, that he continually reigns above them — it is because he has made a right use of the powers that God has given him of rising in the scale of existence. The rich bequest of



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Heaven to man, was a natural body, a reasonable soul, and an immortal mind. With these he is rendered capable through the wisdom of Providence, of ascending to the throne of angels, or descending to the abyss of devils. Hence there seems to be a relation between man and the animal creation, that subsists, neither in their origin nor their end, but satisfactorily exhibits that man may exist in a state of purity, as far *superior* to theirs, as future happiness is to this world, and as far *inferior*, as we are distant from future misery.

There is scarcely a single fact more worthy of indelible record, than the utter inefficiency of human punishments, to cure human evils. The history of wars exhibits a hopeless, as well as a fatal lesson, to all such enterprises. All the associated powers of human governments, have been placed in requisition to quell and subdue the spirit of passion; without improving the condition of the human family. Human bodies have been lacerated with whips and scourges – prisons and penitentiaries have been erected for the immolation of human victims – the gibbet and halter have performed their office – while the increase of crime has kept pace with the genius of punishment, and the whole march of mind seems to have been employed in evading penal enactments, and inventing new methods of destroying the blessings of the social state, not recognized by human codes.

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peace and quietude, they must at all times be ready to sacrifice on the altar of principle, the rude passions that animate them. This they can only perform by exerting their reasoning powers. If there be those that desire to overlook the offences of others, and rise above those inflictions that are the offspring of passion, they must seek for protection in something *higher* than human power. They must place their faith in Him who is able to protect them from danger, or they will soon fall a prey to the wicked artifices of their wicked enemies.

Human passion is the hallucination of a distempered mind. It renders the subject of it like a ship upon the ocean, without ballast, or cargo, always in danger of being wrecked by every breeze. Phrenologically speaking, a mind that is subject to the fluctuating whims of passion, is without the organ of order, "which is nature's first law." Our reasoning powers ought to be the helm that should guide us through the shoals and quicksands of life.

I am aware that there are those who consider the non-resistance wholly impracticable. But I trust that but few such can be found, that have adopted the injunction of the Messiah for their guide and future hope, for he commands us to "love our enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you." These

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words were peculiarly applicable at the period they were uttered, and have a direct reference to the wars and strifes that then convulsed the world, and they are equally applicable at this moment. If the christian church had at her beginning made herself the enemy of war, the evil would doubtless have been abolished throughout christendom. The christians of the present day do not seem to regard the principles of peace as binding, or they are unwilling to become subject to the Divine government. Human governments then, as well as now, were too feeble to stay the ravages of passion and crime, and hence there was an evident necessity for the imperious command, "Whomsoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn unto him the other also."

And now, Mr. President, I rest my argument on the ground, that whatever is *scriptural* is *right*, and that whatever is right, is reasonable, and from this invulnerable position I mean not to stray, for the sake of any expediency whatever. The doctrine evidently taught by the scriptural quotation, evidently instructs us that resistance to physical aggression is wholly unnecessary as well as unrighteous, and subjects the transgressor to the penalty due from a willful departure from the moral and Divine law. Therefore every act of disobedience to the commands of christian duty, in relation to our fellow men, may fairly be deemed unreasonable, as it is at enmity with our true interests and the welfare

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of human society. We are further instructed to turn away from the evil *one*, rather than waste our strength, influence and passions, in a conflict that must in the end prove very injurious to both.

But some one perhaps is ready to raise an objection against this method of brooking the insults of others; and believes it right to refer to the maxim "that self defence is the first law of nature." I will readily agree that it is the unbounded duty of every individual to defend himself against both the vulgar and false aspersions of a wicked world. But then I contend that his weapons should be his reasoning powers. That since a kind Providence has bestowed on him the power of speech, and the ability to reason, he degrades his Creator by engulphing himself in the turmoils of passion, and physical conflict. A mode of warfare practised by barbarous tribes in their native forests, and suited only to those animals that are alone endowed with the powers of instinct. Nor is it possible to suppose that men can pursue such a course, without first parting with their reason. We often see men, while under the reigning influence of passion, as fit subjects for the lunatic asylum, as any that are confined in the lunatic asylum on account of insanity.

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enemy, overcome him by my superior physical powers, or my skill in battle, I neither wholly subdue him, or convince him of the justice of my cause. His spirit becomes still more enraged, and he will seek retaliation and conquest on some future occasion, that may seem to him more propitious. If I intimidate him I have made him a slave, while I reign a despot; and our relation will continue unnatural, as well as dangerous to each other, until our friendship has become fully restored. And what has been gained by this barbarous method of warfare, when both parties become losers thereby? Yet this single case illustrates the value of all personal conflicts.

But let us pursue this subject in a more dignified view, I mean as it respects the moral and Divine government. Is it possible that any christian man or woman, that will flog and maltreat their fellow beings, can be in *earnest*, when they with apparent devotion ask their heavenly Father to “forgive their trespass as they forgive others?” Surely they must be asking God to punish them—or when they say “lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,” do they mean that they should run headlong into both, with all their infuriated madness? Certainly not. Who would not be more willing to apply to them insincerity of motive, and that they knew not what they were doing, rather than

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suppose that intelligent minds would be capable of such gross inconsistency. Would it not prove infinitely better in times of trials and difficulties, to leave the tempter, and temptation behind, and pursue our course onward? But says the objector, there will be no safety nor security in this method, from the insults of the vulgar, and the brutal attacks of the assassin. I am inclined to believe to the contrary, and will be borne out in that belief by the evidence of those that have pursued this christian course of conduct.

A writer under the signature of Philopacificus, while "taking a solemn view of the custom of war," says, "There are two sets of professed christians in this country, which, as sects, are peculiar in their opinions respecting the lawfulness of war, and the right of repelling injury by violence." These are the Quakers and Shakers. They are remarkably pacific. Now we ask, does it appear from experience, that their forbearing spirit brings on them a greater portion of injury and insults, than what is experienced by people of other sects? Is not the reverse of this true in fact? There may indeed be some such instances of gross depravity as a person taking advantage of the pacific character, to do them an injury with the hope of impunity. But in general it is believed their pacific principles and spirit command the esteem, even of the vicious, and operate as a shield from insult and abuse.

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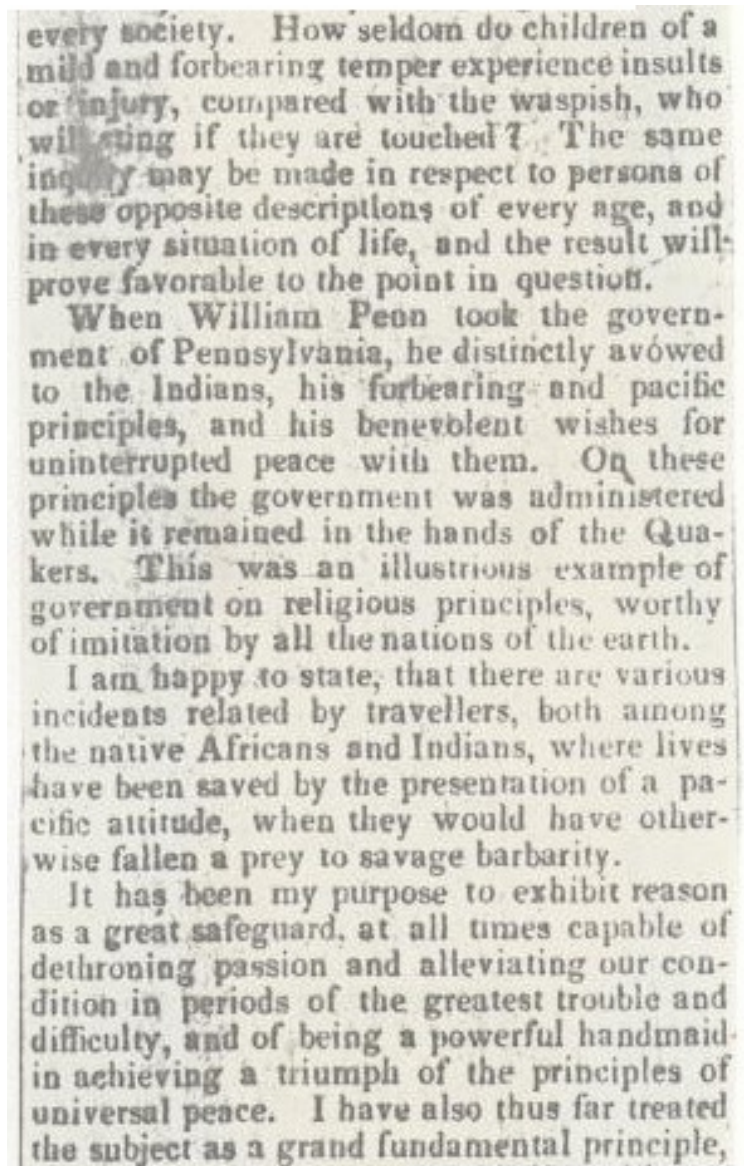


every society. How seldom do children of a mild and forbearing temper experience insults or injury, compared with the waspish, who will sting if they are touched? The same inquiry may be made in respect to persons of these opposite descriptions of every age, and in every situation of life, and the result will prove favorable to the point in question.

When William Penn took the government of Pennsylvania, he distinctly avowed to the Indians, his forbearing and pacific principles, and his benevolent wishes for uninterrupted peace with them. On these principles the government was administered while it remained in the hands of the Quakers. This was an illustrious example of government on religious principles, worthy of imitation by all the nations of the earth.

I am happy to state, that there are various incidents related by travellers, both among the native Africans and Indians, where lives have been saved by the presentation of a pacific attitude, when they would have otherwise fallen a prey to savage barbarity.

It has been my purpose to exhibit reason as a great safeguard, at all times capable of dethroning passion and alleviating our condition in periods of the greatest trouble and difficulty, and of being a powerful handmaid in achieving a triumph of the principles of universal peace. I have also thus far treated the subject as a grand fundamental principle,



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universal in its nature, and binding alike on every member of the human family. But if there be a single class of people in these United States, on which these duties are more imperative and binding, than another, that class is the colored population of this country, both free and enslaved. Situated as we are, among a people that recognize the lawfulness of slavery, and more of whom sympathize with the oppressor than the oppressed, it requires us to pursue our course calmly onward, with much self-denial, patience and perseverance.

We must be prepared at all times, to meet the scoffs and scorns of the vulgar and indecent – the contemptible frowns of haughty tyrants, and the blighting mildew of a popular and sinful prejudice. If amidst these difficulties we can but possess our souls in patience, we shall finally triumph over our enemies. But among the various duties that devolve on us, not the least is that which relates to ourselves. We must learn on all occasions to rebuke the spirit of violence, both in sentiment and practice. God has said, “vengeance is mine, and I will repay it.” The laws of the land guarantee the protection of our persons from personal violence, and whoever for any cause, inflicts a single blow on a fellow being, violates the laws of God and of his country, and has no just claim to being regarded as a christian or a good citizen.

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the pestilential influence of mob violence, that has spread its devastating influence over our country. And it is to me no matter of astonishment that they continue to exist. They do but put in practice a common every-day theory that pervades neighborhood, and almost every family, viz: That it is right, under certain circumstances, to violate all law, both civil and national, and abuse, kick and cuff your fellow man, when they deem that he has offended or insulted the community in which he resides.

Whenever the passions of individual rise above all laws, human and divine, then they are in the first stages of anarchy, and then every act prosecuted under the influence of this spirit, necessarily extends itself beyond the boundary of our laws. The act of the multitude is carried out on the principle of combination, which is the grand lever by which machinery as well as man is impelled in this fruitful age. There is no difference in principle between the acts of a few individuals, and those of a thousand, while actuated by the spirit of passion, dethroning reason, the laws of our country and the liberty of man. Hence every individual that either aids or abets an act of personal violence towards the humblest individual, is guilty of sustaining the detestable practice of mobocratic violence. Yet such is the general spirit that pervades our common country, and receives its sanction from places of high honor

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and trust, that it is patriotism to disregard the laws. It is but reasonable to suppose that individuals, guided by like views and motives will on some occasions concentrate their power, and carry on their operations on a large scale. Unless the hearts and reasoning powers of man become improved, it is impossible for the most sagacious mind to augur the consequences. The spirit of passion has become so implanted in human bosoms, that the laws of our country give countenance to the same, by exhibiting lenity for those who are under its influence.

This is doubtless a great error in legislation, because it not only pre-supposes the irrationality of man, but gives him a plea of innocence, in behalf of his idiotism. The only sure method of conquering these evils, is to commend a reform in ourselves, and then the spirit of passion will soon be destroyed in individuals, and communities, and governments, and then the ground-work will be fully laid for a speedy triumph of the principles of universal peace.

The love of power is one of the greatest human infirmities, and with it comes the usurping influence of despotism, the mother of slavery. Show me any country or people where despotism reigns triumphant, and I will exhibit to your view the spirit of slavery, whether the same be incorporated in the government or not. It is this demon-like spirit

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How different is the exercise of this love of power, when exercised by man, or enforced by human governments, to the exercise of Him who holds all “power over the heavens, earth, and seas, and all that in them is.” With God, all is order—with man, all confusion. The planets perform their annual revolutions—the tides ebb and flow—the seas obey His command—the whole government of universal worlds are sustained by His wisdom and power—each invariably performing the course marked out by their great Author, because they are impelled by His love. But with man, governments are impelled by the law of force; hence despotism becomes an ingredient in all human governments.

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And now my friends, let us cease to be guided by the influence of a wild and beguiling passion – the wicked and foolish fantasies of pride, folly and lustful ambition – the alluring and detestable examples of despotism and governments – the sickly sensibility of those who from false notions of honor, attempt to promote the ends of justice, by placing “righteousness under their feet,” and are at all times ready to imbue their hands in a fellow creature’s blood, for the purpose of satisfying their voracious appetites for crime, murder and revenge. I say from them let us turn away, for a terrible retaliation must shortly await them, even in this life. The moral powers of this nation and the world is fast waking from the sleep of ages, and wielding a swift besom, that will sweep from the face of the earth error and iniquity with the power of a whirlwind. But a few years ago and duelling was considered

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The period is fast approaching when the church, as at present constituted, must undergo one of the severest contests she has met with since her foundation, because in so many cases she has refused to sustain her own principles. The moral warfare that is now commenced will not cease if the issue should be a dissolution of both church and state.

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The time has already come when those believe that intemperance, slavery, war and fighting is sinful, and it will soon arrive when those who practice either their rights to enjoy christian fellowship will be questioned.

And now, Mr. President, I shall give a few practical illustrations, and then I shall have done. It appears by history that there have been many faithful advocates of peace since the apostolic age, but none have ever given a more powerful impetus to the cause of peace, than the modern abolitionists. They have been beaten and stoned, mobbed and persecuted from city to city, and never returned evil for evil, but submissively, as a sheep brought before the shearer, have they endured scoffings and scourges for the cause's sake, while they prayed for their persecutors. And how miraculously they have been preserved in the midst of a thousand dangers from without and within. Up to the present moment not the life of a single individual has been sacrificed on the altar of popular fury. Had they have set out in this glorious undertaking of freeing 2,500,000 human beings, with the war-cry of "liberty or death," they would have been long since demolished, or a civil war would have ensued; thus would have dyed the national soil with human blood. And now let me ask you, was not their method of attacking the system of human slavery the most reasonable? And would not their policy have been correct, even if we were to lay aside their christian motives?

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Their weapons were reason and moral truth, and on them they desired to stand or fall—and so it will be in all causes that are sustained from just christian principles, they will ultimately triumph. Now let us suppose for a single moment what would have been our case, if they had started on the principle, that “resistance to tyrants is obedience to God?”—what would have been our condition, together with that of the slave population? Why, we should have doubtless perished by the sword, or been praying for the destruction of our enemies, and probably engaged in the same bloody warfare.

And now we are indebted to the modern abolitionists more than to any other class of men for the instructions we have received from the dissemination of their principles, or we would not at this moment be associated here to advocate the cause of moral reform—of temperance, education, peace and universal liberty. Therefore let us, like them, obliterate from our minds the idea of revenge, and from our hearts all wicked intentions towards each other and the world, and we shall be able through the blessing of Almighty God, to do much to establish the principles of universal peace. Let us not think the world has no regard for our efforts—they are looking forward to them with intense interest and anxiety. The enemies of the abolitionists are exhibiting a regard for the power of their

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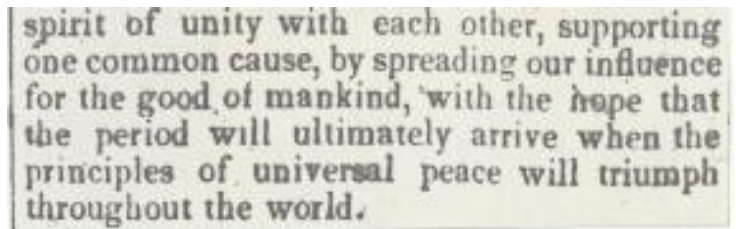
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principles that they are unwilling to acknowledge, although it is every where known over the country, that abolitionists "will not fight," yet they distrust their own strength so much, that they frequently muster a whole neighborhood of from 50 to 300 men, with sticks, stones, rotten eggs and bowie knives, to mob and beat a single individual, probably in his "teens," whose heart's law is non-resistance. There is another way in which they do us honor—they admit the right of all people to fight for their liberty, but colored people and abolitionists—plainly inferring that they are too good for the performance of such unchristian acts—and lastly, while we endeavor to control our own passions and keep them in subjection, let us be mindful of the weakness of others; and for acts of wickedness committed against us, let us reciprocate in the spirit of kindness. If they continue their injustice towards us, let us always decide that their reasoning powers are defective, and that it is with men as the laws of mechanics—large bodies move slowly, while smaller ones are easily propelled with swift velocity. In every case of passion that presents itself, the subject is one of pity rather than derision, and in his cooler moments let us earnestly advise him to improve his understanding, by cultivating his intellectual powers, and thus exhibit his close alliance with God, who is the author of all wisdom, peace, justice righteousness and truth. And in conclusion, let it always be our aim to live in a

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