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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

Ala. Governor

GOV. THOMAS H. WATTS

BEFORE THE

ALABAMA LEGISLATURE,

DECEMBER 1ST, 1863.



MONTGOMERY, ALA.:

MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER BOOK AND JOB OFFICE.

1863.

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

*Gentlemen of the Senate and
House of Representatives:*

Called by the voice of the people of Alabama, without solicitation from me, to preside over the destiny of the State, for the next two years, I cannot feel otherwise than grateful for this generous manifestation of confidence and esteem. In a time of profound peace, such an honor might well be deemed the fit reward of a lifetime of public service. But conferred when the duties of the office have been increased a hundred fold by the multiplied business created by the greatest war of modern times; when the clangor of war is heard all around us, and the sighs for our fallen brave fill every passing breeze, I scarcely know whether thanks are due for the grave responsibilities with which this election clothes me. I feel that I shall have need of the constant support and hearty sympathies of an indulgent people, and I pray God to give me such strength and wisdom as will enable me so to conduct our affairs, that no detriment shall accrue to the people of Alabama, and no stain shall mar the beauty of her honored name. Multiplied, grave and onerous as the duties of the office may now be, still I cannot deny, whilst entering on the discharge of its high functions, I feel some such pride and pleasure as a dutiful son must feel when obeying the will of a noble mother.

Gentlemen: On the 11th day of January, 1861, the sovereign people of Alabama, through their delegates in

Convention assembled, declared by solemn ordinance, that the bonds which bound her to the Government of the United States were severed. In thus deliberately acting, the people of Alabama only exercised a right belonging to every free people. In the days of 1776, our forefathers declared that to secure life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, "Governments are instituted among men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed; and that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." After a war of seven years, checkered with various defeats and victories, our revolutionary sires achieved a crowning triumph, and wrung from the grasp of British tyranny their liberties and independence. The reluctant consent of Great Britain was given to the great principles of freedom for which they contended. In the treaty of peace which closed this revolutionary struggle, the old thirteen States, naming them separately and distinctly, were acknowledged by Great Britain to be "*free, sovereign and independent States.*" France was a party to this treaty; having given of her blood and treasure to accomplish this grand result. The articles of Confederation formed and adopted during the progress of the war by the several States, then united in a common cause, declared "that each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and right, which is not by this Confederation expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled." These articles likewise declared that they were formed for a confederation and *perpetual* Union between the States agreeing to them.

After the pressure of this war was over, and when the recollection of common dangers and difficulties became

less vivid, a new Constitution, that of 1787, was formed by the States then composing the Union, and after being thus formed, was submitted separately to a Convention of delegates chosen by each State, for its free acceptance or rejection. This Constitution was to be binding only between those States ratifying the same. Each one of the States, at different times, some promptly, some with lingering reluctance, separately and independently of each other, withdrew from the articles of Confederation, and thus formed a new Government under the Constitution of the United States. The sovereign people of each State, through their own delegates in Convention assembled, adopted this Constitution to govern them in their intercourse and relations with foreign nations, and in their relations and intercourse with each other. The same sovereign people in each State who adopted State Constitutions, and who, throughout our political history as the United States, made, altered, or abolished their State Constitutions, ratified and adopted as their federal Constitution, the Constitution of 1787. In this Constitution, the right of the sovereign people of each State to alter or abolish their Government and to establish new governments for their safety and happiness, is not surrendered; neither is it prohibited. The Constitution expressly provides that "the enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

This Constitution provides for the admission of new States. Under its provisions, the Congress of the United States, on the 2d day of March, 1819, authorized the people of Alabama Territory "to form for themselves a Constitution and State Government, and when formed into a State, shall be admitted into the Union upon the same footing with the original States, in all respects whatso-

ever." In accordance with this act of Congress, the people of Alabama, through their delegates in Convention assembled, made their State Constitution and State Government, and ended their work on the 2d of August, 1819. On this day—the 2d day of August, 1819—our forefathers in Alabama, through their delegates in Congress assembled, declared, as a part of their fundamental and organic law, that "all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their benefit, and therefore they have, at all times, an inalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform, or abolish their form of Government in such manner as they may think expedient."

With this declaration contained in the Constitution of Alabama, the Congress of the United States, on the 14th day of December, 1819, declared the State of Alabama to be one of the United States of America, admitting her by express terms into the Union "on an equal footing with the original States, in all respects whatsoever."

Whatever right Virginia, or any other State of the original thirteen, possessed, Alabama possessed. Virginia, in the ordinance ratifying and adopting the Constitution of the United States, expressly reserved her right to withdraw the powers delegated, whenever, in her judgment the safety and happiness of her people demanded it. When the people of Alabama, through their delegates in Convention assembled, on the 11th of January, 1861, declared their withdrawal from the United States, they were only exercising a right which the declaration of independence declared, belonged to every free people—a right not denied or prohibited in the Constitution of the United States; a right exercised by every State when the Constitution of 1787 was formed and adopted—an inalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform or abolish their form of Government, which Alabama's bill of rights declared might be done "at all times"—a right vital to freemen—dangerous only to tyrants.

The sovereign people of Alabama, through their delegates in Convention assembled, in 1861, only repealed an ordinance which the same sovereign people, through their delegates in Convention assembled, ordained in 1819. The simple ordinance of secession declared the Constitution of the United States no longer binding on the people of Alabama; and that they were free to form and adopt a new Constitution to govern them in their relations to other States, and with foreign powers. The State Government—the people of Alabama, remained the same, their relations to other States alone were changed.

In accordance with the dictates of her judgment, Alabama and other States, now known as the Confederate States of America, formed a new Constitution and a new Government, based on the principles of the old one, amending the Constitution so as to leave no room for doubtful construction on disputed points.

Because of the exercise of this right—a right lying at the foundation of all free government, and the corner stone of every republican system of government, the Northern States, now calling themselves the United States, made war on the Confederate States. The authorities of these Northern States by their declarations and their conduct thus deny the right of free government—deny that all governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed—deny the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence, and the principles of the fathers of the Republic, and assert and attempt to exercise the doctrines of force. They deny to the people of Alabama the right of self government, and declare the monstrous pharisaic dogma, that they have the right to *coerce* us to be subservient to *their* will! that they are our *superiors*, our masters! and we, their inferiors! their slaves!

Freemen of Alabama! If you had submitted to such monstrous pretensions, you would have been unworthy the heritage of freedom your patriot fathers left you!

You would have been unworthy the sires from whence you sprung! you would have been unworthy the name of freemen! You would have been base cowards, slaves indeed! fit for Yankee masters!

When the Constitution of 1787 was adopted, the Northern States had little more of population than the Southern States. Even under the census of 1790, the political power of the North, as reflected in the House of Representatives of Congress, only exceeded that of the South by *five* majority. The North was cold in climate, with comparatively rugged and barren soil. The South was blessed with a mild and generous, and healthful climate, and with a soil of unsurpassed fertility. The South had more commerce, more wealth, and all the prospects, as far as natural advantages indicated, of a far more rapidly increasing population. Yet, in the progress of our history, through means of various acts of congressional legislation, (unnecessary here to mention,) large portions of Southern territory were devoted to Northern aggrandizement, the population of the North was greatly augmented beyond the natural increase; the bulk of the commerce and capital of the country was concentrated there. The rich South was despoiled of her wealth and commerce, and had become for years little more than tributary to the swelling magnitude of Northern commerce and power. In proportion to the increased commerce, augmented population and concentrated capital, the political power of the North was increased. So that under the census of 1850—little more than half a century after the adoption of the Constitution of 1787—the political power of the North, as reflected in the House of Representatives, had increased from five to fifty-five majority. With this increasing political power came constant turmoil and aggressions on the rights of the South. The most solemn constitutional guaranties were trifled with or wantonly disregarded by the States and people of the North.

Almost from the foundation of the government under the Constitution of 1787, the North and the South differed—widely differed—as to the character of the government and the construction of the Constitution. The North always contended for a latitudinous, the South for a strict construction of the Constitution. There was manifested in the North a constant and persistent tendency to regard the people of the United States as *one nation*. The South more truly maintained that in no sense could the United States be considered as one nation except in the relations they bore to other governments and nations; that the true character of the government was that of a federal republic having for its basis a confederation of separate and sovereign States. The whole framework of the Constitution and the history of its adoption proved the Southern view to have been the correct one. Instead of being a government controlled by a mere numerical majority as contended by the statesmen of the North, it was intended by its framers to be controlled and governed by concurrent majorities of States, and the people of the States as represented in the House of Representatives. The States in their separate sovereign character adopted the Constitution. It was binding on none until accepted by the free consent and ratification of its people. No act could ever become a law by the simple majority of the people as represented in the House of Representatives. The Senators, the Representatives of the States—the larger and smaller being equal in power—must first concur. And yet still, the President, who, when elected by electors, was the double representative of the States, and the people of the States, and when elected by Congress, the Representative of the States, must give his sanction, before any measure could become a law, unless passed by a constitutional majority over his negative. So long as the South had equality with the North in the Senate, the South had some guaranty that her rights would be protected. But when the

progress of events destroyed this equality, the rights of the South, as recent events clearly prove, were no longer safe in the Union. When the North obtained a majority of the States, and a majority of the people of the States, the greed of sectional dominion with insane furor seized the public mind, and not heeding even the warnings of her own patriotic sons, disregarding the protests of the minority South, the North undertook to select the President and Vice President from her own borders, and by purely a sectional majority to instal the wildest fanaticism in a chair once honored by Washington. So that in truth and in fact, whatever may have been the theory, the North, having a majority of States, a majority of the people—majority in Senate and House of Representatives—and a President and Vice President selected from the North by a purely sectional vote, thus ignoring the South in the administration of federal affairs, the government became practically one, governed by the will of a *mere numerical majority!* In all ages such a government has been a despotism!

For years the South watched with intense interest the rapid progress of events; the increasing fanaticism of the North, threatening destruction to the landmarks of the Constitution of our forefathers, and endangering the great interests and liberties of the South. In various ways and at repeated times, the Southern people evinced their apprehensions for their future peace and happiness. The two great parties in the slaveholding States each adopted resolutions, as portions of their party creed, denouncing the election, by the North, of a Black Republican President on a platform avowing the destructive dogmas of that party, and they declared their firm purpose, in the event of such election, to sever every tie which bound them to the Union. In Alabama, this was done as early as 1856. In 1859, '60, the Legislature of Alabama, by a vote unanimous, save two dissenting voices, passed resolutions authorizing and requiring the Gover-

nor of the State, in such event, to call a convention of the people of the State "to consider, determine and do whatever, in the opinion of said convention, the rights, interests, and honor of the State of Alabama require to be done for their protection." The people of the South made all honorable efforts to avoid the necessity which such an event would produce. By conventions and legislatures solemn warning was given to the people of the North of the fixed determination of the South on this subject. But the North, disregarding the time-honored principles of the fathers of the Republic, turning a deaf ear to the voice of Southern patriotism, forgetful of the ties which bind freemen to principle, ignoring the hallowed associations of our revolutionary history, mad with fanaticism, and filled with the boastful pride of numerical strength, rushed headlong in the wild career of sectional domination.

When the Convention of Alabama met on the 7th day of January, 1861, the members were united in heart. The *unanimous* declaration on the first day of the Convention, "that the people of Alabama *will not submit* to be parties to the inauguration and administration of Abraham Lincoln as President, and Hannibal Hamlin as Vice President of the United States of America," demonstrated a fixed and united purpose. The co-operationists and separate secessionists were equally intent for *resistance*, equally honest, equally patriotic; and they only differed intellectually as to the best and safest mode of making that resistance effectual and permanent. And when the first tocsin of war was sounded, co-operationists and secessionists marched shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, hand in hand to the arbitrament of battle. From the Gulf to our northern border; from the mountains, valleys and plains; from the east and from the west, the stalwart sons of Alabama rushed to the standard of the newborn republic. And with dauntless bravery and heroism, they have crimsoned with their blood every battle

field from Manassas to Chickamauga. An imperishable monument of glorious renown has been erected for the State! The name "*Alabamian*" has become immortal in history!

In the commencement of the war, Lincoln and his followers declared their purpose as simply to repossess the forts and arsenals, the public property; and to suppress the rebellion. It was supposed by the North that the large mass of the people in the South were willing to submit to Black Republican rule—and that it only needed an opportunity to rally around the flag which was once the proud ensign of a united people. These flattering anticipations were soon dissipated. Seventy-five thousand men were deemed by them quite sufficient to crush in ninety days the power of the Confederate States. The flying hosts of Lincoln at Bethel and Manassas showed the prowess of Southern arms and the folly of Northern calculations. The banner, once loved and honored by Southern people, became the object of loathing and disgust, and the hated emblem of oppression and tyranny.

Then three hundred thousand additional men were called for by Lincoln; and the South, by the power of numbers, was to be *coerced* into further affiliation with the North! The Confederate States were to be *forced* back into a Union whose first principle was *free consent*. It was vainly imagined by the wisemen of the North that the eighteen millions of Northern whites could and would very soon crush to powder the eight millions of Southern white people; especially as in their vain imaginings they supposed the four millions of blacks were here amongst us ready to burst the bonds which bound them to us. But these men, wise in their own conceit, forgot that "the battle is not always to the strong, nor the race to the swift." They forgot that there was a God of justice, the ruler of men and nations.

In numerical strength, and in all the appliances of war, the North certainly had greatly the advantage of us. The

North had the regular army, the navy, the commercial marine, manufactories of arms, and of all the munitions of war. The South had no regular army, no navy, no commercial marine, no manufactories of arms or powder! Very soon all our ports were blockaded, and being thus cut off from the outside world, we were left to our own resources, our own strong arms and stout hearts. By the blessing of God, these have availed us thus far to maintain our cause. We have, as it were, improvised armies, arms and munitions, of which Napoleon, in his palmyest days, might have been justly proud. Aye, more! by the energy and wisdom displayed, by the brilliant achievements of our arms on a hundred fields, by the high regard we have paid to civilized usage, by the christian magnanimity we have shown to our enemies, we, but yesterday unknown, to-day have drawn from reluctant lips not only praise, but the admiration of all enlightened nations.

The series of brilliant triumphs, achieved over the North in 1862, caused the President of the North to announce a different policy. With all the efforts of the people of the North, aided by every foreigner who could be bought with money or seduced by promises of booty, with the ports of every nation open to his commerce and his necessities, Lincoln was forced to admit that the eighteen millions of Northern whites could not coerce the South back into the Union. A new discovery in Black Republican philosophy was made. It was proved by numerous experiments in the great crucible of practice that, the slave population, instead of being a grand volcano, threatening destruction and death to the cause of Southern Independence, was a great element of Southern power.

Lincoln, without the authority of his Congress or Constitution, in the fall of 1862, proclaimed his intention to declare free, every slave of the South, unless by the 1st of January, 1863, we should lay down our arms and with crossed hands repentantly submit to his dominion. The

South scorned alike his threats and his promises! His threatened proclamation in due time made its appearance. It was as impotent as it was unconstitutional. It was mere *brutum fulmen* so far as it effects the institution of slavery. But it deserves to be considered by our people as showing the temper of the Northern mind. In the first place, it is a humiliating confession of Yankee weakness. It is a confession that the eighteen millions of Northern whites, strengthened by all the foreign aid they could get, were unable to coerce the Southern States back into the Union. In the next place it shows an utter disregard of Constitutional obligations, a palpable violation of that Constitution once revered by our fathers and by us. In the third place, it shows an utter disregard of the principles of international law settled for ages, by publicists, and recognized as binding by Kent, Wheaton, Gardner and Adams! It is, in the fourth place, a deliberate attempt to excite our slaves to insurrection—it is an invitation, yea, an urgent solicitation, to an ignorant race, recognized as our property by the Constitution Lincoln has sworn to support, to commit murder, rapine, rape, arson, and all manner of diabolical deeds. An invitation to have our homes and our firesides deluged with the blood of our wives and our children. It is the expression of fiendish wish to see a whole country deluged in innocent blood, and to hear the mingled lamentations of a whole people, and to see the “blackness of darkness” like a funeral pall, overspread forever the glories of our sunny land!

This proclamation was the first authoritative announcement that this war was no longer waged for a restoration of the Union. Reconstruction of the Union is no longer desirable, no longer practical, even with Lincoln! It has been recently announced by Lincoln’s Solicitor of the Treasury—it is proclaimed by his generals in the field, approved and applauded by a sycophant press and people, that the purpose of the North now is, to *subjugate* the

freemen of the South, to confiscate all their property and deprive them of all that freemen hold dear! State lines and all State rights are to be abolished. The right to have Legislatures, Governors, Judges of our own choosing, juries from amongst us, the right to vote even, every civil and political right is to be denied to the *subjugated* South! Some Butler, or some black *satrap* of Lincoln's creation, would, in such an event, be the Governor of Alabama, with a standing army of blacks to ravage our country, outrage our women, and hold freemen in bondage!

As if God had given such a people over to the reprobation of the devil, during the progress of this war, the people of the North seem to have lost every principle of morals, law and religion which adorn a civilized people! In attempting to deprive us of our liberties, they have lost their own! Every principle of constitutional liberty amongst them has been destroyed. The writ of *habeas corpus*, the great writ of liberty, wrung from tyrant hands ages ago by our British ancestors, has been suspended by the simple will of Lincoln. The freedom of the press—of speech, the right of petition, trial by jury, have all been trampled under foot. The monstrous dogma has been proclaimed in high places that in time of war, the Constitution, its guarantees and prohibitions, are all suspended, and that all power to do or not to do, is concentrated by political necessity in the unrestrained hands of a single man! On their part, in the conduct of the war, every principle of civilized usage has been set at naught; obligations and stipulations, always heretofore held sacred even by savage nations, have been violated when convenience and present policy interfered with their fulfilment. In such portions of our country as the fortunes of war have enabled them to possess, private property, heretofore respected by the usage of all modern nations, has either been dishonestly appropriated or wantonly destroyed. Works of art and ornament, the proudest achievements of genius, the keep-sakes and mementoes of departed

friends, have been filched from the places they graced, and carried North to beautify some Yankee general's parlor, made luxuriant by the spoils from Southern households. The graves of our honored dead, the houses where christians worship God, have been basely desecrated, (despoiled of the emblems which love had consecrated to honor,) polluted and destroyed by these Northern Goths and Vardals! It almost seems that such a people have always been strangers to us! Is it possible that we could ever again dwell in political Union with such a people? It is almost an insult to ask a Southern man such a question.

By the graves of our fallen sons, around our desolated altars, in view of our devastated fields and blazing homes and cities, in view of our banners red all over with Southern blood, let us renew our faith to the Southern cause, and let us swear before high heaven, whatever else may be our fate, we will never have political connection with such a God cursed race!

Whatever may have been the differences of opinion amongst our people as to the propriety of dissolving the Union in 1861, there cannot now be any difference as to our duties to our State and country. Our property, our homes, our wives and our children, our lives, our liberties and our honor—everything we hold dear on earth—are dependent upon the triumph of Southern arms. Should we be conquered, everything worth living for will be gone. Our political salvation now depends on our own resources, our own energies, bravery and fortitude. With the continued favor of Providence, and with hearty cooperation amongst ourselves, we shall be equal to the task before us. Every motive which can urge a freeman to noble deeds and lofty daring prompts to action now. Death will be a heavenly boon compared to the miseries of Yankee rule. If the proud Roman could sing, in the acme of Roman power, *dulce est pro patria mori*—tis sweet for one's country to die—can we not prove by our actions 'tis glorious to die for our native land?

It our people will only be true to themselves, true to their homes and their firesides, and true to their God, our liberties are safe and our triumph is sure. In the beginning of the war, we had only undisciplined citizen soldiers, few guns, no heavy artillery, little powder and other munitions or appliances for warlike defense. After near three years of war, we have larger armies to-day than we have ever had; we have more arms, munitions and equipments of war than we have ever had. We have manufactories of arms and powder sufficient to arm our whole people. We have a growing navy. Already the few cruisers we have put afloat have driven the bulk of Yankee commerce from the ocean, or compelled their vessels to seek shelter under the flags of foreign nations. We have fought more battles than Alexander, Caesar or Napoleon ever fought. In nearly all we have been the victors. In not one, where there has been anything like equality in numbers, have we ever failed to triumph over the foe. In all the great battles we have been greatly inferior in numbers to our enemy. To-day we are more nearly equal to our enemy in numbers than we have ever been. If all our men now enrolled were at their posts of duty, our armies in the field would quite equal those of the enemy. It is true we have met with some serious reverses. But in the Providence of God our reverses have availed the enemy little advantage. Our reverses and sufferings have never half equalled those of our fathers of 1776, and yet they, three millions in number, triumphed over all the power of Great Britain.

The "Old Dominion," whose soil has been truly "the dark and bloody ground" of this war, stands yet erect, and proudly boasts *sic semper tyrannis*. McDowell, McClellan, Pope, Burnside, Hooker, Meade, each with an army the "best the world ever saw," with boastful pride and banners gleaming, has essayed to find a road to Richmond. Each has been signally foiled in all attempts on

the capital of Virginia, and of the Confederacy, by the Beauregards, Johnstons, Lees, Jacksons and Longstreets of the South. While Virginia stands as an adamant wall against the onward march of Lincoln's columns, never let the voice of despondency be uttered from our lips, or find a lodgment in our hearts.

Charleston, after one hundred and forty days' bombardment, from navy and land batteries combined, controlled and directed by all the science of Yankee ingenuity, still stands with her colors proudly and defiantly floating. The names of Sumter and Moultrie have had the glories of 1863 added to the renowned memories of Revolutionary times.

Whilst Alabama mourns thousands of her noblest men, her Jones's, Martin, Lomax, Moore, Hale, Baine, Woodward, Pegues, Pelham, Tracey, Garrott, Webb, Deshler, and other fallen braves, have erected along the mountain cliffs of fame, the beacon lights by which, in all time, her sons of freedom may discern the path to honor and renown.

Had I the time, and you the patience, it would delight me to refer to many incidents of battle in which Alabama's sons have gained a "deathless name." Nor yet would I stop with recounting the deeds of Alabama's sons! Her daughters are the diamonds which sparkle in her coronet of glory! Woman's voice whispered courage when the first blow for freedom was struck! Woman's hands made the clothes the soldier wears! Woman made the banners under which the soldiers rush to the charge! Woman's smiles encourage the timid, her frowns send back the skulker to duty! and her fortitude gives new strength and assurance to the despondent.

Go to the fireside, and there is heard the mother's prayer for husband, son and country! Go to the houses made desolate by the horrors of war, and there is heard the sympathetic sigh of woman! Go to the hospitals, where our sons and brothers, with mangled limbs and bleeding

hearts in confusion lie, and there woman binds up the broken limbs and soothes the bleeding hearts. Go to the couch of the dying soldier boy, far from home and friends, and there woman's hands wipe the death damp from his noble brow, and her tears soften the sod over his humble grave. Woman has been, and is, the inspiring angel, whose influence nerves the arm and swells the heart of the soldier in the camp, on the march, on the battle field in the death struggle for liberty. Woman has recorded her name on the brightest page in our annals of Freedom.

But, gentlemen, we have grave duties yet to perform before our independence is safe. Large numbers of our soldiers have gone from home, carrying their lives in their hands, to fight our battles, and have left their wives and little ones without the means of comfort—yea, many without the means of subsistence. There are many women and children made widows and orphans by this war equally comfortless, equally unprovided for. Now what is our duty to these? It is obviously to feed, to clothe, to comfort, to protect, to care for those, the loved ones of our brave soldiers, thus become the children of the Republic. Whilst all the people of Alabama have their lives and their liberties staked on the result of this war, and large numbers have property to be saved and protected, many of our soldiers now in the field have nothing but their lives, their wives and children, and their liberties. Those of our people who have property to be saved and protected, are under a double obligation to feed, clothe and protect the wives and children of the brave men who form, with their bodies, breastworks against Yankee invasion and outrage. The people of South and Middle Alabama, the seat of wealth and plenty, cannot discharge their whole duty unless they, out of their abundance, provide for the families left destitute in other portions of the State. Let the soldier know, whilst he is gone, that his loved ones at home are cared for, and this

very knowledge gives renewed strength to his arm, fills his heart anew with the fires and patriotism. I trust that liberal and just hearts need, on this subject, but a suggestion. But, gentlemen legislators, you will not discharge your duty unless you provide for the wants of these wives and children. Tax heavily if need be—tax liberally the property of the citizens of the State, so that their wants may surely be supplied, and thus show to the brave defenders of our soil that their services are appreciated by grateful hearts at home. Let us in private and in public stations come up to the full measure of our duty. We have fallen short of our duty. I fear, I know we have been too much absorbed with a greedy lust for money making. The glittering treasures, which filthy lucre hoards, have been gathered, too often, from the tears and sighs of widows and orphans, wives and children of soldiers, who, amidst the thunders of battle, have poured out their life blood. God will never prosper riches so acquired, nor favor any people so forgetful of the duties of humanity and true patriotism.

Our Confederate currency must be upheld. Every dollar's worth of property in the Confederate States is pledged for its redemption. It can only become worthless by our subjugation, by our failure to achieve our independence. If we are ever conquered, we shall conquer ourselves by failure to discharge our duty. If we fail, then nothing we can call our *own* will be worth a dollar to us. It is the currency which our soldiers receive for their services. If it is good enough for them, it is surely good enough for any property we have. Let it be sustained at all hazards. The credit of the Confederate States is the lifeblood of Southern liberty.

The Legislature of Alabama and of the several States ought to aid in sustaining the credit of Confederate promises. Our Senators and Representative in Congress ought to feel and know that a people who have shown no unwillingness to give up their children as sacrifices on

the altars of Southern freedom, are ready to devote their property to the establishment of their independence.

We should cultivate a better spirit of harmony amongst ourselves. We are all engaged in a common cause. Whatever is the interest of any good man, is the interest of the whole State. One fate awaits us all. We must resolve to die in one common grave or live in the enjoyment of a common liberty. The fires of past party must be extinguished. The baptism of blood through which our people have passed, in defense of a common cause and country, ought to have washed out all the defilements of prejudice, renewed in us right spirits and fitted us for a nobler career of future prosperity and happiness. Let us learn to regard every man who sustains our cause with his blood or treasure as a friend and brother, whatever may have been his former opinions. And let us henceforth, and until this contest ends in our complete independence, have but *one party*—and let that be, heart and soul, for the Southern cause!

Let us give to our noble President, and those associated with him in power, a generous confidence and support. That he has committed errors is simply to say that he is a man! No man, in his trying position, could have shown more energy, more ability, more patriotic fervor, more regard for the rights of the people, and of the States.

But whilst I advise a generous confidence in our public authorities, I would not have the people forget that "Vigilance is the price and preserver of liberty." In times of war the tendency of authority, civil and military, is to assume unwarranted power, under the plausible plea of public necessity. Let us never forget that our Constitution was made for war and peace, and that we have for its construction but one set of rules which *shall* govern in war as well as in peace. And let the cardinal rule be, *strict construction*. Let us not overlook the fact that the military power, by the Constitution, is to be always subordinate to the civil authority; and let us take care that our

rights and liberties at home shall not be sacrificed whilst resisting the oppression and tyranny of the North.

Whilst Alabama has not shown any disposition to shrink from the performance of her full duty to the Confederate States, still she has not promptly responded to the last call made on her by the President. I know the reason why this delay has occurred. Let there be no cause for further delay. Our State has been invaded, and every day the enemy's footsteps pollute our soil, adds insult to injury, and ought to arouse higher and higher the just indignation and the energies of our people. Let us arouse our people in every county of the State, and let it not be said that Alabamians can sleep quietly at home whilst any of our citizens have been brutally murdered, driven from their firesides, their property pillaged, or ruthlessly, maliciously and wantonly destroyed.

If we will promptly organize under the act of Congress for local defence, or under the militia laws of the State, thousands of troops now engaged in catching skulkers and deserters, can be sent to the armies to which they belong, and the people who have been harrassed and their substance eaten by men paying little regard to persons or property, will be free from annoyance. The skulkers and deserters can and will be sent to their duty by good men organized at home. The excesses and outrages committed by irresponsible bodies of men in some portions of our State is a sore and crying evil, and they must be stopped.

The manner in which the impressment law of Congress has been executed in many portions of our State needs your serious attention. Gross wrong and, I almost said, wanton injuries, have been perpetrated by officers who have no common sense, and no regard for the proprieties of life or the rights of property. If our laws do not furnish ample remedy for such outrages, provide the remedy.

In discharging the duties of the office I am about to assume, I shall endeavor to see that the rights of our citizens are protected from violence at home as well as

against the raids and ravages of our enemy. I shall expect, as I have a right to demand, the hearty co-operation of all in the support of every measure calculated to promote the prosperity and happiness of the people of Alabama, and the cause of Southern independence.

Let us never forget that the Almighty rules over the affairs of men, and that people and Governments are His handiwork! That His favor may be continued towards us as it has been in the past, let us constantly implore His mercy by submitting ourselves in all things to His will. Let us humble ourselves in His sight, and show by our acts that we deserve His protecting care!

REMARKS OF GOV. JOHN GILL SHORTER ON DELIVERING UP
THE STATE SEAL TO HIS SUCCESSOR.

Governor Watts:

By the Constitution of the State of Alabama, the Governor is made the custodian of the great seal of the State. Upon my induction into the executive office, two years ago, I received this seal from my respected predecessor. By the blessing of God, I have been enabled to preserve it inviolate to the present hour; and now, with more than a cheerful obedience to the expressed will of the people, I have the honor to deliver it into your hands. I do so with an abiding confidence that it is committed to the custody of one who is worthy to receive it, and who will devote all the power and resources at his command, if need be, to preserve it untarnished and thus deliver it to his successor. It may not be inappropriate—as it is the promptings of my feelings on this occasion as well as my clear convictions of duty—to declare to you, in the presence of the General Assembly, that, in my retirement from the arduous labors and severe responsibilities of the Executive office to the more calm and pleasing pursuits of private life, I shall not forget my obligations to the State and people of Alabama, nor to

you our honored Chief Magistrate. I heartily approve and endorse the admirable inaugural address which you have just delivered; and I pledge you my cordial and earnest support in every effort you may make to promote the welfare of Alabama and to advance our glorious Confederate cause, upon the success of which depends everything we esteem dear on earth. And I pray God that He may "give you grace and strength sufficient for every hour of need."

RESPONSE OF GOVERNOR WATTS.

Governor Shorter :

I return you my profound thanks for the kind expressions you have been pleased to use towards me, personally, and for the approval of the sentiments I have just uttered, and, also, for the generous support you have tendered to my administration. I can only hope in the administration of the affairs of State, to approximate the expectations of partial friends. The times are pregnant with historic events; and the responsibilities of the office of Governor, at this time, are such as to make the loftiest intellect and the purest heart seek for aid and cordial sympathy.

The honest purpose you have shown to advance the interests of Alabama, the arduous labors you have performed, your untiring devotion to the public welfare, will hereafter be properly appreciated by the people, and their thanks cheerfully rendered to you. In your retirement from public life, in the quiet precincts of home, I trust you may enjoy the happiness you deserve. I am sure you will not there forget the duties you owe to our noble State, and the great cause in which we are all engaged. My best wishes shall accompany you.

The seal of State which you have so well preserved, I accept, and shall guard it with all the energies I possess. It is the emblem of the power of Alabama. Alabama is my mother; whilst I have an arm to raise in her defense, and a voice to speak in her behalf, her power and glory shall be maintained, and her great seal, if the people will sustain me with the same hearty co-operation manifested in placing me here, under the blessing of God, shall be preserved, untarnished, for my successor.

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