

Address given by
Rev. John L. Girardeau, D. D.
at the reinterment ceremony
Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston
of the South Carolina
Confederate Gettysburg dead
Confederate Memorial Day
10 May 1871

In introducing what may be said, I beg leave to make two requests:

First, that in any utterances which may have a political complexion I may not be understood to assume to speak as a minister of the Gospel, and as delivering a message from the LORD, but as any citizen might express his sentiments who professes to fear God and to cherish the interests of his people; Secondly, that as a special interest attaches to this occasion some indulgence as to time may be granted for the remarks which may be offered. And wilt Thou, Almighty Being, inspire what may be uttered with the spirit of wisdom, justice and truth.

The circumstances which assemble us in the streets of this City of the Dead are, in the last degree, solemn, tender and affecting. The bones of our brethren have for nearly eight years been sleeping in the graves in which they were laid on the bloody battle-field of Gettysburg. Their repose was unbroken by the roar of subsequent conflicts, by the wild wail of grief which broke forth at the fall of their beloved country, or by the triumphal honours paid to the memories of those who battled against the cause for which they died, and fell on the same field with them. The wounded who survived for a brief while the carnage of that day turned amid their last thoughts on earth to the State they had loved so well, even as dying children to a mother, and ere they yielded up their gallant spirits breathed the fervent entreaty: "**Send our bodies to South Carolina to be buried there!** "

Was it that in their latest moments of consciousness they recoiled from the thought that they would be interred in an enemy's soil, and that their graves would be designated as those of rebels and traitors? They did not mistake. The remains of their opponents have very naturally been carefully collected, and with distinguished funereal honours been laid side by side in a place of sepulture decorated by the hand of affection. They were left to sleep apart. We could not have wished it otherwise. They had, as a peculiar people, contended for their rights, and, as a peculiar people, occupied graves by themselves -- in death as in life adhering to a noble and sacred, though despised and execrated, Cause.

They were entitled to strangers' accommodations and they received them. But they will no longer sleep alone. They will now have a fellowship in death from which they have hitherto been excommunicated. Their dying wish is fulfilled. Their isolated repose has been interrupted by the gentle hands of their country women who have tenderly removed them from alien graves, and brought them hither for admission to the communion of kindred dead. They have come home at last; and we, their brethren, their comrades, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, are met with one accord to welcome them to their native soil. We receive them not as conquerors, else would a whole people in funeral procession and with military pageant have escorted them to their coveted repose; but none the less honour on that account shall be awarded them. Not one chaplet, not one laurel-wreath shall be withheld albeit twined with the willow and the cypress. Not the roll of drums, the blast of bugles and the thunder

of cannon, but the throb of grief, the quick-flowing tear, the yearning of an unspeakable love, all that boundless admiration, undying gratitude and unconquered principles can give, -- these, Heroes of a defeated but glorious Cause, are the tribute we offer you today.

Afflicted Carolina, rise in thy mourning weeds, and receive thy returning children to thy maternal breast! Pillow them softly there, for there they prayed to sleep their long and dreamless sleep! Here let men who never surrendered except to death find a fitting resting place in a spot overlooking the waters which were never parted by a hostile keel so long as an artillery-man remained with his port fire behind the guns which guarded them, and yonder battered and ragged fortress which though often assaulted was never carried by storm. Here let them sleep with those who never looked upon a conqueror's flag floating over the citadels of a sovereign State, but closed their eyes upon a still free and defiant Commonwealth. Shoulder to shoulder they stood; now let them lie side by side. Confederates in life, confederates let them be in death.

Deep as is the grief which this occasion calls forth we are not here simply as mourners for the dead. There are living issues which emerge from these graves -- gigantic problems affecting our future, which starting up in the midst of these solemnities demand our earnest attention. The question which thrills every heart is, Did these men die in vain? Their death was but the logical conclusion of the principles which led to our great struggle, and furnished their highest and most significant illustration. It was the costliest sacrifice which an injured people could make for the maintenance of their fundamental liberties. Fathers and mothers gave up their children, wives their husbands, sisters their brothers, sovereign States their sons, and these men themselves, for the sake of a cause which involved every earthly interest and overshadowed every earthly relation. What sacrifice could for a moment be put into comparison with this? To have yielded up our fortunes, to have been ejected from our burning homes, to have witnessed the sacking of our cities, and the destruction of our harvests, - could all these have borne any analogy to the loss of these lives? The questions, therefore, force themselves upon us, Was this sacrifice a useless one? Was this precious blood spilt wholly in vain?

There are two senses in which it must be admitted that they lost their cause, --they failed to establish a Confederacy as an independent country, and they failed to preserve the relation of slavery. But there were fundamental principles of government, of social order, of civil and religious liberty, which underlay and pervaded that complex whole which we denominated our Cause. And the question whether those who fell in its support died in vain, as to those principles, must depend for its answer upon the course which will be pursued by the people of the South. What then shall be the nature of our answer? What the course which we shall adopt? There is but one reply which deserves to be returned to these inquiries -- our brethren will not have died in vain, if we cherish in our hearts, and as far as in us lies, practically maintain, the principles for which they gave their lives.

Either these men were rebels against lawful authority, or they were not. If they were, then the principles upon which they acted ought to be abandoned and the cause for which they contended ought to be consigned to oblivion. Dear as their memory is to us, we would have no warrant in being moved by personal relations to them to perpetuate a grievous wrong. If they were not, then every noble attribute of our nature, every sacred sentiment of justice, gratitude and consistency should impel us to justify their course, and to perpetuate their principles. And this is our position. In the face of the world we protest, that so far from having been rebels against legitimate authority and traitors to their country, they were lovers of liberty, combatants for constitutional rights, and as exemplars of heroic virtue benefactors of their race. This is not mere assertion dictated by sympathy or uttered in the spirit of bravado. It is susceptible of proof.

There are three great elements in the social constitution of man, involving corresponding necessities -- the Domestic, the Political and the Religious. Answering to these fundamental features of our nature there are three Divinely ordained institutes, independent of, but related to, each other -- the Family, the State, and the Church. Taken together they constitute the trinity of human relations. Each of them is indispensable to the wellbeing, if not the very preservation, of the race. They are the pillars on which rests the stability of society, as well as the

prime motors in its catholic Progress -- its organic nusus towards the great end for which it was originally ordained. To injure either of them is to strike a blow at the root of human happiness; and so intimate is the bond between them, so nice and delicate their action and re-action upon each other, that to impair one of them is to imperil the integrity of them all. Adverse to each and all of these beneficent ordinations, and consequently antagonistic to the vital interests which they suppose, there is a spirit abroad in the earth, almost universal in its operation, the measures of which are characterized by a subtlety and unity betokening the shaping influence of one master intelligence - that of the Arch-foe of God and man. Need it be said that this is Radicalism? Conceived in revolt from the sublime and harmonious order in which the different elements operate, it purposes to upturn the very ground-forms of society. Nothing that is sustained by the experience of the past, nothing that is venerable with age and consecrated by immemorial associations, nothing that descending through the ages has retained, in the midst of change and revolution, the fragrance of our primeval estate, or even of patriarchal dignity and simplicity, nothing just, true and pure, will be allowed to escape the sweep of this deluge. Montalbert has said, in effect, that there is a force in Europe, set in motion, by radical agitators, and penetrating and impelling the sea-like masses; which, if unchecked, is destined ere long to obliterate every existing secular and ecclesiastical organization.

This ruthless, leveling Spirit wages war against the Family, the State and the Church. Hearth-stones, grave, altars, temples, -- all are borne down under its tempestuous irruption. Nothing is safe from it. There is no sanctuary which it will not invade, no just, holy, time-honored sanction which it will not violate. Contemning the ordinances of man, it swaggers, in its Titanic audacity, against the empire of the Eternal. A leader of Parisian Socialism is reported recently to have exclaimed, that if he could reach the Almighty he would poniard Him upon His throne! Breach after breach has it already opened through the barriers which limit and restrain it, and in its onward rush, should laws, constitutions and public sentiment fail to impede its course, can only be arrested, aside from immediate Divine intervention, by the iron power of imperial Absolutism. Plunged into the vortex of anarchy by this Genius of Lawlessness, swimming for life in the vast gulf of the miseries induced by it, men will in very despair turn for refuge to Autocratic Despotism. It has been said by a great writer on Government, that there are two cardinal wants of society -- protection and liberty; and that of these the first in order is protection. Existence must be pre-supposed by happiness. In accordance with this principle it is but natural to judge that, when men have tried the desolating misrule of radical anarchy, they will recoil for protection under the sceptre of Despotism. But a selfish desire for safety will not have eradicated the prescriptive habits of democratic license, and the probable resultant of these conflicting forces will be a mechanical union between the imperial and popular element -- between Consolidated Despotism and Democratic Absolutism. To this the indications in Europe and on this Continent seem to point. Extremes will meet on a principle shared by both -- uncompromising hostility to regulated government and constitutional liberty. Apparently as far apart as the poles, they will be united by a common axis, on which the insane attempt will be made to drive the revolutions of the political world. And if an opinion might be ventured, suggested by a probable view of Inspired Prophecy, the day may not be far distant when this consummation will be reached. The body of iron will attached to feet of clay -- significant symbol of a great Imperial Despotism resting on the uncertain masses of a fierce Democracy. When this climax of crime and folly shall have been attained, there will be one of two alternatives before a sickened and despairing world, -- on the one hand the experience of a condition of things in which a social, political and religious Chaos will reign, in which star after star of hope will be quenched, the constellations of the great lights be blotted from the firmament, and the earth saturated with blood shall go down into a seething abyss of destruction; or, on the other hand, a supernatural interposition of God to rectify the otherwise remediless disorders of the world, and the re-establishment of a theocratic government no longer confining its sway to one favoured people, but assuming the diadem of universal dominion, healing the schisms of the race, collecting the struggling nations into one peaceful flock, and distributing with impartial hand the blessings of equal rule, regulated liberty and wide-spread domestic peace.

This somewhat extended portraiture of the spirit of Radicalism will not be deemed out of place, when it is remembered that it powerfully contributed to produce the evils under which we are now suffering. It was against

its aggressions, in the particular forms in which they were directed upon the South, that these men whose memories we honour today and their compatriots contended unto death. It was this fell spirit which, aiming at the destruction of an institution peculiar to the South, overrode every moral and constitutional obstacle which opposed its progress, drenched a once peaceful land in fraternal blood, and has occasioned that disturbed condition of affairs which is now likely to be confined to no section, but threatens to agitate the whole country. It began by assuming the existence of a "higher law," growing out of what were denominated the instincts of human nature, which it held to be superior, in the sphere of morals, to Divine Revelation, and, in that of politics, to the provisions of the Federal Constitution. Which such a theory from which to derive its inspirations, it is not to be wondered at that it regarded neither the laws of God nor of man which were conceived to lie in the path to the attainment of its ends. Pushing out this baleful dogma to its legitimate results, it boldly invaded the political order, and the fundamental principles of that federative government, which we had inherited from our fathers. Resting not until it had destroyed the attitude of strict neutrality imparted to the Constitution by the wisdom of its framers, it perverted that instrument into an organ, and the government into an agent of a section, trampled under foot the rights of sovereign States, and utterly refused to the people of the South all claim to think and act for themselves. It was a case demanding resistance from freemen. It was in view of such subversions of their constitutional rights and liberties that the Southern States in their organic capacity, and by the solemn acts of conventions, determined to withdraw from a confederation in which it was plain as day that their hopes of justice and equal consideration were destroyed. This act of sovereignty they were refused the liberty of performing; and no choice was left but unconditionally to submit or meet force with force. They adopted the alternative of freemen. In the struggle which ensued the Sons of the South, feeble in numbers and in the apparatus of war, excluded from the fellowship of nations, cut off by a cordon of fire from access to the ports of the world, and overwhelmed by vast hordes representing almost every European nationality, failed to secure the Independence they sought. They lost the power to exercise certain rights and principles. But did they lose these rights and principles themselves? How could they? except in the case of any which, acting in their organic capacity since the close of the war, they may have deliberately relinquished. Lost them? Yes, as a weak man, overpowered by the superior physical strength of another, may be said to lose the right for which he has contended. He loses the exercise of it, until he has the power to recover it. Are the religious principles of the martyr destroyed because he is burnt for them? Does the freeman lose his natural or political rights because tyranny represses their exercise? The very struggle to maintain them, the blood that was shed for them, the lives that were sacrificed in their defense render their rights and principles all the dearer to men out of whom all love of liberty is not completely crushed. Our principles were defeated, not necessarily lost. It behooves us to cling to them as drowning men to the fragments of a wreck. They furnish the only hope for our political future -- the only means of escape from anarchy on the one hand, or from despotism on the other, which are left to a once free and happy country. If the death of our brethren shall have the effect of enhancing these principles in our regard it will not have been in vain.

These men also contended for the existence and the purity of their social relations, particularly in the domestic form. They fought for their firesides as well as for their political rights. The same Radical spirit which disregarded the limitations of the Constitution, contemns the Divinely-instituted barriers which fence in the sanctities of the Family relation. Its triumph bodes for us no good. The danger is imminent of the introduction amongst us of novel social theories, born on another soil, and coming in as filthy camp-followers of a conquering host. Their first appearance may excite no alarm. They may even be derided; but they start tendencies, and tendencies, especially when seconded by the depraved instincts of nature, speedily become results if not arrested in their inception. It becomes us with all our might to resist that corruption of manners which is incompatible with the simplicity of free institutions, and the purity and integrity of moral character. The overwhelming affliction through which we have passed, the trials through which are still passing, and the memory of our dead, should lead us to a corresponding gravity of deportment. Who of us is there who does not sometimes weep over the glorious past? Is there one of us across whose soul there does not sometimes sweep the storm of an irrepressible grief? We are not yet done burying our dead. We are now standing by the open graves of those who died for liberty, who died for

us. We cannot put off the signals of mourning yet. Shall we ever do it, while our liberties are prostrated? It is to be greatly feared that a temper of levity is growing upon us which ill befits the seriousness, the deep sadness of our condition. These are homely counsels. Would that they were not suggested by obvious dangers. O! my countrymen, if ever we are really, finally conquered, it will be by ourselves. The process of dissolution will commence from within. The history of the past indicates it to be an almost universal law. The most powerful nations have succumbed under their own deterioration of moral sentiment, and degeneracy of manners. As long as these causes of decay were inoperative no external force or internal agitations availed to destroy them. Look at the English people. While comparative simplicity and purity of manners prevailed, revolution followed revolution but the country stood. The fundamental law was perfected by fresh guarantees of freedom. Every conflict enhanced the vigour of their institutions; every storm settled the roots of the tree of liberty deeper and faster in the soil. It is said by observers the luxuriousness of living has greatly increased among them. If so, the checks and balances of their conservative government will be soon put to the strain; its noble embankments will not long stand against the sea of Radicalism which is beginning to dash in thunder against them.

We must resist the influence of Radicalism in its Socialistic aspects as we would oppose the progress of a plague. Socialism and Communism are developments of the same Radical spirit. They go hand in hand. When the relations of life are subverted, the rights which spring from them are destroyed. When the altars of the Family are overthrown, it is but a step to tear down the pillars of the State. The stability of political principle and the happiness of the people depend upon the preservation of the social system from the inroads of corruption. To poison this is to poison the fountain. Let us read in the fearful tragedy now enacting in Paris before the horrified gaze of the world the bitter end to which we, too, shall inevitably come unless we steadfastly maintain the principles which have been twice consecrated by patriotic blood -- that of our ancestors in the first, and that of our brethren and fathers in the second, revolutionary war.

We have seen that in the complex constitution of our nature the religious element forms an integral part, and that provision is made for its exercise in the Divinely appointed institute of the Church. In contending against those influences which threaten to sap the foundations of every venerable institution, our slain brethren fought for their altars, as well as for their fire-sides and their political franchises. This is not an extravagant statement. The spirit of the Christian Religion pervaded the armies of the Confederacy. The vast majority of our soldiers were its nominal adherents, and thousands of them were professors of the faith. Its influence was felt in almost every regiment. In the quiet of camp, during the march and on the eve of battle its sacred services imparted fortitude under hardship and heroic courage for the day of conflict. From the Commander-in-chief to the humblest private in the ranks a reverent respect was paid to its ministers and its ordinances. We have seen Robert E. Lee, unattended by even a sergeant, go afoot through the mire to the soldiers' gathering for worship, and sitting in the midst of them devoutly listen with them to the preaching of God's Word, and mingle his prayers and praises with theirs. Jackson was proverbially a man of prayer. He led his fiery and resistless columns into the tempest of battle with hand uplifted to heaven in token of dependence on God, and supplication for His blessing. It deserves to be mentioned that that great soldier before the breaking out of hostilities taught a humble Sabbath-School at Lexington, the pupils of which when his remains were taken there for burial followed them with every mark of affection to their last, quiet resting-place. I desire to record it, amidst the affecting solemnities of this funereal occasion, that during an extended experience as chaplain I never encountered a sick, wounded or dying Southern soldier who rejected the Christian faith, or treated its proffered consolations with contempt. Let us then accept from them as in some sort martyrs for religion as well as for liberty the solemn obligation to maintain the Christianity which sustained them amid the privations of a soldier's life and the anguish of a soldier's death.

The relation between our people and the Gospel at once confers invaluable benefits and creates imperishable responsibilities. We cannot impair it without doing ourselves irreparable damage. Our civilization takes its dominant type from Christianity. All its distinctive moral features are derived from it. Ancient Pagan civilizations embodied the intellectual as well as our own. We can boast of no capacity of thought, no mental culture superior

to that which distinguished the land of Homer and Aristotle, or the home of Virgil and Cicero. But the incompleteness and self-destructiveness inherent in a civilization merely intellectual are illustrated in the history of every great power, save one, of ancient times. The stability of a State, and of the institutions which it embraces and which go to make up its organic life, depend on the degree in which the principle moral obligation obtains, and the rules of virtue are practiced. But, as has been observed by a splendid writer on American Democracy, there can be no true morality without religion. It is incumbent on us, therefore, as possessing the only perfect religion which the world has known, to appreciate the responsibilities which flow from such an endowment. Apostasy from Christianity would be suicide. But may be asked, What special danger is there of such an event growing out of present circumstances? It may be said in reply that the danger is two-fold: First, The critical changes through which we have passed expose us to the invasion of theories and the pressure of influences which were excluded by the settled condition of the past. The violence of the revolution in our circumstances can scarcely be exaggerated. Not only has our political state been so altered as to reverse relations formerly existing, but one element has been torn by force, and torn suddenly out of the very fabric of our social system. Our domestic life is passing through a most extraordinary transition. We are therefore in a forming condition. Every month is settling precedents for the future. Old institutions, customs and sentiments are breaking up as by the upheaval of a deluge; and it is a question of the last importance, into what order, what type of thought, opinion and practice we shall finally crystallize. It is while we are passing through this transitional process that the peril is immanent that ideas, theories and usages may be imbedded in the yielding mass which, when it shall have consolidated, no power will avail to extract. Already does this danger threaten us in the sphere of religion; and it becomes us to watch against tendencies which carry in them the seeds of defection from a pure religious faith.

Secondly, The prostration of our civil, forebodes injury to our religious, liberties. Civil Liberty and Religious Liberty are twin sisters. They stand or fall together. Here, however, a distinction is necessary. It is freely conceded that the essential liberty of the soul cannot be formed by human power. There are two prerogatives with which our Maker has endowed us which no tyranny can affect. They lie beyond the jurisdiction of human courts and the coercion of human executives. They are as free in the dungeon, at the stake and on the gibbet, as in the assemblies of an unconquered people, or in the issues of an unlicensed and unmuzzled press. They are the inalienable, indestructible powers of thought and language -- the faculty by which we form our opinions, and that by which we express them. They body may be manacled in irons, while the mind in its limitless excursions mounts as on wings of fire above the stars. The tongue, the glory of our corporeal frame, the harp from the strings of which is evoked the spontaneous adoration of God, the trumpet which heralds forth to mankind the noble conceptions of the human intelligence, the tongue -- the obedient organ of free thought -- cannot be coerced. It may be cut out but cannot be compelled to speak. When, therefore, physical liberty is restrained, these essential, godlike prerogative of the soul are as untrammelled as ever. But the freedom to express positively our convictions, to embody in outward form our worship of the Deity, to maintain institutions significant of our faith -- this freedom may be crushed by human power. The Church in its external manifestations may be suppressed. In this point of view the difference between civil and religious liberty becomes exceedingly thin. The one may to some extent survive the other, especially if the ruin of that other be not total; but the destruction of one originates the impulse to the subversion of the other, and supplies the motive to it. What has been done may be done; and when civil liberty has in fact been extinguished, the argument is a short one to the extinction of religious. It is the argument of triumphant power. Farther than this, the connection between these two complementary forms of liberty is so close -- the fire on the one altar so readily communicates itself to the smouldering ashes on the other -- that it is evident that as long as one is enjoyed, the other cannot be completely quenched. Their principles are akin; and the existence of one necessarily conduces to the maintenance of the other. Consequently, that a people should be thoroughly subdued, neither can be left intact. Both must be crushed. The people, therefore, which deliberately consents to the destruction of one form of liberty vainly dreams when it hopes that the other may escape. As

surely as the law of contagion operates, so surely will one not long survive the contact with the corpse of the other. To this conclusion, then, must those come who abandon the last struggle for civil liberty -- they must expect as a legitimate inference the loss of religious.

To sum up what has been said: Our brethren will not have died in vain if we their survivors adhere to the great principles for which they contended unto death; if we preserve an attitude of protest against those Radical influences which threaten to sweep away every vestige of constitutional rights and guarantees, to pollute the fountains of social life, and ultimately to whelm our civil and religious liberties in one common ruin.

Can this attitude be maintained? I presume not to speak of special political measures, but would earnestly urge the adoption of a course which will enable us to retain our hold upon our principles, and keep a posture of preparation for any relief which a gracious Providence may be pleased in answer to our prayers to grant us from the evils which now oppress us:

Let us cling to our identity as a people! The danger is upon us of losing it -- of its being absorbed and swallowed up in that of a people which having despoiled us of the rights of freemen assumes to do our thinking, our legislating and our ruling for us. Influences are operating on us with every last breath we draw which, if we be not vigilant, will sooner or later wipe out every distinctive characteristic which has hitherto marked us. Are we prepared for it? In that event, nothing of the past will be left to the South but a history which will read like an elegiac poem, nothing for the present but a place on the maps which our children study, nothing for the future but a single element of existence -- a geographical one. -- But can we preserve our identity in the face of the difficulties which oppose it?

We may do it, by continuing to wear the badges of mourning befitting a deeply afflicted people; by consenting to undergo the trials which distinguish us from a people inflated with material prosperity rather than abate one jot or tittle of our adhesion to principle; and by transforming the sufferings endured for freedom's sake into a discipline which may save our virtues from decay, and our liberties from extinction. We may do it, by utterly refusing to participate in any measures, of however great apparent utility, which require the slightest compromise of our innermost convictions; by declining to acquiesce where only to submit is demanded of us; and by preserving a dignified silence by which we shall signify our resolution, if we may not act for truth, right and liberty, not to act at all. We may do it, by instituting peculiar customs and organizations which will discharge the office of monuments perpetuating the past; by forming associations of a memorial character like that whose call gathers us here today; by collecting and publishing materials for our own history; and by appointing anniversaries by which if we may not celebrate the attainment of independence we can at least commemorate the deeds of men who died for our fundamental liberties and constitutional rights. We may do it, by scrupulously adhering to the phraseology of the past -- by making it the vehicle for transmitting to our posterity ideas which once true are true forever, all opposition to them by brute force to the contrary notwithstanding. We may do it, by the education we impart to the young; by making our nurseries, schools and colleges channels for conveying from generation to generation our own type of thought, sentiment and opinion; by stamping on the minds of our children principles hallowed by the blood of patriots, and by leading them with uncovered heads to gaze upon the grandest monuments the South can rear to liberty -- the headstones which mark the last resting-place of Southern Volunteers!

If we adopt not this course, what will be the consequences, which must ensue? One of the results will be that the only remaining representatives on this continent of free republican principles -- especially in their federative form -- will have ceased to exist, and the faintest, the last hope of a return to the noble, the glorious estate inherited from our patriotic ancestors will have gone out in the blackness of darkness. And then it must in all probability follow that the question of the possibility of republican institutions, or of the maintenance of the principle of free representation will have been negatived forever. The failure of the experiment on this continent instituted under conditions so favourable, under auspices so happy will discourage any similar attempt for the future in any country

under heaven. It may without extravagance be said that we occupy a moral Thermopylae in the struggle for republican liberty, and if we go down it will be buried in the same grave with us.

Another consequence of our refusal to take this course will be -- and it deserves our solemn consideration -- that our deliberate acquiescence in the criminal acts by which the liberties of the country are subverted will make us partakers in the condign punishment which must some day be visited on their perpetrators. It implies no ordinary crime to break the faith of compacts between people and people, to despoil sovereign States of rights won by sacrifice and independence purchased by blood, to disturb the balances of equitable government, and to threaten with ruin as fair a fabric of constitutional liberty as the sun ever shone upon. "The offense is rank and smells to heaven;" and if nations are punished for their sins in this world, the penalty of such acts must soon or late descend. It matters little that its approach is delayed, or is noiselessly made. It was a saying of the ancients that "the feet of the avenging Deity are shod with wool." The tread of the pursuing Nemesis may not be heard, but it presses with inevitable and tremendous certainty upon the track of national transgression. The demon of Radicalism has been invoked. It knows no law; and may yet turn upon those who have imagined it obedient to their will. And shall we elect to participate in these retributions? No, my countrymen; let us prefer to suffer present affliction for righteousness' sake rather than to incur the future punishments of national guilt. Let us keep our skirts clear. We can only do this by maintaining our identity as a people. And is this impossible? There is a race, which, coming down through the centuries enveloped with antagonistic influences and hostile nationalities, has stood out in perpetual protest against amalgamation with other peoples, and today preserves its characteristics, as the current of the great Western River flows into, without blending with, the multitudinous waters of the Gulf. Even so must we hold to our identity, or, as a people, we are undone. We may perish if we attempt it; perish we must, as a Southern race, if we do not. It is now almost the only hope that is left us. Conservation of our peculiar principles is our great, our paramount duty. We owe it our forefathers; we owe it to these our dead brethren; we owe it to ourselves; we owe it to our children; we owe it to the struggling, waning, almost expiring sense of constitutional liberty in this land. If we yield in the extremity, all is lost. If we tenaciously hold on to the fragments of a noble past, cling to the planks of a ship-wrecked Constitution, the very attitude we shall maintain may possibly inspire other lovers of liberty in this land to rally to a last, mighty effort to regain lost ground, or at least to arrest further strides to ruin, as the firm stand of a colour-bearer, in the crisis of battle and danger of rout, sometimes recalls a discomfited and retiring host. It is thought by some that there is a speck of hope -- a gleam of light in the stormy horizon. The disregard of the limitations of the Federal Constitution, the disposition to make fresh inroads upon the provisions of that instrument, the seeming determination to be balked by no barriers of fundamental law in its march to permanent triumph -- these features disclosed by the dominant party are awakening thought and exciting apprehension. It may please a merciful Providence by this means to restore to the people of this land some measure of respect for the guarantees of liberty enjoyed in the past. If so, it would be suicidal in us by any unfortunate concessions to relinquish the conservative position we have held. Whether this be so, or not, we must stand by our principles. When Stonewall Jackson had, on that fearful night at Chancellorsville, received his fatal wound, and the ground was swept by a storm of grapeshot, he was informed by an officer that it was thought necessary to retire. Faint from the loss of blood, and suffering from excruciating pain, he partly raised himself from his prostrate posture and in a tone of authority said: "Hold your ground, Sir!" The bleeding form of Liberty rises from the earth before us and utters the same command. We must, by God's help, hold our ground, or consent to be traitors to our ancestry, our dead, our trusts for posterity, to our fire-sides, our social order, and our civil and religious liberties.

Barring a certain fearful looking for of a retribution, which would be the end of such a policy, no doubt we might better our material condition by accommodating our principles to the demands of circumstances. But shall we come to that? Who of us holds Principle so cheap as to prefer to her his gold, his houses and his lands? Who of us will put her into the market, and barter her for so many pieces of silver? Who of us, gazing into these open graves and upon these coffins, will measure her value by even life itself? These men loved not their lives in comparison with her. They died for her. Who will cleave to material goods and sensual ease at the sacrifice of

principle? Were there one here who would answer in the affirmative, every mouldering bone in these narrow houses would find a tongue of rebuke for him! Better, far better would it be to gain a bare subsistence with our principles retained than to revel in luxury with the consciousness of treachery in our souls and the welcome collar of servitude on our necks! Rather than surrender character, better would it be in the last extremity to leave a soil on which it would be no longer possible for freemen to live, to take with us all that would remain of a historic Carolina, and to seek in some happier clime liberty to enjoy a few natural rights without being menaced by those who were our equals for not acquiescing in the tyranny of those who were our inferiors. That was the issue to which Carolina's great Statesmen declared, in the Senate of the United States, it would come in case force measures should succeed when employed against a Southern State. But, whither could we go from the relentless, all-pervading Spirit of Radicalism? Could we ascend into heaven, it would not be there; but should we make our beds in hell, behold, it would be there. If we should take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there would not its hand pursue us, and its right hand hold us? If we should say, surely the darkness will cover us, would not the night be made light about us by its incendiary conflagrations? Whither could we turn? Where on earth could the last asylum of the oppressed be found? Merciful God, we lift our appeal to Thee! Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations; cover us with Thy feathers, and let our trust be in the shadow of Thy wings!

But enough! the mournful office which has summoned us hither waits to be performed. Let us hasten to remove these relics of unconquered patriots from a strange atmosphere less free than the air of the sepulchre. And if we have abandoned the last hope of maintaining their principles, if we are prepared to give up everything for which they died, let us discharge this office for them with the feelings of those who are interring their principles with their bones -- of those who are solemnizing the funeral-rites, and burying the corpse, of Liberty. Let us place no emblem of hope above their heads, but having in the silence of death struck the last stroke of the spade upon their graves, retire from the scene as men withdraw from a field on which all has been lost.

But if it be our determination that we will cease to cherish the sacred principles which these men consecrated with their blood only when we cease to live, then let us, comrades, fellow-citizens, lovers of liberty, with reverent mien and tender hands consign all that remains of our brethren to their coveted resting-place in the bosom of their beloved Carolina. And as we cover them for their last sleep let us bury with the every proposal to us to apostatize from their principles, every tendency even to compromise them, every desire to recover position, wealth or ease at the sacrifice of honour, virtue and truth. Let us lay them down in hope; and as each modest stone rears its head above them, inscribe upon it a Resurgam - - the token of our faith that their principles now trodden into dust will rise again, the symbol of our invincible resolution that these men shall not altogether have died in vain.

Heroes of Gettysburg! Champions of constitutional rights! Martyrs for regulated liberty! Once again, farewell! Descend to your final sleep with a people's benedictions upon your names! Rest ye here, Soldiers of a defeated - - God grant it may not be a wholly lost -- Cause! We may not fire a soldier's salute over your dust, but the pulses of our hearts beat like muffled drums, and every deep-drawn sigh breathes a low and passionate requiem. Memory will keep her guard of honour over your graves; Love will bedew them with her tears; Faith will draw from them her inspiration for future sacrifices; and Hope, kindling her torch at the fires which glow in your ashes, will, in its light, look forward to a day when a people once more redeemed and enfranchised will confess that your death was not in vain.