

1. *A great part of our countrymen believe the war in which we are engaged, to be unnecessary and unjust.* This is true of many members of the national Legislature; of a great multitude of members, belonging to the state Legislatures; and of a vast multitude of the inhabitants, embodied in both of the great political parties. It is not my province to determine whether this opinion is just, or unjust. That a war should exist, and yet such an opinion prevail so extensively, cannot but be unhappy. On the part of all, by whom it is received, it cannot but embarrass their consciences, their conduct, and even their prayers. That the nation, with whom we are at war, has done us repeated injuries, is admitted on all hands. Still the questions recur, and are to be answered; whether our own hands are clean; whether we have used all the measures to preserve peace, which are demanded of a Christian nation; and whether the war promises to us any real good, sufficiently important to compensate for the loss of life, property, and comfort, which it must necessarily involve; for the innumerable sins, which it will occasion; and for the varied and manifold evils, which it will produce. When we think how great must be that loss, and how many those sins and miseries; the subject becomes solemn, painful, and melancholy, to a sober man, in a degree which it will be difficult to assign.

2dly. *We have begun this war, almost without any preparation.*

In ancient times it was determined by very high authority to be wise for him, *who was about to build a tower, or going to make war, to sit down first and count the cost*, whether he had sufficient to finish the undertaking.