

this age, which their own efforts and example have so largely contributed to produce, and now mainly impel.

Their characters and positions, in other respects, give the amplest assurance that a resort to force is not now to be expected. No two separate nations have, perhaps, ever existed, at any period of time, between whom has prevailed, of what is valuable, so much that is common to both. Language, laws, religion, ancestry, historical renown, and the most intimate relations of commerce and pervading interchange of capital in other forms—all conspire to condemn war between them as peculiarly calamitous and unnatural. It is true, as I have stated, that, notwithstanding all this, war has, in fact, occurred between them. Yet this multitude of kindred principles soon triumphed over temporary hostility, and reunited them, as the necessities of their relative positions ever must, as the high priests of human civilization and freedom. They defy their destiny, when their arms are turned against each other. The cause of human nature suffers under every blow they strike.

Such being the relative positions of the two Powers, for the reasons and for the high purposes which I have mentioned, the simple fact that difficulties like the present now exist must strike every observer as in a high degree extraordinary. Whence, then, these disturbances, whilst every enlightened motive is against them?

It was admitted by the President, almost in terms, before the affair of the Caroline, that *our* citizens, by the violation of their neutral obligations, were endangering the peace of the two nations; and, in effect, that retaliation by the *other* side might be provoked. The danger was alleged by him to proceed, in the first instance, from our citizens, and the enactment of laws recommended to restrain *them*; treating it throughout as a domestic cause of difficulty to be removed by domestic measures. What, I ask, produced this lawless spirit amongst our people? For in that, and not in the defenceless state of our frontier, or in the seizure of the Caroline, lies the true cause of this emergency. Pains, I know, have been taken in this debate, by the friends of the administration, to cast the whole blame upon *the people*, to the entire exoneration of *the Government*; a course not without a late precedent, from the same quarter, on another subject. This condemnation of the people is scarcely less unjust than the acquittal of the Government. These errors of the people, (for such I readily admit them to be) find their palliation, if not justification, in the antecedent and more flagrant wrongs by the Government itself. When the head of a Government like ours becomes lawless and unjust, upon whom, in the eye of reason, rests the blame, if those who live under that Government, taking shelter under the example, are infected with a similar spirit? Is not the influence natural and unavoidable? Does not the moral condition, in many respects, of our people, mournfully attest that a lawless spirit has found its way into our national councils? To all whose judgments, and affections, and imaginations, are united as they ought to be, and as I hope mine are, in devotion to their country, it is a source of humiliation and pain to be compelled to arraign their Government in a matter so delicate as the conduct of its relations towards a foreign nation. But, sir, there is a stage in the progress of international controversies when to condemn one's own Government, if in the wrong, is not only becoming the citizen, but rises into a solemn duty of patriotism. Not to do so, would be blindly to sanction and follow whithersoever the caprice, ambition, or injustice, of weak or wicked rulers might lead. The voice of the citizen, exposing and denouncing pernicious and unjust measures towards other nations, should be raised with

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