

all remember what Shakespere says of the great armies which were led out to fight for a piece of ground not large enough to cover the bodies of those who would be slain in the battle; but I do not remember that Shakespere says that the battle was on this account necessarily unreasonable. It is the old point of honour, which, till it had been made absurd by certain changes of circumstances, was always grand and usually beneficent. These changes of circumstances have altered the manner in which appeal may be made, but have not altered the point of honour. Had the Southern States sought to obtain secession by constitutional means, they might or might not have been successful; but if successful there would have been no war. I do not mean to brand all the Southern States with treason, nor do I intend to say that having secession at heart they could have obtained it by constitutional means. But I do intend to say that acting as they did, demanding secession not constitutionally but in opposition to the constitution, taking upon themselves the right of breaking up a nationality of which they formed only a part, and doing that without consent of the other part, opposition from the North and war was an inevitable consequence.

It is, I think, only necessary to look back to the revolution by which the United States separated themselves from England to see this. There is hardly to be met, here and there, an Englishman who now regrets the loss of the revolted American colonies,—who now thinks that civilisation was retarded and the world injured by that revolt; who now conceives that England should have expended more treasure and more lives in the hope of retaining those colonies. It is agreed that the revolt was a good thing; that those who were then rebels became patriots by success, and that they deserved well of all coming ages of mankind. But not the less absolutely necessary was it that England should endeavour to hold her own. She was as the mother bird when the young bird will fly alone. She suffered those pangs which Nature calls upon mothers to endure.

As was the necessity of British opposition to American independence, so was the necessity of Northern opposition