

that in the state of excitement to which the public mind is raised, and which is hourly increasing by the most profligate disregard of truth and of the welfare of the country---and by the utmost prostitution of talents, a mere trifle would suffice to produce a convulsion---(as, when you have collected together a quantity of highly combustible materials, a single spark suffices to produce a conflagration.)---that a dissolution of the union will infallibly produce a civil war; that in the event of a civil war, there will be a struggle throughout the country for the ascendancy, wherein will be perpetrated atrocities similar to those which disgraced the French revolution; that even if we should be so fortunate as to escape a civil war, or, (if we should not) after its termination, and the establishment of separate confederacies, the country will be cursed with a constant border war, fomented by the nations of Europe, to whom we shall be a sport and a prey; and that, in one word, a nation most highly favoured by heaven, is on the very verge of perdition.

These views may be erroneous. They differ from those of most of my friends. The mass of the community, moreover, do not accord with them. But they are unalterably impressed upon my mind. I cannot shake them off. They are all supported by the instructive, but neglected voice of history. I possess not the happy faculty with which so many are endowed. I cannot believe an event will not take place, because I hope and pray it may not. I am disposed to envy those who are thus gifted. It diminishes the hours of suffering. In a life so chequered as ours, this is some advantage. But it has, like all other blessings, a counterpoising evil. When we disbelieve in the approach of danger, we make no preparations to repel it.

With these impressions I preferred risking any consequences, however pernicious to myself, that might arise from the present address, to a state of torpor and inactivity---to perishing without an effort. In a sanguine moment, I indulged the flattering, the fond, (pray heaven it may not be, the delusive) hope that my efforts might be so far crowned with success, as to make me the blessed, the happy instrument of arousing even one, two, or three influential active citizens from the morbid, the lethargic slumber, into which the community has been so fatally lulled; that these might arouse others; and that thus the potent spells might be dissolved, which, in a manner unexampled in the history

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