

body of men in the Republic were more capable of interpreting the constitution and disputed points. Reason and the constitution are evidently against the doctrine, but in examining it in its practical application we more plainly perceive its absurdity. Take for example, the question which was causing so much dispute, the tariff. The general government passed the laws. South Carolina being displeased would veto and nullify them. Perhaps all the other States would approve of the laws and pay the duties. The result would be that either the voice of a single State would upset the legislation of all the other States, or else one State would pay no duties while the others did, although the constitution contains an express provision that all duties shall be equal in all States. This example shows the absurdity of the doctrine but not its effects in reality. The general government convinced in the validity of its actions, would certainly endeavor to enforce its enactments, and would meet with direct opposition. Military force would take the place of legal procedures, and civil war would ensue. Such, then, was this doctrine, unconstitutional, impracticable and revolutionary. Its adoption meant the falling back under the old confederation; a disconnected union; and finally a complete overthrow of all bonds of unity, and the treasured constitution in which the people placed so much confidence, would be valueless. These misfortunes Daniel Webster averted. His skillful interpretation of the constitution, and the patriotic appeal with which he closed the debate in the Senate, caused a revulsion of feeling against the doctrine of nullification, and made it impossible for its promoters to make any advance. Though they continued for three years more to maintain and endeavor to enforce their plans, Webster also continued to counteract their advances, and thus, with the aid of President Jackson's proclamation threatening the nullifiers, the doctrine was suppressed. But none too soon, for in 1832 South Carolina was on the point of secession, and a civil war was the prospect for the young Republic. Webster alone prevented this, or at least delayed it for thirty years. We know the result of the Civil War of '61, but we cannot judge from that what it might have been in 1832. Circumstances at that time were vastly different, and probably in favor the South. The result of the