

abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; then the abolition of the slave trade between the States; then the exclusion of slavery from Oregon; then the Wilmot Proviso; then the admission of California with a free constitution. Each of these, in its day, was a cause of disunion, to be effected through the instrumentality of a Southern convention, forming a sub-confederacy, in flagrant violation of the constitution, and effecting the disunion by establishing a commercial non-intercourse with the free States. After twenty years' agitation upon these points, they are all given up. The constitution, and the Union, were found to be a "mistake" from the beginning—an error in their origin, and an impossibility in their future existence, and to be amended into another impossibility, or broken up at once.

The regular inauguration of this slavery agitation dates from the year 1835; but it had commenced two years before, and in this way: nullification and disunion had commenced in 1830 upon complaint against protective tariff. That being put down in 1833 under President Jackson's proclamation and energetic measures, was immediately substituted by the slavery agitation. Mr. Calhoun, when he went home from Congress in the spring of that year, told his friends, *That the South could never be united against the North on the tariff question—that the sugar interest of Louisiana would keep her out—and that the basis of Southern union must be shifted to the slave question.* Then all the papers in his interest, and especially the one at Washington, published by Mr. Duff Green, dropped tariff agitation, and commenced upon slavery; and, in two years, had the agitation ripe for inauguration on the slavery question. And, in tracing this agitation to its present stage, and to comprehend its rationale, it is, not to be forgotten that it is a mere continuation of old tariff disunion; and preferred because more available.

In June, 1833, at the first transfer of Southern agitation from tariff to slavery, Mr. Madison wrote to Mr. Clay:

"It is painful to see the unceasing efforts to alarm the South, by imputations against the North of unconstitutional designs on the subject of slavery. You are right, I have no doubt, in believing that no such intermeddling disposition exists in the body of our Northern brethren. Their good faith is sufficiently

guaranteed by the interest they have as merchants, as ship-owners, and as manufacturers, in preserving a union with the slaveholding States. On the other hand, what madness in the South to look for greater safety in disunion. It would be worse than jumping into the fire for fear of the frying-pan. The danger from the alarms is, that pride and resentment excited by them may be an overmatch for the dictates of prudence; and favor the project of a Southern convention, insidiously revived, as promising by its counsels the best security against grievances of every kind from the North."

Nullification, secession, and disunion were considered by Mr. Madison as synonymous terms, dangerous to the Union as fire to powder, and the danger increasing in all the Southern States, even Virginia. *"Look at Virginia herself, and read in the Gazettes, and in the proceedings of popular meetings, the figure which the anarchical principle now makes, in contrast with the scouting reception given to it but a short time ago."* Mr. Madison solaced himself with the belief that this heresy would not reach a majority of the States; but he had his misgivings, and wrote them down in the same paper, entitled, "Memorandum on nullification," written in his last days and published after his death. *"But a susceptibility of the contagion in the Southern States is visible, and the danger not to be concealed, that the sympathy arising from known causes, and the inculcated impression of a permanent incompatibility of interests between the North and the South, may put it in the power of popular leaders, aspiring to the highest stations, to unite the South on some critical occasion, in a course that will end in creating a theatre of great though inferior extent. In pursuing this course, the first and most obvious step is nullification—the next, secession—and the last, a farewell separation. How near has this course been lately exemplified! and the danger of its recurrence, in the same or some other quarter, may be increased by an increase of restless aspirants, and by the increasing impracticability of retaining in the Union a large and cemented section against its will."*

—So wrote Mr. Madison in the year 1836, in the 86th year of his age, and the last of his life. He wrote with the pen of inspiration, and the heart of a patriot, and with a soul which filled the Union, and could not be imprisoned in

one half of it. his Southern vision to the of the slavery tation, a Southe union end—to th both to the Sou

Mr. Calhoun But he has left of peace! who "feared to trea turbulence of the punge it. He bloodshed in c millions of dolla

CHA

THE SUPREME C
TORNEY-GEN
SHALS DURIN
THIS VOLUM

CHIEF JUSTICE
Maryland, appoi

JUSTICES:—J
appointed, 1811
Ohio, appointed,
M. Wayne, of C
tinues, 1850.—J
pointed, 1837:
bury, of New H
tinues, 1850.—R
appointed, 1846:

ATTORNEY-GR
Pennsylvania, a
tenden, of Kent
S. Legare, of So
—John Nelson,
John Y. Mason
—Nathan Cliffor
Isaac Toucey, of
—Reverdy John
1849.—John J.
pointed, 1850.

CLERK:—Wil
District of Col
tinues, 1850.

REPORTERS OF
jr., of Pennsylv