

I think it will be admitted, at least, that during the six years in which I have been connected with the executive administration of the government I have acted in that character and upon those principles. And now to assume a sectional character. All of you here, and all the people in Virginia, and all in North Carolina, and all I might also say in Georgia, and in Mississippi, and Texas, and Louisiana, and Connecticut, and Boston, were all born on the eastern slope of the Alleghany mountains. We find here no dividing line of the North and the South. Upon the West the mountains are our barriers, and on the East the Atlantic Ocean is our border. Differences arose between the sections, and progressed until we reached excited animosities, and finally the most fearful civil war that ever destroyed the human family—and all to settle the balance of power between the Northern Atlantic States and the Southern Atlantic States—between the free States of the North and the slaveholding States of the South. While we have been consuming our patriotism and energies in this strife between the North and the South, the tide of migration has gone across the Alleghanies.

While discussing the questions incident to that, there comes up a power in the great West—a free people—who know nothing of the negro and who care less for the master, and still less for the manufacturer. This young empire has a mutual care for each of the sections. It becomes us, speaking as a sectional statesman, to reconcile our views and to settle our questions amongst ourselves. You are losing time in these everlasting contentions. How are we now in the councils of the nation? The Constitution, to secure to the people in the aggregate their rights, declares “that no law shall be passed without the approval of the President of the United States, unless a minority of one-third shall vote against it.” You have the President and the Congress, but where is your minority of one-third? I think it will be found on the Atlantic Coast; and this will require the whole Atlantic Coast, from Maine to Mississippi. If you are going to restore the Constitution, you must establish harmony between the North and South.