

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS.

The General Assembly of Maryland have seen with concern certain indications, at the seat of the General Government, of an interference with the institution of slavery in the slaveholding States, and cannot hesitate to express their sentiments, and those of the people they represent, in regard to a policy so unwise and mischievous. This war is prosecuted by the Nation with but one object, that, namely: of a restoration of the Union, just as it was when the rebellion broke out. The rebellious States are to be brought back to their places in the Union, without change or diminution of their constitutional rights. In the language of the resolution adopted by both Houses of Congress, at its extra session in July last, with remarkable unanimity, this war is declared to be prosecuted, not "in any spirit of oppression or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of those States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union, with all the dignity, equality and rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as those objects are accomplished, the war ought to cease."

The objects and purposes of the war, thus impressively declared, are those alone which the Nation can rightfully contemplate in its prosecution; and the moment the object of the war changes from a simple restoration of the Union, as known to the Constitution, to something else, in conflict with the guarantees of that instrument, from that moment the war itself changes its character. The duty of the Government, in a great crisis like the present, is a very plain one—it is to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States; and, thankful as we have reason to be for our exemption from the devastation and ruin of civil war, we rely further upon the wisdom and firmness of the President in the discharge of the high and solemn trust committed to his hands,