

undivided sovereignty is, that they expressly ceded the right to punish treason—not treason against their separate power—but treason against the United States. Treason is an offence against SOVEREIGNTY, and sovereignty must reside with the power to punish it. But the reserved rights of the States are not less sacred, because they have for their common interest made the General Government the depository of these powers. The unity of our political character (as has been shown for another purpose) commenced with its very existence. Under the Royal Government we had no separate charter—our opposition to its oppression began as UNITED COLONIES.

We were the United States under the confederation, and the name was perpetuated, and the Union rendered more perfect by the Federal Constitution: In none of these stages did we consider ourselves in any other light than as forming one nation. Treaties and alliances were made in the name of all. Troops were raised for the joint defence. How, then, with all these proofs that under all changes of our position we had, for designated purposes and with defined powers, created National Governments—how is it, that the most perfect of those several modes of union should now be considered as a mere league, that may be dissolved at pleasure? It is from an abuse of terms. Compact is used as synonymous with league, although the true term is not employed, because it would at once show the fallacy of the reasoning.

It would not do to say that our constitution is only a league: but it is labored to prove it a compact, (which in one sense it is) and then to argue that as a league is a compact, every compact between nations must of course be a league, and that from such an engagement every sovereign power has a right to secede. But it has been shown, that in this sense the States are not sovereign, and that even if they were, and the National Constitution had been founded by compact there would be no right in any one State to exonerate itself from its operations.

So obvious are the reasons which forbid this secession, that it is necessary only to allude to them. The Union was formed for the benefit of all. It was produced by mutual sacrifices of interests and opinions. Can those sacrifices be recalled? Can the States who magnanimously surrendered their title to the Territories of the West, recall the grant? Will the inhabitants of the inland States agree to pay the duties that may be imposed without their assent by