

ence to the legitimate powers of the government.

But that is not all he said. Mr. Everett tells you that even at an earlier period he (Jefferson) uttered the same sentiments :

"He urged, in 1786, the establishment of a naval force by the Congress of the confederation, as a means of chastising the Barbary Powers, and because it would furnish the Federal head 'with the safest of all instruments of coercion over delinquent members,' precisely the use to which the Government of the United States is now employing the naval power of the country. Writing on the same subject to Mr. Monroe a month afterwards, in reply to the objection that there is no money in the treasury, Mr. Thomas Jefferson says: 'there never will be any money in the treasury till the confederacy shows its teeth. The States must see the rod; perhaps it must be felt by some of them.'"

This is Thomas Jefferson, quoted all around the House here as authority for the doctrine of State rights, against the extraordinary power of coercion, and in favor of the right of any State to secede at any moment when, under its own interpretation, its so-called sovereignty was invaded by the General Government.

And what does Mr. Madison say? I have a book here entitled "Sectional Controversy," which is a very valuable book to the other side of the House; I suppose they are in possession of it. It is a collation and compilation of all the sentiments that ever have been uttered by any statesman in favor of State rights; a compilation made, too, by a northern man—a northern man with southern principles—a Mr. William Chauncey Fowler, L. L. D., of New York. But there are some things in it which he has not been exactly able to exclude, which I will read for the information of this Convention, as bearing upon this theory of the right of secession; for the whole theory of argument upon the other side here has been defensive of secession. We have sat here and listened to debates which I am sure must have proven to my friend from Somerset, (Mr. Jones,) the total absence of any necessity for any amendment to our bill of rights, to preserve freedom of speech. That amendment was entirely unnecessary, so far as anything here was concerned; for, as I am glad to see, the largest liberty of speech has been allowed here.

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. [In his seat.] Within an hour, or an hour and a quarter.

Mr. RIDGELY. In a letter which Mr. Madison wrote in 1833, he uses the following language—

Mr. MILLER. From what page is the gentleman reading?

Mr. RIDGELY. I read from page 217. I see the gentleman has a copy of this book. It has furnished the texts for all the argu-

ments made here by the gentlemen on the other side, and has been a very valuable auxiliary to them. Indeed, one of my particular friends in this Convention, on the other side, expressed to me this morning his regret that he had only lately discovered the existence of this book; he much regretted that he had not discovered it earlier.

In a letter written in 1833, Mr. Madison uses the following language:

"It surely does not follow from the fact that the States, or rather the people embodied in them, having, as parties to the constitutional compact, no tribunal above them, that in controverted meanings of the compact a minority of the parties can rightfully decide against the majority, still less that a single party can at will withdraw itself altogether from its compact with the rest."

That is the sentiment uttered in 1833 by Mr. Madison, who has been quoted all around the House here, from the very first speech made by the honorable gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke.) The Madison papers and the Federalist have been quoted by our Southern friends as authority, conclusive, overwhelming authority. Now, I confess that while I have great veneration for these names, yet I have not the fullest faith, not at least what is scripturally called "saving faith," in the utterances of these great men, for the reason that the oracles have not always taught the same doctrine, have not always spoken the same voice. They have, like other men, been at times on both sides of the same question. I therefore take all their utterances with many grains of allowance.

This very same Mr. Madison, as all will remember, during the first Congress, by his powerful and extraordinary influence defeated Mr. Hamilton upon the United States Bank question—upon the question of the constitutional power of the Government to create a corporation. Mr. Madison defied and challenged the friends of a United States Bank to produce power in the Constitution to authorize Congress to create a corporation; and was successful in defeating the attempt to charter the first United States Bank. But the same James Madison, when afterwards President of the United States, signed the charter for the Bank of the United States, thus occupying ground on both sides of that question. And other great men have done the same thing.

Mr. MILLER. Mr. Everett has said exactly the opposite of the article the gentleman has read here.

Mr. RIDGELY. That may be another proof, then, of what I say: that mere opinion *per se*, is unsatisfactory authority, especially when such opinion has not been consistent; and instead of being controlled by mere opinions, I address myself and my judgment to the reasons upon which men base their opinions;