

**THE DEATH AND FUNERAL
CEREMONIES OF JOHN CALDWELL
CALHOUN, CONTAINING THE
SPEECHES, REPORTS, AND OTHER
DOCUMENTS CONNECTED THEREWITH**

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The Death and Funeral Ceremonies of John Caldwell Calhoun, Containing the Speeches, Reports, and Other Documents Connected Therewith by R. B. Rhett

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R. B. RHETT

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THE
DEATH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES

OF

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN,

CONTAINING

THE SPEECHES, REPORTS, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS
CONNECTED THEREWITH,

THE

ORATION OF THE HON. R. B. RHETT,

BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE,

&c. &c.

South Carolina
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE LEGISLATURE.

COLUMBIA, S. C.

PRINTED BY A. S. JOHNSTON.

1850.

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Main body of handwritten text, appearing to be a list or series of entries, possibly related to a ledger or account book. The text is faint and difficult to read.

MESSAGE

OF

THE GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA,
TO THE LEGISLATURE,

IN RELATION TO

THE DEATH OF MR. CALHOUN.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }
COLUMBIA, November 27, 1850. }

Fellow Citizens of the Senate,

and House of Representatives:

Since your adjournment, in December last, South Carolina has presented a scene of sadness and affliction. In a few months, four of her faithful public servants, exercising distinguished and highly responsible public trusts, under the Federal and State Governments, have passed from time to eternity. To this bereavement, it behooves us, as a people, humbly to submit, in the encouraging assurance that the chastenings of Providence are tempered with mercy and loving kindness.

On the 31st of March, in the city of Washington, JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN, one of the Senators from this State, terminated his earthly career. The announcement of the death of so eminent a citizen called forth the strongest manifestations of grief

from a large portion of the Republic. In intensity of feeling and deep pervading gloom, it renewed the heart-felt exhibition of mourning which occurred in December, '99, when the fatal truth was realized that George Washington had ceased to be numbered with the living.

While this great confederacy of co-equal sovereignties, through their common agent, portrayed in lofty terms the character and services of the deceased, several of the States themselves, as well as the people of many sections of the Union, in the most impressive forms in which sorrow is susceptible of expression, proclaimed to the political communities of the world that a great man, morally and intellectually, had fallen. The accompanying resolutions of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the reports of the late Mayor of Charleston, and the Committee of 25, appointed by the Executive to bring the remains of our late Senator to South Carolina, alone furnish satisfactory evidence on this subject.

Although it may be with truth affirmed, that personally Mr. CALHOUN was unknown to his countrymen, yet, perhaps, no public servant ever had a stronger hold on their affections. This was the result of a settled belief, that to deep sagacity, an enlightened judgment, and profound wisdom, he added a patriotic ardor and integrity of purpose which no force of circumstances could subdue or weaken. If, from a fearless assumption of responsibility, and entire freedom from party trammels, on all questions involving principle, he was occasionally exposed to the rebukes of a certain class of politicians, still, the meed of the people's admiration, if not actual concurrence, was never withheld from him.

With all the lofty qualifications of a consummate statesman, our great leader was deficient in the lower, yet not unfrequently important, attributes of the mere politician. In determining the relative influence of circumstances on the progress and destiny of nations, and in estimating the force of their combinations, his perspicacity was pre-eminent. Unadapted to the character of his mind, and the elevated ends at which he aimed, the task of car-

rying an assailable point by address, adroitness in contrivance, or other expedients, formed no part of his labors. Possessing a thorough knowledge of the human mind, and the springs of human action, political causes and their effects, he could, with rare penetration, unfold. In the moral, as in the physical world, there are fixed laws, which, under the same circumstances, produce like results. In steadfastly adhering to these, as his guide, he was at all times able to eliminate the truth of a case amidst the obscurity and embarrassment that encompassed it. Far in advance of the age in which he lived, the discoveries of his intellectual vision, which the ordinary eye was incapable of appreciating, were, on certain subjects, often considered as the visionary speculations of an habitual alarmist. In illustration of his prophetic power, the wide spread effects of abolition aggression might be appropriately cited. If his admonitions and warnings, so early and solemnly uttered in the Senate, had been practically attended to, the present perilous condition of the Southern community never would have been reached; nor would the mind of the public have been startled by a proposition to amend the charter of Union, as a measure necessary to secure the permanence and safety of the domestic institutions of the South.

Because it was the fundamental law, Mr. CALHOUN was among the most ardent and undeviating supporters of the Federal Constitution. Guided by the soundest principles of political ethics, he justly maintained that the only safe and effectual mode of preserving a partnership, whether among individuals or States, was to resist every encroachment on the terms of agreement. One act of unchecked usurpation, he was well aware, would constitute a precedent for another, until, by a series of unwarrantable measures, adopted at various, and it may be distant dates, the distinctive characteristics of the original covenant no longer existed in practice. The time of resistance to unlawful authority is at the commencement of its assaults, because the power of the many, under the panoply of might, is perpetually encroaching on the rights of the few. The tendency of all majorities, moreover, is to despotism. In their recognition of the Ordinance of

'87, unwarrantably enacted by the old confederation, and in assenting to the act admitting Missouri into the Union, the Plantation States unwittingly inflicted perhaps an incurable evil upon their institutions and domestic quiet.

Mr. CALHOUN'S name is intimately associated with the history of the United States for the last forty years. During that eventful period, every measure of high public interest received the impress of his master mind. On the science of Government, as exemplified in the operation of our institutions, and that of the Republics of antiquity, his speeches and writings have shed a flood of light. While he admitted that the Constitution of our country was the work of pure and patriotic men, and is a proud monument of human wisdom, yet, in neglecting to provide ample securities for the weaker section of the community, and relying too confidently on parchment barriers for the protection of the social organization of the respective parties, its framers have furnished instruments for the destruction of their own labors, by a slow, but certain, process.

Always on the side of liberty and justice, the South Carolina statesman was sleeplessly vigilant in detecting the insidious advances of power, and confining the central authority within its strictly constitutional orbit. Aware of the centripetal tendency of all political associations, under a federal head, he labored so unceasingly to maintain the Union by preserving the integrity of its members, as to subject himself, among the latitudinarians, to the imputation of southern predilection. Duty and patriotism alike impelled him to the adoption of this course.

The Congress, at an early period of our history, had not only exercised ungranted powers, but had applied them to the promotion of sectional purposes, first by openly plundering, through the forms of law, the property of one half the States for the benefit of the other half; but more recently by other means, which threatened the extinction of their independence and sovereignty. To compel submission to its edicts, the authority of the Executive had been unwarrantably enlarged. Prior, indeed, to that despotic enactment,—the Force Bill—the President of the United