

tured fairly on the experiment. What will come of it in the end, remains to be seen.

Why They Seceded.

There seems to be a considerable difference of opinion among the members of the Convention of South Carolina as to the reasons and motives of secession. As the rest of the country is at least equally in the dark on the subject, it may be well to consider the different reasons assigned by different members.

Mr. WARDLAW objected to one of the Declarations of Independence reported by the Committee, that "it dwelt too much upon those Fugitive Slave laws and those Personal Liberty bills, which give it too much the appearance of *special pleading*." The real reason, he thought, was, that the election of LINCOLN was equivalent to an "edict of emancipation,"—and the address ought, therefore, to set forth very fully and strongly the fact that "emancipation would be deleterious to the blacks and degradation to the whites."

Mr. MEMMINGER, who drew the address, appreciated the importance of going before the world with a full vindication of their action, if they expected any sympathy or support. He said :

"Allow me to say to the honorable gentleman, that when you take the position that you have a right to break your faith ; to destroy an agreement which you have made ; to tear off your seal from the document to which it is affixed ; you are bound to justify yourself fully to all the nations of the world, for there is nothing that casts such a stain upon the escutcheon of a nation as a breach of faith. Therefore the document shows fully that both in measure and in spirit our co-States have broken the Constitution and the Union. Not only in letter has this been done, but also in spirit. They have so brought matters to pass in this country that every single end which that Constitution professed to carry into effect has been made destructive of those ends ; that the common agent which should have acted for our common good has been converted into an instrument for our destruction. And now, as a consummating act, they have so perverted the Constitution of the United States as to seize hold of that clause in relation to the Executive Department to enable them to elect a sectional President, and put in office a man whose only recommendation, or whose chief recommendation to the whole of them, was that he is an enemy of our Constitution—that he desires to see Slavery abolished. The great objection that we raise is not to ABRAHAM LINCOLN himself, but chiefly because he is the representative of a hostile opinion, destructive of every interest of the South."

Mr. M. expects that a "national breach of faith" on the part of South Carolina, is to be justified in the eyes of the world, on the ground that the people of the United States have "elected a President who desires to see Slavery abolished." This is the only actual point of his complaint. Does he believe that England, France, the North, or even sensible men in South Carolina, will recognize this as an offence sufficiently grave to justify what he himself styles "a breach of faith?"

Mr. RHETT was more emphatic, and somewhat more explicit on several points than either of the preceding speakers. He said :

"The secession of South Carolina is not an event of a day. It is not anything produced by Mr. LINCOLN's election, or by the non-execution of the Fugitive Slave law. It has been a matter which has been gathering head for thirty years, and, in the production of this great result, the great men who have passed before us, whose great and patriotic efforts have signalized the times in which they lived, have not been lost. Have the labors of CALHOUN been forgotten, when he declared a few years ago, for the secession of South Carolina? and that secession would be the consummation of their liberties? Sir, the election of LINCOLN and HAMLIN, sectional candidates of the North, was the last straw on the back of the camel. But it was not the only one. The back was nearly broken before. The point upon which I differ from my friend is this : He says he thought it expedient for us to put this great question before all the world upon this simple matter of wrongs on the question of Slavery ; and that question turned upon the Fugitive Slave law, according to his statement. Now, Sir, in regard to that Fugitive Slave law, I myself doubt its Constitutionality, and I doubted it on the floor of the Senate, when I was a member of that body. It was also doubted by a member of the House. Mr. WEBSTER declared it unconstitutional, and, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Keitt expressed the same opinion. If we look at that clause which requires that fugitive slaves shall be delivered, we will find that it was a guarantee between the States. We cannot go before Congress in relation to this matter. The States, acting in their sovereign capacity, should be responsible for the rendition of fugitive slaves. That was our best security ; and hence the attempt of certain States to relieve themselves from the responsibility as States, and go into Congress and legislate upon the subject was a breach on the part of the North."

This is a new idea. It must have astonished the Convention even. South Carolina does not complain of violations of the Fugitive Slave law,—for that law is unconstitutional :—her grievance is its passage. The North has violated the Constitution in the passing of the Fugitive Slave law! This will be news to Senator MASON, of Virginia.

Mr. RHETT is undoubtedly right in saying that this secession movement has been "gathering head for thirty years." His comparison, too, is a happy one. Like all sores of a pustulous character, it was under the necessity of "gathering" and bursting : and now that it has reached this point, there is hope that it will thoroughly discharge itself and that the patient may be cured.

South Carolina was never quite healthy, on this point. But Mr. CALHOUN was the real author of secession. He planted its seeds, and died disappointed because he did not see their fruit. He tried to get the South out of the Union on the Tariff question, but failed. He immediately started the Slavery issue as one that promised better results. It was capable of being worked to better advantage. Immediately after the failure of nullification, he announced the "irrepressible conflict" on Slavery, and the residue of his life was devoted to developing it and shaping Southern sentiment upon it. Mr. RHETT is right in saying that Mr. CALHOUN's labors have not been lost or forgotten. From 1832 his disciples, in and out of South Carolina, have been watching for a favorable opportunity to secede. They have found one at last, and have ven-