

“Our government has lost its capacity for action, David. Anarchy, confusion, and bloodshed must follow; then despotism steps in to close the scene. Thus all ancient republics have fallen, and can we escape a similar fate? One remarkable fact will strike the attention in reading the history of nations, that LIBERTY can be easily *lost*, but never can be permanently *regained*.”

“That makes her, uncle, so *precious a jewel*—a jewel that can only be preserved by *eternal vigilance*. Why are not all mankind free? How came they to be otherwise? Let the response come up from England, France—nay, all the nations of the earth.”

“But one response, David, could be heard, and that would be, We were incapable of appreciating and preserving so great a blessing—so valuable a *jewel* as *liberty*. Though the confession would be derogatory to the intelligence of our race, yet it would be true. France recently had it in her power to be free—was free—but she soon bowed her neck, gentle as a lamb, under the iron yoke of Louis Napoleon. England has beheaded kings, but the work was in vain—in the end, monarchy was re-established. Rome had her commonwealth—it perished; the die was cast when Cæsar passed the Rubicon. Pompey fell, and with him liberty vanished. The usurper was slain in the Senate house, by Brutus, Cassius, and others. His death, however, did not put an end to tyranny—that endured while Rome had an existence.”

“These are historic truths, uncle, and should impress upon the minds of all the weighty responsibility of maintaining, in their vigor and purity, our Free Institutions, and transmitting them unimpaired to succeeding generations. Oh! what a rich heritage has descended to us! Shall it be said of those now living, they were incapable of its preservation? My humble aim has been to strengthen the bonds of the Union, to show its immense value to our happiness, individually and collectively, and warn my countrymen of the dangers that now environ it. If my efforts, however feeble, have had a tendency to nerve their arms in its defense, I shall retire satisfied to the sunny fields of the South, there to await, with fearful anxiety, the momentous issues of the future.”