

French Letter



Mobile Jan 13th 1861

Mrs. L. V. French-

Dear Madam-

Your very kind letter reached me yesterday and I avail myself of the earliest leisure moment to send you a reply. As regards your request that I will append my name to a "Memorial" to be presented to the Georgia State Convention, you will I trust pardon me, when candor compels the avowal, that with such a "Memorial" I have no sympathy whatever. I regret most sincerely, that on this subject, our views are so widely at variance; you have warmly expressed the Union Cause; while I, am an earnest and most uncompromising secessionist. Your predicate of "Southern Rights in the Union," I now regard as more than paradoxical; and prompt and separate state action, I believe to be the only door of escape, from the worse than Egyptian bondage of Black Republicanism. For fifteen years, we of the South, have endured insult and aggression; have ironed down our just indignation, and suffered numberless encroachments because of our devotion to the Union; because we shuddered and shrank from laying sacrilegious hands on the magnificent Temple which our fore fathers reared in proud triumph; and which has long blazed, the Pharos of the civilized world. Presuming upon this devotion, northern fanaticism has grown on Southern endurance; and not all the diplomacy, the consummate statesmanship of patriotic men of both sections has weighed one iota against the waves of Abolitionism; which have rolled rapidly on, till they threaten to pollute the sacred precincts of the "White House." The Union has become a misnomer, and rather than witness the desecration of our glorious Fane, we of the South will Sampson-like lay hold upon its pillars, and if need be, perish in it's ruins. The present attitude of the Republican Party, and the desperate and unscrupulous character of its leaders, preclude the hope of a satisfactory redress of our grievances in the Union; and since the Aegis of the Constitution has been contemptuously thrown aside, I could place no confidence in the temporary concessions, which just so soon as the storm of Secession swept by, would be cancelled as hitherto. The South asks but her sacred Constitutional Rights; these have been grossly and persistently violated; pleadings, expostulations and threats on our part, have been answered with taunts, sneers, and defiance on theirs; and promises which the present alarming crisis might possibly extort from them, would be kept with their accustomed Punic faith. I repeat it; the Union has been an Idol with us all, too long, to admit of its being struck rudely from its lofty pedestal, without sending a thrill of anguish to every true, patriotic heart; but my dear Madam, the law of "self-preservation" is imperative and as the thirteen states cut the chains of Great Britian to regain their birth right--Freedom; so we of the South sever the links that bind us to a people, who guided by the Demon of fanaticism, have insanely destroyed the noblest government, which the accumulated wisdom of centuries has ever erected. The "Memorial" which you propose to lay before the Convention of Georgia, from the "representative women of America," essays to accomplish what our ablest Statesmen have found impossible; and it is because I most earnestly deprecate as suicidal any effort to delay the dissolution of the Union, that I must decline to add my own signature. A few weeks hence, our rights would inevitably be maintained at the point of the sword; for the coercive policy of Lincoln is foreshadowed; and since the South has resolved to defend her constitutional rights at all hazards, I regard it as an economy of blood, for the fifteen states to secede as promptly as possible. As a citizen of Alabama, I am proud to be able to tell you, we have irrevocably linked our destiny with Carolina's, and if necessary will drain our veins rather than yield to the ignominious rule of Black Republicanism as a native of the Empire State of the south, my heart clings to her soil, and I look forward to the meeting of her convention, with a triumphant assurance that "knowing her rights, she dare maintain them"; and that in the palmiest days of our coming Confederacy, I shall look back to the 16th of Jan 1861 and exclaim exultingly, "I too am a Georgian." Perhaps my dear Madam you will censure my warmth on this subject; but my all is at stake. My father and my brothers belong to the garrison of Fort Morgan; day after day, I ply my needle, making sandbags for its ramparts and cartridges for its cannon; and if, (which God in his mercy forbid!) the hour arrives when Federal guns pour their fiery hail upon it, I feel that I would infinitely prefer to perish there with them, rather

than endure the horrors which hundreds of John Browns would inevitably stir up in our midst, sheltered by the protecting mantle of Lincolns Administration. Were it my privilege to address my countrymen of Georgia on the 16th I should point to the flag of Alabama, waving its magnificent folds in the balmy breezes of the Gulf, and with a serene trust in the God of Justice; say triumphantly, "let the Star of the Empire State blaze with ours along the way of Freedom. Let us conquer or perish together; delay is ruinous, suicidal--; the time has come." Such are my views regarding the vital views of the day, and having freely expressed them; you will not feel surprised that I do not comply with your request. With many and sincere thanks for your friendly feeling toward me, I am my dear Madam

Very respectfully yours-
Augusta J. Evans--