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PERSPECTIVES OF THE WASHINGTON AMERICAN.

We can hardly think it necessary to urge upon those who hold that Americans ought to rule America, the importance of having a paper at the seat of the Federal Government, which shall enunciate and advocate the doctrines of the American party.

A paper issued from any of the great centres of a nation, but especially from the political Metropolis, in the present age, not in this country only, but in Great Britain, France, and wherever there is the least freedom of discussion, is a medium through which those holding similar sentiments in regard to public affairs and public policy, may make known, discuss and defend their views, and expose the impropriety of the principles, and the impolicy of the measures of their antagonists. It should earnestly labor to give a proper direction to public opinion by enlightening the public mind.

The American is the only paper published at the seat of the Federal Government which advocates American doctrines; the only sentiment of the party stationed where a near and close view can be had of the movements and doings of their opponents at their headquarters. Here political information concentrates, and from hence it radiates to every part of the empire; here party measures and movements are determined, and political campaigns planned; here stratagems are concocted and thwarted, and here at certain seasons of the year politicians most do congregate; here, in short, is the centre of the great political maelstrom in which so many thousands are constantly plunging and forever gyrating.

If the American party is desirous of being a national party, it should not be without a paper here through which it can make known to all people its views, aims and opinions, and which shall also refute the calumnies that are from time to time uttered against it through ignorance or a less excusable motive; and we, therefore, take hope that the American, standing as it will stand upon the platform of his administration, in our political text-book and end organ; and shall be our compass and chart.

PLATFORM

Of the American Party, adopted at the session of the National Council, June 1, 1857.

1st. A humble acknowledgment to the Supreme Being, for His protection and care vouchsafed to our fathers in their successful Revolutionary struggle, and hitherto manifested to us, their descendants, in the preservation of the liberties, the independence, and the peace of the Union.

2d. The perpetuation of the Federal Union, as the palladium of our civil and religious liberties, and the only sure bulwark of American independence.

3d. Americans must rule America, and to this end native-born citizens should be selected for all State, Federal, and municipal offices or government employment, in preference to all others; and no person should be selected for political station, (whether of native or foreign birth,) who occupies any allegiance or obedience to a power, or who refuses to recognize the Federal and State constitutions (each within its sphere) as paramount to all other laws, or rules of political action.

4th. The unqualified recognition and maintenance of the reserved rights of the several States, and the cultivation of harmony and fraternal good will, between the citizens of the several States, and of the good, non-interference with the individual States, and non-intervention by each State with the affairs of any other State.

5th. The recognition of the right of the native-born and naturalized citizens of the United States, permanently residing in any Territory, to the right of franchise, and to the right of suffrage, and to the right of holding political office.

6th. A change in the laws of naturalization, making a continued residence of five years, of all not hereinbefore provided for, an indispensable requisite for citizenship hereafter, and excluding all paupers and persons convicted of crime, from landing upon any shores; but no interference with the right of foreigners.

7th. Opposition to any union between Church and State; no interference with religious faith, or worship, and no test oaths for office.

8th. Free and thorough investigation into any and all alleged abuses of public functionaries, and strict economy in public expenditures.

9th. The maintenance and enforcement of all laws constitutionally enacted, until said laws shall be repealed, or shall be declared null and void by competent judicial authority.

10th. A free and open discussion of all political principles embraced in our platform.

SPEECH

HON. JAMES F. SIMMONS,

OF RHODE ISLAND,

On the Admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution,

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

March 20, 1858.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. President, I always feel some embarrassment in attempting to address the Senate upon any question; but the importance of this, and the protracted discussion it has already undergone, make this one increasingly embarrassing. There is nothing connected with it which has not already been commented upon with so much ability that an endeavor to add more appears to be an act of temerity. I have no disposition to repeat what has been said upon the topics involved in this question of the admission of Kansas into the Union as a State, and shall therefore, find the most difficulty, in what I have to say, in trying to avoid a repetition of what has been said by others; and I should not address the Senate at all, but for the fact that the question is one of deep interest in the State I, in part, represent here; and our Legislature having passed resolutions of instruction, may expect some remarks as an accompaniment to the vote I shall give in accordance with those instructions.

I may here say, that the difficulties surrounding this question, although seemingly so threatening, are all, in my judgment, capable of a peaceful and satisfactory solution. We have only to act—as I trust all of us are disposed to do—honestly and right, and the matters can easily be settled. I can add nothing to the powerful appeals made to the Senate to do this, by the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, [Mr. CARRINGTON], and the distinguished Senator from Tennessee, [Mr. BRAY]. This question involves the American doctrine of self-government; upon which I regret to witness a diversity of opinion in this Chamber. A number of Senators on the other side only admit that the people have a right to be well governed; and to secure this, they contend that the forms of law only are to be observed and regarded; while on this side, it is contended that the people have the right to govern themselves, and that they shall enjoy this right substantially, viewing the forms of law as the means of securing that end; and that if the end be not accomplished, the forms are worthless. There is great diversity of opinion, and equal unanimity of votes, with the advocates of this measure as to the meaning of "popular sovereignty." The Senator from South Carolina [Mr. HAMMOND] denounces it as populism; or populace sovereignty, a kind of mob-law, with which he will have nothing to do.

The true doctrine upon which our institutions rest, as laid down by the Father of his Country, is, the will of the majority authentically expressed.

I ask Senators to examine all the proceedings in relation to the formation of the instrument before us, and the constitution itself, and then say, if in their judgment, there is, in the whole series of acts, a single expression of the will of the people of Kansas authentically made. There is nothing authentic about these proceedings, from the origin of the Territorial Legislature to the last act of this Kansas Convention. The fountain was corrupted at the outset, and it has sent forth nothing but bitter waters; and the sooner we dismisse it, and remit it to the people of Kansas, for settlement, under a Legislature now chosen, and admitted to be the first elected by the people of the Territory, the sooner peace will be restored to the country.

The Senator from Missouri [Mr. POLE] said that, by the first census taken in Kansas, there was a majority there from the Southern States, which showed there was no necessity for an invasion from Missouri to carry the first election, and furnished strong presumptive evidence that no such invasion was made. That Senator must recollect that Mr. (or General) Atchison, of Missouri, in a letter to the people of the Southern States, complained that the emigrants that had induced to enter Kansas from the South, when there, nearly all turned against the project of making Kansas a slave State. These emigrants were not slaveholders; and if not, although from the South, it was their interest to have Kansas free. Exciting as political questions are, they will not entirely control men, and induce them to vote against their interests; and if it be true that a majority of the first settlers were from the South, the knowledge of the fact that these very Southern emigrants were in favor of making Kansas a free Territory, may have been the occasion for the invasion; for the Missourians saw it would not answer their purpose to let even Southern emigrants settle the question for themselves.

I have listened to this protracted debate, and still am unable to see what authority this first Territorial Legislature had to take the sense of the people as to whether they wanted a State constitution or not. The Senator from South Carolina has said that this body was elected merely to organize a territorial government; all have said that it was contemplated that when there should be sufficient inhabitants they should apply for admission as a State. Does any one pretend that the act authorizing territorial governments in Kansas and Nebraska, which are said not then to have contained four hundred American citizens, the first Legislature of Kansas had any power, either by that statute, or by the common law of this country, to take steps for forming a constitution and State government at its very first session? If that Legislature had been legally chosen, it would have been an act of usurpation, on their part, thus to attempt to control the future population of that vast region, considering the few men then in it. It is insulting the common sense and understanding of the people to contend that the first band who should hop into the Territory could at once mould and determine the institutions for the future people of that Territory when there should come to be sufficient to make a State government and ask admission into the Union. I believe their proceedings began without authority; have been carried on in all stages without precedent, or authority of law; and, what is still worse, in my opinion, without the slightest intention to do right.

I know that this Lecompton constitution, establishing slavery in Kansas, is made the exciting question now in this country; but there is a question underlying this, which gives it its importance—that is, a question of power, always an angry one. It is a question whether power can be continued in the hands of the few at the expense of the many, in this country, and in defiance of the will of the many. Such a question must be an exciting one.

The question of slavery has been debated in

Congress and the country from the origin of the Government—nay, from the origin of the Revolution; never angrily, except when political power was connected with the decision. I had occasion, eleven years ago, to participate in such a debate here, although I never allude to the subject unless it is introduced by others; for, from my experience, it has not proved a profitable one of discussion in Congress, and but for that experience I should not now address the Senate.

Mr. President, when I look over this body and am unable to recognize a single individual here who was a member of it the first year of my service here, and I am taught a profitable lesson. I look again, and find but one whose service here dates prior to my own, and I turn naturally to him for counsel and for guidance.

What are the recommendations of that Senator [Mr. CHITTENDEN] to us? Do they breathe any spirit of ill-will? Do they regard this question as too difficult to be surmounted by the wisdom and patriotism of the Senate? No, sir. The course he points out is as obvious as the path at noon day; do right, that is all that is wanted. We have had difficulties from the outset on this question of slavery; but they have always been surmounted. It was brought into discussion when the Declaration of Independence was made in 1776. It was presented to the convention of Virginia, which sent delegates to the Congress of 1774; and was never presented to a Congress of the Colonies or States of the Union, without eliciting some difference of opinion, if not dissatisfaction; and yet, for more than eighty years, those difficulties have been overcome by a fraternal and liberal regard to the interests of the whole country.

The Senator from Virginia [Mr. MASON] invited me, the other day, to go back to the cause of the fathers of the Republic; and dealing with this subject in their fraternal spirit, and according to their teachings. I am willing to meet him on that ground, and to meet Senators from the South on the precise ground, to deal with the question as it has been dealt with, in a spirit of candor and frankness, with no desire to excite unkind feeling in any one. It has become envolved with difficulties, which did not originally exist. I desire the Senate to recollect the history of this controversy. It has been made to embrace some points which are contained in a recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, often referred to in this debate, as to who are citizens; and also the power of this Government over the Territories of the United States—questions which originated before the Constitution was formed, and which, in my judgment, was settled either before the Constitution was made, or when it was established.

If Senators will consult the record, they will be in no doubt as to who were made citizens, and none as to the powers of this Government in the Territories. I will read as to the first introduction of slavery into these colonies. I do not find the account to be, as stated by the Senator from Virginia, [Mr. MASON], in 1620. Mr. Jefferson, one of the fathers, says:

"The first establishment in Virginia which became permanent was made in 1607. I have found no mention made of negroes in the colony until about 1650. The first brought here as 'slaves' were by a Dutch ship; after which the English commenced the trade, and continued it until the Revolutionary war."

Mr. Jefferson is pretty good authority as to the early history of Virginia, and he says slavery was first introduced in 1650, by the Dutch. Efforts are now made to show that the trade was commenced by England, and that slavery existed by the common law. I do not know that that may be, or that it is material; but the court in the Dred Scott case say, that at

"this day it is difficult to realize the state of public opinion in relation to that unfortunate race which prevailed in the civilized and enlightened portions of the world at the time of the Declaration of Independence, and when the Constitution of the United States was framed and adopted."

They had for more than a century before been regarded as so far inferior as to have "no rights which the white man was bound to respect, and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit," &c.; that up to the time of the adoption of the Constitution this right had not been called in question, or words to that effect; and that all public acts and records are to be construed in reference to the opinions prevailing at the time they were written, and not as if written in our day, with our enlightened and humane opinions of that unfortunate race, &c.

But to return to the history of African slavery in the colonies, which was introduced into Virginia in 1650. I find in the annals of Rhode Island that in 1652 the government there passed this order:

"Whereas, there is a common course practiced amongst English men to buy negroes, to that end they may have them for servants or slaves forever; for the preventing of such practices among us, let it be ordered, that no blacke man, kind or white, being forced by covenant, bond, or otherwise, to serve any man or his assignees longer than ten years, or until they be taken in twenty-four years of age, if they be taken in under 14 from the time of their cominge within the liberties of this colonie. And at the end of terme of ten years to sett them free, as the manner is with the English servants."

That does not look much as if, by the common law of England, they were held forever.

"And that man that will not let them goe free, or shall sell them away elsewhere, to that end that they may be enslaved to others for a long time, bee or they shall forfeit to the collobie forty pounds."

I suppose that is about as early a law for the prevention of slavery as can be found upon record. The next law, I suppose, was made against the Dutch slave trade, and was in this form:

"Ordered, That all Dutchmen, except inhabitants amongst us, are prohibited to trade with the Indians in this collobie; and in case they be found to transgress herein, they shall forfeit to the collobie goods and vessel if proved; and this order to be in force two months after the date hereof; and if this case come to be tried, it shall be tried in the Generall Court of Tryalls."

The President, Mr. John Smith, is chosen Moderator of the Assembly this 20th of May, 1652.

Ordered, That the President shall give notice to the Dutch Governor of the Menadoes touching the laws of prohibition of trade with the Indians.

This legislation, (which is probably the earliest to be found on this continent to prevent slavery,) was before we had a charter from England; and I read it to show that in the earliest history of the people of England, or other commercial nations, men to hold others in slavery; that at this later day they have in England. I call attention to these old records on account of what is said here in debate by Senators, who seem to think these are new doctrines, and that to act upon them, or believe in them, is an aggression upon the South. They may be too old for reference to, and I come to the history of the times, preferred to, and I come to the acts of the fathers of the Republic. I read from a paper written by Mr. Jefferson, and laid before the Convention of Virginia in 1774, from which instructions were to be drawn for the members from that State to the Congress to be held in reference to our difficulties with Great Britain, and to petition the King:

"The abolition of domestic slavery is the great object of desire in these colonies where it is unappily introduced in their infant state. But 'previs to the enfranchisement of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa. Yet our repeated attempts to effect this, by prohibition, and by imposing duties which might amount to a prohibition, have been hitherto defeated by the Major's negative; thus preferring the immediate advantages of a few British colonies, to the lasting interests of the American States, and to the rights of human nature, deeply wounded by this infamous practice."

In this paper it is declared that the abolition of slavery is "the great object of desire in the colonies." The next paper I will call the attention of the Senate to, is the original draft of the Declaration of Independence, as reported by the committee to Congress. I refer to the clause in that instrument which, Mr. Jefferson says, "was stricken out in compliance to South Carolina and Georgia; who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who, on the contrary still wished to continue it." That stricken out was in these words:

"He has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow-citizens with the allurements of forfeiture and confiscation of our property.

"He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, capturing and carrying them into slavery in other hemispheres, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms against us, and to purchase the liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another."

It is proper to say that although this was stricken out, for the reasons assigned, its substance was declared in another form, by saying, "he has refused his assent to laws most of which would be necessary for the public good;" which may have included the one referred to by the Senator from Louisiana [Mr. BENJAMIN], as having been passed by South Carolina in 1760, for suppressing the slave trade.

At this period of our history there seems to have been a stronger feeling against slavery than at any time since the adoption of the Constitution. Not only in Congress, but in the primary assemblies of the people, were such feelings expressed, as was natural, and often declared that whereas we were about to assert our rights to liberty, it was proper to recognize and assert the right of all men to it. During the war of the Revolution, Rhode Island passed a law giving to every slave his freedom who would enlist in the service and serve for a term of three years. Many did so; and thus secured their own freedom, and that of their former owners. The court must have forgotten, or overlooked, all these facts, so prominent in our revolutionary history, or they would not have felt it necessary to put a construction upon instruments written at this period of intense love of liberty, and be compelled to restrict the application of liberal doctrines to a single class of men, when they declare if they had been written in our time, they should have considered them as embracing all classes.

I mean, however, to have no dispute with the Supreme Court, although their decision has involved this question in most of the difficulties that surround it.

I ask the attention of Senators to these facts, to show that this question of slavery, and the best means to prevent its further increase in this country, was a prominent one with the people, with their Representatives in Congress, and in the convention which framed the Constitution upon which our Government rests. In the convention there were but two States that threatened not to unite with the rest if power was given to Congress to prohibit the slave trade before 1808—the same two in compliance to whom the clause about slaves was stricken from the Declaration of Independence; but the convention was more successful than Congress was, for after they had altered the Declaration, South Carolina voted against it; and Georgia was divided, and did not vote for it; whereas, the convention, by inserting a clause in the Constitution, that Congress should not prohibit the importation of such persons as any of the States then existing should think proper to admit prior to the year 1808, induced both these States to adopt the instrument.

By inserting and adopting this clause in the Constitution, the importation of slaves was not sanctioned or authorized by the convention or people; for if the Constitution had either authorized or sanctioned it, being the supreme law, no State could have prohibited it until 1808, nor even then; for at that time, this power, which had been in abeyance, so far as Congress was concerned, became theirs to exercise, and was exercised by them, and the States ceased to have anything to do in the matter, though most of them had prohibited the traffic before Congress acted. I think, therefore, the court have used a little unsound reasoning in trying to show that the people constituted this Government to the support of slavery, by adopting this clause of the Constitution, which simply postponed the time when Congress should prevent its further increase. This post-

ponement was not readily agreed to, as I had occasion to show in a debate here eleven years ago, when this same question was before the Senate. I then read the remarks made in the convention by the distinguished ancestors of the Senator from Virginia, who urged as the other day to go back to the ways of "the fathers" upon this slavery question. Upon this demand of South Carolina and Georgia to withhold the power from Congress for twenty years, Virginia then said, by Colonel Mason:

"This infernal traffic originated in the avarice of British merchants. The British Government constantly checked the attempts of Virginia to put a stop to it. The present question concerns not the importing States alone, but the whole Union. The evil of having slaves was experienced during the late war. Had slaves been treated as they might have been by the enemy, they would have proved dangerous instruments in their hands. But their folly dealt by the slaves as it did by the Tories. He mentioned the dangerous insurrections of the slaves in Greece and Sicily; and the instructions given by Cromwell to the commissioners sent to Virginia, to arm the servants and slaves, in case other means of obtaining their submission should fail. Maryland and Virginia, he said, had already prohibited the importation of slaves expressly. North Carolina has done the same in substance. All this would be in vain if South Carolina and Georgia be at liberty to import. The Western people are already calling out for slaves for their new lands, and will fill that country with slaves, if they can get any, through South Carolina and Georgia. Slavery discourages arts and manufactures. The poor despite labor when performed by slaves. They prevent the emigration of whites, who really enrich and strengthen a country. They produce the most pernicious effects on manners. Every man's slaves is born a petty tyrant. They bring the judgment of Heaven upon a country. As nations cannot be rewarded or punished in the next world, they must be in this. By an inveterate chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins by national calamities. He lamented that some of our Eastern brethren had, as from a lust of gain, embarked in the nefarious traffic. As to the States being in possession of the right to import, this was the case with many other rights, now to be properly given up. He held it essential, in every point of view, that the general Government should have power to prevent the increase of slavery."

This argument, as well as all other extracts I have made from revolutionary documents, shows the determination of our ancestors that the "General Government should have power to prevent the increase of slavery." No arguments in this Senate, or reasoning in the court below us, can conceal these facts. The feeling against slavery, instead of being stronger now than when the Constitution was framed, as the court have argued, I think is just the reverse; for slavery has become much more profitable since the adoption of the Constitution than it was before; and interest has a powerful influence upon the minds of men, even in such questions. It is from interest that the emigrants from Southern States who are not slaveholders desire Kansas to be a free State. The slaveholder, from the same calculation of interest, wants the unencultivated lands to be withheld from the free laborers, and reserved for the profitable employment of his slaves, when, by their growth or importation, he may have sufficient slaves to cultivate them. The difference between the two classes of men is, that the free laborer is here now, and wants the land for cultivation; the slave labor is subject to all the contingencies of a distant future. The moral aspects of the question should be considered elsewhere; the Senate is not the place to discuss or decide such questions. I will say a single word in answer to the repeated charges from the other side of the Chamber, that Senators on this side are all rabid Abolitionists. I do not believe there is one here who can truthfully be called a rabid Abolitionist. I know I am not one, never was, and never expect to be, in the sense in which that term is used by Senators of the Democratic side of the Chamber.

So far as my vote in this body may contribute to affect the measures of this Government, it shall be given in the spirit of the Constitution under which we live—interfering with no questions designed to be left with the States. I believe this will best promote the happiness of all classes and races of men among us, and, while I believe that slaves are held in some States where the people would be better off without them, it is their business, and not mine. I shall not interfere with such questions myself, or act with any party who may propose such interference, if any such should ever exist.

I can see no real cause of irritation between the two sections, if those living upon the borders between the slave and free States will observe the obligations of good neighborhood in their intercourse with each other. With such a disposition to observe the obligations imposed by the Constitution, I can see no reason why the South should be annoyed with the sentiments of the people of distant States. What could the people of Rhode Island do to annoy them? They could not molest them if they would, and would not if they could. Why this denunciation of the Northern States—distant States—for any opinions they may entertain on the question of slavery? They are not responsible for the irritation which arises between the people in the immediate neighborhood of slaves. I see no disposition at home, and have seen none for thirty years, to produce irritation at the South. As to this controversy about Kansas, it is made by the South itself.

It is a suitable place to try the experiment of forcing slavery into a Territory, a country without laws, and where the only power which has a right to govern has abdicated government? For I insist, whatever may be said about "popular sovereignty" that this government has the constitutional power to govern the Territories. We may, as we have done, authorize a Territorial Legislature to participate, when a given number of inhabitants have settled there; but this Kansas-Nebraska act is the first instance in our history where power was delegated to a Legislature without reference to the population, and without control on the part of this Government over their legislation. Under the Constitution we have no right to abdicate government anywhere, if that instrument imposes upon us the duty of government. Under the Articles of Confederation nine States had a right to establish a new government, and abdicating government in the other four, if they should not adopt it and come into the Union; but when adopted, the Constitution has no provision for abdicating government anywhere within the

territorial limits over which its jurisdiction extends. You cannot constitutionally withdraw your authority from the States or the Territories. So far as that instrument imposes upon you the duties and obligations to govern, if laws exist in Territories, this Government must see them faithfully executed. They cannot place themselves or be placed by this Government beyond its jurisdiction.

Mr. President, I regret that there is a design here to make this Kansas question, not the cause, for that lies deeper, but the occasion, for a separation of these States. There are those who affect to believe that the Union is a disadvantage to them—those who have "calculated its value." This was said by the Senator from Georgia, [Mr. TOOMBS], but he did not say he had calculated its cost, for no figures can represent the cost of this Union; and, lightly as he may speak or think of it, I believe it to be worth more than its cost to the whole country, although the patriotic blood and treasure sacrificed to secure it were enough to enrich an empire. Let it be preserved; it has blessings in store for us and our posterity, if we but act according to its injunctions.

I do not propose to enlarge upon this topic; but I do say that, so far as I know the objects of those with whom I now act, they have no motive or purpose to disturb the institutions of the South, or to create any ill-feeling between the different sections of this country; and, having lived somewhat longer than most of the Senators here, I will tell them all that I will act with no party, at any time, that entertains or proposes any such measures. Sir, the warmest and closest party ties that have existed with me have been severed. I do not know where the party is to which I was proud to belong. I do not know how, or by whom, it was destroyed; but its principles will endure as long as this Government lasts. Most of the great men who upheld them have passed away; but they have left a history, and we shall leave its principles, which will yet be acted upon, to the prosperity and renown of our common country. Others may have the honors, but that will make no difference to you [Mr. SEWARD, who was in the chair] or to me.

Mr. President, I have made these references to our early records to show what were the doctrines of the fathers of the Republic. And these show conclusively that the same opinions were held by them that are now acted upon by Senators upon this side of the Chamber; and what may appear singular, they are met by the same kind of complaints and threats which have been used in this "infected district," embraced in the States of South Carolina and Georgia, from the Congress of 1776 down to the present time. These States were not suited with the Declaration of Independence as originally reported; they threatened the convention, in 1787, not to unite with the other States unless the Constitution was altered; and both instruments were altered to suit their views about slavery; and since this discussion commenced, every Senator who has spoken upon it from the four States now occupying the original territory of the two referred to, have threatened us with secession unless this question is settled to suit them; no other States seem so ready with estimates of the value of the Union, with plans for peaceable secession, and inquiries of how it is to be prevented, and extravagant estimates of the resources and power of the new Republic. Such things would be alarming, if now made for the first time; but they have been the peculiar characteristics of the same region for more than eighty years; and yet they have been going along with in some way or other, without much real danger to the Union. It is but justice to these States to say that they have furnished many patriots, many sound and able statesmen, and have been regarded as banner States, for the high quality of their distinguished men. To all these threats of secession and disunion, I have only to say that, in my judgment, we can get along better together than we can separately. It does not alter my mind about this to hear the Senator from South Carolina sound, in tones of triumph, that "cotton is king," and rules the commercial world; that the South have only to fold their arms, and all nations must come to their terms; that they need no connection with the rest of the United States, and they will interfere with the world. Well, sir, it is well to feel pleasantly, and the South is a pleasant region; they have a good country and profitable productions, and I rejoice with them at that; but this idea that a State can isolate itself and live alone, is a mistake.

I recollect to have read somewhere that a man who thinks he can get along without the rest of the world is very much mistaken; but that he who thinks the world cannot get along without him is strikingly the case with States that wish to be individuals. The Senator supposes, if they should refuse to plant cotton for three years, the throes of Europe would topple and fall. This reminds one of the tone of the English press just before our war with that country in 1812. They demonstrated that we should come to a dead lock if we undertook to get along without them; and as to maintaining a war with them, that was only ridiculous. But we fought them about three years, and were just beginning to learn the art of war, when peace was made. If we had fought them three years more it would have been little consequence to us whether we renewed our trade with her people or not; we should have made ourselves independent. I am, however, in favor of commerce, if reciprocal; but with no degrading inequality or dependence; and I have no notion of acknowledging any such relation between this country and England, or any other country, which was set up by them before 1812. I think the cotton planters are imbibing this English notion I have referred to, in supposing that their staple rules; instead of this, I think it likely, that if they stopped planting cotton for five years, instead of returning all governments and all creation, as they fancy, mankind would learn to go along without cotton; and just before everybody bowed to them, they would forget that there had ever been such a thing as cotton used for their convenience. It is within my life-time that this material has been extensively cultivated in this country. It is a very valuable crop, and ministers greatly to the profit and comfort of man; and it is because of this that the connection of the growers and workers of it is most beneficial; two customers are better than one for them. If we at the North did not consume six or seven hundred thousand bales of good annual crop, it would be difficult to find any market for this, in addition to what they now send to Europe for sale. I do not wish to see the South dependent upon one market for the sale of their great staples, and that market a for-

sign one. I watch the prices of their products as closely as they do, and appreciate their influence in our intercourse with the rest of the world; and I never have and never shall support a policy that gives to other nations a control of the market and the prices of the leading productions of this country.

It is for these reasons, as well as others, that we can do better together than we could without the aid of each other. But if our pecuniary interests were not improved by our Union, there are others which cannot be forgotten. We shall always remember the past; we shall always have the history of our revolutionary struggle, the fame of our ancestors, the prosperity, the liberty, and glory of a common country, and these are the strongest and happiest ties that bind societies and States together. Sir, I could say more of the advantages of our Union, but I do not regard it as in any immediate danger; though I regret to have one of the cords weakened by any unkind expressions.

Mr. President, much has been said of the right of the people of a State to change their constitution without regard to the provisions it contains for making such change. The President has said that if we admit Kansas under this constitution, it may be modified whenever it may suit the people of the State to do it, notwithstanding the action of the people may conflict with its provisions; and many Senators have expressed the same opinion. The Senator from Virginia [Mr. MASON] does not consent in this; nor does the Senator from South Carolina, [Mr. HAZARD]; but the Senators from Missouri give the doctrine a qualified approval, and others unreservedly approve the views of the President, as the true version of their party's creed.

There are two modes by which the people can change their constitutional form of government, which are in accordance with the American idea of popular rights: one is a constitutional mode, and is to be exercised in conformity with the provisions of their own agreement, or constitution; the other, an inherent right, not controlled by compacts or laws—a revolutionary right, which may be a peaceful one, or may come to be a right, to fight in order to reform abuses and wrongs. This last governments do not give, and cannot take away.

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. BENJAMIN] showed us the other day, by an exhibit of his researches into history and law, that the British Government had imposed slavery upon their colonies, the Old Thirteen States, against the will of the people of the colonies; and made an application of the facts to sustain the positions of the court in their reasoning in the Dred Scott case. In reference to the illegality of introducing slavery into this country, it may be admitted that the whole belonged to the mother country; and what did "the fathers" say of it? They enumerated this as among the acts of tyranny which justified revolution; and, by fair analogy, we must admit that if we impose slavery upon the people of Kansas against their will, by adopting for them this Lecompton constitution, we shall justify rebellion and revolution on their part, to rid themselves of a tyranny as odious to them as the similar crimes against liberty were, which caused the revolution of 1776. If the President refers to such a right in the people of Kansas to remedy the wrong he recommends us to inflict upon them, nobody will question the soundness of his position; but that will not excuse us for doing a deed so unreasonable and unnecessary.

In any one to gain by producing such a state of things in Kansas? Are not the people there already excited, nay, exasperated, by attempts to impose slavery upon the Territory against the will of the majority? The question has ceased to be one about slavery, and has become the more serious one of the right of a majority to govern. Can you expect a people, educated as Americans are, possibly to surrender such a right?

According to the doctrine of the Kansas-Nebraska act, as expounded by the party in the Cincinnati convention, this attempt to legalize slavery by a Territorial Legislature is clearly a usurpation. They say Congress cannot legislate upon slavery in the Territories, and the law itself says they do not intend thereby to carry slavery into the Territories, or exclude it therefrom. The power of Congress to legislate upon slavery is denied. It will not be pretended that Congress can delegate a power to a Territorial Legislature to do what it has no power to do itself. It has been said in this Chamber that slavery is not established in the States by positive enactment to that effect, but by laws protecting the owners of slaves in the right to the labor of slaves, and their control over them, &c., by just such laws as have been passed by the Territorial Legislature in Kansas. If it is by this species of legislation that slavery is established, and if without such laws it could not exist, as it appears it could not, it follows that Congress has delegated a power to the Territorial Legislature of Kansas, which, according to the doctrine of the party who did it, Congress itself could not exercise. These laws were made before they formed this constitution, which included the result of their will, and required men to swear to support it, in order to vote upon it as to whether they would have a further importation of slaves or not. No freeman would take such an oath; none should be required to take any oath to secure the right of franchise. You, sir, would not take it; I would not. I would not take one either to support this Lecompton constitution, or to do as I pleased about it.

The Senator from Missouri, who reported this bill, asked what harm there was in requiring a man to swear to support the constitution or a certain code of laws, before he was allowed to vote? I answer, it is an insult to his understanding to require it. There is no such test oath anywhere else, and there was no right to establish it in Kansas. This test existed when the vote was taken to determine whether or not they wished to form a State constitution, and from this cause this constitution with slavery is here against the will of the majority of the people of Kansas.

Sir, I believe, as the Senator from Kentucky [Mr. CHITTENDEN] has said he did, that Congress had power to prohibit slavery north of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes; and I also think that it has been made to appear by the very doctrines asserted by the court in