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EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH OF HON. C. L. VALLANDIGHAM, OF OHIO,

ON THE ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, December 15, 1859.

Allusion has been made to the present state of parties and of public sentiment in the North and West. Sir, I do not propose to speak at any length upon this subject. The events are recent, and the public man anywhere can have failed to observe them. It is folly to deny that all through the North, and in many portions of the West, distinct and very earnest sympathy has been exhibited for John Brown in his recent insurrectionary and murderous invasion of Virginia; and that, too, not by the vulgar and low, but by men very high in political, social, and religious positions. Funeral processions; halls draped in mourning; tolling of bells, sermons, eulogies, orations, public meetings, adjournment of senates and houses of representatives, and all the other usual insignia of public sorrow, bestowed only hitherto upon the great and the good, he patriots, the heroes, and martyrs of the world; all these tributes, and more, have been paid to the memory of a murderer and felon. Even in my own native State, and in a part of my own district, I lament to say that these sad evidences of a corrupted public sentiment have been exhibited. In Cleveland, fertile in revolutionary convulsions; in Akron, in Cincinnati, and elsewhere, in public assemblages and by her municipal authorities, and significant, the sympathy of thousands has been expressed. Sir, it is vain to attempt to conceal what all this means. There is a public sentiment behind it all, or it never would be tolerated. Thirty years ago John Brown, hung like a felon, would have been buried like a dog.

Allusion has been made also to the Union meetings held or to be held in the great cities of the North. Sir, I would not attach one jot or tittle from the true value, least of all from the patriotism of these assemblages. When public meetings run along with public sentiment, they are powerful to mold and to give it efficiency; but when they do not best responsive to the popular heart they are of no value. Not one single page of election returns is worth more, as an index of real public sentiment, than all the Union resolves which shall be passed between this and the 4th of March, 1861. Let no man be deceived. If the distinguished gen leman from Tennessee (Mr. Nelson) be sincere—and I know that he is—in believing that the great mass of the people of the free States are opposed to the agitation of the slavery question in any form, and are ready to strike hands with any party that will put it down forever; if he really thinks that but a very small portion of the North sympathizes with John Brown, or yield assent—or tacit and working assent—to the doctrines of William H. Seward, he "irrepressible conflict" included, full as it is of insurrection, treason and murder, if he believes that, without the strong aim of the Federal Government powerfully and in good faith sire ched forth, fugitive slaves could be recaptured in one half the free States of the Union, under any law of Congress, I can only say that he has the mild virtue of an honest heart—most marvelous credulity. Sir, I entertain for that gentleman the very highest respect, but he must allow me to say that, aside from that portion of his remarks the other day, which breathed so much of honest, sincere, and eloquent eulogy upon the Union—one such speech, blinding the eyes of the people of the free States to the real public sentiment at the South, does more thus to keep alive the flames of civil discord between the South and the North and the West, than a hundred speeches, vehement and impassioned though they may be, of the gentleman from South Carolina, (Mr. Keitt). Sir, when a member of this House, of his personal appearance and sonorous voice, of classic education, and approved rhetorical excellence, tells us with a magnificence of rythm which triumphtates through their tales, peals along these galleries, pierces the ceiling and loses itself amid the columns and the scaffolding of the unfinished dome of the Capitol, that he will shatter this Republic of the Stars, "turret to foundation stone," we are apt to understand that he is executing a grand rhetoric figure, and that he is not half so much in earnest as he would have us imagine. Sir, I speak in gentleness, nature in years, with cold logic and calm demeanor, but a sincere heart and earnest purpose, tells me, in the midst of invasion and murder—the legitimate and inevitable fruits of the "irrepressible conflict," which has been proclaimed against this own section—that he is not alarmed, and that no alarm that is intended, we only understand that he invites aggression.

Sir, I am this moment reminded by the appearance of the gentleman from Maine, (Mr. Briggs,) that I send no setter illustration of the melancholy change in public sentiment at the North within the past few years. Here is a man, the political idol of the democratic chamber, sole exemplar of the "lost politics" of the whig party, faithful among the faithless only he; sole representative of the dog of our country, military and civic, of a plurality seam. [Laughter.] Sir, does not all this mean something?

But I will pursue this subject no further. I find no pleasure in it. I have said, and I think the dullest among us cannot fail to discern it now, that there is danger, great and most imminent danger of a disruption of the Union of these States. Too many of the South desire it; and but too man of you of the North are either striving for, or reckless whether it comes or not.

Do you ask me whether the election of an anti-slavery, sectional Republican President, upon a sectional platform, pledged to admit into the Government of the republic, "slave or free," as he, for a justifiable cause of disunion? I cannot tell you. But I do tell you, as a western man, and I tell the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Nelson) that when a man of the South shall have attained the numerical power and strength in this Union, and shall have organized a southern party on a southern basis, and, under the forms of the Constitution, shall elect a southern President, for the purpose of controlling all the vast power and patronage and influence of the Government for action or non-action, for the advancement of southern interest and above all, for the purpose of extending slavery into States nowfree, with the strength of three millions of slaves in States, I will meet you as the Irish patriot would have met the invaders of Ireland—with a sword in one hand and a torch in the other; I speak sense; every inch of ground, every blade of grass, till the last intrenchment of independence shall be my grave. [Applause.] I will not wait for anybody's act. What! Do I not know that first and last the South will conquer, that steel and poison will do their work of destruction to the human system, that I shall await the slow process of expatriation even, in our half-way house of the States of this Union. Look around you. Behold upon this side of the House every section represented. Here are the United States. What Power can tear us all asunder? Sir, I shudder at the first step in disunion, but its consequence follows as inevitable as fate. One section—the North or South—will always have the majority. Disfranchise six upon the other side, and the Union could not hold together a day; it could not hold fogether upon such conditions a day. On this floor we have from the free States one hundred and forty representative, and ninety from the slave States. Suppose the relative numbers were reversed; would we submit to be denied all participation in privileges here? Nor you an mean. And should we ask for such submission from others? Never! The whig party also—gone! The true people of the North say—never."

That, sir, was good whig doctrine ten years ago. It was good American doctrine in 1850; and I ever insist, upon my responsibility as a representative, that it is good sound Democratic doctrine everywhere, and all the time.

Mr. Clerk, I am not, perhaps, so hopeful of the final result as some other men; but I was taught in my boyhood that nobler of all Roman maxims—that we must live for the republic. I was taught too by those lips at my mother and holier doctrine still—a firm belief in a overruling Providence, which governs the affairs of nations, and which, in the infinite goodness, has bestowed on the land a higher, mightier, nobler destiny than for any other country upon the world. Began Time's noblest empire in the east. Rolled the Arctic ocean to the Isthmus of Darien; from the Atlantic to the Alleghanies; stretching far and wide over the vast basin of the Mississippi, scaling the Rocky mountains, and lost at last in the blue waters of the Pacific, I behold, in holy and patriotic vision, one Union, one Constitution, one destiny. [Applause.]

But this grand and magnificent destiny cannot be fulfilled by us, except as a united people. Clouds and darkness, indeed, rest now over us; we are in the midst of perils; rocks and quicksands are before us; strife and discord are all around us. How then, sir—what, in this extremity, shall we do? Upon whom, upon the of an empire—shall we bring to this troubled and distracted country? Is its deliverer and most solemn judge? Shall we hold out the offer of escape, and that on conditions, absolute, unconditional disunion of this sectional, anti slavery, Republican party of yours. [Applause in the galleries.] Shall we place upon your heads, and upon the heads of your children, be the blood of this republic. You have organized a political party based upon sectional discriminations, and for the purpose of administrating this Government for the benefit of a part. You have neither strength nor organization, or extent even, in one half the territory of the States of this Union. Look around you. Behold upon this side of the House every section represented. Here are the United States. What Power can tear us all asunder? Sir, I shudder at the first step in disunion, but its consequence follows as inevitable as fate. One section—the North or South—will always have the majority. Disfranchise six upon the other side, and the Union could not hold together a day; it could not hold fogther upon such conditions a day. On this floor we have from the free States one hundred and forty representative, and ninety from the slave States. Suppose the relative numbers were reversed; would we submit to be denied all participation in privileges here? Nor you an mean. And should we ask for such submission from others? Never! The whig party also—gone! The true people of the North say—never."

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