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SPEECH OF A SOUTHERN DESERTER.

The people of West Tennessee should know how recreantly Emerson Etheridge has deserted the cause of the South. They can get this information from the following extracts, from his speech in the House of Representatives, January 22d. They are taken from a report of the debate of that day, published in the New-York Courier and Enquirer:

The revolution attempting to subvert the country was the most unjustifiable and unpardonable the world ever beheld, involving the most fearful consequences, and yet men all over the country are playing with the mad passions of the people, and stigmatizing those as traitors who would not participate in the revolution. He proceeded to show the madness and folly of subverting the Government to secure any right without, that may not be enjoyed in the Union. The personal liberty bills are not without excuse, but it was due to truth to express his belief that they would soon be swept from the statute books. If unconstitutional, they are void. If constitutional, there is no right to complain. As to the fugitive slave law, from the commencement of the present century till now, not a dozen slaves have been rescued from the State authorities.

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The northern people have always, and will ever be opposed to slavery, and you can make no man in the North a pro-slavery man. The strongest slavery men in the South are Yankees. They no sooner go South, than they marry a negro. [Laughter.] He begged pardon. They marry a woman with negroes, and then they talk about the rights of slaveholders.

There was not a man in his body who claims to be an abolitionist. If there is such a one he wanted to know it.

Responses from the Republican side, "Not one—not one."

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Gone in their platform denounced John Brown as the greatest of crimes. Whose party had done this? The people of the South and the North do not hate one another more than the old Whigs and Democrats used to hate each other; but will you love one another more if you separate? You will separate on paper, but the Ohio river is the only barrier to separate the hostile States.

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If, as has been said, northern people are for negro equality, that is a matter of taste. [Laughter.] But while he did not believe this, separation would change their opinion. Up to 1834, free negroes had the privilege of suffrage over certain white men in Tennessee. Who assisted in making the Constitution of that State? Andrew Jackson; and before it was amended, the latter was twice elected President of the United States. In New York, recently, a similar proposition was voted down, twenty against one. Political equality, as to white and black, existed in North Carolina twenty years ago, but did not now. *He would stand by the Government and give his northern brethren a chance to progress in political science.*

He would assent to anything—to the resolutions which he had himself a right to introduce here. *He would go for the recommendation of the select committee? Sixty-three before he would go out of the Union.* Falling in this, he would *meet the disunionists* with a torch in one hand *and a sword in the other*, and so long as the stars and stripes wave over Tennessee, he would never submit to disunion. [Applause.] He proceeded to show every slave act of Congress which has excited public notice and discussion, has been *dictated by southern statesmen* or advocated by them. In every instance where southern statesmen have demanded concessions and guarantees, *the North has been yielding everything that was demanded*, though it might be reluctantly. He referred to the acquisition of Louisiana and Florida. Many years ago, 1819, before he lived, he came in one great that the Federal Government had to purchase that territory, because the peninsula of Florida must not be in the hands of foreign powers. It cost five millions originally, fifty millions more was spent to suppress Indian hostilities, and a million more to build fortifications to guard our commerce. After all this on the part of the United States, Florida, with not half so many voters there as are in his district, and which cannot muster enough people to destroy her alligators, assumes to keep aloof from her sisters. She walks out of our Union, not only with our public lands and fortifications; that is not the worst; she leaves no prestige of the unity of the States. Why is it that Florida cannot protect herself from the alligators without the aid of the Federal Government? [Laughter.] Florida was purchased at the instance of southern men. They demanded and obtained Texas; and, in the bargain, he paid an eloquent tribute to Gen. Houston, who was now stigmatized by some as a traitor, and unfaithful to the South. The South, in 1793, got the fugitive slave law, and in 1850 obtained a more stringent one; which the Executive says has been enforced. In 1820 the Missouri compromise was passed. Southern statesmen, such as Pinckney, hailed this as a great southern triumph.

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Mr. Vallandigham asked if the gentleman's statement of the case between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States be true, ought the people of the free States to humiliate themselves by proposing any constitutional amendment, or any additional legislation?

Mr. Etheridge replied by saying so persistently have been the disagreeable sectional representations of northern men, high in position, *as to what would be the Republican policy, that the people of the South are willing to believe the lie, that they may be damned.* [Laughter.]

Mr. Vallandigham further asked whether that was a reason that they should yield what self-respect forbids.

Mr. Etheridge said it was known the people of the South are like a tempest. They were insane, and, in the language of the scripture, *he would answer fool as he would a fool, according to their folly.* If the people are misled, in the name of Heaven, would it be just to say, that they built out do what's right?

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Mr. Vallandigham inquired whether anything in the Crittenden propositions, or in the resolutions of the Select State committee, or in the recommendations in the report of the committee of thirty-three, is calculated to remove such delusions, as were spoken of, in the minds of the southern people?

Mr. Etheridge replied that men standing in the South to-day are standing surrounded by a tempest, by a fire, which feeds itself and is self-devouring. It is well known that throughout the South, where the division sentiment predominates, *it is a reign of terror.* While conventions were to assemble in Charleston, Montgomery and elsewhere, the military were being drilled while men deliberated on the fate of the empire.

Mr. Leake wanted to know where the gentleman stood—by the North or by the South?

Mr. Etheridge. I speak on the side which has few representatives. I am speaking for my country. [Applause.] *After alluding to the fearful condition of affairs in the South and the misery the military movement occasion*, he said, he would vote for any proposition that could for a moment relieve the public mind. I will, he added, return to Tennessee to resist the waves of disunion. If Tennessee goes—the worst, and I should be dragged to the fearful precipice and made an unwilling observer of my country's ruin, I will send my shroud to the disunion pedlar, which will attach to those who would overthrow the public liberty and make our country a Cassandra. I will cling to the flag of my country, with the darkest hour of her peril, and cling to it as the saint would cling to his God! [Applause.]

Tennessees, who are for resisting the rule of Black Republicanism, that they are not for their "country." They will be surprised, also, to hear a Southern man speak [for the negro-equality doctrine now advanced in the North by referring to the fact that negroes could once vote in North Carolina and Tennessee—the evil resulting from the failure to insert the word "white" after the word "free" in their old Constitution.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Exciting Day in Washington—The Virginia Conference—Col. Hayne—The President's Reply to Hayne—The Feeling in Florida—Sumter—What the President will—An Attack on Fort Sumter—The Charleston Mercury on Jefferson—The Feeling in Charleston—The Fortifications there—Gov. Pickens' Letter.

Correspondence of the Cincinnati Enquirer.]

WALLINGFORD, February 4, 1861.

This has been an exciting day in Washington. The meeting of the Virginia commissioners, exciting rumors from South Carolina and Montgomery, have kept us on the qui vive all day.

It is certainly a fact at last that Colonel Hayne has presented his letter, or ultimatum, as some are pleased to call it, to the President. Col. Hayne argues fully the question of property, contending that South Carolina desires to purchase Fort Sumter fairly and legally, and that that State has a perfect right to negotiate with the Federal Government for any of its property, and, at the same time, transmitting with his communication the resolutions of the South Carolina legislature. The President intimated to him that he has no power, either expressed or implied, to dispose of the property of the Government, as that is vested solely in Congress, to whom his application must be made. Col. Hayne is fully satisfied that the President will send his communication to Congress, without replying to him personally, and he (Hayne) will not consider the question of selling Fort Sumter, the matter would seem to end here.

No dispatches have been received from Maj. Anderson for four days past, and it is feared by some that his intercourse has been interrupted, but I doubt this.

It is rumored here that Fort Sumter has been reinforced, in spite of the vigilance of the Charleston volunteers. It is said that the soldiers taken out by the Brooklyn were secretly landed at the fort, and that it was contains some three hundred men; that the landing was effected at night, in boats with muffled oars. It will be remembered that the Charleston papers have noticed that boats had been seen silently moving about the harbor several nights in succession. But in his correspondence with Ex-President Tyler, President Buchanan expressly declared that the Brooklyn had gone, not to South Carolina, but on an errand of peace and mercy, and further assured Mr. Tyler that no reinforcements would be sent to Anderson unless he demanded them.

There every reason to believe, however, that the South Carolinians are preparing for an attack on Fort Sumter. Governor Pickens, in a letter to Governor Letcher, of Virginia, from which I quote, says: "I have written to President Lincoln, stating that unless he shall by today a satisfactory pledge to the contrary, I shall consider the peace of South Carolina as broken by the action of the Federal Government in reinforcing Fort Sumter, and I shall act accordingly.