The Burlington Free Press.

Vol XXIII.---Whole No 1179. BURLINGTON, FRIDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 15, 1850. New Series, Vol. 1---No. 33

Burlington Free Press.

Published at Burlington, Vt.,
By D. W. C. CLARKE,
Editor and Proprietor.

Terms:
To Village subscribers who receive the paper by the carrier. $2,50
If paid in advance, ... 2,00
Mail subscribers and those who take it at the Office, ... 2,00
If paid in advance, ... 1,50
ADVERTISEMENTS inserted on the customary terms

The $250 New Year's Present.

BY MRS. CAROLINE A. SOULE.

'That is he,' exclaimed Ellen Lee in a joyous tone, as the street door was gently opened and closed.

'How glad I am he has come at last; I thought it would never be two o'clock; and rising hastily, she shook an aproutul of gorgeous worsted upon the carpet, tossed her thimble in the midst of them, and was down stairs ere he whom she had been impatiently expecting, had laid aside his overcoat.

'Oh, father! father!' cried she, grasping the hands of a fine looking man and gazing earnestly at him. 'I am so glad you've come! Do you know I have been watching at the window a whole hour for you? Pray, why did you stay so long?'

'So long, Ellen! why, it's not late; the clock is only now striking.'

'Well, it has seemed an *age* since noon.'

'Two hours, an age! oh, the extravagance of these young girls!' and the parent, half-reprovingly, half-jestingly, place his fingers upon her lips.

'Now don't, father, pray don't use that word.—You know two hours do seem a long while, when one is waiting for them to pass. So now lay aside that frown, for it was only because I wanted to see you so much, *so very much*, that the hours dragged so.'

'But why want to see me so very much?'—answered he, in a bantering tone, as he suffered her to lead him into the parlor and seat him in his easy chair; 'not, I hope, to get my consent to giving away this little ——'

'Now, father, don't, don't tease; you know I am never agoing to leave you.'

Again were the fingers placed upon her lips.

'Just now, an age ment two hours; and now, never is synonymous with a year, and perhaps less, if love and business can agree. Oh, Elly! Elly! I must chide you sometimes. But tell me, why have you been so anxiously awaiting me?'

Then the daughter, nestling at his feet on a low stool, and resting her head on his knee, as she was wont to do when a little child, looked wistfully into his face, parted her lips as if to speak, and then turned aside her countenance as though she were half afraid to utter her wishes.

'You are strangely timid, Ellen. What is it you want so very much, and yet dare not ask me for? Come, let me hear it quickly; for, if my appetite deceive me not, the dinner bell will ring ere long. I never refuse you any thing reasonable, do I?'

'Oh, no, no; and that ——' she hesitated.

'Then you want something unreasonable, do you? another silk dress, ere the last has been worn a half dozen times; or ——'

'A new dress!' and the lip curled. 'No indeed. But, father,' said she, gazing into his eyes as tho' going to express some startling fact, 'do you know it is almost New Years's?'

He laughed aloud.

'Do I know it? Why, yes, I should think I did; at least I ought to; I have received billets enough to that import, this morning.'

'Billets! father; what kind pray?'

'Those that must be answered by bank notes, Elly. But tell me, did you watch an hour at the window for me, and fret another away, merely to tell me it is almost New Year?'

'Oh, no; that is only the preface to my tale; and I want to ask yet another question, before I begin the proposition. Which is the wealthiest, you or Mr. Grey?'

'What are you trying to come at, Ellen?'

'Don't you think you are as rich as he?'

'Why, yes, I guess I am. But why ask me such a question? You and Julia have not been quarrelling about you probable dowries?'

'Julia and I quarrelling—why, father!—but you jest. I'll tell you now why I've wanted to see you so much. Mr. Grey returned last evening from Boston, and he has brought Julia an elegant gold watch and chain. But she is not to wear them yet, as he intended them for a New Years present; and she only told me of it, because she wanted me to have one just like it, as we have always dressed very nearly alike ——'

'You needn't continue, Ellen I can easily guess the remainder of your story. It is only this: you want your dear father to be as generous as Mr. Grey, and give you a watch and chain for the New Year. Is it not so, daughter?' and he playfully patted her flushed cheeks. But let me see, are you old enough to wear a watch?'

'Old enough!' repeated the young girl, in a tone of surprise; and rising she drew up her graceful form to its extreme height, 'Why, father, I was eighteen last month; why I shall soon be ——'

'Old as the hills, shan't you, Ellen?' said the good-natured parent. 'But come, there is the bell; we will talk of this at dinner.'

At the table, Mrs. Lee had so much to say to her husband about some preparations for the approaching holidays, that Ellen could not, without obtruding, speak a word of the costly gift, and could only wish, in secret, that the viands were despatched and she again at her father's feet. But, alas for her! just as they were entering the parlor, he was summoned in haste to his counting-room, 'on important business.'

'Business—business—how I hate the word!' muttered Ellen, as she proceeded to her chamber. 'It's always business with men, just when their wives and daughters want them most.—I wish,'—but she checked herself, good sense whispered to her, if it were not for that business, what would become of those wives and daughters? 'But, after all,' said she to herself, when she had again found her thimble and commenced re-arranging her worsted, 'it was provoking that he should be call away so soon, when it will be so long before he will be in again. Let me see what time it is;' and she glanced at the clock on the mantel; 'half past three. four, five, six, seven—three hours and a half.—Father may laugh or frown, they will certainly seem an age.'

If it did not seem an age, it really did a very long afternoon to that excited and impatient young creature.

'I do believe my clock is wrong: indeed, I know it must be too slow,' exclaimed she, as it struck five; 'I will go down and see.'

But it was only five by the clock in the parlor; and the others told the same story.

'What sha'l I do to pass away the time! I am almost ashamed of myself for being so childish, but I cannot help it; I do so want to know whether I am to have them or not. I cannot bear this suspense. Oh, I bethink me now,' and her face brightened; 'I will run over to Julia's and look at her's again; I can then tell father all about it.'

Once closited with her friend, she forgot the hours, and was only aware they had passed, by the entrance of a domestic, summoning them to tea.

'Stop with me, won't you?' said Julia.

'Oh, no, not for the world!—pardon me, I was rude in word only; I did not mean so,—No, I must see father to-night about it. Good bye;' and she did not draw along breath till she found herself beside her parent.

'Why, what is the matter?' said he, in surprise; 'are you frightened, Ellen? You pant like a chased fawn.'

It was some moments ere she could answer; and then, with blushes and broken sentences, she told him she had hurried to talk with him about that gold watch and chain.

'You will give them to me for a New Year's present, won't you father? Now don't—playfully covering his mouth as he was about to speak—'don't this time have a long string of preliminaries. Say yes, at once.'

He shook his head.

'Well, then, begin. What is the first thing to be considered?'

'How much will it cost, Ellen; a hundred dollars?'

'A hundred dollars, father! Why, you don't suppose you could buy a handsome watch and chain for a hundred dollars! Why, Julia's cost two hundred and fifty.'

'Two hundred and fifty! Bless me; that is twice as much as I had laid aside to purchase New Year's presents for all of you. I think you are growing modest, Ellen. What is the style of Julia's present?'

'Oh, it is beautiful—exquisitely so;' and then she went on with a long and minute account of it, concluding with—'Mr. Grey says he don't think there is one in the city like it, and there was only one more just like it where he purchased Julia's; so, father, I want you to decide soon about it, so that we can send for it, if we cannot find one here.'

'Yes, yes,' answered the father, musingly; 'but Ellen, if I give you the watch and chain, I shall very soon have to give you a new breast-pin, and some new bracelets, for, as the man said in the story, the watch and chain will kill them.'

'Oh, no, indeed. I would not exchange these for any in the town. They are as beautiful as I shall ever want.'

'But of what use will this present be?'

'What use? Why, father, a great deal more use than my pin and bracelets. Indeed, I always thought I should like a watch, for the very reason that it combines utility with ornament.'

'Utility! yes, it will be very useful to you, as we have only five clocks in the house.'

'But when I am out, father.'

'Were you deaf, its utility might come in play then; but as it is, the town clocks acquaint us of the hours. And then, if it is only for the utility of the thing you desire it, why, you can have a good silver one for—'

'A silver watch on a young lady in these days! why, father, how it would look!'

'Look; ah, yes; I suspect look has a little more to do in the case than utility; and see here, Ellen, if I give you this watch for a New Year's present, I ought, in justice, to purchase for your mother those elegant silver pitchers which she has so much admired; and buy Harry the pony he has coveted so long; and George that mocking bird in the gilt cage. It would look rather partial in me, not I am sure would make you feel unpleasantly, to show to your friends a gift valued at two hundred and fifty dollars, while your mother and brothers could only exhibit those which cost five or ten dollars. Have you thought of this Elly? you are not wont to be selfish.'

'But, father, you are rich enough to buy the pitchers, poney, bird and all, even though you should give me a watch and chair. If I thought that you could only gratify my wishes at the expense of mother and brothers, I should despise myself for asking it of you. But I know you need not do so; so come, be a generous Santa Claus this time.'

'Is there nothing else you can think of, for a New Year's gift?'

'No; if I can't have these I don't wan't anything,' said she rather pettishly.

'Two hundred and fifty dollars will buy a great many things; a good many barrels of flour, and cords of wood—'

'Why, father, you talk as though you were poor. You don't expect we'll have to use any the less bread or fuel the coming year, if I have a watch?'

'Oh, no; I was not thinking of ourselves, Ellen. I had the poor upon my mind. Such sum would by a fortune to many a family in this city. How many, many comforts it would produce; how much sorrow and suffering it would relieve.'

The young girl bent her head, and was silent some time. There was a struggle going on in her heart; pride and pity were at war. Which shall conquer?

Upon the lapse of some moments, she spoke: 'But, father, were you to give to the poor not only the money which I ask you to expend for me, but even the value of the pitchers, poney, and bird, it would go quite a very little way towards relieving poverty, even in our own city. The mass would be as poorly off as ever.'

'That may be; but the reflection that I had made two or three, or even one family, comfortable, and glad, would add not a little to the pleasant memories, to the substantial happiness of my life. And then, though it would but a mite, if every one who is blessed as we are, were to do the same, there would be soon be but little misery left. Never refuse to do good, because you can do but a little. Atoms make the world.'

There was silence.

When Ellen spoke it was in a subdued voice: 'I wish I had not set my heart so upon having a watch and chain, but it seems'—and her lips trembled.

'As though it would break if you did not have them.'

'Oh, no, not quite so bad as that, father;' and she tried to smile; 'but I should feel very, very much disappointed.'

'And you really think the possession of the coveted object would make you a great deal happier?'

'Oh, yes, a thousand'—she paused, fancying she felt the fingers on her lips.

'But why would they make you so much happier, Ellen? Come, tell me that, and mayhap, if my purse is long enough, you can show as splendid a gift as Julia.'

'Why—why—you see—you know, father,' began the daughter; and then she stopped. 'I hardly know why,' said she, at length, 'but I feel that they would.'

'Well, if you cannot tell me why you would be happier with them, perhaps you can tell me why you would be sad without them. Would you have thought of such a present, if Julia had not received one?'

She did not answer.

'Come, now, be frank. Would not the greater part of your sorrow arise from the fear that Julia would eclipse you? And would not the pleasure arise more from a feeling of gratified vanity than any thing else?'

Still she made no reply; she did not even look into his face. She thought there must be a frown upon his brow; for she knew that few things were more despicable in his eyes, than the desire of making a show, or having certain things merely because others did.

'Am I not right, daughter?' said he very gently. 'You would not like to have folks wonder why Ellen Lee's father did not make her as costly a present as Mr. Grey did his.—You would not like to show your young beaux, on New Year's day, a less expensive present than here.'

'Do not go on, father, pray do't; I see I am very foolish—almost wicked; but I am so young.

'Young! I thought you were old just now, Ellen. But we have moralized long enough here; I'll warrant the tea is stone cold. A word in your ear, for I see mother is watching us very closely, to see how our talk terminates; not I suspect without some selfish thought.' He bent forward his head, and whispered something to her; when he again continued, audibly, 'and now, daughter, for a kiss and our tea.'

'A dozen, a dozen kisses, father!' cried the young creature in a tone of estacy, half smothering him with passionate embraces; forgetting all the significant reproofs she had just received, in the excitement begotten by the hope of soon gratified wishes.'

'Oh, I am so happy now, so very happy;' and she sank upon a sofa, buried her head in its cushions, and dreamed away the evening hours in golden fancies, seeming—even her father said so—to be imbued with the very spirit of happiness.

The illusion lasted till she had sought her chamber, and laid her head upon her pillow.—But as her heart prepared to commune with holy things, she realized that it was excitement, not happiness, which thrilled her. She could not conceal from herself the truth that she had desired the watch and chain, not half so much as a gift to be treasured in after years as coming from a father's hand, as to gratify a feeling of vanity; and she felt the surmise was too true, that the pain of disappointment would arise chiefly from the mortification of being outdone by a companion. She began to wonder, too, what her father would have given her for a present if she had not teased him for this one, acknowledging it would have been much better to have received a free-will offering, than what she feared he would no give against his judgment. He was always generous to his family; never gave them a mean present; and he had even said to her that he had appropriated over a hundred dollars for their New Year gifts. But now,—why, how much these holidays will cost him,' she said; and began to calculate: but ceased when she had added the price of the watch and pitchers, and mused again, 'But then, he's rich enough,' murmured she after a while, and, stifling her conscience, closed her eyes and tried to slumber. But the words of her father, '*I was thinking of the poor,*' would recur to her mind. She knew him to be very charitable; and she knew, also, that if he were rich, his position brought with it many and heavy expenses. Besides, there was a limit to his wealth, for he was very far from being a millionaire. Perhaps if he made *his* family such expensive New Year gifts, many *poor* families would suffer, who otherwise would have received aid from his purse.

She had a kind, noble heart, and though vanity might reign in it for a time, with calm tho't its crown would ever tremble. It was long ere she slept that night; and when at length she did, gold watches, and ragged children, brilliant chains and pale-faced men and women, were blended in strange confusion.

(*To be Continued.*)

The Great Disaster in New York.

On Monday Morning, the 4th inst., as the readers of our daily paper have already learned, an explosion of a steam boiler occurred in Hague Street, New York, causing a dreadful destruction of life. The N. Y. *Courier and Enquirer* of Tuesday morning says:—

The most fatal disaster which has ever occurred in this city, happened yesterday morning, at the Machine Shop of Messrs. ALVAH B. TAYLOR & Co., No. 3, Hague street, between Pearl and Cliff streets. The building was a substantial brick structure, five stories in height. The first and second stories were occupied by the machine and press making establishment of A. B. TAYLOR & Co., and the other stories by Messrs. BURR & Co., hat body manufacturers. In the basement of the building was a steam boiler, belonging to Messrs. TAYLOR, and used for driving the machinery employed in their business. This boiler exploded at 15 minutes before eight, yesterday morning, with a load report, which was heard at a dissance of a third of a mile. The report was followed in a few seconds by a rumbling sound, caused by the fall of the building. So tremendous was the force of the explosion that the building was raised entirely from its foundations, and fell upon the spot were it had stood—very little of the rubbish falling into the street. The adjoining building of Messrs. W. HULL & SON—substantial and with walls of immense thickness—was severely shaken by the explosion, and the walls have bulged out perceptibly.

The alarm of fire was at once given,—for the mass of ruins had instantly ignited—and the firemen resorted to the spot with their usual alacrity.

And now a scene was presented which cannot be imagined by those who did not witness it. Buried beneath these burning ruins were scores of men, many of them still living. The flames were rapidly extending,—while the application of water in sufficient quantities to check them, was prevented by the consideration, that the water might prove fatal to those who might escape the ravages of the fire. The temprature of the atmosphere was exceedingly low,—the day being one of the coldest of the season—with the thermometer at 18, and added greatly to the agony of the sufferers. Indeed, it will be seen by the inquest, that in the opinion of the physicians, the cold had proved fatal to one of the unfortunate men.

There was a very large body of workmen employed in this building, the greater portion of them (probably over a hundred) had entered the fatal walls previous to the explosion. The number of killed is variously estimated at from 60 to 100! The *Express* of Tuesday says:—

The ruins in the course of to-day surely must be sufficiently cleared away to bring to light the remains of those who, there is too much reason to believe, are buried there in greater numbers than we dare at this writing to estimate.

THE PUBLIC LANDS.—From the report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office it appears that during the past year, upwards of six millions of acres of land were advertised for sale, and more than six and a half millions are prepared for market, a great part of which will be proclaimed during the ensuing year. The report shows that the quantity of land disposed of in 1847, by warrants equivalent to cash, amounts to $3,696,254 08, and in 1848, to $5,482 814 26. In the first three months of 1848, it amounted to $3,937 160 39, and in the first three months, of 1849, it amounted to $1,297,737 26; showing that the increase in the amount of land disposed of keeps pace with the increased population.—*N. Y. Farmer & Mechanic.*

SPEECH OF MR. PHELPS, OF VERMONT, ON THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY, &C.

IN THE U. S. SENATE, JANUARY 23, 1850.

The Senate having resumed the consideration of the motion to print the resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of Vermont on the Subject of Slavery, which were some time since presented by Mr. UPHAM—

Mr. PHELPS. After the few remarks which I made the other day, I entertained the hope that I should not find myself under the necessity at present of participating any further in the debate on tais question. But, sir, after what has fallen from the other side of this chamber, I feel it due to myself, and due to the State which I in part represent, to offer some further remarks in vindication of my course and their course.

Sir, I have been called upon to 'face the music.' I have no disposition, Mr. President, to avoid the "facing" of any "music;" but I must be allowed to say, sir, that I think we have some very bad "music" on this floor. I have been called upon, sir, to meet the issue. I make no issue here which I am not prepared to meet, and I trust my constituents will make no issue here which I am not prepared to meet. Nay, sir, I am prepared to meet the approaching issue, pregnant as it is with consequences to this country.

Sir, it has been said by gentlemen on the other side of this chamber that this great issue was forced upon them. It has not, however, been forced upon them by the officiousness of any portion of this country; it is an issue which has forced itself upon us, an issue which has come here uninvited and unwelcome. It presents itself as one of that train of consequences which many of us foresaw and resisted. It comes here as the consequence—the necessary consequence—of a train of measures which I for one have resisted from the outset. It is one of the fruits of that spirit of aggrandizement, and conquest, and military acquisition, which seems to have infected and infatuated every republican Government. Sir, it is one of the fruits of our Mexican war—the fruits of that policy which originated in the disposition to extend the area of our power, but which carries in its train the element which may in the end dissolve this republic. Sir, I am not surprised at this issue. It is what I have long anticipated; it is an issue which we cannot avoid; and here, sir, lies its difficulty and its danger—it is a question to be settled; but *how* settled no man on this floor now can anticipate.

Sir, in approaching this question, I am not forgetful of the pledge which I gave the Senate on a former occasion, that I should approach it coolly, deliberately, and with feelings of conciliation; that I should approach it with an ardent attachment to the constitution and to the Union. Sir, I shall not be diverted from this determination, whatever may be the tenor or the temper of the debate. It is true that there are many considerations, some of them of great magnitude, pressing upon me not to depart in the least from what I consider a cool, and dispassionate, and rational consideration of this question.

Sir, we are all attached to the Union; we all value the harmony and stability of that Union; and no topic which tends to endanger either, should, in my judgment, be discussed here in anger.

Sir, these professions may be doubted. My professions the other day seemed not to have carried with them the most implicit confidence on the part of some gentlemen. Sir, if proof were wanting of the sincerity of my professions on this subject, it is to be found in the history of my public life. There are passages, Mr. President, in that life here which Senators ought not to have forgotten. It is but a few months since, in the situation where I now stand, I advocated the measure alluded to by the honorable Senator from South Carolina. I allude to the territorial bill reported by the select committee, commonly called the Clayton compromise. The honorable Senator from South Carolina the other day pronounced that bill satisfactory to the South. His expression was, that it was "framed to save the honor of the South." I sustained that bill; and under what circumstances? Sir, I knew from the outset the position I was about to take in consenting to be a member of that committee. I knew that it was no enviable but a perilous position. I knew well the difficulty of reconciling the excited feelings of different sections of this country; I was not ignorant of the danger of any concession with a view to compromise. I knew, sir, the temper of the people of different sections of this Union, and that every concession on either side, however small, would be viewed with extreme jealousy. Sir, I might have avoided this position; I might have gone further, and when the bill was reported I might have consulted my own popularity by going with my friends of the North, and in following the crowd in denouncing the creature of our own creation. Sir, it was not unanticipated that, in consequence of my course upon that bill, my name should be associated with terms of reproach; that opprobrium, personality, and, sir, I may add, personal insult should be cast upon me. But, sir, I trust that I was influenced by higher and better motives than the mere love of popularity. I had a duty to perform here; I desired to see this troublesome and dangerous question settled; and, in the discharge of that duty, I came boldly to the vindication of that bill, while it was denounced by the almost unanimous voice of the North, and I may add by the almost unanimous voice of my own constituency. I stood alone of all the people of the North; I followed the dictates of my own judgment; and I can say in all sincerity that judgment is now what it was then.

Sir, I regret that the bill did not pass, and I believe the country will yet regret it. I was willing, if necessary, to make myself a sacrifice in order to attain the great object of harmonizing this Union and of putting an end forever to the question which now agitates and alarms us. If that object could have been attained by the sacrifice of my public pretensions, I would have considered the object very cheaply purchased. Sir, when gentlemen from other sections of this Union, when gentlemen from the South, will place themselves in the gap between the excited feelings of their constituents and the harmony of this Union—when they, disregarding the excitement of the moment, will breast themselves to the storm of popular prejudice, hazarding their popularity and their good name with an excited constituency, I promise those gentlemen I will never do them the injustice to doubt the sincerity of their professions.

I will pursue this subject no further. My object is to satisfy the Senate, that in what I have said in relation to the cultivation of a harmonious spirit, whatever professions I have made of a disposition to harmonize the different sections of this Union, and settle forever this troublesome question, my sincerity is proved by the course I have heretofore taken in my action on this floor.

Sir, one object I have in addressing the Senate on the present occasion, is to vindicate the resolutions presented here from the State which I in part represent. Those resolutions have been the object of no very conciliatory comment. Almost every epithet in the whole category of opprobium has been bestowed on them. Sir, I believe I can vindicate these resolutions, before the Senate and before the world. They have been, sir, misconceived here, and most grossly misrepresented elsewhere. They have been pronounced on this floor offensive, violent opprobious, vituperative, unjust, insulting, treasonable, and untrue. Sir, if there is any thing left in the category of opprobium not bestowed upon them, it may well be regarded as surplusage.

Let me revert to the resolutions themselves. I have said that they have been mis-construed. Sir, if they have not been most egregiously misconstrued, I have not the capacity to judge.—They are drawn not, perhaps, as skilfully as they ought to be. The language is perhaps not precisely what others would have employed to express the same sentiments. I will read them The first resolution asserts—

"That slavery is a crime against humanity and a sore evil in the body politic, that was exposed by the framers of the Federal Constitution as a crime entailed upon the country by their predecessors, and tolerated as a thing of inexorable necessity."

The other day I took the liberty of remarking that the sentiment here expressed was the general sentiment of the civilized world. In making this remark I really regarded it as a trite common place. It seems, however, to have been received as offensive, and was so considered, probably, because the resolutions themselves were considered to convey an offensive imputation. Sir, when I made the remark, I considered that these resolutions cast no imputation on any portion of this Union. I regarded the resolutions as merely expressing an abstract opinion, directly implicating nobody; and having this view of their purport, I felt at liberty to endorse them, although if I had regarded the resolution as containing an offensive imputation on any portion of the Union I should probably have avoided the expression. But these resolutions merely express an abstract opinion. What is it? That slavery is a crime, or, if you please, an offence against humanity. Whom does this implicate? Upon whom is censure cast? Upon those, and those only, who participate in the offence and are responsible for the crime, if there be a crime. If criminality is imputed to any one in particular, it is by inference only. What, sir, have you, and what I heard, from our childhood, on this subject? We have all heard and felt the force of the vindication of the South on this subject. Originating as it may, the continuance of this institution has been vindicated by gentlemen of the South: first, on the ground that they are not responsible for its origin; and, second, on the ground that its existence being a matter of inexorable necessity, they are not responsible for that continuance. Sir, this language has been used every where. I have not only heard it, but I have used this language myself among my own constituents, in excuse, if you please, or in vindication (if you please to use the term) of the people of the South for their participation in this institution.

I repeat, we all felt the force of the argument.—Let it be an offence if you please; those who brought it into the country are responsible, those who participate in it are responsible for its continuance when its abolition can be made consistent with their safety.—I have ever felt the force of this argument. And what say the resolutions? They express the opinion that the institution is an offence against humanity. —They proceed further to furnish the vindication which the South have always urged for themselves, the fact that the institution was entailed upon them by those who had gone before them, and that its continuance with them rests upon inexorable necessity. Now, sir, having this view of the resolutions, finding they presented at the same moment in which they branded the institution as a crime, the excuse or exculpation of the South, I could not regard the sentiment as an imputation upon them. It was with this view that I hazarded the remark which I then considered and now consider rather as a common place one, without the slightest idea it could give offence to any one.

But, sir, does the assertion need proof? Does the opinion that the institution is inconsistent with the dictates of humanity need proof?

Sir, what has been the opinion, and what is now the opinion of the civilized world? What has been the language of the ablest and the best men of the South? What language have they held, and what has the civilized world at large said and done on this subject? Why, sir, if we look abroad we find the opinion of the civilized nations of Europe expressed by their acts. Great Britain has put an end to the institution: France demolished it at a single blow.—One of the first acts of the French Republic—I speak of it as it is existing now—was the abolition of this institution totally, universally, absolutely, without reservation and without qualification, throughout her dominions. Sir, how, did we feel, and how did this Senate act in regard to that matter? Have gentlemen forgotten the resolutions of congratulation, and sympathy, and approbation which were transmitted from this body to France immediately after her late revolution? And have gentlemen forgotten the remark which I thought proper to make on that occasion, when we were expressing our gratification that, among the first acts of the new Government with whom we were sympathizing, and to whom we were extending our congratulations, was the absolute and unqualified execution of a measure about which my humble constituents were not even permitted to talk? Yes, sir, the axe was put to the root of the institution. It was done boldly, promptly, decisively; and yet, at the moment when we were thus expressing our sympathies and extending our congratulations, the subject when presented here from a constituency represented on this floor, was laid upon the table upon the question of reception. Now, sir, I find no fault with that disposition of the subject, so long as it is brought here by the officious fanaticism of people who had better let it alone. So long as it is the mere topic of demagogueism and popular excitement, I care not, if it is presented here in that spirit, if it is put *under* your table. But the subject presents itself now in a different spirit—it comes to us, as I have already remarked, uninvited and unwelcome. It is an intruder upon us; but even though it is an intruder, it must be received for we cannot get rid of it. The issue is made in respect to these territories in reference to this institution, and it cannot be evaded. It must be met, and it must be decided, for it is impossible to avoid it.—Under these circumstances it is the right of every State and of any State in this Union to express its sentiments upon this engrossing subject. It is the right and duty, in this aspect of the question, for every State to express not only its opinion as to the propriety of extending this institution to our territories, but its opinion of the institution itself.

But if I was not right in the remark I dropped the other day with reference to the views and opinions of the civilized world—with the exception perhaps of a small portion of it in which the institution exists—if I am in error, let gentlemen point to me some spot in the civilized world where the institution does not now exist and where that civilized people demand its introduction. Sir, who desires it? When and where, in what portion of the globe do you find an earnest wish expressed for its introduction where it has not heretofore existed? What now is the sentiment of the people of all these Territories? What was the sentiment of Oregon, and what is the sentiment of California? She has presented us here a constitution, in which the people have attempted to prohibit the institution.—But, sir, I need not go abroad for material to vindicate my expression; I may appeal to the expressed opinions of the ablest and the best men of the South—the ablest and the best men whom this country has ever produced. What were the opinions of Washington, of Madison, and of Jefferson?

Sir, gentlemen seem to have forgotten the expressive language of these men, when they regard the expression of similar sentiments in these resolutions as offensive to the South. Sir, let me advert to some of the opinions of Thomas Jefferson on this subject, and let me at the same time advert to the course of Virginia herself in relation to the introduction of this institution. Mr. Jefferson tells us:

"During the regal Government we had at one time obtained a law which imposed such a duty on the importation of slaves as amounted nearly to a prohibition, when one monopolizate Assembly, placed under a peculiarity of circumstances, repealed the law. This repeal met a positive rejection from the then Sovereign, and to deter the expedients which could ever after be attempted by subsequent Assemblies—and they seldom met without attempting them—could succeed in getting the royal assent to a renewal of the duty. In the very first session held under the republican Government, the Assembly passed a law for the perpetual prohibition of the importation of slaves. This will at some measure stop the increase of this great political and moral evil, while the minds of our citizens may be ripened for a complete emancipation of human nature.—[Notes on Virginia, pp. 161, 162.

Sir, the sentiments here expressed are the sentiments this day of the free States, and if an apology be necessary on their part for their expression here, it is to be found in the fact that the language is that of a distinguished statesman and patriot of the South. Mr. Jefferson says further:—

"And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever."—[Same, p. 200.

Why tremble? If slavery be no sin and no crime, why tremble at the reflection "that God is just?" Such the language when it was uttered, was the language of the patriot and the statesman. It was the language of a man more prominent as a Southern statesman than any other man who ever existed in that quarter of the Union. But this language, then considered as the language of the philosopher, the patriot, and the statesman, has now become "*fanaticism.*" Transplanted from the soil of Virginia to the free soil of the North, these sentiments, which at one time did honor to the head and the heart of the author, have now degenerated into "*fanaticism.*" This probably is an illustration of what the Senator from Michigan (Mr. Cass) calls the progress of the age—of progress in morality and political ethics. The sentiments thus uttered in the very heart of the country where this institution exists—uttered by Mr. Jefferson with the approbation of his own country, his own people, and of the world—when repeated by my humble constituency, in less pointed and less vigorous terms, become "*fanaticism!*"

What have we done here? What sort of brand has Congress put upon this institution? Sir, at the very outset of our legislation, the subject of the slave trade was taken up. As early as 1794, although the importation into this country could not then be prohibited under the constitution, laws were passed against carrying on the foreign slave trade, with the severest penalties attached to their violation. As early as May, 1800, another act was passed involving the forfeiture of all vessels built and equipped for the purpose, and all persons employed in the business on board those ships were made liable to a penalty of $2,000, and imprisonment for two years. In March, 1807, an act was passed prohibiting the introduction of slaves into the country after the first of January, 1808. The law also provided that all vessels built and equipped for that purpose should be forfeited, and the penalty of the persons engaged in fitting out such vessels was fixed at a fine of $20,000. The penalty for the importation of the slaves into the country was imprisonment for not more than ten nor less than five years, and a fine of not more than $10,000 nor less than $1,000. The act of 1818 was a similar one. In May, 1820, the traffic was pronounced piracy, and punished with death. Now, sir, is this traffic, which you denominate piracy and punish with death, to be denominated a crime or not? The expression in this resolution assumes that it is a crime. If it is no crime, why pronounce it piracy and punish it with death? Sir, I am aware that these penalties are directed against the slave trade, and that it is the *importation* of slaves which has been made the object of the stringent and severe penalties; but is not the institution itself a perpetuation of the offence against humanity? It originated at the outset in what you deem piracy, and, however long it may continue, it partakes still of the character of its origin. It is of the blood of its own lineage.

Sir, the present generation may not be responsible for its origin—it may be an evil which they cannot remedy. But, sir, do these considerations render the institution less oppressive, or more consistent with the dictates of humanity?

This is not all, Mr. President. In our treaty with Great Britain, ratified in 1842, we stipulated to employ a force on the coast of Africa for the suppression of this slave trade, and further, the parties to that treaty engaged to exert their influence with nations still permitting the traffic, to put an end to it, by closing their markets. It was thought to be the best mode of discouraging this disgusting traffic to close the markets. What do my constituency now propose? They propose not to open new markets in territories where the institution does not now exist, for the future encouragement of a traffic which the almost entire civilized world has combined to suppress.

Sir, are not the cases parrallel? If we are justified in putting an end to this traffic; if we are justified in endeavoring to close the market in other countries, how can we be justified in opening these immense territories, that have been conquered by our valor, as a new market for the introduction of this species of property?

Mr. President, the second resolution has, if possible, been more misconceived than the first. It has been asserted here, and it has been asserted elsewhere, that the second resolution claims a right in Congress to interfere with the institutions of the various States. Sir, the resolution claims no such right. It will bear no such construction. It is not a substitution of one expression for another, by which such a construction can be fixed upon. What is the language of the resolution?

"That the so called 'compromises of the Constitution' restrained the Federal Government from interference with slavery only in the States in which it then existed, and from interference with the slave trade only for a limited time, which has long since expired."

Now, it is to be remarked that the word restrained is used in the past tense; it is used in reference to the effect and operation of the Constitution at the time it was adopted. Well, sir, is not the assertion true? If the compromises of the constitution, which restricted Congress in relation to this subject, restricted them in relation to other territories than the States where it then existed, I desire to be informed where that territory is; for at this time we had but