THE NATIONAL ERA.

G. BAILEY, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR; JOHN G. WHITTIER, CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

VOL. IV.—NO. 11. WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1850. WHOLE NO. 167.

The National Era is Published Weekly, on Seventh Street, opposite Odd Fellows' Hall.

TERMS.

Two dollars per annum, *payable in advance.*

Advertisements not exceeding ten lines inserted three times for one dollar; every subsequent insertion, twenty-five cents.

All communications to the *Era*, whether on business of the paper or for publication, should be addressed to G. BAILEY, *Washington, D. C.*

BUELL & BLANCHARD, PRINTERS.

THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, MARCH 14, 1850.

SPEECH OF JOHN C. CALHOUN.

IN SENATE, MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1850.

THE DANGER TO THE UNION—ITS NATURE, CAUSES, AND REMEDY.

[CONCLUDED.]

What has since followed are but the natural consequences. With the success of their first movement, this small fanatical party began to acquire strength; and with that, to become an object of courtship to both the great parties. The necessary consequence was, a further increase of power, and a gradual tainting of the opinions of both of the other parties with their doctrines, until the infection has extended over both; and the great mass of the population of the North, who, whatever may be their opinion of the original Abolition party, which still preserves its distinctive organization, hardly ever fail, when it comes to acting, to co-operate in carrying out their measures. With the increase of their influence, they extended the sphere of their action. In a short time after the commencement of their first movement, they had acquired sufficient influence to induce the Legislatures of most of the Northern States to pass acts, which in effect abrogated the provision of the Constitution that provides for the delivery up of fugitive slaves. Not long after, petitions followed to abolish slavery in forts, magazines, and dock yards, and all other places where Congress had exclusive power of legislation. This was followed by petitions and resolutions of Legislatures of the Northern States and popular meetings, to exclude the Southern States from all Territories acquired, or to be acquired, and to prevent the admission of any State hereafter into the Union, which, by its Constitution, does not prohibit slavery. And Congress is invoked to do all this expressly with the view to the final abolition of slavery in the States. That has been avowed to be the ultimate object from the beginning of the agitation until the present time; and yet the great body of both parties of the North, with the full knowledge of the fact, although disavowing the Abolitionists, have co-operated with them in almost all their measures.

Such is a brief history of the agitation, as far as it has yet advanced. Now I ask, Senators, what is there to prevent its further progress, until it fulfils the ultimate end proposed, unless some decisive measure should be adopted to prevent it? Has any one of the causes, which has added to its increase from its original small and contemptible beginning until it has attained its present magnitude, diminished in force? Is the original cause of the movement, that slavery is a sin, and ought to be suppressed, weaker now than at the commencement? Or is the Abolition party less numerous or influential, or have they less influence over, or control over the two great parties of the North in elections? Or has the South greater means of influencing or controlling the movements of this Government now, than it had when the agitation commenced? To all these questions but one answer can be given: no, no, no. The very reverse is true. Instead of being weaker, all the elements in favor of agitation are stronger now than they were in 1835, when it first commenced, while all the elements of influence on the part of the South are weaker. Unless something decisive is done, I again ask, what is to stop this agitation, before the great and final object at which it aims—the abolition of slavery in the States—is consummated? Is it, then, not certain that if something decisive is not now done to arrest it, the South will be forced to choose between abolition and secession? Indeed, as events are now moving, it will not require the South to secede to dissolve the Union. Agitation will of itself effect it, of which its past history furnishes abundant proof, as I shall next proceed to show.

It is a great mistake to suppose that disunion can be effected by a single blow. The cords which bound these States together in one common Union are far too numerous and powerful for that. Disunion must be the work of time. It is only through a long process, and successively, that the cords can be snapped, until the whole fabric falls asunder. Already the agitation of the slavery question has snapped some of the most important, and has greatly weakened all the others, as I shall proceed to show.

The cords that bind the States together are not only many, but various in character. Some are spiritual or ecclesiastical; some political; others social. Some appertain to the benefit conferred by the Union, and others to the feeling of duty and obligation.

The strongest of those of a spiritual and ecclesiastical nature consisted in the unity of the great religious denominations, all of which originally embraced the whole Union. All these denominations, with the exception, perhaps, of the Catholics, were organized very much upon the principles of our political institutions; beginning with smaller meetings corresponding with the political divisions of the country, their organization terminated in one great central assemblage, corresponding very much with the character of Congress. At these meetings the principal clergymen and lay members of the respective denominations from all parts of the Union met to transact business relating to their common concerns. It was not confined to what appertained to the doctrines and discipline of the respective denominations, but extended to plans for disseminating the Bible, establishing missionaries, distributing tracts, and of establishing presses for the publication of tracts, newspapers, and periodicals, with a view of diffusing religious information, and for the support of the doctrines and creeds of the denomination. All this combined contributed greatly to strengthen the bonds of the Union. The strong ties which held each denomination together formed a strong cord to hold the whole Union together; but, as powerful as they were, they have not been able to resist the explosive effect of slavery agitation.

The first of these cords which snapped, under its explosive force, was that of the powerful Methodist Episcopal Church. The numerous and strong ties which held it together are all broke, and its unity gone. They now form separate churches; and instead of that feeling of attachment and devotion to the interests of the whole church which was formerly felt, they are now arrayed into two hostile bodies, engaged in litigation about what was formerly their common property.

The next cord that snapped was that of the Baptists, one of the largest and most respectable of the denominations. That of the Presbyterians is not entirely snapped, but some of its strands have given away. That of the Episcopal Church is the only one of the four great Protestant denominations which remains unbroken and entire.

The strongest cord, of a political character, consists of the many and strong ties that have held together the two great parties which have, with some modifications, existed from the beginning of the Government. They both extended to every portion of the Union, and strongly contributed to hold all its parts together. But this powerful cord has fared no better than the spiritual. It resisted for a long time the explosive tendency of the agitation, but has finally snapped under its force—if not entirely, in a great measure. Nor is there one of the remaining cords which has not been greatly weakened. To this extent the Union has already been destroyed by agitation, in the only way it can be, by snapping asunder and weakening the cords which bind it together.

If the agitation goes on, the same force, acting with increased intensity, as has been shown, will finally snap every cord, when nothing will be left to hold the States together except force. But, surely, that can with no propriety of language be called a Union, when the only means by which the weaker is held connected with the stronger portion, is *force*. It may, indeed, keep them connected; but the connection will partake much more of the character of subjugation, on the part of the weaker to the stronger, than the union of free, independent, and sovereign States, in one confederation, as they stood in the early stages of the Government, and which only is worthy of the sacred name of Union.

Having now, Senators, explained what it is that endangers the Union, and traced it to its cause, and explained its nature and character, the question again recurs—How can the Union be saved? To this I answer, there is but one way by which it can be; and that is by adopting such measures as will satisfy the States belonging to the Southern section that they can remain in the Union consistently with their honor and their safety. There is, again, only one way by which that can be effected; and that is by removing the causes by which this belief has been produced. Do *that*, and discontent will cease, harmony and kind feelings between the sections be restored, and every apprehension of danger to the Union removed. The question, then, is—By what can this be done? But, before I undertake to answer this question, I propose to show by what the Union cannot be saved.

It cannot, then, be saved by eulogies on the Union, however splendid or numerous. The cry of "Union! Union! the glorious Union!" can no more prevent disunion than the cry of "Health! health! glorious health!" on the part of the physician, can save a patient lying dangerously ill. So long as the Union, instead of being regarded as a protector, is regarded in the opposite character, by not much less than a majority of the States, it will be in vain to attempt to conciliate them by pronouncing eulogies on it.

Besides, this cry of Union comes commonly from those who we cannot believe to be sincere. It usually comes from our assailants. But we cannot believe them to be sincere; for, if they loved the Union, they would necessarily be devoted to the Constitution. It made the Union, and to destroy the Constitution would be to destroy the Union. But the only reliable and certain evidence of devotion to the Constitution is, to abstain, on the one hand, from violating it, and to repel, on the other, all attempts to violate it. It is only by faithfully performing these high duties that the Constitution can be preserved, and with it the Union.

But how stands the profession of devotion to the Union by our assailants, when brought to the test? Have they abstained from violating the Constitution? Let the many acts passed by the Northern States to set aside and annul the clause of the Constitution providing for the delivery up of fugitive slaves answer. I cite this, not that it is the only instance, (for there are many others,) but because the violation in this particular is too notorious and palpable to be denied. Again: Have they stood forth faithfully to repel violations of the Constitution? Let their course in reference to the agitation of the slavery question, which was commenced and has been carried on for fifteen years, avowedly for the purpose of abolishing slavery in the States—an object all acknowledge to be unconstitutional—answer. Let them show a single instance, during this long period, in which they have denounced the agitators or their attempts to effect what is admitted to be unconstitutional, or a single measure which they have brought forward for that purpose. How can we, with all these facts before us, believe that they are sincere in their profession of devotion to the Union, or avoid believing their profession is but intended to increase the vigor of their assaults and to weaken the force of our resistance?

Nor can we regard the profession of devotion to the Union on the part of those who are not our assailants, as sincere, when they pronounce eulogies upon the Union, evidently with the intent of charging us with disunion, without uttering one word of denunciation against our assailants. If friends of the Union, their course should be to unite with us in repelling these assaults, and denouncing the authors as enemies of the Union. Why they avoid this, and pursue the course they do, it is for them to explain.

Nor can the Union be saved by invoking the name of the illustrious Southerner whose mortal remains repose on the western bank of the Potomac. He was one of us—a slaveholder and a planter. We have studied his history, and find nothing in it to justify submission to wrong. On the contrary, his great fame rests on the solid foundation, that, while he was careful to avoid doing wrong to others, he was prompt and decided in repelling wrong. I trust that, in this respect, we profited by his example.

Nor can we find anything in his history to deter us from seceding from the Union, should it fail to fulfil the objects for which it was instituted, by being permanently and hopelessly converted into the means of oppressing instead of protecting us. On the contrary, we find much in his example to encourage us, should we be forced to the extremity of deciding between submission and disunion.

There existed then, as well as now, a union—that between parent country and her then colonies. It was a union that had much to endear it to the people of the colonies. Under its protecting and superintending care, the colonies were planted and grew up and prospered, through a long course of years, until they became populous and wealthy. Its benefits were not limited to them. Their extensive agricultural and other productions gave birth to a flourishing commerce, which richly rewarded the parent country for the trouble and expense of establishing and protecting them. Washington was born and grew up to manhood under that union. He acquired his earliest distinction in its service, and there is every reason to believe that he was devotedly attached to it. But his devotion was a rational one. He was attached to it, not as an end, but as a means to an end. When it failed to fulfil its end, and, instead of affording protection, was converted into the means of oppressing the colonies, he did not hesitate to draw his sword, and head the great movement by which that union was forever severed, and the independence of these States established. This was the great and crowning glory of his life, which has spread his fame over the whole globe, and will transmit it to the latest posterity. Nor can the plan proposed by the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, nor that of the Administration, save the Union. I shall pass by, without remark, the plan proposed by the Senator, and proceed directly to the consideration of that of the Administration. I however assure the distinguished and able Senator, that in taking this course, no disrespect whatever is intended to him or his plan. I have adopted it, because so many Senators of distinguished abilities, who were present when he delivered his speech and explained his plan, and who were fully capable to do justice to the side they support, have replied to him.

The plan of the Administration cannot save the Union, because it can have no effect whatever towards satisfying the States composing the Southern section of the Union, that they can, consistently with safety and honor, remain in the Union. It is in fact but a modification of the Wilmot Proviso. It proposes to effect the same object, to exclude the South from all territory acquired by the Mexican treaty. It is well known that the South is united against the Wilmot Proviso, and has committed itself, by solemn resolutions, to resist, should it be adopted. Its opposition *is not to the name*, but that which it *proposes to effect*. That the Southern States hold to be unconstitutional, unjust, inconsistent with their equality as members of the common Union, and calculated to destroy irretrievably the equilibrium between the two sections. These objections equally apply to what, for brevity, I will call the Executive Proviso. There is no difference between it and the Wilmot, except in the mode of effecting the object; and, in that respect, I must say that the latter is much the least objectionable. It goes to its object openly, boldly, and distinctly. It claims for Congress unlimited power over the Territories, and proposes to assert it over the Territories acquired from Mexico, by a positive prohibition of slavery. Not so the Executive Proviso. It takes an indirect course, and in order to elude the Wilmot Proviso, and thereby avoid encountering the united and determined resistance of the South, it denies, by implication, the authority of Congress to legislate for the Territories, and claims the right as belonging exclusively to the inhabitants of the Territories. But to effect the object of excluding the South, it takes care, in the mean time, to let in emigrants freely from the Northern States, and all other quarters except from the South, which it takes special care to exclude by holding up to them the danger of having their slaves liberated under the Mexican laws. The necessary consequence is to exclude the South from the Territory, just as effectually as would the Wilmot Proviso. The only difference in this respect is, that what one proposes to effect directly and openly, the other proposes to effect indirectly and covertly.

But the Executive Proviso is more objectionable than the Wilmot, in another and more important particular. The latter, to effect its object, inflicts a dangerous wound upon the Constitution, by depriving the Southern States, as joint partners and owners of the Territories, of their rights in them; but it inflicts no greater wound than is absolutely necessary to effect its object. The former, on the contrary, while it inflicts the same wound, inflicts others equally great, and, if possible, greater, as I shall next proceed to explain.

In claiming the right for the inhabitants, instead of Congress, to legislate for the Territories, in the Executive Proviso it assumes that the sovereignty over the Territories is vested in the former; or, to express it in the language used in a resolution offered by one of the Senators from Texas, [General HOUSTON, now absent,] they have "the same inherent right of self-government as the people in the States." The assumption is utterly unfounded, unconstitutional, without example, and contrary to the entire practice of the Government, from its commencement to the present time, as I shall proceed to show.

The recent movement of individuals in California to form a Constitution and a State Government, and to appoint Senators and Representatives, is the first fruit of this monstrous assumption. If the individuals, who made this movement, had gone into California as adventurers, and if, as such, they had conquered the Territory and established their independence, the sovereignty of the country would have been vested in them, as a separate and independent community. In that case, they would have had the right to form a Constitution, and to establish a Government for themselves; and if afterwards they thought proper to apply to Congress for admission into the Union as a sovereign and independent State, all this would have been regular, and according to established principles. But such is not the case. It was the United States who conquered California, and finally acquired it by treaty. The sovereignty, of course, is invested in them, and not in the individuals who have attempted to form a Constitution and a State, without their consent. All this is clear, beyond controversy, unless it can be shown that they have since lost or been divested of their sovereignty.

Nor is it less clear, that the power of legislating over the acquired territory is vested in Congress, and not, as is assumed, in the inhabitants of the Territories. None can deny that the Government of the United States have the power to acquire Territories, either by war or treaty; but, if the power to acquire exists, it belongs to Congress to carry it into execution. On this point, there can be no doubt, for the Constitution expressly provides that Congress shall have power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper to carry into execution the foregoing powers," (those vested in Congress,) "and all other powers vested by this Constitution in *the Government* of the United States, or in *any department* or *office* thereof." It matters not, then, where the power is vested; for, if vested at all in the Government of the United States, or any of its departments, or officers, the power of carrying it into execution is clearly vested in Congress. But this important provision, while it gives to Congress the power of legislating over Territories, imposes important restrictions on its exercise, by restricting Congress to passing laws necessary and proper for carrying the power into execution. The prohibition extends, not only to all laws not suitable or appropriate to the object of the power, but also to all that are unjust, unequal, or unfair, for all such laws would be unnecessary and improper, and therefore unconstitutional.

Having now established, beyond controversy, that the sovereignty over the Territories is vested in the United States—that is, in the several States composing the Union—and that the power of legislating over them is expressly vested in Congress, it follows, that the individuals in California who have undertaken to form a Constitution and a State, and to exercise the power of legislating without the consent of Congress, have usurped the sovereignty of the State and the authority of Congress, and have acted in open defiance of both. In other words, what they have done is revolutionary and rebellious in its character, anarchical in its tendency, and calculated to lead to the most dangerous consequences. Had they acted from premeditation and design, it would have been, in fact, actual rebellion; but such is not the case. The blame lies much less upon them than upon those who have induced them to take a course so unconstitutional and dangerous. They have been led into it by language held here, and the course pursued by the Executive branch of the Government.

I have not seen the answer of the Executive to the calls made by the two Houses of Congress for information as to the course which it took, or the part which it acted, in reference to what was done in California. I understand the answers have not yet been printed. But there is enough known to justify the assertion, that those who profess to represent and act under the authority of the Executive, have advised, aided, and encouraged the movement, which terminated in forming what they call a Constitution and a State. General Riley, who professed to act as civil Governor, called the Convention, determined on the number and distribution of the delegates, appointed the time and place of its meeting, was present during the session, and gave its proceedings his approbation and sanction. If he acted without authority, he ought to have been tried, or at least reprimanded and disavowed. Neither having been done, the presumption is, that his course has been approved. This of itself is sufficient to identify the Executive with his acts, and to make it responsible for them. I touch not the question, whether General Riley was appointed or received the instructions under which he professed to act from the present Executive, or its predecessor. If from the former, it would implicate the preceding as well as the present Administration. If not, the responsibility rests exclusively on the present.

It is manifest from this statement, that the Executive Department has undertaken to perform acts preparatory to the meeting of the individuals to form their so-called Constitution and Government, which appertain exclusively to Congress. Indeed, they are identical, in many respects, with the provisions adopted by Congress, when it gives permission to a Territory to form a Constitution and Government, in order to be admitted as a State into the Union.

Having now shown that the assumption upon which the Executive and the individuals in California acted throughout this whole affair, is unfounded, unconstitutional, and dangerous, it remains to make a few remarks, in order to show that what has been done is contrary to the entire practice of the Government from its commencement to the present time.

From its commencement until the time that Michigan was admitted, the practice was uniform. Territorial Governments were first organized by Congress. The Government of the United States appointed the Governors, Judges, Secretaries, Marshals, and other officers, and the inhabitants of the Territory were represented by legislative bodies, whose acts were subject to the revision of Congress. This state of things continued until the Government of a Territory applied to Congress to permit its inhabitants to form a Constitution and Government, preparatory to admission into the Union. The preliminary act to giving permission was, to ascertain whether the inhabitants were sufficiently numerous to authorize them to be formed into a State. This was done by taking a census. That being done, and the number proving sufficient, permission was granted. The act granting it fixed all the preliminaries—the time and place of holding the Convention; the qualification of the voters; establishment of its boundaries, and all other measures necessary to be settled previous to admission. The act giving permission necessarily withdraws the sovereignty of the United States, and leaves the inhabitants of the incipient State as free to form their Constitution and Government, as were the original States of the Union after they had declared their independence. At this stage, the inhabitants of the Territory become for the first time a people, in legal and constitutional language. Prior to this, they were, by the old acts of Congress, called inhabitants, and not people. All this is perfectly consistent with the sovereignty of the United States, with the powers of Congress, and with the right of a people to self-government.

Michigan was the first case in which there was any departure from the uniform rule of acting. Hers was a very slight departure from established usage. The Ordinance of 1787 secured to her the right of becoming a State, when she should have 60,000 inhabitants. Owing to some neglect, Congress delayed taking the census. In the mean time her population increased, until it clearly exceeded more than twice the number which entitled her to admission. At this stage she formed a Constitution and Government without the census being taken by the United States, and Congress waived the omission, as there was no doubt she had more than a sufficient number to entitle her to admission. She was not admitted at the first session she applied, owing to some difficulty respecting the boundary between her and Ohio. The great irregularity, as to her admission, took place at the next session, but on a point which can have no possible connection with the case of California.

The irregularities in all other cases that have since occurred are of a similar nature. In all, there existed Territorial Governments established by Congress, with officers appointed by the United States. In all, the Territorial Government took the lead in calling conventions, and fixing the preliminaries preparatory to the formation of a Constitution and admission into the Union. They all recognised the sovereignty of the United States, and the authority of Congress over the Territories; and wherever there was any departure from established usage it was done on the presumed consent of Congress, and not in defiance of its authority, or the sovereignty of the United States over the Territories. In this respect California stands alone, without usage, or a single example to cover her case.

It belongs, now, Senators, for you to decide what part you will act in reference to this unprecedented transaction. The Executive has laid the paper purporting to be the Constitution of California before you, and asks you to admit her into the Union as a State; and the question is, will you or will you not admit her? It is a grave question, and there rests upon you a heavy responsibility. Much, very much, will depend upon your decision. If you admit her, you endorse and give your sanction to all that has been done. Are you prepared to do so? Are you prepared to surrender your power of legislation for the Territories—a power expressly vested in Congress by the Constitution, as has been fully established? Can you, consistently with your oath to support the Constitution, surrender the power? Are you prepared to admit that the inhabitants of the Territories possess the sovereignty over them, and that any number, more or less, may claim any extent of territory they please; may form a Constitution and Government, and erect it into a State, without asking your permission? Are you prepared to surrender the sovereignty of the United States over whatever territory may be hereafter acquired, to the first adventurers who may rush into it? Are you prepared to surrender virtually to the Executive Department all the powers which you have heretofore exercised over the Territories? If not, how can you, consistently with your duty and your oaths to support the Constitution, give your assent to the admission of California as a State, under a pretended Constitution and Government? Again: can you believe that the project of a Constitution which they have adopted has the least validity? Can you believe that there is such a State in reality as the State of California? No; there is no such State. It has no legal or constitutional existence. It has no validity, and can have none, without your sanction. How, then, can you admit it as a *State*, when, according to the provision of the Constitution, your power is limited to admitting new *States*. To be admitted, it must be a State, an existing State, independent of your sanction, before you can admit it. When you give your permission to the inhabitants of a Territory to form a Constitution and a State, the Constitution and State they form derive their authority from the people, and not from you. The State before admitted is actually a State, and does not become so by the act of admission, as would be the case with California, should you admit her contrary to constitutional provisions and established usage heretofore.

The Senators on the other side of the Chamber must permit me to make a few remarks in this connection particularly applicable to them, with the exception of a few Senators from the South, sitting on that side of the Chamber. When the Oregon question was before this body, not two years since, you took (if I mistake not) universally the ground that Congress had the sole and absolute power of legislating for the Territories. How, then, can you now, after the short interval which has elapsed, abandon the ground which you took, and thereby virtually admit that the power of legislating, instead of being in Congress, is in the inhabitants of the Territories? How can you justify and sanction by your votes, the acts of the Executive, which are in direct derogation of what you then contended for? But, to approach still nearer to the present time, how can you, after condemning, little more than a year since, the grounds taken by the party which you defeated at the last election, wheel round and support by your votes the grounds which, as explained recently on this floor by the candidate of the party in the last election, are identical with those on which the Executive has acted in reference to California? What are we to understand by all this? Must we conclude that there is no sincerity, no faith in the acts and declarations of public men, and that all is mere acting or hollow profession? Or are we to conclude that the exclusion of the South from the territory acquired from Mexico is an object of so paramount a character in your estimation, that Right, Justice, Constitution, and Consistency, must all yield, when they stand in the way of our exclusion?

But, it may be asked, what is to be done with California, should she not be admitted? I answer, remand her back to the territorial condition, as was done in the case of Tennessee, in the early stage of the Government. Congress, in her case, had established a Territorial Government in the usual form, with a Governor, Judge, and other officers, appointed by the United States. She was entitled, under the deed of cession, to be admitted into the Union as a State as soon as she had sixty thousand inhabitants. The Territorial Government, believing it had that number, took a census, by which it appeared it exceeded it. She then formed a Constitution, and applied for admission. Congress refused to admit her, on the ground that the census should be taken by the United States, and that Congress had not determined whether the Territory should be formed into one or two States, as it was authorized to do under the act of cession. She returned quietly to her territorial condition. An act was passed to take a census by the United States, containing a provision that the Territory should form one State. All afterwards was regularly conducted, and the Territory admitted as a State in due form. The irregularities in the case of California are immeasurably greater, and offer much stronger reasons for pursuing the same course. But, it may be said, California may not submit. That is not probable; but if she should not, when she refuses, it will then be time for us to decide what is to be done.

Having now shown what cannot save the Union, I return to the question with which I commenced—How can the Union be saved? There is but one way by which it can with any certainty; and that is, by a full and final settlement, on the principle of justice, of all the questions at issue between the two sections. The South asks for justice, simple justice, and less she ought not to take. She has no compromise to offer, but the Constitution; and no concession or surrender to make. She has already surrendered so much that she has little left to surrender. Such a settlement would go to the root of the evil, and remove all cause of discontent, by satisfying the South; she could remain honorably and safely in the Union, and thereby restore the harmony and fraternal feelings between the sections, which existed anterior to the Missouri agitation. Nothing else can, with any certainty, finally and forever settle the questions at issue, terminate agitation, and save the Union.

But can this be done? Yes, easily: not by the weaker party, for it can of itself do nothing—not even protect itself—but by the stronger. The North has only to will it to accomplish it—to do justice by conceding to the South an equal right in the acquired territory, and to do her duty by causing the stipulations relative to fugitive slaves to be faithfully fulfilled—to cease the agitation of the slave question, and to provide for the insertion of a provision in the Constitution, by an amendment, which will restore to the South in substance the power she possessed of protecting herself, before the equilibrium between the sections was destroyed by the action of this Government. There will be no difficulty in devising such a provision—one that will protect the South, and which, at the same time, will improve and strengthen the Government, instead of impairing and weakening it.

But will the North agree to do this? It is for her to answer this question. But, I will say, she cannot refuse, if she has half the love of the Union which she professes to have, or without justly exposing her to the charge that her love of power and aggrandizement is far greater than her love of the Union. At all events, the responsibility of saving the Union rests on the North, and not the South. The South cannot save it by any act of hers, and the North may save it without any sacrifice whatever, unless to do justice, and to perform her duties under the Constitution, should be regarded by her as a sacrifice.

It is time, Senators, that there should be an open and manly avowal on all sides, as to what is intended to be done. If the question is not now settled, it is uncertain whether it ever can hereafter be; and we, as the representatives of the States of this Union, regarded as Governments, should come to a distinct understanding as to our respective views, in order to ascertain whether the great questions at issue can be settled or not. If you, who represent the stronger portion, cannot agree to settle them on the broad principle of justice and duty, say so; and let the States we both represent agree to separate and part in peace. If you are unwilling we should part in peace, tell us so, and we shall know what to do, when you reduce the question to submission or resistance. If you remain silent, you will compel us to infer what you intend. In that case, California will become the test question. If you admit her, under all the difficulties that oppose her admission, you compel us to infer that you intend to exclude us from the whole of the acquired Territories, with the intention of destroying irretrievably the equilibrium between the two sections. We would be blind not to perceive, in that case, that your real objects are power and aggrandizement, and infatuated, not to act accordingly.

I have now, Senators, done my duty in expressing my opinions fully, freely, and candidly, on this solemn occasion. In doing so, I have been governed by the motives which have governed me in all the stages of the agitation of the Slavery Question since its commencement. I have exerted myself, during the whole period, to arrest it, with the intention of saving the Union, if it could be done; and if it could not, to save the section where it has pleased Providence to cast my lot, and which I sincerely believe has justice and the Constitution on its side. Having faithfully done my duty to the best of my ability, both to the Union and my section, throughout this agitation, I shall have the consolation, let what will come, that I am free from all responsibility.

SPEECH OF HON. DANIEL WEBSTER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, ON THE TERRITORIAL QUESTION.

Delivered in the Senate of the United States, March 7, 1850.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The resolutions submitted by the Senator from Kentucky were made the special order of the day at 12 o'clock. On this subject, the Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. WALKER] has the floor.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. President, this vast audience has not assembled to hear me, and there is but one man, in my opinion, who can assemble such an audience. They expect to hear him, and I feel it to be my duty, as well as my pleasure, to give the floor, therefore, to the Senator from Massachusetts. I understand it is immaterial to him upon which of these questions he speaks, and therefore I will not move to postpone the special order.

Mr. WEBSTER. I beg to express my obligations to my friend from Wisconsin, [Mr. WALKER,] as well as to my friend from New York, [Mr. SEWARD,] for their courtesy in allowing me to address the Senate this morning.

Mr. President, I wish to speak to-day, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American, and a member of the Senate of the United States. It is fortunate that there is a Senate of the United States—a body not yet moved from its propriety, not lost to a just sense of its own dignity, and its own high responsibilities, and a body to which the country looks with confidence for wise, moderate, patriotic, and healing doctrine. It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations, and in the midst of very considerable dangers to our institutions of Government. The imprisoned winds are let loose. The East, the West, the North, and the stormy South, all combine to throw the whole ocean into commotion, and to toss its billows to the skies, and to disclose its profoundest depths. I do not expect, Mr. President, to hold, or to be fit to hold, the helm in this combat of the political elements; but I have a duty to perform, and I mean to perform it with fidelity—not without a sense of the surrounding dangers, but not without hope. I have a part to act, not for my own security or safety, for I am looking out for no fragment upon which to float away from the wreck, if wreck there must be, but for the good of the whole, and the preservation of the whole; and there is that which will keep me to my duty during this struggle, whether the sun and the stars shall appear or shall not appear for many days. I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union. "Hear me for my cause." I speak to-day, out of a solicitous and anxious heart, for the restoration to the country of that quiet and that harmony which make the blessings of this Union so rich and so dear to us all. These are the topics that I propose to myself to discuss; these are the motives, and the sole motives, that influence me in the wish to communicate my opinions to the Senate and the country; and if I can do anything, however little, for the promotion of these ends, I shall have accomplished all that I desire.

Mr. President, it may not be amiss to recur very briefly to the events which, equally sudden and extraordinary, have brought the political condition of the country to what it now is. In May, 1846, the United States declared war against Mexico. Her armies, then on the frontiers, entered the provinces of that Republic; met and defeated all her troops; penetrated her mountain passes, and occupied her capital. The marine force of the United States took possession of her forts and her towns on the Atlantic and on the Pacific. In less than two years a treaty was negotiated, by which Mexico ceded to the United States a vast territory, extending seven or eight hundred miles along the shores of the Pacific, reaching back over the mountains, and across the desert, until it joined the frontier of the State of Texas. It so happened, that in the distracted and feeble state of the Mexican Government, before the declaration of war by the United States against Mexico had become known in California, the people of California, under the lead of American officers, persons, generally, overthrew the existing Provincial Government of California, the Mexican authorities, and run up an independent flag. When the news arrived at San Francisco that war had been declared by the United States against Mexico, this independent flag was pulled down, and the stars and stripes of this Union hoisted in its stead. So, sir, before the war was over, the powers of the United States, military and naval, had possession of San Francisco and Upper California, and a great rush of emigrants from various parts of the world took place into California in 1846 and 1847. But now, behold another wonder.

In January of 1848, the Mormons, it is said, or some of them, made a discovery of an extraordinarily rich mine of gold—or, rather, of a very great quantity of gold, hardly fit to be called a mine, for it was spread so near the surface—on the lower part of the south or American branch of the Sacramento. They seem to have attempted to conceal their discovery for some time; but soon another discovery, perhaps of greater importance, was made of gold, in another part of the American branch of the Sacramento, and near Sutter's fort, as it is called. The fame of these discoveries spread far and wide. They excited more and more the spirit of emigration towards California, which had already taken place; and persons crowded in hundreds, and flocked towards the bay of San Francisco. This, as I have said, took place in the winter and spring of 1848. The digging commenced in the spring of that year, and from that time to this, the work of searching for gold has been prosecuted with a success not heretofore known in the history of this globe. We all know, sir, how incredulous the American public was at the accounts which reached us at first of these discoveries; but we all know that these accounts received, and continue to receive, daily confirmation, and down to the present moment I suppose the assurances are as strong, after the experience of these several months, of mines of gold apparently inexhaustible in the regions near San Francisco, in California, as they were at any period of the earlier dates of the accounts. It so happened, sir, that, although in the time of peace, it became a very important subject for legislative consideration and legislative decision to provide a proper Territorial Government for California, yet differences of opinion in the councils of the Government prevented the establishment of any such Territorial Government for California at the last session of Congress. Under this state of things, the inhabitants of San Francisco and California—then amounting to a great number of people—in the summer of last year, thought it to be their duty to establish a local Government. Under the proclamation of General Riley, the people chose delegates to a convention—that convention met at Monterey. They formed a Constitution for the State of California, and it was adopted by the people of California in their primary assemblages. Desirous of immediate connection with the United States, its Senators were appointed and Representatives chosen, who have come hither, bringing with them the authentic Constitution of the State of California; and they now present themselves, asking, in behalf of their State, that the State may be admitted into this Union as one of the United States. This Constitution, sir, contains an express prohibition against slavery or involuntary servitude in the State of California. It is said, and I suppose truly, that of the members who composed that Convention, some sixteen were natives and had been residents of the slaveholding States, about twenty-two were from the non-slaveholding States, and the remaining ten members were either native Californians, or old settlers in that country. This prohibition against slavery, it is alleged—

Mr. HALE. Will the Senator give way until order is restored?

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Sergeant-at-Arms will see that order is restored, and no more persons admitted to the floor.

Mr. CASS. I trust the scene of the other day will not be repeated. The Sergeant-at-Arms must display more energy in suppressing this disorder.

Mr. HALE. The noise is outside of the door.

Mr. WEBSTER. And it is this circumstance, sir, the prohibition of slavery by that Convention, which has contributed to raise—I do not say it has wholly raised—the dispute as to the propriety of the admission of California into the Union under this Constitution. It is not to be denied, Mr. President—nobody thinks of denying—that, whatever reasons were assigned at the commencement of the late war with Mexico, it was prosecuted for the purpose of the acquisition of territory, and under the alleged argument that the cession of territory was the only form in which proper compensation could be made to the United States by Mexico, for the various claims and demands which the people of this Government had against her. At any rate, it will be found that President Polk's message at the commencement of the session of December, 1847, avowed that the war was to be prosecuted until some acquisition of territory was made. And, as the acquisition was to be south of the line of the United States, in warm climates and countries, it was naturally, I suppose, expected by the South, that whatever acquisitions were made in that region would be added to the slaveholding portion of the United States. Events have turned out as was not expected, and that expectation has not been realized; and therefore, some degree of disappointment and surprise has resulted, of course. In other words, it is obvious that the question which has so long harassed the country, and at some times very seriously alarmed the minds of wise and good men, has come upon us for a fresh discussion—the question of slavery in these United States.

Now, sir, I propose—perhaps at the expense of detail and consequent detention of the Senate—to review historically this question of slavery, which, partly in consequence of its own merits, and partly, perhaps mostly, in the manner it is discussed in one and the other portion of the country, has been a source of so much alienation and unkind feeling between the different portions of the Union. We all know, sir, that slavery has existed in the world from time immemorial. There was slavery, in the earliest periods of history, in the Oriental nations. There was slavery among the Jews; the theocratic government of that people made no injunction against it. There was slavery among the Greeks, and the ingenious philosophy of the Greeks found, or sought to find, a justification for it exactly upon the grounds which have been assumed for such a justification in this country; that is, a natural and original difference among the races of mankind, and the inferiority of the black or colored race to the white. The Greeks justified their system of slavery upon that ground precisely. They held the African, and in some parts the Asiatic tribes to be inferior to the white race; but they did not show, I think, by any close process of logic, that, if this were true, the more intelligent and the stronger had therefore a right to subjugate the weaker. The more manly philosophy and jurisprudence of the Romans placed the justification of slavery on entirely different grounds.

The Roman jurists, from the first, and down to the fall of the Empire, admitted that slavery was against the natural law, by which they maintained that all men, of whatsoever clime, color, or capacity, were equal; but they justified slavery, first, upon the ground and authority of the law of nations—arguing, and arguing truly, that at that day the conventional law of nations admitted that captives in war, whose lives, according to the notions of the times, were at the absolute disposal of the captors, might, in exchange for exemption from death, be made slaves for life, and that such servitude might descend to their posterity. The jurists of Rome also maintained that, by the civil law there might be servitude—slavery, personal and hereditary—first, by the voluntary act of an individual who might sell himself into slavery; second, by his being received into a state of slavery by his creditors in satisfaction of a debt; and, thirdly, by being placed in a state of servitude or slavery for crime. At the introduction of Christianity into the Roman world the world was full of slaves, and I suppose there is to be found no injunction against that relation between man and man in the teachings by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or by any of his Apostles. The object of the instruction imparted to mankind by the founder of Christianity was to touch the heart, purify the soul, and improve the lives of individual men. That object went directly to the first fountain of all political and all social relations of the human race—the individual heart and mind of man.

Now, sir, upon the general nature and character and influence of slavery, there exists a wide difference between the Northern portion of this country and the Southern. It is said on the one side, that, if not the subject of any injunction or direct prohibition in the New Testament, slavery is a wrong; that it is founded merely in the right of the strongest; and that it is an oppression, like all unjust wars, like all those conflicts by which a mighty nation subjects a weaker nation to their will; and that slavery, in its nature, whatever may be said of it in its modifications, is a subject of the same character. It is therefore said, that it has taken place, is not in fact according to the meek spirit of the Gospel. It is not kindly affectioned. It does not "seek another's, and not its own." It does not "let the oppressed go free." These are sentiments that are cherished, and recently with greatly augmented force, among the people of the Northern States. It has taken hold of the religious sentiment of that part of the country, as it has more or less taken hold of the religious feelings of a considerable portion of mankind. The South, upon the other side, having been accustomed to this relation between the two races all their lives, from their birth—having been taught in general to treat the subjects of this bondage with care and kindness, and I believe, in general, feeling for them great care and kindness—have not yet taken this view of the subject which I have mentioned. There are thousands of religious men, with consciences as tender as any of their brethren at the North, who do not see the unlawfulness of slavery; and there are more thousands, perhaps, that, whatsoever they may think of it in its origin, and as a matter depending upon natural right, yet take things as they are; and, finding slavery to be an established relation of the society where they live, can see no way in which (let their opinions on the abstract question be what they may) it is in the power of the present generation to relieve themselves from this relation. And, in this respect, candor obliges me to say, that I believe they are just as conscientious, many of them, and of the religious people all of them, as they are in the North in holding different opinions.

Why, sir, the honorable Senator from South Carolina, the other day, alluded to the great separation of that great religious community, the Methodist Episcopal Church. That separation was brought about by differences of opinion upon this peculiar subject of slavery. I felt great concern, as that dispute went on, about the result; and I was in hopes that the difference of opinion might be adjusted, because I looked upon that religious denomination as one of the great props of religion and morals throughout the whole country, from Maine to Georgia. The result was against my wishes and against my hopes. I have read all their proceedings and all their arguments, but I have never yet been able to come to the conclusion that there was any real ground for that separation; in other words, that no good could be produced by that separation. Sir, when a question of this kind takes hold of the religious sentiments of mankind, and comes to be discussed in religious assemblies of the clergy and laity, there is always to be expected, or always to be feared, a great degree of excitement. It is in the nature of man, manifested by his whole history, that religious disputes are apt to become warm, and men's strength of conviction is proportionate to their views of the magnitude of the questions. In all such disputes, there will sometimes men be found with whom everything is absolute—absolutely wrong or absolutely right. They see the right clearly; they think others ought to do it, and they are disposed to establish a broad line of distinction between what they think right and what they hold to be wrong. And they are not seldom willing to establish that line upon their own convictions of the truth and the justice of their own opinions; and are willing to mark and guard that line by placing along it a series of dogmas, as lines of boundary are marked by posts and stones. There are men who, with clear perceptions, as they think, of their own duty, do not see how too hot a pursuit of one duty may involve them in the violation of others, or how too warm an embracement of one truth may lead to a disregard of other truths equally important. As I heard it stated strongly, not many days ago, these persons are disposed to mount upon some duty as a war-horse, and to drive furiously on, and upon and over all other duties that may stand in the way. There are men who, in times of that sort and disputes of that sort, are of opinion that human duties may be ascertained with the precision of mathematics. They deal with morals as with mathematics, and they think what is right may be distinguished from what is wrong with the precision of an algebraic equation. They have, therefore, none too much charity towards others who differ from them. They are apt, too, to think that nothing is good but what is perfect; and that there are no compromises or modifications to be made, in submission to difference of opinion, or in deference to other men's judgment. If their perspicacious vision enables them to detect a spot on the face of the sun, they think that a good reason why the sun should be struck down from heaven. They prefer the chance of running into utter darkness to living in heavenly light, if that heavenly light be not absolutely without any imperfection. There are impatient men—too impatient always to give heed to the admonition of St. Paul, "that we are not to do evil that good may come"—too impatient to wait for the slow progress of moral causes in the improvement of mankind. They do not remember that the doctrines and the miracles of Jesus Christ have, in eighteen hundred years, converted only a small portion of the human race; and, among the nations that are converted to Christianity, they forget how many vices and crimes, public and private, still prevail; and that many of them, public crimes especially, which are offences against the Christian religion, pass without exciting particular indignation. Thus wars are waged, and unjust wars. I do not deny that there may be just wars; there certainly are; but it was the remark of an eminent person, not many years ago, on the other side of the Atlantic, that it was one of the greatest reproaches to human nature, that wars were sometimes necessary. The defence of nations sometimes causes a war against the injustice of other nations.

Now, sir, in this state of sentiment upon the general nature of slavery lies the cause of a great portion of those unhappy divisions, exasperations, and reproaches, which find vent and support in different parts of the Union. Slavery does exist in the United States. It did exist in the States before the adoption of this Constitution, and at that time.

And now let us consider, sir, for a moment, what was the state of sentiment North and South in regard to slavery, at the time this Constitution was adopted. A remarkable change has taken place since; but what did the wise and great men of all parts of the country think of slavery then? In what estimation did they hold it in 1787, when this Constitution was adopted? Now, it will be found, sir, if we will carry ourselves by historical research back to that day, and ascertain men's opinions by authentic records still existing among us, that there was no great diversity of opinion between the North and the South upon the subject of slavery; and it will be found that both parts of the country held it equally an evil—a moral and political evil. It will not be found that either at the North or at the South there was much, though there was some, invective against Slavery as inhuman and cruel. The great ground of objection to it was political; that it weakened the social fabric; that, taking the place of free labor, society was less strong and labor was less productive; and therefore we find from all the eminent men of the time the clearest expression of their opinion that slavery was an evil. And they ascribed it, not without truth, and not without some acerbity of temper and force of language, to the injurious policy of the mother country, who, to favor the navigator, had entailed these evils upon the colonies. I need hardly refer, sir, to the publications of the day. They are matters of history on the record. The eminent men, the most eminent men, and nearly all the conspicuous of the South, held the same sentiments; that slavery was an evil, a blight, a blast, a mildew, a scourge, and a curse. There are no terms of reprobation of slavery so vehement in the North of that day as in the South. The North was not so much excited against it as the South; and the reason is, I suppose, because there was much less at the North, and the people did not see, or think they saw, the evils so prominently as they were seen, or thought to be seen, at the South.

Then, sir, when this Constitution was framed, this was the light in which the Convention viewed it. The Convention reflected the judgment and sentiments of the great men of the South. A member of the other House, whom I have not the honor to know, in a recent speech has collected extracts from these public documents. They prove the truth of what I am saying; and the question then was, how to deal with it, and how to deal with it as an evil. Well, they came to this general result. They thought that slavery could not be continued in the country if the importation of slaves were made to cease, and therefore they provided that after a certain period the importation might be prevented by the act of the new Government. Twenty years was proposed by some gentleman, a Northern gentleman, I think, and many of the Southern gentlemen opposed it as being too long. Madison especially was somewhat warm against it. He said it would bring too much of this mischief into the country to allow the importation of slaves for such a period. Because we must take along with us, in the whole of this discussion, when we are considering the sentiments and opinions in which this constitutional provision originated, that the conviction of all men was, that if the importation of slaves ceased, the white race would multiply faster than the black race, and that slavery would therefore gradually wear out and expire. It may not be improper here to allude to that, I had almost said, celebrated opinion of Mr. Madison. You observe, sir, that the term slave or slavery is not used in the Constitution. The Constitution does not require that "fugitive slaves" shall be delivered up. It requires that "persons bound to service in one State, and escaping into another, shall be delivered up." Mr. Madison opposed the introduction of the term slave or slavery into the Constitution; for he said that he did not wish to see it recognised by the Constitution of the United States of America, that there could be property in men. Now, sir, all this took place at the Convention in 1787; but connected with this—concurrent and contemporaneous—is another important consideration not sufficiently attended to. The Convention for framing this Constitution assembled in Philadelphia in May, and sat until September, 1787. During all that time, the Congress of the United States was in session at New York. It was a matter of design, as we know, that the Convention should not assemble in the same city where Congress was holding its sessions. Almost all the public men of the country, therefore, of distinction and eminence, were in one or the other of these two assemblies; and I think it happened in some instances that the same gentlemen were members of both. If I mistake not, such was the case of Mr. Rufus King, then a member of Congress from Massachusetts, and at the same time a member of the Convention to frame the Constitution from that State. Now, it was in the summer of 1787, the very time when the Convention in Philadelphia was framing the Constitution, that the Congress in New York was framing the Ordinance of 1787. They passed that Ordinance on the 13th July, 1787, at New York—the very month, perhaps the very day, on which these questions about the importation of slaves and the character of slavery were debated in the Convention at Philadelphia. And, so far as we can now learn, there was a perfect concurrence of opinion between these respective bodies; and it resulted in this Ordinance of 1787, excluding slavery as applied to all the territory over which the Congress of the United States had jurisdiction, and that was all the territory northwest of the Ohio. Three years before, Virginia and other States had made a cession of that great territory to the United States. And a most magnificent act it was. I never reflect upon it without a disposition to do honor and justice—and justice would be the highest honor—to Virginia, for that act of cession of her northwestern territory. I will say, sir, it is one of her fairest claims to the respect and gratitude of the United States, and that perhaps it is only second to that other claim which attaches to her: that in her counsels, and from the intelligence and patriotism of her leading statesmen, proceeded the first idea put into practice for the formation of a general Constitution of the United States. Now, sir, the Ordinance of 1787 applied thus to the whole territory over which the Congress of the United States had jurisdiction. It was adopted nearly three years before the Constitution of the United States went into operation; because the Ordinance took effect immediately on its passage, while the Constitution of the United States, having been framed, was to be sent to the States to be adopted by their Conventions; and then a Government had to be organized under it. This Ordinance, then, was in operation and force when the Constitution was adopted and this Government put in motion, in April, 1789.

Mr. President, three things are quite clear as historical truths. One is, that there was an expectation that on the ceasing of the importation of slaves from Africa, slavery would begin to run out. That was hoped and expected. Another is, that as far as there was any power in Congress to prevent the spread of slavery in the United States, that power was executed in the most absolute manner and to the fullest extent. An honorable member whose health does not allow him to be here to-day—

[A SENATOR. He is here. (Referring to Mr. CALHOUN.)]

Mr. WEBSTER. I am very happy to hear that he is—may he long be in health and the enjoyment of it to serve his country—said the other day that he considered this as the first in the series of measures calculated to enfeeble the South and deprive them of their just participation in the benefits and privileges of this Government. He says, very properly, that it was done under the old Confederation, and before this Constitution went into effect; but, my present purpose is only to say, Mr. President, that it was done with the entire and unanimous concurrence of the whole South. Why, there it stands! The vote of every State in the Union was unanimous in favor of the Ordinance, with the exception of a single individual vote, and that individual was a Northern man. But, sir, the Ordinance abolishing or rather prohibiting slavery northwest of the Ohio, has the hand and seal of every Southern member in Congress.

This was the state of things, sir, and this the state of opinion under which those two very important matters were arranged, and those two immediate acts were acted upon, namely, the adoption of the Constitution with a recognition of slavery as it existed in the States, and the establishment of the Ordinance prohibiting, to the full extent of all territory owned by the United States, the introduction of slavery into those territories. And here, sir, we may pause. We may reflect for a moment upon the entire coincidence and concurrence of sentiment between the North and the South upon this question, at the period of the adoption of the Constitution. But opinions, sir, have changed—greatly changed—changed North and changed South. Slavery is not regarded in the South now as it was then. I see an honorable member of this body paying me the honor of listening to my remarks; he brings to me, sir, freshly and vividly the sentiments of his great ancestor, so much distinguished in his day and generation, so worthy to be succeeded by so worthy a grandson, with all the sentiments he expressed in the Convention in Philadelphia upon this subject.

Here we may pause. There was unanimity of sentiment, if not a general concurrence of sentiment, running through the whole community, and especially entertained by the eminent men of all portions of the country, in regard to this subject. But soon a change began at the North and the South, and a severance of opinion soon showed itself—the North growing much more warm and strong against slavery, and the South growing much more warm and strong in its support. Sir, there is no generation of mankind whose opinions are not subject to be influenced by what appears to them to be their present and emergent and exigent interest. I impute to the South no particularly interested view in the change which has come over her. I impute to her certainly no dishonest view. All that has happened has been natural. It has followed those causes which always influence the human mind, and operate upon it. What, then, have been the causes which have created so new a feeling in favor of slavery in the South—which have changed the whole nomenclature of the South on the subject—and from being thought of and described in the terms I have mentioned and will not repeat, it has now become an institution, a cherished institution there; no evil, no scourge, but a great religious, social, and moral blessing, as I think I have heard it latterly described? I suppose this, sir, is owing to the sudden uprising and rapid growth of the cotton plantations of the South. So far as any motive of honor, justice, and general judgment could act, it was the cotton interest that gave a new desire to promote slavery, to spread it and to use its labor. I again say, that this is produced by the causes which we must always expect to produce like effects—their whole interests became connected with it. If we look back to the history of the commerce of this country at the early commencement of this Government, what were our exports? Cotton was hardly, or but to a very limited extent, known. The tables will show that the exports of cotton for the years 1790 and 1791 were hardly more than forty or fifty thousand dollars a year. It has gone on increasing rapidly until it may now be, perhaps, in a season of great product and high prices, a hundred millions of dollars. Then there were more of wax, more of indigo, more of rice, more of almost everything exported from the South than of cotton. I think I have heard it said, when Mr. Jefferson negotiated the treaty of 1794 with England, he did not know that cotton was exported at all from the United States; and I have heard it said, that after the treaty which gave to the United States the right to carry their own commodities to England in their own ships, the custom-house in London refused to admit cotton, upon an allegation that it could not be an American production, there being, as they supposed, no cotton raised in America. They would hardly think so now!

Well, sir, we know what follows. The age of cotton became a golden age for our Southern brethren. It gratified their desire for improvement and accumulation at the same time that it excited it. The desire grew by what it fed upon, and there soon came to be an eagerness for other territory, a new area or new areas for the cultivation of the cotton crop, and measures were brought about, somewhat rapidly, one after another, under the lead of Southern men at the head of the Government, they having a majority in both branches of the Government, to accomplish their ends. The honorable member from Carolina observed that there has been a majority all along in favor of the North. If that be true, sir, the North acted either very liberally and kindly, or very weakly; for they never exercised that majority five times in the history of the Government. Never. Whether they were out-generalled, or whether it was owing to other causes, I shall not stop to consider; but no man acquainted with the history of the country can deny that the general lead in the

[SEE FOURTH PAGE.]