WASHINGTON, D. C.

DEFENCE OF KANSAS.

SPEECH OF HON. ANSON BURLINGAME,

Of Massachusetts,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

June 21, 1856.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union,

Mr. BURLINGAME said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House will bear witness that I have not pressed myself upon its deliberations. I never before asked its indulgence. I have assailed no man; nor have I sought to bring reproach upon any man's State. But, while such has been my course, as well as the course of my colleagues from Massachusetts, upon this floor, certain members have seen fit to assail the State which we represent, not only with words, but with blows.

In remembrance of these things, and seizing the first opportunity which has presented itself for a long time, I stand here to-day to say a word for old Massachusetts—not that she needs it; no, sir; for in all that constitutes true greatness—in all that gives abiding strength—in great qualities of head and heart—in moral power—in material prosperity—in intellectual resources and physical ability—by the general judgment of mankind, according to her population, she is the first State. There does not live the man anywhere, who knows anything, to whom praise of Massachusetts would not be needless. She is as far beyond that as she is beyond censure. Members here may sneer at her—they may praise her past at the expense of her present; but I say, with a full conviction of its truth, that Massachusetts, in her present performances, is even greater than in her past recollections. And when I have said this, what more can I say?

Sir, although I am here as her youngest and humblest member, yet, as her Representative, I feel that I am the peer of any man upon this floor. Occupying that high stand-point, with modesty, but with firmness, I cast down her glove to the whole band of her assailants.

She has been assailed in the House and out of the House, at the other end of the Capitol, and at the other end of the avenue. There have been brought against her general charges and specific charges. I am sorry to find at the head of the list of her assailants the President of the United States, who not only assails Massachusetts, but the whole North. He defends one section of the Union at the expense of the other. He declares that one section has ever been mindful of its constitutional obligations, and that the other has not. He declares that, if one section of our country were a foreign country, the other would have just cause of war against it. And to sustain these remarkable declarations, he goes into an elaborate perversion of history, such as that Virginia ceded her lands against the interests of the South, for the benefit of the North; when the truth is, she ceded her lands, as New York and other States did, for the benefit of the whole country. She gave her lands to Freedom, because she thought Freedom was better than Slavery—because it was the policy of the times, and events have vindicated that policy.

It is a perversion of history, when he says that the territory of the country has been acquired more for the benefit of the North than for the South; he says that substantially. Sir, out of the territory thus acquired, five slave States, with a pledge for four more, and two free States, have come into the Union; and one of these, as we all know, fought its way through a compromise degrading to the North.

The North does not object to the acquisition of territory, when it is desired, but she desires that it shall be free. If such a complexion had been given to it, how different would have been the fortunes of the Republic to-day! This may be ascertained by comparing the progress of Ohio with that of any slave State in the Mississippi valley. It will appear more clearly by comparing the tree with the slave regions. I have not time to do more than to present a general picture.

Freedom and Slavery started together in the great race on this continent. In the very year the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock, slaves landed in Virginia. Freedom has gone on, trampling down barbarism, and planting States—building the symbols of its faith by every lake, and every river, until now the sons of the Pilgrims stand by the shores of the Pacific. Slavery has also made its way toward the setting sun. It has reached the Rio Grande on the South; and the groans of its victims, and the clank of its chains, may be heard as it slowly ascends the Western tributaries of the Mississippi river. Freedom has left the land bespangled with free schools, and filled the whole heavens with the shining towers of religion and civilization. Slavery has left desolation, ignorance, and death, in its path. When we look at these things; when we see what the country would have been, had Freedom been given to the Territories; when we think what it would have been but for this blight in the bosom of the country; that the whole South—that fair land God has blessed so much—would have been covered with cities, and villages, and railroads, and that in the country, in the place of twenty-five millions of people, thirty-five millions would have hailed the rising morn exulting in republican liberty—when we think of these things, how must every honest man—how must every man with brains in his head, or heart in his bosom—regret that the policy of old Virginia, in her better days, did not become the animating policy of the Republic!

It is a perversion of history, when the President intimates that the adoption of the Constitution abrogated the Ordinance of 1787. It was recognised by the first Congress which assembled under the Constitution; and it has been sanctioned by nearly every President, from Washington down. It is a perversion of history when the President intimates that the Missouri Compromise was made against the interests of the South, and for the benefit of the North. The truth—the unmistakable truth is, that it was forced by the South on the North. It received the almost united vote of the South. It was claimed as a victory of the South. The men who voted for it were sustained in the South; and those who voted for it in the North passed into oblivion; and though some of them are physically alive to-day, they are as politically dead as are the President and his immediate advisers. Not only has the President perverted history, but he has turned sectionalist. He has become the champion of sectionalism. He makes the extraordinary declaration, that if a State is refused admission into the Union because her Constitution embraced Slavery as an institution, then one section of the country would of necessity be compelled to dissolve its connection with the people of the other section! What does he mean? Does he mean to say that there are traitors in the South? Does he mean to say, if they were voted down, that then they ought not to submit? If he does, and if they mean to back him in the declaration, then I say the quicker we try the strength of this great Government the better. Not only has he said that, but members have said on this floor, again and again, that if the Fugitive Slave Law, which has nothing sacred about it—which I deem unconstitutional—which South Carolina deems unconstitutional—if that law be repealed, that this Union will then cease to exist.

Mr. KEITT. I wish to know from the gentleman from Massachusetts, by what authority he says South Carolina holds the Fugitive Slave Law to be unconstitutional?

Mr. BURLINGAME. By the authority of the Charleston *Mercury*.

Taking that paper from his pocket, Mr. B. read the following:

"Of the action of Massachusetts in the abrogation of the Fugitive Slave Law, we have no complaint to make. It was from the first a miserable illusion; and worse, in fact, for it was an infringement upon one of the most cherished principles of the Constitution, which provides that fugitives from labor, 'upon demand, shall be delivered up,' but gives no power to Congress to act in this affair. The tenth amendment to the Constitution provides that 'the powers not delegated to the United States are reserved to the States or to the people.' The clause above confers no power, but is the naked declaration of a right; and the power, not being conferred, results to the States as one of the incidents of sovereignty too dear to be trusted to the General Government.

"Our Southern members strove for the passage of the law, and strove honestly; but it shows the evils of our unfortunate condition, that, in the urgency of our contest with an aggressive adversary, we lose the landmarks of principle—to obtain an illusive triumph, we pressed the Government to assume a power not conferred by the instrument of its creation, and to establish a precedent by which, in all after time, it will be authorized to assume whatever right may have no constitutional right of enforcement; and, wearied with so many efforts to confine the Government to its limits of legitimate powers, we are pleased to have assistance from another quarter; and if the question shall be determined in her favor, we will sincerely rejoice in such a vindication of the Constitution."

That is my authority, but I do not wish to be interrupted; I have not time. I say that it is not for the President and members on this floor to determine the life of this Union; this Union rests in the hearts of the American people, and cannot be eradicated thence. Whenever any person shall lift his hand to smite down this Union, the people will subjugate him by liberty and the Constitution. I do not wish to dwell on the President, and what he has said. Notwithstanding all this perversion of history—notwithstanding his violated pledges—and notwithstanding his warlike exploits at Greytown and Lawrence—his servility has been repaid with scorn. I am glad of it. The South was right. When a man is false to the convictions of his own heart and to Freedom, he cannot be trusted with the delicate interests of Slavery. I cannot express the delight I feel in the poetic justice that has been done; but, at the same time, I am not unmindful of the deep ingratitude that first lured him to ruin, and then deserted and left him alone to die. [Applause.] If I were not too much of a Native American, I would quote and apply to him the old Latin words, "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*"—speak nothing but good of the dead. I can almost forgive him, considering his condition, the blistering words he let fall upon us the other night, when he went through the ordeal of ratifying the nomination of James Buchanan. He said that we had received nothing at the hands of the Government, save its protection and its political blessings. We have not certainly received any offices; and as for its protection and political blessings, let the silence above the graves of those who sleep in their bloody shrouds in Kansas answer.

There have been general and specific charges made against old Massachusetts. The general charge, when expressed in polite language, is, that she has not been faithful to her constitutional obligations. I deny it. I call for proof. I ask when? where? how? I say, on the contrary, that from the time when this Government came from the brains of her statesmen, and the unconquerable arms of her warriors, she has been loyal to it. In peace, she has added to it renown; and in war, her sons have crowded the way to death as to a festival. She has quenched the fires of rebellion on her own soil without Federal aid; and when the banners of nullification flew in the Southern sky, speaking through the lips of Webster, in Faneuil Hall, she stood by Jackson and the Union. No man speaking in her name—no man wearing her ermine, or clothed with her authority—ever did anything, or said anything, or decided anything, not in accordance with her constitutional obligations. Yet, sir, the hand of the Federal Government has been laid heavily upon her.

That malignant spirit which has usurped this Government, through the negligence of the people, too long has pursued her with rancor and bitterness. Before its invidious legislation she has seen her commerce perish, and ruin, like a devastating fire, sweep through her fields of industry; but, amid all these things, Massachusetts has always lifted up her voice with unmurmuring devotion to the Union. She has heard the Federal drum in her streets. She has protected the person of that most odious man—odious both at the North and the South—the slave-hunter. She has protected him when her soil throbbed with indignation from the sea to the New York line. Sir, the temples of justice there have been clothed in chains. The Federal courts in other States have been closed against her, and her citizens have been imprisoned, and she has had no redress.

Yet, notwithstanding all these things, Massachusetts has always been faithful and loyal to the Constitution. You may ask why, if she has been so wronged, so insulted, has she been so true and faithful to the Union? Sir, because she knew, in her clear head, that these outrages came not from the generous hearts of the American people. She knew that, when Justice should finally assume the reins of Government, all would be well. She knew that, when the Government ceased to foster the interests of Slavery alone, her interests would be regarded, and the whole country be blessed. It was this high constitutional hope that has always swayed the head and heart of Massachusetts, and which has made her look out of the gloom of the present, and anticipate a glorious future. So much in relation to the general charge against Massachusetts.

There are specific charges, upon which I shall dwell for a moment. One is, that she has organized an "Emigrant Aid Society." Did you not tell Massachusetts that the people of Kansas were to be left perfectly free to mould her institutions as they thought best? She knew, and she told you, that your doctrine of squatter sovereignty was a delusion and a snare. She opposed it as long as she could here; and when she could do it no longer, she accepted the battle upon your pledge of fair play. She determined to make Kansas a free State. In this high motive the Emigrant Aid Society had its origin. Its objects are two-fold—Freedom for Kansas and pecuniary reward. And it is so organized that pecuniary benefit cannot flow to stockholders, except through the prosperity of those whom it aids. The idea of the society is this: to take capital and place it in advance of civilization; to take the elements of civilization, the saw-mill, the church, the school-house, and plant them in the wilderness, as an inducement to the emigrant. It is a peaceful society. It has never armed one man; it has never paid one man's passage to Kansas. It never asked—though I think it should have asked—the political sentiments of any man whom it helped to emigrate to Kansas. Congress has assisted $100,000, and it has expended [illegible]. It has invested setts to Kansas, [illegible] conducted from Massachu- of the [illegible] from twelve to fifteen hundred [illegible] of her people. Such is the Emi- [illegible] Aid Society, such is its origin, and such its action. It is this Society, so just and legal in its origin and its action, that has been made the pretext for the most bitter assaults upon Massachusetts. Sir, it is Christianity organized.

How have these legal and these proper measures been met by those who propose to make Kansas a slave State? The people of Massachusetts would not complain, if the people who differ from them should go there to seek a peaceful solution of the conflicting questions. But how have they been met? By fraud and violence, by sackings, and burnings, and murders. Laws have been forced upon them, such as you have heard read to-day by the gentleman from Indiana, [Mr. COLFAX,] so atrocious that no man has risen here to defend one single one of them. Men have been placed over them whom they never elected, and this day, as has been stated by the gentleman from Indiana, civil war rages from one end of Kansas to the other. Men have been compelled to leave their peaceful pursuits, and starvation and death stare them in the face, and yet the Government stands idle—no, not idle; it gives its mighty arm to the side of the men who are trampling down law and order there. The United States troops have not been permitted to protect the Free State men. When they have desired to do so, they have been withdrawn. I cannot enter into a detail of all the facts. It is a fact that war rages there to-day. Men kill each other at sight. All these things are known, and nobody can deny them. All the Western winds are burdened with the news of them, and they are substantiated equally by both sides.

Has the Government no power to make peace in Kansas, and to protect citizens there under the organic law of the Territory? I ask, in the name of old Massachusetts, if our honest citizens who went to Kansas to build up homes for themselves, and to secure the blessings of civilization, are not entitled to protection? She throws the responsibility upon this Administration, and holds it accountable; and so will the people, at the polls, next November.

Another charge is, that Massachusetts has passed a personal liberty bill. Well, sir, I say that Massachusetts, for her local legislation, is not responsible to this House, or to any member of it. I say, sir, if her laws were as bad as those atrocious laws of Kansas, you can do nothing with her. I say, if her statute-books, instead of being filled with generous legislation—legislation which ought to be interesting to her assailants, because it is in favor of the idiotic and the blind—[laughter]—were filled, like those of the State of Alabama, with laws covering the State with whipping-posts, keeping half of her people in absolute slavery, and nearly all of the other half in subjection to twenty-nine thousand slaveholders; if the slaveholders themselves were not permitted to trade with or teach their slaves, as they choose; if ignorance were increasing faster than the population—I say, even then, you could not do anything here with the local laws of Massachusetts. I say, the presumption is, that the law, having been passed by a sovereign State, is constitutional. If it is not constitutional, then, sir, when the proper tribunal shall have decided that question, what is there, I ask, in the history of Massachusetts, which will lead us to believe that she will not abide by that result? I say, there is nothing in the history of the State of Mississippi, or of South Carolina, early or recent, which makes Massachusetts desirous of emulating their example. I, sir, agree with the South Carolina authority I have quoted here in regard to the legislation of Massachusetts.

Sir, my time is passing away, and I must hasten on. The State of Massachusetts is the guardian of the rights of her citizens, and of the inhabitants within her border line. If her citizens go beyond the line, into distant lands or upon the ocean, then they look to the Federal arm for protection. But old Massachusetts is the State which is to secure to her citizens the inestimable blessing of trial by jury and the writ of *habeas corpus*. All these things must come from her, and not from the Federal Government. I believe, with her great statesmen and with her people, that the Fugitive Slave Law is unconstitutional. Mr. Webster, as an original question, thought it was not constitutional; Mr. Rantoul, a brilliant statesman of Massachusetts, said the same thing; they both thought that the clause of the Constitution was addressed to the States. Mr. Webster bowed to the decision of the Supreme Court in the Prigg case; Mr. Rantoul did not. Massachusetts believes it to be unconstitutional; but whether it be constitutional or not, she means, so long as the Federal Government undertakes to execute that law, that the Federal Government shall do it with its own instruments, vile or otherwise. She says that no one clothed with her authority shall do anything to help in it, so long as the Federal Government undertakes to do it. But, sir, I pass from this.

I did intend to reply *seriatim* to all the attacks which have been made upon the State, but I have not half time enough. The gentleman from Mississippi, [Mr. BENNETT,] after enumerating a great many things he desired Massachusetts to do, said, amongst other things, that she must tear out of her statute-book this personal liberty law. When she had done that, and a variety of other things too numerous to mention, then he said "the South would forgive Massachusetts." The South forgive Massachusetts! Sir, forgiveness is an attribute of Divinity. The South has it not. Sir, forgiveness is a higher quality than justice, even. The South—I mean the Slave Power—cannot comprehend it. Sir, Massachusetts has already forgiven the South too many debts and too many insults. If we should do all the things the gentleman from Mississippi desired us to do, then the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. SHORTER] comes in, and insists that Massachusetts shall do a great variety of other things before the South probably will forgive her. Among other things, he desired that Massachusetts should blot out the fact that General Hull, who surrendered Detroit, had his home in Massachusetts. Why, no, sir; she does not desire even to do that, for then she would have to blot out the fact that his gallant son had his home there—that gallant son who fell fighting for his country, in the same war, at Lundy's Lane—that great battle, where Colonel Miller, a Massachusetts man by adoption, when asked if he could storm certain heights, replied, in a modest Massachusetts manner, "I will try, sir." He stormed the heights.

The gentleman desires, also, that we should blot out the history of the connection of Massachusetts with the last war. Oh, no! She cannot do that. She cannot so dim the lustre of the American arms. She cannot so wrong the Republic. Where, then, would be your great seafights? Where, then, would be the glory of "Old Ironsides," whose scuppers ran red with Massachusetts blood? Where, then, would be the history of the daring of those brave fishermen, who swarmed from all her bays and all her ports, sweeping the enemy's commerce from the most distant seas? Ah, sir! she cannot afford to blot out that history. You, sir, cannot afford to let her do it—no, not even the South. She sustained herself in the last war; she paid her own expenses, and has not yet been paid entirely from the Treasury of the nation. The enemy hovered on her coast with his ships, as numerous, almost, as the stars. He looked on that warlike land, and the memory of the olden time came back upon him. He remembered how, more than forty years before, he had trodden on that soil; he remembered how vauntingly he invaded it, and how speedily he left it. He turned his glasses towards it, and beheld its people rushing from the mountains to the sea to defend it; and he dared not attack it. Its capital stood in the salt sea spray, yet he could not take it. He sailed south, where there was another capital, not far from where we now stand, forty miles from the sea. A few staggering, worn-out sailors and soldiers came here. They took it. How it was defended, let the heroes of Bladensburg answer! [Laughter.]

Sir, the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. KEITT] made a speech; and if I may be allowed to coin a word, I will say it had more *cantankerosity* in it than any speech I ever heard on this floor. [Renewed laughter.] It was certainly very eloquent in some portions—very eloquent indeed, for the gentleman has indisputably an eloquent utterance and an eloquent temperament. I do not wish to criticize it much, but it opens in the most extraordinary manner with a "weird torchlight [illegible]," and he introduces a dead man—or rat, and then he makes him "point his finger," and then he galvanizes him, and puts him in that chair, and then he makes him "point his cold finger" around this Hall. Why, it almost frightens me to allude to it. And then he turns it into a theatre, and then he changes or *transmogrifies* the gentleman from Indiana, [Mr. COLFAX,] who has just spoken, into a snake, and makes him "wriggle up to the foot-lights;" and then he gives the snake hands, and then "mailed hands," and with one of them he throws off Cuba, and with the other clutches all the Canadas. Then he has men with "glozing mouths," and they are "singing psalms through their noses," and are moving down upon the South "like an army with banners." Frightful—is it not? He talks about rotting on dead seas. He calls our party at one time a "toad," and then he calls it a "lizard;" "and more, which e'en to mention would be unlawful." Sir, his rhetoric seems to have the St. Vitus's dance. [Laughter.] He mingles metaphors in such a manner as would delight the most extravagant Milesian.

But I pass from his logic and his rhetoric, and also over some historical mistakes, much of the same nature as those made by the President, which I have already pointed out, and come to some of his sentences, in which terrific questions and answers explode. He answers, hotly and tauntingly, that the South wants none of our vagabond philanthropy. Sir, when the yellow pestilence fluttered its wings over the Southern States, and when Massachusetts poured out her treasures to a greater extent in proportion to her population than any other State, was that vagabond philanthropy? I ask the people of Virginia and Louisiana?

But, sir, the gentleman was most tender and most plaintive when he described the starving operatives. Why, sir, the eloquence was most overwhelming upon some of my colleagues. I thought I saw the iron face of our Speaker soften a little, when he listened to the unexpected sympathy of the gentleman with the hardships of his early life. Sir, he was an operative from boyhood to manhood—and a good one, too. Ah, sir, he did not appreciate, as he tasted the sweet bread of honest toil, his sad condition; he did not think, as he stood in the music of the machinery which came from his cunning hand, how much better it would have been for him, had he been born a slave, [laughter,] and put under the gentleman from South Carolina—a kind master, as I have no doubt he is—where he would have been well fed and clothed, and would have known none of the trials which doubtless met him on every hand. How happy he would have been, if, instead of being a Massachusetts operative, he had been a slave in South Carolina, fattening, singing, and dancing, upon the banks of some Southern river. [Great laughter.]

Sir, if the gentleman will go to my district, and look upon those operatives and mechanics; if he will look upon some of those beautiful models which come from their brains and hands, and which from time to time leap upon the waters of the Atlantic, out-flying all other clippers, bringing home wealth and victory with all the winds of heaven, he might have reason to change his views. Let him go there, and, even after all he said, he may speak to those men, and convince them, if he can, of their starving condition. I will guaranty his personal safety. I believe the people of Massachusetts would pour forth their heart's blood to protect even him in the right of freedom of speech; and that is saying a great deal, after all that has happened. Let him go to the great county of Worcester—that bee-hive of operatives and Abolitionists, as it has been called—and he will find the annual product of that county greater, in proportion to the population, than that of any other equal population in the world, as will be found by reference to a recent speech of ex-Governor Boutwell, of our State. The next county, I believe, in respect to the amount of products in proportion to population, is away up in Vermont. Sir, let him go and look at these men—these Abolitionists, who, we are told, meddle with everybody's business but their own. They certainly take time enough to attend to their own business, to accomplish these results which I have named.

The gentleman broke out in an exceedingly explosive question, something like this: I do not know if my memory can do justice to the language of the gentleman, but it was something like this: "Did not the South, equally with the North, bare her forehead to the god of battles?" I answer plainly, No, sir, she did not; she did not. Sir, Massachusetts furnished more men in the Revolution than the whole South put together, and more by ten-fold than South Carolina. I am not including, of course, the militia—the conjectured militia furnished by that State. There is no proof that they were ever engaged in any battle. I mean the regulars; and I say that Massachusetts furnished more than ten times as many men as South Carolina. I say, on the authority of a standard historian, once a member of this House, (Mr. Sabine, in his history of the Loyalists,) that more New England men now lie buried in the soil of South Carolina, than there were of South Carolinians, who left their State to fight the battles of the country. I say, when General Lincoln was defending Charleston, he was compelled to give up its defence, because the people of that city would not fight. When General Greene, that Rhode Island blacksmith, took command of the Southern army, South Carolina had not a Federal soldier in the field; and the people of that State would not furnish supplies to his army; while the British army in the State were furnished with supplies almost exclusively from the people of South Carolina. While the American army could not be recruited, the ranks of the British army were rapidly filled from that State.

The British post of Ninety Six was garrisoned almost exclusively from South Carolina. Rawdon's reserve corps was made up almost entirely by South Carolinians. Of the eight hundred prisoners who were taken at the battle of King's Mountain—of which we have heard so much—seven hundred of them were Southern Tories. The Maryland men gained the laurels of the Cowpens. Kentuckians, Virginians, and North Carolinians, gained the battle of King's Mountain. Few South Carolinians fought in the battles of Eutaw, Guilford, &c. They were chiefly fought by men out of South Carolina; and they would have won greater fame and brighter laurels, if they had not been opposed chiefly by the citizens of the soil. Well might the British commander boast that he had reduced South Carolina into allegiance.

But, sir, I will not proceed further with this history, out of regard for the fame of our common country; out of regard for the patriots—the Sumters, the Marions, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Haynes—truer patriots, if possible, than those of any other State. Out of regard for these men, I will not quote from a letter of the patriot Governor Mathews to General Greene, in which he complains of the selfishness and utter imbecility of a great portion of the people of South Carolina.

But, Mr. Chairman, all these assaults upon the State of Massachusetts sink into insignificance, compared with the one I am about to mention. On the 19th of May, it was announced that Mr. SUMNER would address the Senate upon the Kansas question. The floor of the Senate, the galleries, and avenues leading thereto, were thronged with an expectant audience; and many of us left our places in this House, to hear the Massachusetts orator. To say that we were delighted with the speech we heard, would but faintly express the deep emotions of our hearts awakened by it. I need not speak of the classic purity of its language, nor of the nobility of its sentiments. It was heard by many; it has been read by millions. There has been no such speech made in the Senate since the days when those Titans of American eloquence—the Websters and the Haynes—contended with each other for mastery.

It was severe, because it was launched against tyranny. It was severe as Chatham was severe when he defended the feeble colonies against the giant oppression of the mother country. It was made in the face of a hostile Senate. It continued through the greater portion of two days; and yet, during that time, the speaker was not once called to order. This fact is conclusive as to the personal and parliamentary decorum of the speech. He had provocation enough. His State had been called hypocritical. He himself had been called "a puppy," "a fool," "a fanatic," and "a dishonest man." Yet he was parliamentary from the beginning to the end of his speech. No man knew better than he did the proprieties of the place, for he had always observed them. No man knew better than he did parliamentary law, because he had made it the study of his life. No man saw more clearly when he broke the diaphragm.

He flung sword of the Constitution, turning every way, guarding all the avenues of the Senate. But he was not thinking of these things; he was not thinking then of the privileges of the Senate nor of the guarantees of the Constitution; he was there to denounce tyranny and crime, and he did it. He was there to speak for the rights of an empire, and he did it, bravely and grandly.

So much for the occasion of the speech. A word, and I shall be pardoned, about the speaker himself. He is my friend; for many and many a year I have looked to him for guidance and light, and I never looked in vain. He never had a personal enemy in his life; his character is as pure as the snow that falls on his native hills; his heart overflows with kindness for every being having the upright form of man; he is a ripe scholar, a chivalric gentleman, and a warm-hearted, true friend. He sat at the feet of Channing, and drank in the sentiments of that noble soul. He bathed in the learning and undying love of the great jurist, Story; and the hand of Jackson, with its honors and its offices, sought him early in life, but he shrank from them with instinctive modesty. Sir, he is the pride of Massachusetts. His mother Commonwealth found him adorning the highest walks of literature and law, and she bade him go and grace somewhat the rough character of political life. The people of Massachusetts—the old, and the young, and the middle-aged—now pay their full homage to the beauty of his public and private character. Such is CHARLES SUMNER.

On the 22d day of May, when the Senate and the House had clothed themselves in mourning for a brother fallen in the battle of life in the distant State of Missouri, the Senator from Massachusetts sat in the silence of the Senate Chamber, engaged in the employments appertaining to his office, when a member from this House, who had taken an oath to sustain the Constitution, stole into the Senate, that place which had hitherto been held sacred against violence, and smote him as Cain smote his brother.

Mr. KEITT, (in his seat.) That is false.

Mr. BURLINGAME. I will not bandy epithets with the gentleman. I am responsible for my own language. Doubtless he is responsible for his.

Mr. KEITT. I am.

Mr. BURLINGAME. I shall stand by mine.

One blow was enough; but it did not satiate the wrath of that spirit which had pursued him through two days. Again and again, quicker and faster fell the leaden blows, until he was torn away from his victim, when the Senator from Massachusetts fell in the arms of his friends, and his blood ran down on the Senate floor. Sir, the act was brief, and my comments on it shall be brief also. I denounce it in the name of the Constitution it violated. I denounce it in the name of the sovereignty of Massachusetts, which was stricken down by the blow. I denounce it in the name of civilization which it outraged. I denounce it in the name of humanity. I denounce it in the name of that fair play which bullies and prize-fighters respect. What! strike a man when he is pinioned—when he cannot respond to a blow! Call you that chivalry? In what code of honor did you get your authority for that? I do not believe that member has a friend so dear who must not, in his heart of hearts, condemn the act. Even the member himself, if he has left a spark of that chivalry and gallantry attributed to him, must loathe and scorn the act. God knows, I do not wish to speak unkindly, or in a spirit of revenge; but I owe it to my manhood, and the noble State I in part represent, to express my deep abhorrence of the act. But much as I reprobate the act, much more do I reprobate the conduct of those who were by, and saw the outrage perpetrated. Sir, especially do I notice the conduct of that Senator recently from the free platform of Massachusetts, with the odor of her hospitality on him, who stood there, not only silent and quiet while it was going on, but, when it was over, approved the act. And worse: when he had time to cool, when he had slept on it, he went into the Senate Chamber of the United States, and shocked the sensibilities of the world by approving it. Another Senator did not take part because he feared his motives might be questioned, exhibiting as extraordinary a delicacy as that individual who refused to rescue a drowning mortal, because he had not been introduced to him. [Laughter.] Another was not on good terms; and yet, if rumor be true, that Senator has declared that himself and family are more indebted to Mr. Sumner than to any other man; yet, when he saw him borne bleeding by, he turned and went on the other side. Oh, magnanimous SLIDELL! Oh, prudent DOUGLAS! Oh, audacious TOOMBS!

Sir, there are questions arising out of facts which far transcend those of a mere personal nature. Of those personal considerations I shall speak, when the question comes properly before us, if I am permitted to do so. The higher question involves the very existence of the Government itself. If, sir, freedom of speech is not to remain to us, what is all this Government worth? If we from Massachusetts, or any other State—Senators, or members of the House—are to be called to account by some "gallant nephew" of some "gallant uncle," when we utter something which does not suit their sensitive natures, we desire to know it. If the conflict is to be transferred from this peaceful intellectual field, to one where, it is said, "honors are easy and responsibilities equal," then we desire to know it. Massachusetts, if her sons and representatives are to have the rod held over them, if these things are to continue, the time may come—though she utters no threats—when she may be called upon to withdraw them to her own bosom, where she can furnish to them that protection which is not vouchsafed to them under the flag of their common country. But, while she permits us to remain, we shall do our duty—our whole duty. We shall speak whatever we choose to speak, when we will, where we will, and how we will, regardless of all consequences.

Sir, the sons of Massachusetts are educated at the knees of their mothers, in the doctrines of peace and good will, and, God knows, they desire to cultivate those feelings—feelings of social kindness, and public kindness. The House will bear witness that we have not violated or trespassed upon any of them; but, sir, if we are pushed too long and too far, there are men from the old Commonwealth of Massachusetts who will not shrink from a defence of freedom of speech, and the honored State they represent, on any field where they may be assailed.

KANSAS AFFAIRS.

SPEECH OF HON. JAMES MEACHAM

Of Vermont,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

April 30, 1856.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. MEACHAM said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In rising to address the Committee at this time, I cannot fail to be reminded that you* and I have been here together before; nor can I fail to recall the scenes through which we passed six years since. Then, as now, there was an agitation in regard to the Territories of this Union; and I believe there was a great deal more animosity on the subject than there is even now. The Territories were different, but the same principles lay at the bottom of the agitation then and now. Time has passed on, and dealt far more kindly with you than with me; and upon your healthy and joyous countenance there are fewer marks of the plough-share, and far fewer furrows upon your brow than upon mine. I cannot but be reminded that there are now only about fifteen men here who were together then. I have said, sir, that the principles which we were agitating at that time—although in relation to different Territories—were the same as those we are agitating now. And you will recognise the fact that probably never, in the history of the world, has there been agitation in relation to Territories so rich, so large, so fertile, and in their anticipated destinies so prosperous, as those then and now under consideration.

We often, in reading a book, find out on a reperusal a good many things of importance which we had passed over in the first reading. It was so in reading the last Presidential message. There are eighteen columns of the *Congressional Globe* occupied in it. The President has discussed in ten columns our condition as to war and peace, the army, and the navy, and the revenue, and the tariff, and the public lands, and then he has gone abroad and discussed our foreign relations. And after he had gone over the whole American continent, and gone abroad over the rest of the world, he comes home, and devotes eight columns out of eighteen in reference to the controversy between the North and South. Eight mortal columns of the *Congressional Globe* are devoted to the agitation of Slavery; and throughout the whole he lays the entire blame upon the North, and excuses in every respect, and in every possible way, the South!

Now, remember by whom that is done. It is done by a President whose nomination was made at Baltimore, where the party was pledged that the man coming into power should not agitate the subject of Slavery, and should not promote sectional agitation. The President himself came out in a speech, and promised the same thing. He came out afterwards in his inaugural, and repeated the pledge over and over again. It was repeated again through the votes which he got in this House. After all that, there stands the eight columns of agitation. And I venture to say—and I say candidly and honestly—that, of all the abolition documents that ever I read, I never read eight columns better calculated to promote sectional agitation than these eight columns of the President's message. No such thing can be found in any other official document of the United States.

One of the points which the President makes is the aggression inflicted on the South by the North. I will read an extract from the message:

"It is impossible to present this subject as truth and the occasion require, without noticing the reiterated but groundless allegation, that the South has persistently asserted claims and obtained advantages in the practical administration of the General Government, to the prejudice of the North, and in which the latter has acquiesced—that is, the States, which either promote or tolerate attacks on the rights of persons and of property in other States, to disguise their own injustice, pretend or imagine, and constantly aver, that they, whose constitutional rights are thus systematically assailed, are themselves the aggressors. At the present time, this imputed aggression, resting, as it does, only in the vague, declamatory charges of political agitators, resolves itself into misapprehension, or misinterpretation, of the principles and facts of the political organization of the new Territories of the United States."

[Mr. Meacham then proceeded to exhibit a colored map of Texas, to show what portion of the Territory was given to Freedom, and what to Slavery.]

Where is now (said he) the territory which was then declared free? It has been given over to New Mexico and Kansas, with the permission to fill it with Slavery if they please. There [indicating it on the map] is the southern boundary of Kansas, and that has gone into Kansas with the permission to fill that with slaves. The only portion of free territory which remains of all that we were to have is just that little red patch. It is a degree and a half of longitude in length, and half a degree of latitude in width. That is what remains. There is the promise made to us, and there is the manner in which it is kept. That little patch of territory is all we have to show that the free States were ever recognised in the distribution. There was once, as you will remember from reading Prescott, a territory in the mountains of Mexico. It was a Republic; and while the hosts of Spain were pouring over all the rest of Mexico, that little Republic maintained its independence for fifty years; and so perfectly determined were they to maintain their independence, that they were fifty years without ever tasting salt, because they could not get down to the ocean. I trust the time will come when in these settled Territories there will be a body of republicans who will have the same spirit and determination to maintain their freedom, come what will. I have shown you, then, what has become of that portion of territory. There [indicating it] is what the slave States have got, and there is what the free States have got.

The President has made the establishment of the Missouri Compromise line one of the great aggressions of the North against the South. That line has been broken up—we think, unjustly broken up. It was made by our fathers, and ratified by their children. But there was something promised in the place of that line. What was it? It was that the people in Kansas should have the right to govern themselves. And the great struggle is, at the present hour, not whether we will restore the Missouri Compromise, but whether they will keep the promise made, when that Compromise was abrogated, to the ear, and break it to the hope!

A year before the Nebraska and Kansas bill was passed, another bill was passed by this House for the organization of this Territory; and I believe it gave joy throughout the whole land. It contained no provision in it for the abrogation of any compromise. It stood before us as free territory, and emigrants said, "We will go to that Territory, the inheritance of our fathers, and we will keep it free. We will go there fearless of any encroachment upon the part of Slavery; we will go there and enjoy a free State." But another year came, and another bill came along with it. That bill promised that every man who went there should go there upon an equality with every other man, so far as political rights were concerned.

Now, sir, all the new territories settled by the Old World were settled in masses; men did not go out singly from their homes. It was so in the settlements made in this country. Such was the fact in the settlement of Virginia, of South Carolina, of Connecticut, of Massachusetts.

But, sir, we hear a great deal of complaint in these days about emigration aid societies. Now, suppose that here is a company of men coming from London to Plymouth. Suppose a hundred men were to come, and you see a man rushing to the King, breathless, exclaiming, "Why, men are emigrating here in masses!" "Well, what of it?" "Why, they have no right to come here in masses. Let every man row his own boat. Let them come singly, and I will not object, but here they come in whole ship-loads." Well, sir, there was an emigrant aid society for the encouragement of the Plymouth colony. Every man who came to Plymouth Rock mortgaged his services for ten years, in order that he might have his expenses paid, and an allowance for his support after he arrived.

And the same thing might be said in respect to the emigrants from Greece to Asia Minor, Italy, and Sicily. Those who emigrated were generally persons composing a minority, who, having been defeated in their political struggles, did not care to be taunted with it; and hence they preferred going to a foreign country. But they were in a different situation in some respects. They went out without law—independent of law—with the right to make their own laws. But there was another thing in regard to these emigrant aid societies; those who stayed at home were bound to pay the expenses of those who went abroad. This was just as much a settled law in that community as any other law that ever existed there.

There was another emigation which, in one respect, and only one, bears a resemblance to those who are now going West. There was a body of men who went out from a certain country for the purpose of going to the land of Freedom. That was their professed mission. Well, sir, they obtained permission to go; and on a certain night, by the help of emigrant aid societies, they started. On that night there were three millions of people started out from Egypt. There were among them six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms. But Pharoah said that was too much. These men were emigrating in too large masses, and he started out after them—not to control them at the ballot-box, but to hinder them from going. But he did not hinder them. They started out for the promised land, not one fifth part of the distance to Kansas, but they did not go directly there. In the course of two years, however, they came to a river, which only separated them from the promised land. They were not, however, fit to enter, and they turned back into the wilderness; and, after thirty-eight years, these six hundred thousand men, capable of bearing arms, again arrived at the promised land; they crossed the river, and Freedom was theirs. They were then trained men—every man trained to his place.

There is a body of men—not going out of Egypt—but from the Northern country to the West. They are not going there armed. They are in practice unacquainted with arms; but they will have their training if it be necessary. They will break the depths of the forest gloom as they tramp their way through the wilderness, and the wilderness will shake beneath their tread, because it will be the tread of a host of freemen. But there will be no going back.

Well, we are told that Northern men have always backed out, and that they will back out on this occasion. No, sir; we have got where we cannot back out. Why taunt the men who hold for the right of the admission of Kansas into the Union, as men lacking courage and high patriotic spirit? They are descendants of good men, always earnest in the cause of Freedom. Heman Allen, as one of the Representatives of Vermont, showed himself a strong assailant of Slavery at the time of the admission of Arkansas, and it was thought fit to sneer at him as buried "way off up in the mountains." Go and stand by the grave of Heman Allen. There will be presented one of the finest scenes ever presented to the eye of man. Could you lengthen your vision, and clip the top of the mountain forests, you might see Arnold on the perilous way to Quebec. You may see him wounded. You may see where Wolfe fell, and where Montgomery died. You may track that army when pestilence hung over it, and death was dripping from her wings. You will see Burgoyne starting his career on the lake, and making