thority, of the several States over the subject of slavery, as it exists within their respective limits. All this appears to me to be a matter of plain and imperative duty.

"But when we come to speak of admitting new States, the subject assumes an entirely different aspect. Our rights and our duties are then both different. * * * *

"I see, therefore, no political necessity for the annexation of Texas to the Union—no advantages to be derived from it, and objections to it of a strong, and, in my judgment, of a decisive character."

Mr. Webster. I have nothing, sir, to add nor to take back from these sentiments. That, sir, you will perceive, and the Senate will perceive, was in 1837. The purpose of immediately annexing Texas at that time was abandoned or postponed. It was not revived with any vigor for some years. In the mean time, it so happened that I had become a member of the executive administration, and was there for a short period, in the Department of State. The annexation of Texas was a common subject of conversation—not confidential—with the President and heads of departments, as it was with other public men. But no serious attempt was made to bring it about.

I left the Department of State in May, 1843, and shortly after I learned from a source in no way connected with official information, that a design had been taken up to bring Texas with her slave territory and population into the United States.

I was here in Washington, and persons are now here who well remember that we had an arranged meeting for conversation upon it. I went home to Massachusetts, and proclaimed the existence of that purpose; but I could get very little attention. Some would not believe it, and some were engaged in their own pursuits. They had gone to their farms or to their merchandise. It was impossible to raise any sentiment in New England, or even in Massachusetts, that should combine the two parties against annexation; and, indeed, there was no hope, from the first, of bringing the northern democracy into it. Even with the whigs, and leading whigs, I am ashamed to say, there was a great indifference concerning the annexation of Texas with her slave territory into this Union. At that time I was out of Congress. The annexation resolutions passed the 1st of March, 1845. The legislature of Texas complied with the conditions and accepted the guaranties; for the phraseology of the annexation resolutions is, that Texas is to come in "on the conditions and under the guaranties herein prescribed."

I happened to be returned to the Senate in March, 1845, and was here in December, 1845, when the acceptance by Texas of the conditions proposed by Congress was laid before us by the President, and an act for the consummation of the connexion was before the two houses. The connexion was completed. A final law, doing the deed of annexation, was ultimately adopted. When it was on its passage here, I expressed my opposition to it, and recorded my vote; and there the vote stands, with the observations I made upon that occasion. It happened, between 1837 and this time, that, on various occasions and opportunities, I have expressed my entire opposition to the admission of slave States, or the acquisition of new slave territory to be added to the United States. I know no change in my own sentiments or in my own purposes in that respect. I will only now, sir, read very briefly one other extract from a speech of mine, made at a convention held in Springfield, Massachusetts, September 27, 1847:

"We hear much just now of a *panacea* for the dangers and evils of slavery and slave annexation, which they call the '*Wilmot Proviso*.' That certainly is a just sentiment, but it is not a sentiment on which Massachusetts whigs differ. There is not a man in this hall who holds to it more finally than I do, nor one who adheres to it more than another.

"I feel some little interest in this matter, sir. Did not I commit myself in 1838 to the whole doctrine fully, entirely! And I must be permitted to say that I cannot quite consent that more recent discoverers should claim the merit and take out a patent.

"I deny the priority of the invention. Allow me to say, sir, it is not their thunder. * * *

"We are to use the first and last and every occasion which offers to oppose the extension of slave power.

"But I speak of it here, as in Congress, as a political question—a question for statesmen to act upon. We must so regard it. I certainly do not mean to say that it is less important in a moral point of view, that it is not more important in many other points of view: but, as a legislator, or in any official capacity, I must look at it, consider it, and decide it, as a matter of political action."

On other occasions, sir, and in debates here, I have expressed my determination to vote for no acquisitions or annexations, North, South, East, or West. My opinion has been that we have territory enough, and that we should use the Spartan maxim: "Improve, adorn what you have; seek no further."

I think, sir, that it was in some observations I made here on the three-million loan bill, that I avowed that sentiment. It is short; and the sentiment has been avowed quite as often, in as many places, and before as many of the people of the United States, as any humble sentiment of mine has been avowed.

But now, sir, what is our condition? Texas is in, with all her territories, as a slave State, with solemn pledges that if she is divided into many States, those States may come in as slave States south of 36 degrees 30 minutes. How are we to deal with them? I know of no way of honorable legislation, but, when the time comes for enactment, to carry into effect all that we have stipulated. I do not agree with my honorable friend from Tennessee, that as soon as there is room for another representative, according to numbers, we should create a new State. The truth, with regard to that, I think to be this: When we have created new States out of Territories, we have generally gone upon the idea that when there was population enough to entitle them to a member—60,000, or some such number—we should create a State. It may be thought a different thing, where a State is divided, and two or three are made out of one. It does not follow that the same rule of apportionment must prevail. But that, sir, is a matter for the consideration of Congress. When the proper time arrives, I may not be here. I may have no vote to give on the occasion; but I wish to be distinctly understood this day, that according to my view of the matter, this government is solemnly pledged by law to create new States out of Texas, with her consent, when her population shall justify such a proceeding, and, so far as those new States are formed out of Texan territory lying south of 36 degrees 30 minutes, to let them in as slave States. That is the meaning of the resolution which our friends, the northern democracy, have left us here to fulfil; and I, for one, mean to fulfil it, because I will not violate the faith of the government.

Now, sir, as to California and New Mexico: I hold slavery to be excluded from those territories by a law even superior to that which admits and sanctions slavery in Texas—I mean the law of nature—the law of physical geography—the law of the formation of the earth. That law settles forever, with a strength beyond all terms of human enactment, that slavery cannot exist in California or New Mexico. Understand me, sir; I mean slavery as we regard it—slaves in the gross, of the colored race, transferrable by sale and delivery as other property. I shall not contest the point. I leave that to the learned gentlemen who have undertaken to discuss it; but I suppose that there are no slaves of that description in Mexico now, and suppose there never will be. I understand that this peonage, this sort of feudal servitude in which men are sold for debt, exists in California and in some parts of Mexico. But what I mean to say is, that the existence of African slavery, as we see it here among us, is as utterly impossible to find itself, or to be found in Mexico as any other natural impossibility upon anything else. Why, sir, California and New Mexico are Asiatic in their formation and their scenery. They are composed of vast ridges of mountains, of an enormous height, sometimes broken by deep valleys. The sides of these mountains are barren—entirely barren. Their tops are capped by perennial snows. There may be in California, now made free by her constitution—and there are, no doubt—some tracts of valuable lands; but it is much less valuable when you get into New Mexico. Pray what is the evidence upon this subject, which any gentleman has collected by information sought by himself, or stated by others? I have read all I could read, and learned all I could learn upon the subject. What is there in New Mexico that could by possibility induce any body to go there with a slave? There are some narrow strips of tillable land upon the borders of the rivers; but the rivers themselves dry up before midsummer. All that the native people there can do is to raise some little articles—some little wheat and other grain for their own use, and all that by irrigation. Who ever expects to see a hundred black men cultivating tobacco, corn, cotton, rice, anything, on lands in New Mexico, made fertile by irrigation? I look upon it, therefore, as a fixed fact—to use a current expression of the day—that both California and New Mexico are destined to be free, so far as they are settled at all—which I believe, especially with regard to New Mexico, will be very little for a great length of time—free by the arrangement of things, by the powers above us.

And I have therefore, sir, to say in this respect also, that this country is fixed for freedom to as many persons as shall ever live there by an irrepealable law—a more irrepealable law than the law which appeals to the right of holding slaves under legal enactments. And I will say further, sir, that if a resolution or a law were now before us to provide a territorial government for New Mexico, I would vote to put in no prohibition whatever. The use of any such prohibition would be idle as it respects any effect upon the Territory. I would not take pains to reaffirm an ordinance of nature, or to re-enact the will of God. I would put in no Wilmot proviso for the purpose of taunt and reproach—as evidence of superior votes or superior power—to wound the pride even—whether a just and rational pride, or an irrational pride—to wound the pride of the gentlemen and people of the Southern States. I have no such object and no such purpose. They would think it a taunt and an indignity. They would think it to be an act taking away from them what they regard as a proper equality of privilege. Whether they are expected to realize any benefits from it or not, they would feel that at least a theoretic wrong—something derogatory, in some degree, more or less, to their character—had taken place. I need not inflict any such wound upon the feelings of anybody, unless in a case where something essentially important to the country and efficient to the preservation of liberty and freedom is to be effected. Therefore I repeat sir,—and I repeat it because I wish to be understood about it—I do not propose to address the Senate often upon this subject. I desire to pour out all my heart as plainly as possible. I say, therefore, sir, that if the proposition were now here for a government for New Mexico, and it was moved to insert a provision for the prohibition of slavery, I would not vote for it.

Now, Mr. President, I have established, so far as I propose to go into any observations to establish, the proposition with which I set out—upon which I mean to stand or to fall; that is, that the whole territory in the States of the United States, or in newly acquired Territories of the United States, has a fixed and settled character now—fixed and settled by law, which cannot be repealed, in the case of Texas, without violation of public faith, and which cannot be repealed by any human power in regard to California and New Mexico. Under one or the other of these laws, every foot of territory in the States or in the Territories has now received a fixed and a decided character. Sir, if we were now making a government for New Mexico, and anybody should propose the Wilmot proviso, I should treat it exactly as Mr. Polk treated that proposition for excluding slavery from Oregon. Mr. Polk was known to be in opinion decidedly adverse to the Wilmot proviso, but he felt the necessity of a law for the government of the Territory of Oregon. And though the Wilmot proviso was there, he knew it would be a perfectly nugatory proviso; and since it must be entirely nugatory, since it took away no describable, estimable, weightable, or tangible right of the South, he said he would sign the bill for the sake of enacting a law for the government of the Territory, and let that entirely useless—and in that connection entirely senseless—Proviso remain. For myself, I will say—we hear of the annexation of Canada—if there be any man, any of the northern democracy, or any of the free-soil party, who suppose it necessary to insert a Wilmot proviso in the territorial government of New Mexico, that man will of course be of opinion that it is necessary to protect the everlasting snows of Canada from the foot of slavery, by the same overpowering wing of Congress. Now, sir, wherever there is a practical good to be done, wherever there is an inch of land to be stayed back from becoming a slave territory, I am ready to insert the principle of the exclusion of slavery. I am pledged to that from 1827—pledged to it again and again—and I will perform those pledges. But I will not do a thing unnecessarily that wounds the feelings of others, or that does disgrace to my own understanding.

Mr. President, in the excited times in which we live, there is found to exist a state of mutual crimination and recrimination between the South and the North. There are lists of grievances produced by each; and these grievances, really, I suppose, alienate the minds of one portion of the country from the other, exasperate the feelings, subdue the sense of fraternal connexion, of patriotic love, and mutual regard. I shall bestow a little attention upon these various grievances, produced by the one side and the other. I begin with the complaints of the South. I will not answer further than I have the general statement of the honorable member from South Carolina, [Mr. Calhoun,] that the North has grown upon the South, in consequence of the manner of administering this government, collecting its revenue, &c. They are disputed topics which I have no inclination to enter into; but I will state these complaints, and especially one complaint of the South which has, in my opinion, just foundation; which is, that there has been found at the North, among individuals, and among Legislatures of the North, a disinclination to perform their constitutional duties in regard to the return of persons bound to service who have escaped into those States. In that respect, it is my judgment that the South is right and the North is wrong. Every member of every Northern Legislature is bound by oath to support the Constitution of the United States; and this article of the Constitution, which says to these States that they shall deliver up fugitive slaves, is as binding in honor and in conscience as any other article; and no man fulfils his duty, under his oath, in any State Legislature, who sets himself to work to find excuses, evasions, escapes from this constitutional duty. I have always thought that the constitution addressed itself to the legislatures of the States or to the States themselves. It says that those persons escaping into other States shall be delivered up; and I confess I have always been of opinion that that was an injunction upon the States themselves. It is said that a person escaping into another State, and becoming therefore within the jurisdiction of that State, shall be delivered up. It seems to me that the plain import of the passage is, that the State itself, in obedience to the injunction of the constitution, shall cause him to be delivered up. This is my judgment; I have always entertained, and I entertain it now. But when the subject came, some years before, under the consideration of the Supreme Court of the United States, the majority of the judges held that the power to cause the fugitive from justice to be delivered up was a power to be exercised under the authority of this government. I do not know, upon the whole, that that may not have been a fortunate decision. I do not say that it is not a legal decision. My habit is to respect the results of judicial deliberation and the solemnity of judicial decisions; but, as it now stands, the business of seeing that these fugitives are delivered up resides in the power of Congress and the national judicature. My friend at the head of the Judiciary Committee has a bill upon that subject now before the Senate, with some amendments to it, which have been offered.

I propose to support that bill, with all proper authority and provisions in it, to the fullest extent. I desire to call the attention of all sober men, and conscientious men, in the North—men carried away by no fanatical ideas—to their constitutional obligations upon this question and in this respect. I put it to all sober and sound men in the North, as a question of morals—a question of conscience—what right they have, in their legislative capacities, any of them, to endeavor to get round this constitution, and embarrass the free exercise of the rights secured by the constitution to all persons whose slaves escape from them? None at all—none at all. Neither in the forum of conscience nor before the face of the constitution can they justify that, in my opinion. Of course it is a matter for their own consideration. They probably in the turmoil of thought, without having stopped to consider of it, fell, as it seems to me, into a current of thought in which they imagined they found motives for their action: and they neglected to investigate fully the real question of the case—to consider the constitutional obligation, which, I am sure, if they did consider, they would fulfill with alacrity. I therefore repeat, here is a ground of complaint against the North, well-founded, which ought to be removed—which it is now in the power of the different departments of this government to remove—which calls for the enactment of a proper law, authorizing the judicatures of the several States of this government to do all that is necessary for the recapture of fugitive slaves, and the restoration of them to those who claim them. Wherever I go, and wherever I speak upon the subject—I speak here, and desire to speak to the people of the whole North—I say that the South has been injured in this respect. It has a right to complain. The North has been too careless upon what I think the constitution peremptorily and emphatically enjoins upon it as a duty.

Complaint is made again, sir, of the resolutions that emanate from the several State Legislatures and are sent here to us, not only upon the subject of slavery in this District, but sometimes recommending Congress to consider the means of abolishing slavery in the States. I should be very sorry to be called upon to present any resolution, not referable to any acknowledged power in Congress; and therefore should be very unwilling to receive from Massachusetts instructions to present resolutions expressing any opinion whatever upon slavery as it exists at the present moment in the States, for two reasons. In the first place, I do not consider that the legislature of Massachusetts has anything to do with it; and, in the next place, I do not consider that I, here, as her representative, have anything to do with it. And if the legislatures of the States do not like it, they have a great deal more power to put it down than I have to uphold it. It has become, in my opinion, quite too common a practice of State legislatures to present resolutions upon all subjects, and instructing us here upon all subjects. There is no public man that needs instruction more than I do, or needs information more than I do, or desires it more than I do; but I do not like to have it come in too imperative a shape. I noticed with pleasure some remarks made the other day in the Senate of Massachusetts by a young man of talent, standing and character, for whom the best hopes are entertained upon the subject—I mean Mr. Hilliard. He told the Senate of Massachusetts that he would vote for no instructions whatever to be forwarded to members of Congress, nor for any resolutions whatever expressive of the wishes of Massachusetts, as to what her members of Congress ought to do. He said he saw no propriety in one set of public servants giving instructions and reading a lecture to another set of public servants—that to their own master all of them must stand or fall, and that master is their constituents. I wish these sentiments could become more common—greatly more common.

I have never entered into the question, and never shall, about the binding force of instructions. I will say simply this: that if there be any interest pending in either of these bodies, where I am a member, and Massachusetts has in that question any particular interest of her own, not adverse to the general interest of the country, I shall pursue her instructions with gladness of heart, and with all the efficiency that I can bring to it. But if the question be one that affects her interests, and at the same time affects the interests of the people of all the other States, I should feel myself no more bound to regard her particular wishes and instructions than if I were chosen a referee or an arbitrator, to decide upon a question of important private rights, I should feel myself bound to regard the instructions of the man that appointed me. If there ever was a government upon earth, it is this government—if there ever was a body upon earth, it is this body, which should consider itself as composed by an agreement of all; appointed by some, but organized by general consent of all; sitting here under obligations of oath and conscience to do that which they consider as best for the good of the whole.

Then, sir, there are those abolition societies, of which I am very unwilling to speak, but in regard to which I have very fixed notions and opinions. I do not think them useful. I think their operations for the last twenty years have produced nothing that is good or valuable. At the same time I know that thousands of them are very honest and good men, perfectly well-meaning. They have excited feelings. They think they must do something for the cause of liberty, and in their sphere of action they do not see what else they can do, but to contribute to an abolition press, or an abolition society, or to pay an abolition lecturer. I do not mean to impute gross motives even to the leaders of those societies; but I am not blind to the consequences; I cannot but see what mischief their interference with the South has accomplished. Is it not plain to every man? Let any gentleman who doubts all this recur to the debates of the Virginia House of Delegates in 1832. See with what freedom the proposition made by Mr. Randolph for the gradual abolition of slavery was discussed in that House of Delegates. Every-body spoke of slavery as they thought; and very ignominious and disreputable names and epithets were applied to it freely. The debates of the House of Delegates were all published. They were read by every colored man who could read; and if there was not a colored man who could read, they were read by white men to colored men who could not read. At that time Virginia was not unwilling or afraid to discuss this whole question, and to let that particular part of her population know as much of it as they could learn. That was in 1832.

As has been said by the honorable member from South Carolina, these abolition societies commenced their course of action in 1835. It is said—I know not with what truth—that they sent incendiary publications into the slave States. At any event they attempted to arouse, and did arouse a very strong feeling—in other words, created a great agitation in the North against Southern slavery. What was the result? The bands of slavery were bound tighter. The rivets were more strongly fastened. Public opinion in Virginia, just then opening to the free discussion of this question, drew back, and shut itself up in its castle. I wish to know now whether anybody in Virginia can talk as Mr. Randolph and Gov. McDowell talked in Virginia? They talked openly, and sent their remarks to the press in 1832, we all know; and we all know the cause. Everything that the agitating people have done has been not to enlarge, but to restrain; not to set free, but to bind faster the slave population of the South. That is my judgment.

As I have said, I know many of them in my own neighborhood are very honest and good people—misled, as I think, by a strange enthusiasm; but wishing to do something, they feel called upon to contribute, and they do contribute. It is my firm opinion this day, that within the last twenty years as much money has been collected and paid to abolition societies, abolition presses, and abolition lecturers, as would purchase the freedom of every slave—man, woman, and child—in the State of Maryland, and send them all to Liberia. I have no doubt of it. I have not learned that the benevolence of the abolition societies has at any time taken that particular turn.

Again, sir, the violence of the press is complained of. The press is violent everywhere. There are outrages—reproaches in the North against the South, and reproaches in not much better taste in the South against the North. The extremists of both parties of the country are violent. They mistake loud and violent talk for eloquence and for reason. They think he who talks loudest reasons the best. We must expect that where the press is free, as it is here, and always will be—for, with all its licentiousness and all its evils, an entire and absolute freedom of the press is essential for the preservation of the government on the basis of a free constitution—wherever that exists, there will be foolish paragraphs and violent paragraphs in the press, as there are. I am sorry to say, foolish speeches and violent speeches in the houses of Congress. In short, sir, I must say that, in my opinion, the vernacular tongue of the country has become greatly vitiated, depraved, and corrupted by the style of Congress debates. [Laughter.] And if it were possible for our debates in Congress to vitiate the principles of the people, as much as they have depraved their tastes, I should cry out, God save the republic! Well, sir, in all this I see no solid grievance—no grievance within the redress of government—produced by the South, but the single one to which I have referred—the want of proper regard for the injunctions of the constitution, about the restoration of fugitive slaves.

Now, sir, there are complaints of the North against the South. I need not go over them particularly. The first and the gravest is—considering that the North entered into the constitution recognizing the existence of slavery in the States, and recognizing the right, to a certain extent, of the representation of slaves in Congress, under a state of sentiment and expectation which does not now exist—that the North by events, by circumstances, by the eagerness of the South to acquire territory and to extend a slave population, finds itself, in regard to its respective influence of the South and North, of the free States and slave States, where it never did expect to find itself when they entered into the constitution. They complain, therefore, that instead of being regarded as an evil, as it was then—an evil which all hoped would go out gradually—it is now regarded by the South and cherished as an institution to be preserved and extended, and is an institution which the South has extended to the utmost of its power, by the acquisition of new territory.

Then, sir, passing from that, every body in the North reads—every body reads whatsoever the newspapers contain; and the newspapers, some of them, and especially those presses to which I have alluded, are careful to spread among the people every reproachful sentiment uttered by any Southern man, high or low, against the North. Every thing that is calculated to exasperate—every thing that is calculated to alienate—and there are many such things, as every body will admit, in the South or some portions of it—is spread abroad among the reading people. And they do exasperate—they do alienate—they do produce a most mischievous effect upon the public mind of the North. I would not notice things of this sort, appearing in obscure quarters; but one thing has occurred in this debate which has struck me very forcibly.

The honorable senator from Louisiana, [Mr. Downs] addressed us here the other day upon this subject. I suppose there is not a more amiable or worthy gentleman in this chamber. I suppose there is not a gentleman more slow to give offence to anybody. He did not mean in his remarks to give offence to anybody. What did he say? He undertook to run a contrast between the slaves of the South and the laboring people of the North, giving the preference in all points—in condition, comfort and happiness—to the slaves of the South. I repeat, sir, that he did not suppose he was giving any offence or doing any injustice. He was expressing his opinions. But does he know how a remark of that sort will be received by the laboring people of the North? They are the North. They are the people who cultivate their farms with their own hands—free-holders—educated men—independent men; and let me say, sir, that five-sixths of the whole property of the North is in the hands of the laborers of the North. They cultivate their farms; they educate their children; they provide means of independence. If they are not free-holders, they earn wages. Wages accumulate, and are turned into capital. New free-holders and new small capitalists are created. That is the condition of things at the North. And what can these people think, when so respectable and worthy a gentleman as the member from Louisiana undertakes to prove that the absolute ignorance and abject slavery of the South are more in conformity with the high purposes of immortal, rational, human beings than the educated and independent condition of the free laborers of the North?

Now, sir, so far as any of these grievances have their foundation in matters of law, they can be redressed. So far as they have their foundation in matters of opinion, in sentiments, in mutual crimination and recrimination, all we can do is to endeavor to allay them—to endeavor to cultivate a better feeling and more fraternal sentiments between the South and the North.

Mr. President, I should much prefer to have heard from every member upon this floor declarations of opinion that this Union could never be dissolved than the declarations of opinion that in any case, under the pressure of any circumstances, such a dissolution was possible. I hear with pain, and anguish, and distress, the word secession, when it falls from the lips of those who are eminent, patriotic, known to the country, and known all over the world, for their political services. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. The dismemberment of this vast country without convulsion! The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep without ruffling the surface! Who is foolish enough—I beg every-body's pardon—who is foolish enough to expect to see any such thing? Sir, he who sees these States, now revolving in harmony around one common centre, and expects to see them quit their places, and fly off, without convulsions, may look out the next day to see the heavenly bodies rush from their spheres, and jostle against each other in the realms of space, without producing a crush of the universe. Such a thing as peaceable secession! It is utterly impossible. Is this constitution under which we live here, covering this whole country, to be thawed and melted away by secession, as the snows on the mountains are melted under the influence of a vernal sun, to disappear almost unobserved, and to die off? No, sir; no, sir.

I will not state what might produce the disruption of these States. I see it as plainly as I see the sun in Heaven; and should it happen it must produce such a war as I will not describe in its two-fold character. Peaceable secession! Peaceable secession! A concurrent agreement of all the members of this great republic to separate. A voluntary separation, alimony on one side or the other! What would be the result? Where is the line to be drawn? What States are to be associated? What is to remain American? What am *I* to be? Where is the flag to remain? Where is the eagle still to tower? or is he to cower, and shrink, and fall to the ground? Why, sir, our ancestors, our fathers and grand-fathers, those of them who still remain among us, by reason of prolonged life, would rebuke us and reproach us, and our children and grandchildren would cry out shame upon us, if we of this generation should bring dishonor upon those ensigns of the honor, and power, and harmony of the Union, which we see around us now with so much joy and gratitude. What is to become of the army? What is to become of the navy? What is to become of the public lands? How is each of the thirty States to defend itself? Nay, although the idea has been suggested distinctly that there is to be a southern confederacy—I do not mean, when I allude to this, that any body contemplates it here or elsewhere; I only mean to say that I have heard it suggested—I am sure that the idea cannot be entertained, even in the dream of wildest imagination. But if any separation is looked to, it must be one including the slave States on the one side and the free States on the other.

Sir, I may express myself too strongly; but some things—some moral things—are almost as impossible as natural and physical things; and I hold the idea of a separation of these States into those which are free to form one government, and those which are slaveholding to form another government, is a moral impossibility. We could not separate them by any such line if we were to try. We could not sit down here and draw a line of separation that would suit any five men in the country. There are natural causes which bind us together, and keep us together, so that we could not break them if we would, and I hope that we would not break them if we could.

Looking over the face of this country at the present moment, nobody can see where its population exists, where its population is most growing, without being compelled to admit that ere long America will be in the Valley of the Mississippi. Now I beg to know what the wildest enthusiast has to say upon the possibility of cutting off half of that river, leaving the free States at its sources and amongst its branches, and slave States down near its mouth. Remember, sir, remember—let me say to the people of this country—that there in the North-west, is to be the storehouse of the population of America. There are already five millions of freemen in the free States North of the river Ohio. Does anybody suppose that this population can be severed by a line that divides them from a foreign and alien government, down somewhere—the Lord knows where—on the lower branches of the Mississippi? What will become of the Missouri? Shall she join with the slave State *arrondissement?* Shall the man from the Yellow Stone be connected in the new republic with the man who lives on the Southern extremity of Florida? I am ashamed to pursue this line of remark. I dislike it. I have an utter disgust for it. I had rather hear of natural blasts and mildews, of war, pestilence and famine, than to hear gentlemen talk of secession, of breaking up this great government, of dismembering this great country. It would be to astonish Europe with an act of folly such as Europe for two centuries past never beheld in any country. No, sir; gentlemen are not serious when they talk of secession and dissolution.

I hear that there is to be a Convention at Nashville. I am one who believes that if those worthy gentlemen meet at all at Nashville, in convention, their object will be to adopt counsels of moderation—to advise the South to forbearance and moderation, and to advise the North to measures of forbearance and moderation, inculcating principles of brotherly love, and affection, and attachment in every part of our common country. I believe, if they meet at all, they will meet for such purposes; for, certainly, sir, if they meet for any purpose hostile to this Union, they have been singularly unfortunate and inappropriate in their selection of a place of meeting. I remember that when the treaty was concluded between France and England, at the peace of *Amiens*, a stern old Englishman, an orator, who disapproved of the terms of that peace as dishonorable to England, said, in the House of Commons, that if King William could know the terms of that treaty, he would turn in his coffin. Let me commend that saying in all its emphasis and all its force, if anybody should think of meeting at Nashville, for the purpose of concerting measures for the overthrow of the Union of these States, over the bones of Andrew Jackson!

Sir, I wish to make two remarks, and hasten to a conclusion. I wish to say, in regard to Texas, that, if it should be hereafter at any time the pleasure of the government of Texas to cede to the United States a portion, larger or smaller, which lies adjoining to New Mexico, and North of the 34th degree of North latitude, for a fair equivalent in money for the payment of her debts, I think it an object well worthy of the consideration of this body. I concur in it myself; and if I should be in the public councils of the nation at that time, it would give me pleasure to aid in the consummation of such an arrangement.

I have one other remark to make. In my observations upon slavery, as it has existed in the country, or as it now exists, I have expressed no opinion of the mode of its extinction or amelioration. I will say, however—though I have nothing to propose on that subject, because I do not feel myself so competent as gentlemen who are themselves more intimately connected with slavery—that, if any gentleman from the South shall propose a scheme of colonization, to be carried on by this government upon a large scale, for the transportation of the free colored people to any colony, or to any place in the world, I should be quite disposed to incur almost any degree of expense to accomplish that object. Nay, sir, following an example set here more than twenty years ago by a great man, a senator from New York, I would propose to return to Virginia, and to the South through her, all the moneys received from the sale of the territory ceded by her to this government, for any such purpose—to deal beneficially in any way with the free colored people of the Southern States. There have been received into the treasury of the United States eighty millions of dollars, the proceeds of the public lands ceded by Virginia, which have been already sold; and if the residue shall be sold at the same rate, the whole will amount to more than two hundred millions of dollars. Now, if Virginia and the South see fit to make any proposition to relieve themselves from the burden of their free colored population, they have my free consent that this government should pay them, out of those proceeds, any sum of money adequate to that end.

Now, Mr. President, I draw these observations to a close. I have spoken freely; I meant to do so. I have not sought to make any display—to enliven the occasion by any animated discussion. I have sought only to speak my sentiments freely and at large—being desirous, once and for all, to let the Senate know, to let the country know, the opinions and sentiments which I entertain upon these subjects. These opinions are not likely to be suddenly changed.

If there be any future service which I can render to the country, consistently with these opinions and sentiments, I shall cheerfully render them. If there be none, I shall still be glad to have had the opportunity to disburden my conscience, and from the bottom of my heart to make known every political sentiment upon this subject.

And now, Mr. President, instead of speaking of the possibility or utility of secession—instead of dwelling in these caverns of darkness—instead of groping with these ideas, so full of all that is horrid and horrible—let us come out into the light of day, and cherish those hopes that belong to us; let us devote ourselves to those great objects that are fit for our consideration and our action; let us raise our conceptions to the magnitude and the importance of the duties that are devolved upon us; let our comprehensions be as broad as the country for which we act, and our aspirations as high as its certain destiny. Never did there devolve on any generation of men higher trusts than are now devolved on us for the preservation of this constitution, and the harmony and happiness of all that live under it. It is a great popular constitutional government, guarded by legislation, law, and judicature, and defended by the whole affections of the people. No monarchical throne presses these States together; no iron chain of despotic power encircles them; they live and stand upon a government, popular in its form, representative in its character, founded on principles of equality, calculated to last, we hope, forever. In all its history it has been benificent. It has trodden down no man's liberty; it has crushed no State; it has been in all its influences benevolent and benificent—promotive of the general prosperity, the general glory, and the general renown. And at last it has received a vast addition of territory. It was large before; it has now become vastly larger. This republic now stands with a vast breadth across the whole continent. The two great seas of the world wash the one and the other shore. We may now realize, on a mighty scale, the description of the ornamental edging on the buckler of Achilles:

"Now the broad shield complete, the artist crown'd
With his last hand, and pour'd the ocean round;
In living silver seem'd the waves to roll, —
And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole."

Mr. Calhoun. Mr. President, I rise to correct what I conceive to be the error of the distinguished senator from Massachusetts, as to the motives which induced the admission of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. I have heard with regret the statement that it was the desire of the Southern people to get an extension of territory with the view of cultivating cotton with more success than they would in a crowded settlement. Now, I think the history of this acquisition will not sustain such a view. It is well known that the acquisition of Florida was the result of an Indian war. The Seminole Indians crossed overland and took one of our fortresses. The troops were ordered out, but were driven back. Then, under the command of Gen. Jackson, Pensacola was seized. It was these acts, and not the desire for more territory, that caused the acquisition of Florida. I admit, however, that it had been for a long time the desire, on the part of the South, and of the administration, I believe, to acquire Florida; but it was very different from the reason assigned by the senator. There were collected together in that territory four tribes of Indians—the Creek, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Cherokee—about 30,000 warriors, who held connexion, almost the whole of them, with the Spanish authorities in Florida, and had their trade principally with them. It was well known that a most pernicious influence was at work there; and it was in the desire of preventing any conflict between those Indians, and ourselves, and Spain, that may be found the motive which induced the desire to acquire Florida.

I come now to Louisiana. You well know that the immediate cause of that acquisition was the suspension of our right of deposite at New Orleans. Under the treaty with Spain, we had the right of navigation of the river as far as New Orleans, and to make deposites there. The Spanish authorities interrupted that right. This brought on great agitation in the West, and, I maintain, throughout the whole of the United States. Some gentlemen then, in opposition to a highly respectable party, if I mistake not, took the lead in the desire of resorting to arms to acquire that Territory. Mr. Jefferson, more prudent, desired it should come in by purchase. The purchase was made to remove that difficulty, and to give to the West an outlet to the ocean. That was the immediate cause of the admission of Louisiana.

Now, sir, I come to Texas. Perhaps no gentleman had more to do with the acquisition of Texas than myself; and I have that I would have been among the very last individuals in the United States to have made any movement at that time towards the acquisition of Texas; and I go further and say, if I know myself, I was incapable of acquiring any territory simply on the ground that it was to be slave territory. No, sir; a very different motive actuated me. I knew at a very early period that the British government had given encouragement to the abolitionists who were represented in the World's Convention. The question of abolition was agitated in that convention; and one gentleman stated that Mr Adams informed him that, if the British government chose to abolish slavery in the United States, they must commence at Texas. A committee was sent from this World's Convention to the British Secretary of State, Lord Aberdeen; and it so happened that a gentleman was present when the interview took place between Lord Aberdeen and the committee, who gave me a full account of it shortly after it occurred. Lord Aberdeen fell into the project, and gave full encouragement to the abolitionists. Well, sir, it is well known that Lord Aberdeen was a very direct, and, in my opinion, a very honest and worthy man; and when Mr. Pakenham was sent here to negotiate with regard to Oregon, and incidentally with respect to Texas, he was ordered to read a declaration to this Government, stating that the British Government was anxious to put an end to slavery all over the world, commencing at Texas. It is well known, further, that at that very time a negotiation was going on between France and England to accomplish that object, and our Government was thrown by stratagem out of the negotiation; and that object was, first, to induce Mexico to acknowledge the independence of Texas upon the ground that she would abolish it. All these are matters of history; and where is the man so blind—I am sure the Senator from Massachusetts is not so blind—as not to see that if the project of Great Britain had been successful, the whole frontier of the States of Louisiana and Arkansas, and the adjacent States would have been exposed to the inroads of British emissaries. Sir, so far as I was concerned, I put it exclusively upon that ground. I never would run into the folly of re-annexation, which I always held to be absurd. Nor, sir, would I put it upon the ground—which I might well have put it—of commercial and manufacturing considerations; because those were not my motive principles, and I chose to assign what were. So far as commerce and manufactures were concerned, I would not have moved in the matter at that early period.

Now, the senator objects to many Northern men throwing the weight of their influence to support the measure of annexation. Well, it was perfectly right that they should be desirous of fulfilling the obligations the constitution imposes. What man of that time doubted but that the compromise of 36 deg 30 min. was constitutional? That territory would have fallen anyhow to the South. All the reasonable men at the North agreed to the extension of that line, so that part of Texas might fall within it. The course was, in my opinion, eminently right and patriotic.

Now, Mr. President, having made these corrections, I most go back a little further, and make a statement which I think the honorable senator has left very defective in reference to the ordinance of 1787. He stated very correctly that it commenced with the old confederation; that it was afterwards confirmed by Congress; that Congress was sitting in New York at the time, and while the Convention was sitting in Philadelphia. Now, I have not looked at that ordinance very recently, but my memory will serve me thus far: Jefferson introduced a proposition to exclude slavery in 1784. There was a vote upon it, and I think upon that vote every southern State voted for it. I am not certain upon this point: therefore, I will not venture my memory upon it. But one thing I will venture further: that it was three years before that ordinance was passed. It never passed till 1787: and it was then only passed, I have good reason to believe, on the principle of compromise, as the ordinance contained a provision similar to the one in the constitution about fugitive slaves, that it should be inserted in the constitution; and this was the compromise upon which that provision was made to commence in 1787. We supposed that in that we had an indemnity. In that, too, we made a great mistake. For what possible advantage do we derive from this stipulation in the ordinance or in the constitution? Broken faith has deprived us of our due share in the Northwest Territory, by an entire exclusion of slavery.

This was the leading question which destroyed the equilibrium. And then followed the Missouri compromise, which was carried mainly by northern votes, although now disavowed and not respected by the North. That was the next step which caused the equilibrum to be broken and destroyed.

Now, sir, after having made these remarks, let me say that I took great pleasure in listening to the honorable Senator from Massachusetts. He put himself upon the fulfillment of the contract in regard to the admission of these four States, stipulated for in the resolutions of annexation. His position was manly and statesmanlike, calculated to produce a better state of feeling between the different portions of the Union. He went further: he has condemned—rightfully condemned, and in that he has shown great firmness—the course of the North relative to the stipulations in the constitution concerning fugitive slaves. But permit me to say—for I desire to be candid upon all subjects—that the senator, I think, as well as many of the friends on the other side put confidence in a bill which has been reported to extend the laws of Congress in relation to the recapture of slaves further, and to make them more penal. It is impossible to make any law of Congress on the subject operative, unless the people of the States shall feel themselves bound to co-operate.

I heard the gentleman also say he would not vote for the Wilmot proviso—that he believed that Nature had already excluded slavery from the new Territories. Now, as far as new acquisition is concerned, I am disposed to leave the question to Nature herself. That is what I always insisted upon. Let that portion of our country which has more naturally a non-slaveholding population be occupied and governed by them, and the other portions by us, destroying the artificial line, although that is perhaps better than none. Mr. Jefferson spoke like a prophet upon the Missouri compromise. Indeed, I am willing to leave it to Nature to settle and organize these Territories. Organize them upon the principle of the gentleman, and give us free scope and a sufficient time to get in—we ask nothing but that, and we never will ask it. When the gentlemen says he is willing to leave it to Nature, I understand that he is willing also to remove all impediments now put in our way, deterring our people from going there—I mean the consummate folly of citing the Mexican law prohibiting slavery in New Mexico and California.

No man would feel more happy than myself to believe that our Union, founded by our ancestors, could live forever. Looking back through the course of forty years I have spent here, I have the consolation to believe that I have never done one act in which I have not done full justice to all sections; and if I am ever expected to the imputation of a contrary motive, it will be because I have been ready to defend my section against unconstitutional laws.

But I cannot agree with the declaration of the Senator that this Union cannot be dissolved. Am I to understand that no degree of oppression, that no outrage, that no broken faith can prevent the destruction of this Union? Why, sir if that becomes a fixed fact, it will be the great instrument of introducing oppression and broken faith. No, sir; the Union can be broken. Great moral causes will do it, if you go on; and it can only be preserved by justice, faith, and rigid adherance to the constitution.

Mr. Webster. I have listened to the honorable member, but the cr