

DEMOCRATIC BANNER.

"UNITED WE STAND—DIVIDED WE FALL."

VOL. 5.] LOUISIANA, PIKE COUNTY, MISSOURI, MONDAY, JUNE 11, 1849. [NO. 8.

The Legislature of Michigan, before its adjournment last winter, adopted the following joint resolutions, submitted by the Hon. E. G. Berry, in the Senate, relative to slavery in the district of Columbia. Let the reflecting men of all parties read them, and then ask themselves who it is that are agitating the slavery question. Resolutions equally strong have been passed by other Northern States:

Resolved, By the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, That the existence of Slavery and the Slave trade at the seat of our National Government, "is an evil of serious magnitude, which greatly impairs the prosperity and peopling of the District, and casts the reproach of inconsistency upon the free institutions established among us."

Resolved, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested to urge the passage of a law that shall put an end to the Slave trade in the District of Columbia without delay, and also provide for ascertaining the views of the people of said District upon the question of the entire abolition of Slavery therein.

Resolved, That the Governor be requested to forward copies of the foregoing resolutions to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress.

The vote on their adoption stood, in the Senate, ayes 17, nays 5—in the House, ayes 37, nays 9.

COL. BENTON'S SPEECH—Continued.

Some search has been made in the department of State for the written opinions of the cabinet, without finding them: but that weighs nothing against the positive testimony that they were there. The wonder would be to find them after 27 years, and so many changes of clerks; and it is to be remembered that no one of Mr. Monroe's cabinet has been Secretary of State since that time but Mr. Calhoun.

The fact is established—established by the rules of evidence which convince the human mind, even the most unwilling—that Mr. Calhoun, as a cabinet minister under Mr. Monroe, supported the constitutionality of the Missouri compromise act. This fact being established, let us see what that act was; and that will be shown by the title to the act—by the act itself—and by the actual condition of the territory in which it was to operate. This is the title:

'An Act to authorize the people of the Missouri territory to form a constitution and State Government, and for the admission of such State into the Union on an equal footing with the original States, and to prohibit slavery in certain territories.'

A very intelligible title this, especially in the concluding clause, and enough to have startled Mr. Calhoun if he had held the same doctrines on the powers of Congress then which he professes now. The act itself was in these words:

'Sec. 8, That in all that territory ceded by France to the United States, under the name of Louisiana, which lies north of 36 degrees 30 minutes north latitude not included within the limits of the State contemplated by this act, slavery and involuntary servitude, otherwise than in the punishment of the crimes whereof the parties shall have been convicted, shall be, and hereby is forever prohibited.'

Such are the words of the act—the very words of the Wilnot Proviso, and if any modern copyist is to supercede Mr. Jefferson in the paternity of that proviso it should be John C. Calhoun, and not Davy Wilnot! It should be called the Calhoun Proviso! and that for many and cogent reasons. In the first place he was nearly thirty years ahead of Davy in the support of this proviso. In the second place, his position was higher, being a Cabinet minister, and his voice more potential, being a southern man. In the third place, he was part of the veto power where three votes were a majority; Davy only a member of the legislative power, where it requires a majority of both houses to do anything. In the fourth place, Calhoun was successful, Davy is not. Finally, Davy's proviso is a weak contrivance to prevent slavery from being where it is not, and where it never will be; Calhoun's proviso was a manly blow to kill slavery where it then existed by law, and where it would now exist in point of fact if that blow had not been struck. The proviso of Mr. Calhoun actually abolished slavery where it existed by law—in all the upper half of Louisiana—from 36—30 to 49, and from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains—over a territory nearly a thousand miles square—nearly a million square miles—enough to make twenty States of 50,000 square miles each—more in fact than all California, New Mexico and Oregon put together.

Over all this vast territory the proviso, supported by Calhoun, abolished slavery—abolished it, then existing by law—and shut it up from the slave emigration of the South. And now what becomes of the *dogma*, in his mouth and that of his followers, so recently invented, of no power in Congress to legislate upon the subject of slavery in territories? what becomes, in their mouths, of the new fangled point of honor, just felt for the first time in thirty years, of insult to slave States in their exclusion from settlement in the territories bought by the blood and treasure of the whole Union? Louisiana was a territory, and Congress legislated upon slavery in it, and legislated slavery out of a million of square miles of it, and Mr. Calhoun supported that legislation; Louisiana was a territory acquired by the treasure, if not by the blood, of the whole Union; and the proviso of 1820 supported by Mr. Calhoun, shut up the one half of it from slave emigration. If that is insult, he and his followers have stood being insulted most remarkably well for about thirty years; and, perhaps, would consult their own self respect, and lose nothing in public opinion, if they should continue standing it with like fortitude for the remainder of their lives.

I do not quote this conduct of Mr. Calhoun in giving the answers which he did to Mr. Monroe's interrogatories, for the purpose of vindicating the right of Congress to prohibit, or abolish slavery in territories. When I feel it necessary to vindicate that right I shall have recourse to very different authority from that which can be quoted on every side of every question it ever touched. I quote it for a very different purpose for the purpose of shutting up the mouths of his followers as completely as it shut up his own from the day he was confronted with it. From that day to the present he has never mentioned his resolutions never called for that vote upon them which he declared himself determined to have when he introduced them!

In giving his cabinet support, where his voice was so potential, to the abolition of slavery over a million of square miles in Louisiana, Mr. Calhoun did more than any man has ever done towards abolishing slavery in the world. Holding, as he did, the one fifth part of the veto power, and commanding as his position was, as a southern man and a cabinet minister—a leading cabinet minister—the largest question ever started of free or slave soil, was then in his hands; and he decided it in favor of free. It was an immense boon to the anti-slavery party, then so numerous and ardent; but it was not the only service which he then rendered them. Texas was then ours—a part of Louisiana—to the lower Rio Grande, large enough to form six great, or ten common States. It was all slave territory, and looked to as the natural outlet of the southern States, with their great increasing slave population. It was given to the King of Spain—given away by treaty, and that treaty the work of Mr. Monroe's cabinet—Mr. Calhoun being a member. And here there is no room for denial or non-recollection. For a long time Mr. Adams bore the blame of that cession. A friend of Mr. Calhoun reproached him with it in the House of Representatives. Mr. Adams was then alive, and present, and soon vindicated the truth of history. He showed that there was a division in the cabinet upon the point: he was against it—Mr. Calhoun for it—and Mr. Calhoun being a southern man, and the majority of the cabinet southern, he carried the day, and Texas was lost. I was not then in public life, but I wrote against that act, blaming Mr. Adams when I should have blamed Mr. Calhoun. By that cession the expansion of slavery was stopped; the growth of slave States in the south west was stopped; three hundred and fifty thousand square miles subject to American slavery, was cut off from American dominion and presented to a foreign King. This was another great gratification to the abolitionist; but it was not all. There was a strip of land, about large enough for two States, lying upon the Arkansas and Red rivers, and between Texas and the 36 deg. 30 min. of north latitude. This strip having escaped the compromise line on one side, and

the Texas cession on the other, was open to the formation of two respectable slave States. Mr. Calhoun was then still cabinet minister—Secretary at war—had the Indians under his care—and was riding the hobby of their civilization. He required this strip to be given up to the Indians for their permanent abode; and thus it, also, was lost to the slave States. All Louisiana was then gone from them except the fragment which was contained in the States of Missouri and Louisiana, and in the territory of Arkansas. Even this fragment appeared to be too much to be left to the slave States, and a slice forty miles wide, and three hundred miles long, was cut off from Arkansas and given to the Indians; and the slaveholders with the slaves upon the slice, were required to remove from the cut off part, and fall back within the contracted limits. This was done by Indian treaty—the treaty negotiated by a *protege* of Mr. Calhoun's. He was then Vice President of the United States, and President of the Senate—I was a member of the Senate—opposed the ratification of the treaty—and came within one or two votes of defeating it. The slightest help from Mr. Calhoun would have defeated it, and saved the slave State of Arkansas that territory, and those salt springs, the loss which she now has to lament. Taken all together—the compromise—the Texas cession—the Indian domain and the slice from Arkansas, and Mr. Calhoun did more, in less time, to abolish slavery, diminish its area, and increase that of free soil, than any man that has ever appeared on the face of the earth; and of this the anti-slave party of the north were fully sensible, and duly grateful. They gave proof of their gratitude. Mr. Calhoun was then candidate for Vice President of the United States: he became the favorite of the north—beating even Mr. Adams, himself, on the free soil track. He beat him six votes in New York—ran head and neck with him through New Hampshire, Vermont and Rhode Island—was even through Massachusetts—and came out a nose ahead on the northern track. He actually beat Mr. Adams in abolition States—and with justice. He had done more than him for free soil, and with more merit, being himself an inhabitant of slave soil. I told him all this in my first *Calhouniac*, in the Senate of the United States, four days after he put in his fire brand resolutions, in my speech to show him to be the true author of the Mexican war. This is what I then said to him:

'This conduct of the Senator, in giving away Texas when we had her, and then making war to get her back, is an enigma which he has never yet condescended to explain, and which, until explained, leaves him in a state of self-contradiction, which, whether it impairs his own confidence in himself or not, must have the effect of destroying the confidence of others in him, and wholly disqualifying him for the office of champion of the slaveholding States. It was the heaviest blow they had ever received, and put an end, in conjunction with the Missouri compromise, and the permanent location of the Indians west of the Mississippi, to their future growth or extension, as slave States beyond the Mississippi. The compromise, which was then in full progress, and established at the next session of Congress, cut off the slave States from all territory north and west of Missouri, and south of thirty-six and a half degrees of north latitude; the treaty of 1819 ceded nearly all south of that degree, comprehending not only all Texas, but a large part of the valley of the Mississippi, on the Red river and the Arkansas to a foreign Power, and brought a non-slaveholding empire to the confines of Louisiana and Arkansas; the permanent appropriation of the rest of the territory for the abode of civilized Indians, swept the little slaveholding territory west of Arkansas, and lying between the compromise line and the cession line; and left the slave States without one inch of ground for their future growth. Nothing was left. Even the then territory of Arkansas was encroached upon. A breadth of forty miles wide, and three hundred long, was cut off from her, and given to the Cherokees, and there was not as much slave territory left

west of the Mississippi as a dove could have rested the sole of her foot upon. It was not merely a curtailment, but a total extinction of slaveholding territory; and done at a time when the Missouri controversy was raging, and every effort made by northern abolitionists to stop the growth of slave States. The Senator from South Carolina, in his support of the cession of Texas, and ceding a part of the valley of the Mississippi, was then the most efficient ally of the restrictionists at that time, and deprives him of the right of setting up as the champion of the slave States now. I denounced the sacrifice of Texas then, believing Mr. Adams to have been the author of it; I denounce it now, knowing the Senator from South Carolina to be its author; and for this—his flagrant recreancy to the slave interest in their hour of utmost peril—I hold him disqualified for the office of champion of the fourteen slave States, (for Delaware cannot be counted) and shall certainly require him to keep out of Missouri, and to confine himself to his own balliwick, when he comes to discuss his string of resolutions.'

In these terms I reproached him to his face for his recreancy to the slave States when he was catering for free soil votes. He was forced to answer, and to admit the vote in Mr. Monroe's cabinet in favor of giving away Texas, and in conformity to which vote the treaty was made; but with respect to the Missouri compromise, and the abolition question he gave an answer which appeared to be plausible then but which turned out to be one of the most unfortunate of his life. He said in his reply to me:

'I have now met, and I trust, successfully repelled all the charges made by the Senator from Missouri, except those relating to the Missouri compromise, and the abolition question at that period, for which I am in no way responsible. I was not then in Congress. I filled the office of Secretary of War at the time, and had no agency or control over it.'

This was his answer—the whole that he chose to give. I did not then know of the proof of the cabinet consultation, and of his opinion at the council table in answer to Mr. Monroe's two questions. The proofs had not then come to light, and he was safe for the time, in disclaiming all responsibility for the Missouri compromise, and the consequent abolition of slavery by a law of Congress, in upwards of one half of all Louisiana; he was safe in taking refuge under the declaration that he was Secretary of War, and not a member of Congress, and, consequently, had no agency in this act, or any control over it. This was a plausible answer at the time; and he stood acquitted for the moment. The discovery of the proof the next year, (1848) reverses the acquittal—establishes his agency in the Missouri compromise act, his control over it, and his responsibility for it. True, he was not a member of Congress in 1820, to give a vote amounting to but little among two or three hundred others, for or against the Missouri compromise, but he was a cabinet minister to give a heavy vote, one in five, for or against its approval. He was not a part of the legislative power, but he was of the veto power; and he gave his vote for the approval, and against the veto. This shows that he had agency in the question, and control over it, and is responsible for it. Considering his position as a southern man, and his weight in Mr. Monroe's administration, and he is the responsible man for that act. The majority of the cabinet were southern, and if he had made the stand then which he does now, he must have vetoed the act—on the contrary he went for it, and passed it—passed the act of Congress legislating upon slavery in territories, and abolishing it over a million of square miles—and now treats such a law as a violation of the constitution, and an insult to the slave States, for which nullification, disunion, and civil war are the proper remedies!

I am mortified to dwell upon Mr. Calhoun. It is neither my habit, nor my pleasure to speak of men. In near thirty years that I have been in Congress I have never

brought the name of any man before the public. I am now forced to do it. Mrs. Calhoun's resolutions are those of the Missouri Legislature. They are identical. One is copied from the other. When the original is invalidated, the copy is of no avail. I am answering his resolutions, and choose to do it. It is just and proper that I should do so. He is the prime mover and head contriver. I have had no chance to answer him in the Senate, and it will not do to allow him to take a snap judgment upon me in Missouri, and carry disunion resolutions in my own State which he has been forced to abandon in the Senate. Duty to the country requires me to answer him, and personal reasons reinforce that public duty. He has been instigating attacks upon me for twenty years—ever since I stood by Jackson and the Union in the first war of nullification: His Duff Green Telegraph commenced upon me at the same time it did upon Jackson, and for the same cause—because we stood by the Union. Last summer, in his own State of South Carolina, where I never was, he dragged my name and that of Gen. Houston before his constituents, and denounced us of defection to the south—the interpretation being that we would not join him in his scheme of a southern convention, to array one half of the Union against the other, and form a southern confederacy. It was an audacious attack upon two absent gentlemen, and who, as Senators, were entitled to Senatorial courtesy from him. Neither General Houston nor myself thought it right to suffer such an attack to pass with impunity; but we did not think the floor of the Senate the proper place for replying to an attack made out of doors. The forum of our respective States was deemed the proper place. He had assailed us before his constituents, and we determined to answer him before ours.—Gen. Houston has replied. He did so during the past session of Congress, in a published address to his constituents. It was published while Mr. Calhoun was in the city, and where he might answer it if he pleased. He did not so please. He stood mute—as if the antagonist was not worthy of notice—a privilege of dignity which did not belong to him after he had begun the attack. He said nothing; and in that he did better than when he denied his support of the Missouri compromise act. He did well in saying nothing. It was a case in which public attention should not be raised by controversy. Houston soon showed what the charge of "defection" meant, and then carried the war into Africa. He charged him with his designs against the Union for twenty years past, and supported what he said by an array of facts which could neither be explained away nor denied. That address of Houston's should be republished by the papers friendly to the Union. It is full of truth and patriotism—worthy of the disciple of Jackson—and killing to Calhoun. He did well not to fix public attention upon it by replying to it. I told Houston that I should reply in a speech to my constituents, and that I am now doing.

This is one of my personal reasons for dwelling on Mr. Calhoun; but I have another, which I will now state. In the year 1844, as it will be remembered, when my fifth election was coming round there was an organization against me in the State, supported by every Calhoun man, and every Calhoun newspaper in the State, and in the United States. There was a coincidence in their operations which showed that they worked by a pattern. I knew at the time where it all came from; and the source has since been authentically revealed to me. There is a law in the moral world by which "murder will out." By virtue of that law one of those who were employed to do the work upon me, and who was then a stranger to me, and afterwards repented, revealed the plot to me, and placed in my hands an original letter of instructions, of which this is an extract:

'With regard to the course of your paper, you can take the tone of the Administration from . . . I think, however, and would recommend that you would confine yourself to attacks upon Benton, showing that he has allied himself with the Whigs on the Texas question. Quote Jackson's letter on Texas, where he denounced all those as traitors to the country who oppose the treaty. Apply it to Benton. Proclaim that Benton, by attacking Mr. Tyler and his friends, and driving them from the party, is aiding the election of Mr. Clay; and charge him with doing this to defeat Mr. Polk, and insure himself the succession in 1848; and claim that full justice be done to the acts and motives of John Tyler by the leaders. Harp upon these strings. Do not propose the union; it is the business of the Democrats to do this, and arrange it to our perfect satisfaction! I quote here from our leading friend at the south. Such is the course which I recommend, and which you can pursue or not, according to your real attachment to the Administration.'

'Look out for my leader, of tomorrow, as an indicator, and regard this letter as of the most strict and inviolate confidence of character.' I read this extract to Mr. Calhoun, in the Senate of the United States, in February, 1847, four days after his fire-brand resolutions were introduced. He said he did not write it. I know he did not. Neither did he write the papers of the A. B. plot against Mr. Crawford, nor the resolutions of the last Missouri General Assembly. He is no such bungler as that. When a paw is to go into the fire, he prefers that of any cat, or dog, to his own. But he was Secretary of State under Tyler at the time, and had dominion over three hundred newspapers, to each of which the same instructions were issued. They were intended for their guidance in the Presidential election, and in the State elections of 1844; and especially for my own, which was coming on. I only read the extract which is special to myself. How well the instructions were obeyed was seen in this State, and in other States.

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