DEBATE IN CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1853.

The House being in Committee of the Whole, and having under consideration a series of resolutions proposing to refer the President's Message—

Mr. GERRITT SMITH, of New York, said: It is natural, sir—ay, it is well-nigh necessary, from the difference in our temperaments, education, pursuits, and circumstances—that we should take different views of many subjects that come before us: but our different views, if we are as kind and patient in regard to them as we should be, will do very little harm; on the contrary, they may be the occasion of great good.

As this is the first time I have had the floor, it may be well for me to confess, in advance, that I am in the habit of imputing errors to men very freely. Perhaps upon this occasion, sir, I shall fall into this habit. It may be a bad habit; but is it not a counterpoise to this habit (if a bad one) that I claim no exemption from errors myself? I acknowledge, on the contrary, that I abound in them, and I am very willing at all times that gentlemen should make reprisals upon me. I hope, sir, whilst I am allowed a seat in this body, ever to hold my spirit in a teachable posture; and to be ever ready to throw away my errors as honorable gentlemen around me shall convince me of them.

I have risen to make some remarks on that part of the message referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

The President's message fully and warmly endorses the conduct of the Administration in the matter of Martin Koszta. Now, sir, I am not prepared to bestow unqualified praise upon the part of the Administration in that matter. I am very ready to accord great credit to Capt. Ingraham for his brave and just determination to rescue Koszta; and yet I would that Capt. Ingraham had gone a step further. I would that he had insisted on Koszta's being set at *absolute* liberty. I would have had him leave nothing at that point to the discretion of the French consul, or of any other consul—to the discretion of the French Government, or any other Government. I would have had him hold no terms and enter into no treaty whatever with kidnappers. Koszta was an American subject—a kidnapped American subject. As such, sir, the American Government was bound to set him *unconditionally free*. But Capt. Ingraham represented the American Government on that occasion—nay, for that occasion, he was the American Government.

Perhaps, sir, for saying what I have said I may appear inconsistent in the eyes of some of my peace-loving friends, who know my opposition to all war. And yet I justify Capt. Ingraham. I believe in the propriety of a national armed police; and I believe that here was an occasion for using it. But this is not to believe in war. Captain Ingraham was not ready to make war upon Austria. Capt. Ingraham did not threaten Austria with war. Capt. Ingraham properly had nothing at all to do with Austria, or with the Austrian consul. It would have been an insult to Austria and to her authorities had Capt. Ingraham charged Austria or her authorities with authorizing kidnapping. Capt. Ingraham had to do only with kidnappers, who were restraining Koszta of his liberty; and all he had to do with them was to compel them to set Koszta *unconditionally free*—was to compel them to make an immediate and unconditional surrender of their prey. I say nothing of our Minister, Mr. Marsh, for the reason that I do not certainly know whether he is justly represented or how the Administration view his conduct.

I know, sir, it is said that Koszta was not an American subject. But our able Secretary of State has argued triumphantly, that, in the light of international law, he was an American subject. I wish our Secretary had gone further, and argued this truth in other lights also. I wish he had gone on to say that, if international law is to the contrary, nevertheless, by the superior law of reason and right, Koszta was an American subject. I wish he had gone on to say that when a foreigner finds his home in our country, and abjures allegiance to the Government he has left, and places himself under the protection of our Government; I wish he had gone on to say that, if international law will not suffice to justify us in affording him protection, *American law shall*. It is high time, Mr. Chairman, that America had based her justification in such cases on something more substantial and more certain than the conventionalities and worm-eaten codes of Europe. It is high time she had placed it on the everlasting and immutable laws of justice.

I may be asked, sir, whether, in case a foreigner charged with an offence should escape to our country, I would allow him to shelter himself under an oath of allegiance to our Government? I answer, sir, that I would not allow the Government he had left to kidnap him, nor would I allow any to kidnap him. I would have that Government make a respectful appeal to this Government for his extradition. And I add that I would have our own Government the sole judge of the fact whether he was charged with an offence; and also the sole judge of the fact whether, if charged with an offence, the offence is a real and essential crime instead of merely a conventional and nominal one.

But, sir, it is said that Capt. Ingraham invaded the rights of a neutral State. I have always regretted that our Secretary did not *positively* deny this. I admit that a denial was not needful to his argument, but yet the denial would have done good. No, sir, Capt. Ingraham did not violate the rights of Turkey; America is not to be charged with violating the rights of Turkey; but Turkey did violate the rights of America. She did this because she did not afford to Koszta the protection due from her. If Turkey is not fairly chargeable with permitting Koszta to be kidnapped, nevertheless she is fairly chargeable with permitting him to remain kidnapped. It is all nonsense to talk of Capt. Ingraham having invaded the rights of Turkey. He did not invade them, if for no other reason than that Turkey had no rights in the case to be invaded. I hold that the only ground upon which a neutral Power can claim respect at the hands of belligerents is, that the rights of such belligerents, so far as that neutral Power is concerned, are protected. Turkey had no rights in the case, because she suffered her laws to be silent.

Now, I hold that when a neutral State shall forbear to do justice to a belligerent, that belligerent may, upon the soil of that neutral State, do justice to itself. I hold that when a neutral State omits to use her law to protect the rights of a belligerent, that belligerent may take the law into his own hands; and I trust, if Turkey shall hereafter be guilty of suspending her laws in such a case as this, that she will find some brave Capt. Ingraham stepping forward to supply her lack of laws.

But I may be asked whether I would have had Capt. Ingraham fire into the Austrian ship? I answer that I would have had Capt. Ingraham set Koszta *unconditionally free*, at whatever expense or peril. But here I will be frank enough to admit that had the rescue of Koszta cost a single life there would have been blame; and blame would have rested, not upon the Turks and Austrians only, but upon our own countrymen also; for let us be honest with ourselves and make the confession that not our own country, nor any other country on the face of the earth, is so identified with justice in the eyes of the world as to make its character for justice an effectual substitute for violence; as to make its character for justice, in a word, a sufficient power for obtaining justice. Were our country and our Government proverbial for wisdom and goodness the world over; were our love to God and man known and read of all men; were all the world to see that Government acts upon Christian principles, both at home and abroad, then no nation would wrong us, and no nation would consent to see us wronged. In that case, sir, if one of our subjects should be kidnapped, as Koszta was, he would speedily be surrendered; for in that case our title to the individual would not be passed upon scrutinously and jealously, but confidingly and generously. In that case our moral character, or, in other words, our moral force, would supersede the necessity of resorting to physical force. Sir, I assert that had physical force been needed to rescue Koszta, it would have been needed for the simple reason that our nation had not a moral character, a moral force adequate to his deliverance. And in this respect other nations are as deficient as our own. Had we such a moral character, such a moral force as I refer to, no more would have been necessary.

But, sir, I said I could not bestow unqualified praise upon our Government for its part in the Koszta affair. In one or two of those passages of very rare rhetorical beauty which occur in Secretary Marcy's letter to Mr. Hulsemann he ventures to insinuate the despotism of Austria. Now, sir, I will not say that there was impudent hypocrisy in that insinuation, but I will say that the insinuation was in bad taste. I will add that it was bad policy. In our diplomatic correspondence we should studiously avoid all allusions to despotism, lest such allusions might suggest to the reader comparisons between our country and other countries that would be quite unfavorable to us. I admit that Austria is an oppressor; but is it not equally and more glaringly true that America is a far greater and guiltier oppressor? Indeed, Austrian despotism, compared with our despotism, which classes millions of men, women, and children with cattle, is but as the little finger to the loins. No, sir, it will be high time for America to complain of Austria for despotism when we have set such an example before Austria as will tend to shame her out of her despotism rather than to justify and confirm her in it.

In this same letter Secretary Marcy proceeds to number, among the justifications of Captain Ingraham, the Divine law to "do unto others as we would have others do unto us." Now, I ask you, was it not the very acme of presumption for America to quote, in justification of herself, that Divine command which she surpasses all other nations in wickedly trampling under foot? Why, did Secretary Marcy suppose Mr. Hulsemann to be stone-blind? Did he suppose Mr. Hulsemann had lived in Washington so long and had never yet seen the buying and selling of men, women, and children, which is going on here continually, under the eye and the authority of the American Government? Did he, I ask, suppose Mr. Hulsemann to be ignorant of the fact that the American Government is the great slave-catcher for American slaveholders? Did he suppose him ignorant of the fact that the great American slave trade finds in the American Government its great patron; and that this slave trade is carried on, not only under the general protection, but under the specific regulations of Congress? Did he suppose him to be ignorant of the fact that many, both at the North and South, claim that American slavery is a national institution—made such, indeed, by the American Constitution? It is, at any rate, made such by the enactments of Congress, the decisions of the judiciary, and the acquiescence of the American people.

It is a common remark that we at the North have nothing to do with slavery, and that the slave States only have to do with it. But as well may you, when you are urging me up hill with a heavy load upon my back and your lash upon my back, tell me that I have nothing to do either with the load or the lash. The North feels the load and the lash of slavery. Did Mr. Marcy suppose Mr. Hulsemann to be ignorant of the fact that this Administration surpasses all its predecessors in shameless pledges and devotion to the slave power? Certainly our Secretary, with all his signal ability, fell into a very great mistake at this point. I would call it a very ludicrous mistake were it not so suggestive of wickedness as to be a painful rather than a ludicrous mistake.

But, sir, I wish to do our Secretary perfect justice; and should I leave this matter here I might leave the impression upon the minds of my hearers that the Secretary enjoined absolute obedience to this commandment of God which he presumed to quote. Now, he did no such thing. He remembered American slavery and the fugitive slave act, and provided for their safety. The Secretary says that we are to obey the Divine command to do unto others as we would have others do unto us, only when there is no command of men to the contrary. In a word, he adopts the American theology—the pro-slavery theology—which exalts the wisdom of man above the wisdom of God, the authority of man above the authority of God. Christianity, says the Secretary, requires us to do unto others as we would have others do unto us, *except when we are acting under legal restraints*.

Now, sir, this exception is a sheer interpolation of the Secretary. This law, as we find it in the authentic and sacred record of Christianity, is absolute. The Administration are therefore guilty of deliberately corrupting Christianity. Sir, I admit that the Administration was under a strong temptation in this case to corrupt Christianity. I admit it, and yet I hold that this temptation should have been resisted.

I am aware that if the Administration had put the justification of Captain Ingraham's conduct upon simple Bible truth, they would, in so doing, have opened wide the door for the rescue of every American fugitive slave; they would have justified the rescue of Shadrach, of Boston; they would have justified the celebrated rescue in my neighborhood—I mean the rescue of Jerry, of Syracuse; they would even have justified the shedding of blood at Christiana; nay, sir, they would have justified the liberation of every slave in the land.

Now, sir, to suppose that an Administration which had sold itself in advance to the slave power; that an Administration which had surpassed every other in its devotion to that power; which owes its hopes and its very being to that power—to suppose, I say, that such an Administration would take the simple Bible ground, which would invite the subversion of all slavery, is to suppose that it would practice the cruelest ingratitude. Such ingratitude could not have failed to exasperate that power—that mighty, dominant power, before which not only all American Administrations, but the American people themselves, fall down as abjectly as did Nebuchadnezzar's people before the image which he had set up.

And yet, sir, I hold that the Administration had no right to give up Christianity for slavery. Important as it may be to maintain slavery, it is nevertheless more important to maintain Christianity; and neither this nor any other Administration shall, with my consent, deliberately corrupt Christianity, either to save slavery or for any other purpose. And if the immortal John Wesley was right in calling American slavery "the sum of all villanies," then it is certainly a very poor bargain to give up Christianity for it.

Sir, this doctrine that the law of God shall not prevail against the law of man—this doctrine, that we may qualify the law of God with the law of man, is a doctrine as perilous to man as it is dishonorable to God. It not only leaves no rights to God, but it leaves no rights to man. What, sir, if the Turks had a statute declaring that every man, Austrian born, might be kidnapped? Then, according to this doctrine of the Administration, we could not have rescued Koszta, because his kidnappers were "acting under legal restraints."

I will suppose, too, that there was a statute in Turkey providing that every man might be kidnapped who is American born; then, according to this doctrine of the Administration, we could not rescue American citizens if kidnapped in Turkey. But, sir, suppose the Secretary of State himself were kidnapped, or even the President of the United States: then, according to the doctrine of the Administration, we could not reclaim either of these great men. Now, the supposition that such great men may be kidnapped or enslaved is by no means absurd. The great Cervantes was enslaved: the great Arago was enslaved; and it may be that even those great men to whom I have referred may yet be enslaved. I know, sir, that such men are casting their mighty influence for African slavery, and for the multiplication of its victims. I know that they dream not of the possibility of their ever being enslaved—of that chalice which they present to the lips of others being ever returned to their own; and yet even such retribution, or one yet more terrible than this life can afford, may be the retribution for such stupendous treachery and hostility to the human brotherhood. Napoleon, who, when at the zenith of his greatness, had the noble but illfated Toussaint l'Ouverture carried across the waters to die in a prison, little dreamed that he himself, in a few short years, would be carried across the waters to die in a prison.

Sir, at that last great day, for which, as it has been sublimely said, "all other days were made," when men shall be judged for the deeds done in the body, let me not be among the number of those who have wielded civil power to bind and multiply the victims of oppression. When I consider the tendency of power to such perversion, I confess that I shrink from possessing it, lest I too might be tempted to lend it to the oppressor instead of the oppressed. "So I returned," says the wise man, "and considered all oppressions which are done under the sun; and beheld the tears of such as are oppressed, and they had no comforter: for on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comfort."

Again, sir, this doctrine of the Administration goes to blot all over that page of history of which Americans are so proud. I refer to that which records the brilliant achievements of Decatur and his brave companions in the Mediterranean. This doctrine of the Administration, that we should do to others as we would have them do to us, except when under legal restraints; this doctrine, I say, being right, would justify the Algerines in that case for insulting American citizens, and would condemn us for chastising the Algerines; and, by the way, let me say that they were very severely chastised, considering that, being the most ignorant of all classes of slave-holders, they were the least guilty.

Sir, this doctrine of the Administration goes to condemn every war that we have ever been engaged in; for when have we waged a war against any others than those "acting under legal restraint?" When, tell me when? Alas! sir, what a pitiable spectacle does our Administration present in thus wilfully corrupting christianity for the sake of saving so vile and abominable a thing as slavery! And then, sir, what a pitiable spectacle do the American people present in choosing such an Administration, and in remaining patient under it! How deep, and broad, and glaring is the brand of hypocrisy upon the brow of the American people! Here stands America, holding in one hand that blessed book which declares that God "has made of one blood all the nations of men that dwell on the face of the earth," and holding in the other that emphatically American paper which declares that "all men are created equal;" and at this time her feet are planted on the necks of millions whom she has doomed to all the horrors, and agonies, and pollutions of slavery. Recollect, too, that America is the nation that owes more than any other to liberty, and christianity, and knowledge, and that therefore she is bound to surpass every other nation in the enlightening and blessed influences of her example. Other nations began their existence in unfavorable periods; they laid their foundations in ignorance, and despotism, and superstition. But knowledge, and liberty, and christianity waited upon the birth of America, and breathed into her the breath of life.

But, sir, my hour is up, and I will bring my remarks to a close. After all, the Administration has done us good service in attempting to qualify the divine command "to do unto others as we would have others do unto us." In attempting this, for the sake of saving slavery, the Administration impliedly admits that the naked command of the Bible requires us to let the oppressed go free.

But no command of God is susceptible of qualification at human hands; and this attempted qualification, therefore, falls to the ground; and the Administration have, in effect, quoted the naked command, and so joined the Abolitionists, of whom I am always ready to declare myself to be one. The Administration, in quoting this divine command, has quoted authority for destroying all slavery. I know that it did not quote it for this purpose. It quoted it to serve a purpose against Austria, and it flattered itself that, by means of a few qualifying words, it would shelter slavery from the force of the quotation. The Administration should have remembered that the Bible is a holy weapon, and is therefore fitted to anti-slavery instead of pro-slavery hands. It should have remembered that such a weapon cannot be used without great danger of great detriment to a bad cause; and therefore they should not have used it.

I trust that the mistake of the Administration in this case will be an effectual admonition to this and all pro-slavery Administrations and all pro-slavery persons not to continue to quote the Bible.

Mr. PRESTON, of Kentucky, next addressed the House. I have listened, (he said,) not without a certain degree of interest, to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SMITH) who has just addressed the committee, and I now desire its indulgence for a brief response, though nothing could have been further from my intentions than the design of offering any remarks to-day in relation to any subject that engages the legislative attention.

Living, as I do, in a State recognising slavery, and firmly convinced, as I am, of the propriety of protecting our property in slaves, yet I do not desire to reply in any intolerant spirit to the views which have been advanced by the gentleman from New York. I feel conscious that the great and wise men who ushered our Government into existence, and laid its foundations deep in truth and justice, were not inferior in religion or philanthropy to those who assail the rights of the Southern members of the Confederacy, assail their institutions, and decry their people. And although I may feel, with a strength of conviction that my language cannot adequately express, the injustice of assailing those rights, yet it is far from me to desire to evade or strangle discussion by denunciation or violence. I trust to the power of truth to show that the men of the South are not the representatives of a people enduring the odious tyranny that the gentleman asserts; that they are not men tolerating and fostering a wrong against every dictate of humanity and justice, but entertaining far wiser and more practical views than those misguided enthusiasts who would shake to its centre a Government planned by patriots and statesmen and cemented by the public prosperity.

Enthusiasm, sir, is respectable even in error. It is attractive when clothed in the fullness of appropriate language and marked by eloquent delivery; but this should not blind us to the pernicious sentiments contained in the remarks we have heard. The gentleman from New York has sought to institute a parallel between the principles of abolition and those contained in the letter of the Secretary of State to the Chevalier Hulsemann in relation to the surrender of Martin Koszta. To institute a comparison which would unite principles so dissimilar would be to create a monster in the political world more deformed than the Siamese twins in the physical world.

The sum of the doctrine in the Koszta letter, as asserted by the American Secretary, is, that Martin Koszta, having taken the initiatory steps to become a citizen of the United States, and having filed his declaration of intention in our courts, became clothed with such a nationality that, having gone into the city of Smyrna in the peaceful pursuit of business or of pleasure, he was still under the protecting power of the American flag and beyond recapture by the power of Austria. But, let me ask the gentleman, if a treaty had existed between Austria and the Government of the United States by which the solemn faith of the American Government was pledged to restore such refugees, as we stipulate for the extradition of felons with Great Britain under the Ashburton treaty, whether, without a violation of faith, we could have refused to surrender the fugitive? There can be but one solution to the question. Yet have not the States of the American Union something more solemn and more obligatory than a mere treaty to compel the extradition of fugitive slaves; something more than a compact, as Webster expounded it, in his memorable reply to Hayne; something more solemn and more binding than treaty or compact—the very Constitution itself upon which our Government exists? A sovereign can recede from a treaty or a compact, and no tribunal on earth but itself can judge it; but in our Constitution—the most solemn form of obligation that society knows—a tribunal, the Supreme Court, is established to assist in the enforcement of the rights of the people composing the confederacy. This Constitution, solemnly ratified, guaranties to the slave-holding States the protection of their property, and the extradition of fugitive slaves when they escape into sister States where the institution is not recognised. Shall those solemn promises be fulfilled? or shall the psuedo-philanthropist, with the Bible in his hand—the Bible upon which the founders of our Government and the two hundred and thirty-eight gentlemen here assembled were sworn to support the Constitution—invoke our body to disregard its precepts, and commit meditated perjury by violating its provisions? Yet such is the morality that fanatical enthusiasm proposes.

The logic of the Secretary of State has been assailed, upon the ground that he has chosen to place an unwarranted limitation upon the divine injunction that you should "do unto others as you would they should do unto you;" yet I would ask of the gentleman who has so keenly criticised the expression if it is not a plain matter to an unsophisticated mind that we should fulfil the promises that we make to others? and if, under this principle, the people of the North are not morally bound to fulfil their promises to their Southern brethren?

The correspondence in relation to the seizure of Koszta does honor to the Administration and the Government; but, while the Secretary sustained his views with great ability, I trust I may be pardoned the digression if I remark that, in my opinion, the acts of Congress in relation to naturalization still further fortified his position. Our whole theory of the right of expatriation is in conflict with the English, and, I believe, the general European law, which maintains that a subject has no power to divest himself of the allegiance due to the Government under whose jurisdiction he is born. It is clear that, if Koszta had received his final letters of naturalization, according to our theory it was undoubtedly our duty to protect him. Until the year 1848 our naturalization laws required an alien to reside in the United States *continuously* for five years before the final letters were granted. Any non-residence or absence from our jurisdiction vitiated his right.

In 1848 an act was passed by Congress permitting the time to be computed during the absence of the alien, which, by implication, authorized him to go abroad during the period of his acquiring citizenship. This act, as I conceive, gave full authority to Koszta to visit Smyrna; and the United States were as much bound to afford him the protection of our Government as they would have been to an alien fully naturalized or to a native citizen.

The gentleman from New York, Mr. Chairman, has not only criticized the letter of the Secretary, but has chosen to make this the occasion for a general denunciation of the institution of slavery in the Southern States. I know, sir, that the subject is trite and exhausted, but I feel unwilling that the remarks which he has uttered should pass without some reply.

The Southern States, since their earliest colonial history, have been peopled by two races of different color and of different civilization. We hold them in bondage because we are unwilling to amalgamate with them, and desire to keep our Teutonic blood pure and uncorrupted by any baser admixture; because we prefer that their untutored labor should be directed by the superior intelligence of our race to useful industry, rather than that they should be freed from all wholesome restraint, and left without coercion to pollute our blood and destroy our progress. It is not within our comprehension to divine the cause which has made the Ruler of Nations establish this order of things.

The wisdom of man cannot foresee or penetrate the means by which the civilization of nations is directed by him. We see ourselves surrounded by three millions of the African race, who, under the dominion of the white race, has, in two hundred years, made greater advances in religion and civilization than they have made in four thousand years in their aboriginal condition. If, at this hour, the angel of death were to breathe upon the face of our people as it did upon the hosts of Senacherib, the surviving black race would exhibit a picture of civilization more remarkable than any that Africa has ever exhibited. But the African is not the only race which has been subject to slavery. Eight hundred years since our boasted Saxon ancestors endured a slavery as abject as that of the Southern negro. The history of all savage races who have attained the blessings of civilization shows that they have marched to freedom through the portals of slavery. Where two races of widely different civilization exist together, the superior exterminate or enslave the inferior. The indocility of the Indian will cause him to be swept from the face of the earth. Slavery seems to be the price that ignorance pays to intelligence for its tuition in the arts of civilization.

Nothing can be more disastrous to a State than the premature enfranchisement of an enslaved race. They gangrene upon the face of its society, until it perishes under the affliction. It is a singular historical fact, and worthy of note, that the first abolitionist was the first person who introduced African slavery upon the shores of America. Las Casas, the Bishop of Chiapas, after Cortez conquered Mexico, felt the deepest compassion for the Indians who were allotted as slaves to his Spanish adventurers. He petitioned the King of Spain that these Indian slaves should be enfranchised, and that the more robust and hardy negroes of the African coast should be imported. His prayer was granted, and it is to him that the thraldom of the African in America is to be first attributed. The misfortunes of Mexico at this hour are, in my opinion, attributable, in a great measure, to the indiscreet philanthropy of Las Casas. The barriers which separated the races were cast down; the Castilian blood no longer ran pure and unpolluted in the veins of the people. The great preponderating mestizo, or mixed race, was engendered; and he who will walk through the streets of Mexico will see all the horrid results of a debased amalgamated race as he sees the Mexican of pure Spanish descent spurn from him with his foot, as he would some beast, the loathly mestizo that obstructs the way.

But let me turn for a moment from a consideration of this picture, and ask if our forefathers had framed the wise and beneficent Government we enjoy; if to-morrow the Ohio were the military line of demarcation between the North and South, as the Rhine between Germany and France; if forts were erected, custom-houses established, and armies posted; if union were proposed to remedy all these evils, would it be accepted? If we were assembled as delegates, and the South were to demand the same terms our Constitution guaranties, and the regulation of our own domestic institutions, can we for a moment doubt that after all the benefits we have experienced the North would not be willing and anxious to accede to its provisions? Or would we of the South, forgetful of the gallant spirit of our forefathers who planted the Southern colonies, and whose descendants, surmounting the crests of the Alleghanies, bore civilization and religion into the primeval forests of the West, until they were borne over Kentucky and Missouri, even to the golden shores of California, prove recreant to the glorious memories of the past, and submit to dishonorable dictation?

I respect the generosity of emotion that seems to move the gentleman from New York, decisively as I differ from every sentiment he utters; but I must say that the abolition of African slavery and its agitation are fraught only with the most pernicious consequences to our common country. I live in a State in which the institution of slavery exists, in which we have stood by our Southern brethren and will stand by them in the defence of our rights; and that if slavery be not perpetual, the hand of time will do more for the cause than the misdirected efforts of philanthropy or fanaticism. We may aptly say, when we point to the ameliorations wrought already by time in the condition of our slaves,

> "Turne, quod optanti Divûm promittere nemo
> Auderet, volvenda dies en attutil ultro."

I trust, Mr. Chairman, that this subject may no longer be the subject of agitation; for I feel assured that, if it is continued, it will overwhelm the institutions we have inherited from our wise and patriotic ancestors in irretrievable ruin.

The Committee then rose and the House adjourned.

On the following day the debate was resumed, when Mr. DEAN, Mr. GIDDINGS, and Mr. FLORENCE addressed the House. The floor was then obtained by—

Mr. WALSH, of New York, who said that he had intended to remark at length on this question, but had then too much regard for the feelings of an already exhausted House, and too much respect for himself, to indulge in those remarks to-day.

I am not so desirous of making a speech (continued Mr. W.) that I will attempt to do so now, but shall confine myself to one or two suggestions in regard to the course which the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIDDINGS) has undertaken to-day. Among theologians, as a general thing, when a man undertakes to be pious, when he gets what, in theological parlance, is called religion, he is taken kindly by the hand and is prayed for and encouraged. He is not repelled and repulsed. And when one of my Soft friends from New York, who is in what may be said to be a chrysalis state of abolitionism, and is gradually softening and becoming encouraged by the regularly-avowed Abolitionists, might be soon found, after the patronage of the President is entirely disposed of, and all the inducements for men to belie and falsify their humanity have passed—I say, when such men might be found gradually softening until they are dissolved in the political cespool of their abolitionism, I think it is at least impolitic, not to say ungenerous, on the part of the gentleman from Ohio, (Mr. GIDDINGS,) to have met these attempts which the Softs of New York have been so studiously making, when freed from the contaminating influences of political partisans, to renew the coalition which they once formed with them in 1848. [Laughter.] Now, sir, the other day a couple of gentlemen stood upon this floor gratuitously to vindicate an Administration which had not been assailed in this House. They thought to draw the true men of New York from their position into an attack upon this Administration which they never have contemplated; but we have proved ourselves to be too good tacticians to be caught by that dodge. It was not a little strange, it was not a little ominous, that this gratuitous, this uncalled-for defence of the Administration should have come from men—the one a Freesoiler and the other a Whig—both opposed to the principles on which Franklin Pierce was whirled into the White House. Sir, when the time comes—and it has not come yet—New York will utter her voice; but thus far I, and those who co-operate with me, have sat in our seats like orderly and respectable citizens, and like quiet and sincere Christians. [Laughter.]

We have sat still and watched and prayed, and the result of it has been a beautiful quarrel between the Abolitionists of the strongest grade and the incipient Abolitionists—a quarrel which I have no disposition to spoil. [Laughter.] But, sir, let me tell this House that when the time does come for New York to speak; when the time arrives for the *true* Democracy of New York to tell the Administration, or this House, or the country what they think of its course, New York will speak in language that will admit of no two interpretations. New York will speak in language that nobody will misunderstand. Until that happy day arrives I shall content myself with returning to my quiet and orderly position. [Laughter.]

PROSPECTUS FOR 1854.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Unrivalled Array of Talent.

THE PROPRIETORS of the POST, in again coming before the public, would return thanks for the generous patronage which has placed them far in advance of every other Literary Weekly in America. And, as the only suitable return for such free and hearty support, their arrangements for 1854 have been made with a degree of liberality probably unequalled in the history of American Newspaper Literature. They have engaged as contributors for the ensuing year the following brilliant array of talent and genius: MRS. SOUTHWORTH, EMERSON BENNETT, MRS. DENISON, GRACE GREENWOOD, and FANNY FERN.

In the first paper of January next we design commencing an Original Novelet, written expressly for our columns, entitled

THE BRIDE OF THE WILDERNESS,

By EMERSON BENNETT, author of Viola, Clara Moreland, The Forged Will, &c.

This Novelet, by the popular author of Clara Moreland, we design following by another called

THE STEP-MOTHER,

By MRS. MARY A. DENISON, author of Home Pictures, Gertrude Russell, &c.

We have also a promise of a number of SKETCHES by GRACE GREENWOOD, whose brilliant and versatile pen will be almost exclusively employed upon the Post and her own "LITTLE PILGRIM."

MRS. SOUTHWORTH, whose fascinating works are now being rapidly republished in England, also will maintain her old and pleasant connexion with the Post. The next story from her gifted pen will be entitled

MIRIAM, THE AVENGER; OR, THE FATAL VOW,

By EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH, author of The Curse of Clifton, the Lost Heiress, The Deserted Wife, &c.

And last, not least, we are authorized to announce a series of articles from one who has rapidly risen very high in popular favor. They will be entitled a

NEW SERIES OF SKETCHES,

By FANNY FERN, author of Fern Leaves, &c.

We expect to be able to commence the Sketches by FANNY FERN, as well as the series by GRACE GREENWOOD, in the early numbers of the coming year.

Engravings, Foreign Correspondence, Agricultural Articles, The News, Congressional Reports, The Markets, &c., also shall be regularly given.

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☞ *To Editors.*—Editors who give the above one insertion, or condense the material portions of it (the notices of new contributions and our terms) for their editorial columns, shall be entitled to an exchange, by sending us a marked copy of the paper containing the advertisement or notice.

dec 15—wp3t

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THE CALIFORNIA FILLIBUSTERS.

Letters from Mazatlan, published in late Mexican papers, contain additional intelligence relative to the capture of La Paz, in Lower California, by a band of American adventurers. The schooner *Pablo y Virginia*, which had cleared from Loreto for La Paz, arrived at Mazatlan about the 8th ultimo, and reported that when about to enter the bay of La Paz a canoe approached and a letter was handed to the captain from the consignees advising him to depart without delay, as he was in danger of falling into the hands of a band of pirates who had just taken possession of the town and imprisoned the Governor, in whose residence they had entrenched themselves, and had seized all the shipping in the harbor. The Pablo y Virginia put to sea, but was closely chased by the Caroline. She escaped, however, by her superior swiftness. The Caroline meanwhile gave chase to another schooner and captured it. On board of the latter was Col. REBOLLEDO, recently appointed Governor of Lower California, together with his staff and some twenty soldiers. So that the expedition had begun its audacious enterprise by securing the persons of both the former and present Governor of the Department. The Mazatlan correspondent adds that the adventurers had pillaged provisions at Cape St. Lucas, and had plundered a whaling vessel of two barrels of brandy. On the 6th instant the English steamer *Virago*, in compliance with the earnest request of the authorities of Mazatlan, left for Guayamas, and strong efforts were making to organize a force to march towards Sonora and resist the invaders.

FACTORY FOR COLT'S PISTOLS IN LONDON.

FROM THE LONDON UNITED SERVICE GAZETTE.

The admirable modern invention, for the perfection of which the world is indebted to Mr. COLT, of the United States, has received frequent commendation in these columns, and our praises have been ratified by such of our correspondents on the Kaffir frontier as may have had an opportunity of using the revolvers. So essentially has the demand for the pistols increased that we believe we are correct in saying that until now it has been found impossible to keep pace with the public want. Notwithstanding the exertions of the establishment in America, hundreds of persons had to wait until the implements could be turned out in sufficient abundance. Now, to meet the British, and continental, and colonial requisitions Mr. Colt has taken the bold step of establishing a manufactory on the banks of the Thames. He has done justice to our spirit of impartiality, and challenged patronage of American workmanship in the heart of our metropolis.

It is now ten months since Colt's manufactory was established at Millbank. So quietly and unostentatiously has the whole thing been managed that we were, in fact, unaware of its being in full operation until two or three weeks ago. We have now, thanks to Mr. Colt's civility, had an opportunity of going over his arsenal, and we must say, in all sincerity, that we were never more gratified in our lives. The magnitude of the edifice and the establishment quite surpassed all that we could have expected. The factory consists of three floors, 300 feet long, and in these there are no fewer than 150 to 200 machines worked by a single steam-engine of 30 horse power. Compactness and simplicity, order and expedition are the main characteristics of the operations. Small forges, in which intense heat is concentrated; forge hammers influenced by machinery, and striking with a force and precision which must make the brawniest blacksmith sigh; dies and perforators; machines for cutting, machines for milling; proving apparatus; model and stock shops; men of Herculean mould, lithesome boys, delicate girls; every thing and every body that can, in their respective ways, minister to the great object of completeness are to be found assembled in the great edifice.

The chief features of modern manufactories are clanking noises, strong effluvia, oppressive heat, or bitter cold. In Colt's superb laboratory there are none of these. Silence, excepting from the gentle revolution of some hundreds of well-oiled wheels, a total absence of disagreeable smells, excellent ventilation, and nicely-distributed warmth form the attributes of this noble establishment. A humane discipline presides over all. There are men to overlook the laborers, and there is a silent index at the entrance to the proprietor's own office, in the form of a timepiece, which checks the overseer. There is a reading-room for the work-people wherein to recreate or hold meetings. There are baths and wash-houses for their physical refreshment. What must be the result of such a system but the perfection of fabrication, especially where there is no stint of capital, and where a rigid conscientiousness governs the manufacturer? The British Government, by their ordnance authorities, decree a certain test of the excellence of their fire-arms. Mr. Colt submits to this ordeal, and then subjects his pistols to a much severer proof. While Birmingham arms are constantly bursting, not one Colt's revolvers fail but *once in two thousand five hundred times*, and rarely as often as that. We cannot wonder, then, at the amazing popularity they have acquired in America, nor can we doubt that the two or three thousand now manufactured weekly at Millbank will obtain purchasers in this country. What is so useful as a protection against Indians, Mexicans, wild animals, and the robbers of California, must prove equally efficacious against the dacoits of Burmah, the ruffians in Australia, the people of the hills north of the Punjaub, &c. The boarding exploits of the last great war will be as nothing compared to what may be hereafter achieved. The fiction of a British sailor annihilating six enemies almost at once will be a great fact, and the capture of a battery defended by artillerymen with revolvers in their belts will be impossible. But let us take care that the tables are not turned in our abstinence from the use of this wonderful peace-preserver.

TROOPS FOR CALIFORNIA.—The new steamer San Francisco left New York on Wednesday for San Francisco, via the Straits of Magellan, touching at Rio Janeiro, Valparaiso, and Acapulco. She takes out companies A, B, D, G, H, I, K, and L, of the third regiment of United States Artillery. These companies, with the non-commissioned staff and band of the regiment, constitute a force of about five hundred men. Companies C and E are equipped as light artillery, and stationed at Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation, and Fort Snelling, Iowa, under command of Bvt. Lieut. Col. BRAGG and Bvt. Major SHERMAN. Companies F and M, commanded by Captains BURTON and KEYES, are now stationed in California.

The following is a list of the officers and families who sailed in the San Francisco:

Col. Wm. Gates, commanding the regiment; Major and Brevet Lieut. Col. J. M. Washington; Major Charles S. Merchant; Surgeon R. S. Satterlee; Assistant Surgeon H. R. Wirtz; First Lieut. S. L. Fremont, Regimental Quartermaster and Acting Adjutant; First Lieut. L. Loeser, Acting Assistant Commissary; Capt. and Brevet Lieut. Col. M. Burke, commanding company I; Capt. and Brevet Major Taylor, commanding company A; Capt. and Brevet Major F. O. Wyse, commanding company D; Capt. H. B. Judd, commanding detachment of recruits to complete companies B and L; First Lieut. and Brevet Capt. H. B. Field, commanding company K; First Lieut. W. A. Winder, commanding company G; First Lieut. C. S. Winder, commanding company H; First Lieut. R. H. Smith; Second Lieut. J. Van Voast; Brevet Second Lieut. J. G. Chandler.

Officers' families.—Mrs. Gates and three children, Miss Carter, Mrs. Merchant and two children, Miss Valeria Merchant, Mrs. Chase and son, Mrs. Fremont and three children, Mrs. Loeser, Miss Eaton, Mrs. Wyse and child, Mrs. Judd.

OXYGEN GAS.—A London paper states that M. BOUSSINGAULT has invented a process by which pure oxygen gas may be obtained from the atmosphere in unlimited quantities and at a trifling expense. His process depends upon a peculiar property possessed by earth *barytes* of absorbing the atmospheric oxygen at one temperature and evolving it at another. The barytes must be mixed with magnesia in order to prevent fusion. This mixture is placed in a heated earthen tube, and is then oxydized by passing a current of dry atmospheric air over it. As soon as the oxydation is completed a jet of steam is poured upon the barytes, reconverting it to its original state, the excess of oxygen being in the mean time given off and collected in the gas-holder. The inventor thinks that in this manner one thousand cubic feet of gas can be obtained every twenty-four hours by the use of a hundred pounds of barytes, and the barytes would never need replenishing.

During a crowded exhibition at Oxford Hall, Portsmouth, (Va.) on Tuesday night, a spirit lamp fell and burst, and a fearful stampede ensued among the audience. The excitement was quieted without serious consequences.

INVASION OF LOWER CALIFORNIA.—This unauthorized act will occasion some trouble to our Government, to say nothing of the expense of dispatching a body of troops to the scene of the outrage to suppress the transgressors. Important negotiations with Mexico are now in progress, under the auspices of Col. GADSDEN, United States Minister to that Republic. This lawless irruption upon the Mexican territory by a body of men from the United States will embarrass the negotiation, to say the least. The Government of this country must be called upon to make compensation for whatever damage on public or private property may be committed by this lawless band. It is probable that their object was to obtain possession of some rich mines which are reported to exist low down on the Peninsula, between the Gulf of California and the ocean. The country itself is a mere sand bank, with scarcely any vegetation whatever. If unchecked in their career the next news will be that those men have crossed the Gulf and seized some of the Mexican towns on the main land.—*New Orleans Courier.*

CUBAN RUMORS.

A despatch was received by one of the city papers on Thursday to the effect that a rumor prevailed in Washington of the organization in New Orleans of a new and formidable fillibustering expedition, to consist of four thousand men. The papers of yesterday allude to this despatch only to ridicule and contradict it.

We are ourselves not so absolutely certain that the despatch is destitute of all foundation. That our city swarms with exiled Cubans, fillibusters, and members of the Cuban junta is a fact noticed by others equally with ourselves. What should bring them here from their headquarters in New York, unless something practical and tangible was looked for? The presence of this element of agitation has not escaped the attention of others. At the same time, however, that we state the fact of the sojourn among us of so unusually large a number of fillibusters, we are bound in candor to add that we know nothing, have heard nothing, and do not believe it possible to organize such an expedition as is referred to in the despatch. Meanwhile the officers of the Government and proper authorities are doubtless aware of the necessity of exercising proper vigilance.—*N. O. Bee, 17th.*

THE CITY OF NEW YORK ASLEEP.

It is curious to see the circulation of a great city commence in the morning—the great city that had *roared* itself to sleep. True, there was a feeble pulse all night; the cars beat to and fro; a carriage now and then gave a flutter; but after all there had been a quiet hour. About half a million of the people had been lying "on a dead level" for four or five hours; some on pillows of down and some on curbstones; some beneath silken counterpanes and some beneath the great blue quilt of heaven. Queer figure they make in the mind's eye to be sure—400,000 folks, more or less, lying in tiers or rows, five or six miles long, lying three or four deep; in the cellar, that is the "primitive formation," then the first floor, second, third, and so on up to the garret. Three hundred thousand people snoring—what a concert! Two hundred thousand people dreaming. Two hundred thousand people in red night-caps, one hundred thousand in white, and here and there one trimmed with lace. Fifty thousand curls twisted up in papers, giving their owners an appearance of having made a pillow of cigar-lighters. Twenty thousand curls hanging over the backs of chairs or tossed upon tables. How gently time touches such people; they never grow gray at all! Ten thousand people weeping, and now and then one dying; dying in his sleep; dying in a dream. And then the getting up is ridiculous enough; though going to bed—*should* we say "retire" in these refined times?—is a solemn piece of business, whether people think of it or not. But the getting up, the waking up, is funny enough for a farce; its process is a species of gradualism. Here's one who has slept "like a top" for nine solid hours, and now he begins to wake; first it's a half-lurch and a long breath and a yawn; then an arm is thrust out, then a foot; the muscles are waking up. Next the rattle of the early wagons strikes his ear; hearing is "coming to." Then his tongue moves uneasily; taste is returning. Last, his eyes open, one after the other; then half close, then open again, and the man's awake, awake all over awake, for all day. There's another, sound asleep this minute, and *this* he shakes himself like a huge Newfoundland, springs up "percussion," and the thing is done; the fellow hasn't a sleepy hair about him. Snowy quilts that have just risen and fallen with the soft bosom beneath begin to grow uneasy. The sweet sleepers are waking, so we'll draw the curtains and leave them to their toilet. Bundles of rags in dark damp corners toss and tumble; there's something alive underneath. Out it comes—*more* rags. Misery *makes* no toilet, and there are no curtains to draw.—*New York Tribune.*

THE ERIE RIOTS.—The Courts at Pittsburgh have decided both of the pending cases against the rioters. The last decision is that the citizens of Erie have no legal right to prevent the laying down of a four feet ten track on that portion of the Erie and State Line Railroad within the city limits; and the courts order the rioters not to destroy the property of the railroad company, and not to hinder or interrupt the workmen engaged in relaying and repaving the track. Up to this point the ringleaders of the mob have professed to believe that the law was on their side, and have urged the mob to acts of violence and outrage by assuring them that they had a legal right to destroy the property of the railroad company, and that the courts would sustain them in that right. Will they now abide the law?

ALLEGED OUTRAGE AT CUBA.—Some of the passengers in the steamer Crescent City, at New Orleans from Havana, have prepared a "manifesto" against the Cuban Government for keeping the ship there over night. It is said to be a fierce paper and breathes war. A correspondent of the New York Express, who was a passenger on the Crescent City, rather unceremoniously pricks this bubble. It is well known that by a regulation of the port of Havana no vessel can pass the Moro after sunset. It seems that the Crescent City got under way and attempted to pass the Moro after the flag had been lowered, and was of course compelled to heave to and get her anchorage.

The Boston Transcript states that the captain of an East India ship, whose wife died two days after leaving Calcutta, reared an infant two or three weeks old by feeding it during the voyage home with hard sea-bread soaked in water, the father acting as nurse and discharging the duties devolving upon him as captain of the ship during a long and stormy passage. The child is now about ten months old, and appears to be in good health, notwithstanding the hardships and sufferings it has passed through during its brief

> "Life on the ocean wave,
> And home on the rolling deep."

MR. JAMES BISCOE, a soldier and seaman of the Revolution, died on the 11th instant at his residence in Franklin county, Kentucky, in the 94th year of his age. He was born in Maryland. He served in the revolutionary army, and was at the siege of Yorktown and the surrender of Cornwallis. He also served as boatswain under Commodore Taylor. The Frankfort "Commonwealth" says that his residence in that county extended through many years, and his upright and pious life secured him the highest respect and esteem of his neighbors and acquaintances.

One by one the few remaining veterans of the great struggle drop away. A very few years must witness the departure of the last one.

FATAL ACCIDENT AT SPY POND.—At a little before nine o'clock on Tuesday night a large party of young men and women went upon the ice at Spy Pond, when it suddenly gave way, by which five persons, three young women and two young men, were thrown into the water. Miss PERSIS, a daughter of MR. ABEL G. PECK, sixteen years of age, was drowned. The others were with difficulty saved. The parents of the young folks upon the ice were spending the evening at the house of a gentleman in the immediate vicinity of the Pond. The sudden announcement to the parents, of whom there were some thirty present, that the ice had given way caused for a time a scene which can better be imagined than described. They all rushed to the border of the Pond, where, except in the case mentioned above, their fears were set at rest by the successful rescue of those whose lives had been thus suddenly endangered. The deceased Miss Peck was a most amiable and lovely young lady, whose death will be severely felt both by her parents and the large circle of her friends. [*Boston Traveller.*

COLLEGES OF THE UNITED STATES.—Two hundred and fifteen years have passed away since the first college—Harvard University—was founded in our country; and at the close of the seventeenth century the number had increased only to three—Harvard, in Massachusetts; the College of William and Mary, in Virginia; and Yale, in Connecticut. But within the past century a great change has come over the spirit of the scene. There are now one hundred and twenty colleges in the United States. The number of undergraduates in these institutions is more than ten thousand, which, increased by the students who are connected with their preparatory and professional departments, amounts to about fourteen thousand. There are thirteen colleges in New England, some of which may be denominated *national* institutions, deriving their students from almost every State, and sending forth their influence to all parts of the Union. These thirteen graduate about five hundred students annually. Since their establishment they have graduated twenty-five thousand students. Most of the colleges of the United States have been founded and directed by the clergy and other members of the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations. Thirteen are now under the superintendence of Baptists, thirteen of Methodists, eight of Episcopalians, and eleven of Roman Catholics.

Besides the above institutions, or those connected with them, there are forty-three theological seminaries, nine of which are in New England; thirty-five medical schools, seven of which are supported in the Eastern States; and thirteen law schools, two only of which are in New England, being those connected with Yale and Harvard colleges.—*Boston Journal.*

UGLY VS. UGLY.—In the eastern part of Delaware county, in that State, there resided a man by the name of B——, now a justice of the peace, and a very sensible man, but by common consent the ugliest looking individual in the whole country, being long, gaunt, sallow, and awry, with a face like a kangaroo. One day he was hunting, and in a path in the mountain roads he met a man on foot and alone, who was longer, gaunter, uglier, by all odds, than himself. He could give the "Squire" fifty, and beat him. Without saying a word B—— raised his gun and deliberately leveled it at the stranger. "For God's sake, don't shoot," shouted the man in great alarm. "Stranger," replied B——, "I swore ten years ago that if I ever met a man uglier than I was I'd shoot him, and you are the first one I've seen." The stranger, after taking a careful survey of his "rival," replied, "Wal, if I look worse than you do, shoot; I don't want to live any longer!"