BARTLETT DAVID W.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES:

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Содержание

Presidential Candidates: / Containing Sketches, Biographical, Personal and Political, of Prominent Candidates for the Presidency in 1860

PREFACE

The sketches in this volume vary in length and minuteness, not from a disposition, on my part, to withhold facts, but because a few of my subjects are too cautious to allow their private history to go before the public; nevertheless, the work contains full and accurate details of the private and public history of our "Presidential Candidates" – not one of whom has any idea of the position I have assigned him.

In selecting candidates, of course, I have followed my own judgment – had I made use of everybody's, I might fill a dozen volumes. I have sketched *the prominent men* who have been named in connection with the Presidency in 1860. Messrs. Buchanan and Pierce I have passed over as men who have gone through a campaign – and through a Presidential term – and the people know them. It is the men who have not run the race for Presidential honors – the new men – of whom the public would learn something, or I have made a mistake in writing this book. The general reader will easily find in the volume the position of any candidate on the issues of the day; and possibly, beside, interesting personal details which show the character of the man.

The Author.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD

The stranger who enters the hall of the United States Senate and casts his eye over the array of senators, will be not a little surprised, possibly somewhat amused, when William H. Seward is pointed out to him. Accustomed to think of Mr. Seward as one of the greatest men in the country, a first-class statesman, as well as orator – for he has *read*, not *heard*, his numberless speeches upon the subjects of the day – he expected to find a gentleman of imposing aspect, to discover the impressive appearance which awes the stranger, or the audience. But, instead of this, he finds a quiet man, sitting in his seat, listening with imperturbable calmness to every senator who chooses to speak, however dry, however provoking, however stupid. For Mr. Seward is well known to be *the best listener* in the Senate. This arises from his rigid politeness, if we may use the phrase, which will not allow him to refuse his ear and eye to any man who chooses to speak. There he sits, leaning back in his chair, a slender man, of average height, clad in simple black, with a singular face, grey eyes, grey hair, Roman nose, a second Wellington, ever in repose. Who ever saw William H. Seward excited? He is never to be provoked by friend or enemy, and is either devoid of all sensibility, or has a spirit which can triumph over, soar above, the common infirmities of poor human nature. We have seen Mr. Seward on two very trying occasions. One, when Mr. Hale, his friend and seat-mate, thought it his duty to severely criticise his vote on the army bill (this was in the winter of 1857-8), and in which criticism he was very personal. Mr. Seward sat composedly in his seat during the painful review of his brother senator, and rose to reply as pleasantly and as quietly as he ever did in his life.

On another occasion, when the Senate sat late in the night on the Cuban bill – last spring – Mr. Toombs made a fierce, and we must say disgraceful attack upon Mr. Seward, calling him, among other names, "a tuppenny demagogue." During the entire harangue by the Georgian senator, Mr. Seward twirled his spectacles, unconsciously, and in his reply was slow, freezingly cold, and never for a moment addressed or looked at Mr. Toombs. These facts show that Mr. Seward purposely refuses in public to allow himself to be angered by personalities or to offer there personalities. He guards constantly against the temptation to offend in this particular. He has often been accused by ardent Republicans of lacking courage, physical courage, and that he did not reply to the attacks of his southern enemies with sufficient spirit. It is a mistake to ascribe this conduct of Mr. Seward to cowardice. It is the result of deliberate thought in him – and if it is mistaken policy, then of course it is to be set down as a blunder, not a vice.

When Mr. Seward speaks, he again disappoints the stranger. There is no *manner*, none of the acts of the orator are to be seen. He leans against the top of his chair, and in an easy, conversational manner *talks* to the Senate, all the time swinging his spectacles to and fro as if at the fireside.

With his arms folded, and leaning back upon the lofty railing in the old Senate hall, we heard Mr. Seward deliver such startling sentiments as these:

> "I think, with great deference to the judgments of others, that the expedient, peaceful, and right way to determine it, is to reverse the existing policy of intervention in favor of slave labor and slave States. It would be wise to restore the Missouri prohibition of slavery in Kansas and Nebraska. There was peace in the territories and in the States until that great statute of Freedom was subverted. It is true that there were frequent debates here on the subject of slavery, and that there were profound sympathies among the people, awakened by or responding to those debates. But what was Congress instituted for but debate? What makes the American people to differ from all other nations, but this – that while among them power enforces silence, here all public questions are referred to debate, free debate in Congress. Do you tell me that the Supreme Court of the United States has removed

the foundations of that great statute? I reply, that they have done no such thing; they could not do it. They have remanded the negro man, Dred Scott, to the custody of his master. With that decree we have nothing here, at least nothing now, to do. This is the extent of the judgment rendered, the extent of any judgment they could render. Already the pretended further decision is subverted in Kansas. So it will be in every free State and in every free Territory of the United States. The Supreme Court, also, can reverse its spurious judgment more easily than we could reconcile the people to its usurpation. Sir, the Supreme Court of the United States attempts to command the people of the United States to accept the principles that one man can own other men, and that they must guarantee the inviolability of that false and pernicious property. The people of the United States never can, and they never will, accept principles so unconstitutional and so abhorrent. Never, never. Let the Court recede. Whether it recede or not, we shall reorganize the Court, and thus reform its political sentiments and practices, and bring them into harmony with the Constitution and with the laws of nature. In doing so we shall not only reassume our own just authority, but we shall restore that high tribunal itself to the position it ought to maintain, since so many invaluable rights of citizens, and even of States themselves, depend upon its impartiality and its wisdom.

"Do you tell me that the slave States will not acquiesce, but will agitate? Think first whether the free States will acquiesce in a decision that shall not only be unjust, but fraudulent. True, they will not menace the Republic. They have an easy and simple remedy, namely to take the government out of unjust and unfaithful hands, and commit it to those which will be just and faithful. They are ready to do this now. They want only a little more harmony of purpose and a little more completeness of organization. These will result from only the least addition to the pressure of slavery upon them. You are lending all that is necessary, and even more, in this very act. But will the slave States agitate? Why? Because they have lost at last a battle that they could not win, unwisely provoked, fought with all the advantages of strategy and intervention, and on a field chosen by themselves. What would they gain? Can they compel Kansas to adopt slavery against her will? Would it be reasonable or just to do it, if they could? Was negro servitude ever forced by the sword on any people that inherited the blood which circulates in our veins, and the sentiments which make us a free people? If they will agitate on such a ground as this, then how, or when, by what concessions we can make, will they ever be satisfied? To what end would they agitate? It can now be only to divide the Union. Will they not need some fairer or more plausible excuse for a proposition so desperate? How would they improve their condition, by drawing down a certain ruin upon themselves? Would they gain any new security for Slavery? Would they not hazard securities that are invaluable? Sir, they who talk so idly, talk what they do not know themselves. No man when cool can promise what he will do when he shall be inflamed; no man inflamed can speak for his actions when time and necessity shall bring reflection. Much less can any one speak for States in such emergencies."

The Senate Hall was crowded – the galleries packed with a dense throng of men and women, and the entire audience leaned forward to catch every one of the words we have quoted, the southern senators smiling scornfully, while some of them were speaking; yet the orator went on as smoothly, as easily, as if he were discoursing a passage of ancient history with a knot of tried friends, instead of dealing with great and living issues before an audience, half of whom, to say the least, were his bitter enemies, eagerly listening to convict him of any imprudent or unjust sentiment.

Mr. Seward is no orator as the word is ordinarily understood. He has little or no animation, no address, no impressiveness. It is *the thoughts, the ideas* of his speeches, which make them so powerful, so widely popular. Almost any one of his speeches *reads* better than it delivers. Mr. Seward, long ago, must have lost all ambition to become merely an orator – if he ever at any time indulged in such an ambition. He speaks not to the few hundreds who can hear his voice, as he well knows; but to millions outside the walls of the Capitol. And so he studies his speeches, makes them truly great, and worth reading by anybody and everybody, then commits them to memory, and recites them in the Senate that they may go with the official stamp upon them to the millions of readers in the free States.

Mr. Seward has long been popular in Washington – personally, we mean – even among his political enemies. When he came to Washington, it was with difficulty that he got a pew in one of the fashionable churches of the capital. Association with him was then thought to be contamination; but, long since, his hospitality, his high mindedness, and his charitable nature, have won for him not only the respect, but the love of many of the citizens of Washington, and some at least of the citizens of the far southern States. No man has more bitter political enemies than Mr. Seward, and no prominent man fewer personal enemies. Those who know him, esteem him highly, however severely they may condemn his political sentiments.

William Henry Seward was born in Florida, New York, May 16, 1801, and is now 58 years old. His ancestors were of Welsh extraction upon his father's side, and of Irish on the mother's side. His father was a physician in the State of New York, of good character and excellent abilities, and his mother was a woman of warm affections and a strong and cultivated intellect. The people of the little town of Florida, generally, were natives of New England, and the tone of society was what some would call Puritanic. In such a village, education and good morals were highly esteemed, and the young mind would be naturally impressed with the importance of great truths, of morality and humanity.

William Henry, while a boy, was noted in the village where he lived, and especially among his circle of family friends, as a great student. His intellect was thought to be precociously developed; but if such was the fact, none of the later effects which usually follow unnatural precocity showed themselves in Mr. Seward's career. He was also known, and is still remembered by his school-day friends, for that frankness, purity and gentleness of character which now distinguish him. As a boy he was pure, and a brother senator remarked of Mr. Seward in our hearing the other day, "He is the purest public man I ever knew!"

When nine years old, he was sent to school at an academy in Goshen, N. Y. At fifteen, the pale, thin, studious lad entered Union College at Schenectady, where he very rapidly distinguished himself by his application, his brilliant talents and the gentleness of his character and disposition. His favorite studies were rhetoric, moral philosophy and the ancient classics. He was a close and thorough student. He rose at four in the morning and sat up late at night. It was here that he acquired those habits of continuous mental toil which have characterized him since he came to public life.

Mr. Seward graduated from Union College with distinguished honors. Among his fellow-graduates were Judge Kent, Dr. Hickok, Professor Lewis, and other eminent men. Shortly after leaving college, Mr. Seward entered the law office of John Anthon, in the city of New York, where, as in college, his unusual devotion to his studies attracted the attention of his teachers and led his friends to prognosticate for him a brilliant future. He finished his legal studies with Judge Duer and Ogden Hoffman, in Goshen, and was admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of New York at Utica in 1822.

In 1823, Mr. Seward took up his residence in the pretty village of Auburn, N.Y. which to this day is his "home," and will always be his abiding place. He became, in 1824 the law-partner of Judge Miller of Auburn and married his youngest daughter, Frances Adeline Miller. The fruits of this marriage were five children, one of whom died young, another took to the army, another to the law, and the remaining two are comparatively young.

Mr. Seward's personal appearance cannot be said to be prepossessing, yet there are fine points in his personal appearance. His ways are modest, his brow and eyes have, however, a sleepy aspect, which has been fostered by his habit of snuffing and smoking tobacco immoderately.

The first time we saw Mr. Seward was at his home – the pretty village of Auburn – beneath the roof of a mutual friend. His face struck us at first unpleasantly, for it seemed too lifeless and expressionless for a man with so much mind, so great an intellect; but in a few moments the clouds passed off and the clear vault of his intellect was open to the eye. His eye grew bright and the fascination of his conversation was at once felt. The compact brow expressed power, the eye genius, the lips force of character, the whole body stately dignity, as well as frankness. In his manners and conversation both in private and in public, Mr. Seward is one of the most natural of men. Nothing is forced or affected, but a pleasant negligence characterizes his manner.

Some men pass for great men because they are physically great and dignified, and because they utter few words and those in a sententious manner. Mr. Seward is not one of these dignitaries, but has won his greatness by *hard work*. He never was one of those brilliant geniuses who suddenly startle the world, but wrought out his reputation, and *earned* the honor which has been so freely accorded to him by his fellow-men.

In Auburn, Mr. Seward has long been personally very popular. His position is a happy one. He has moderate wealth – enough for all his wants – and there at least – however much his hospitality in the Capitol may savor of splendor – there he lives in plain, almost frugal style. He has for years been a member of the Episcopal church at Auburn.

Mr. Seward's father was a Jeffersonian Democrat, and he naturally accepted the politics of his father; but not long after he began to practise law, he left the Democratic party for the opposition. When the Missouri Compromise roused the North from its slumbers, he sided almost instinctively with the friends of freedom, and made several public speeches during the excitement against any compromise with slavery. In 1830, he was elected to the State Senate on anti-Masonic grounds. In 1833, he made the tour of Europe. One year later, he was nominated for governor of the State of New York by the Whig party, and was defeated. In 1838, he was again nominated to that office, and was elected by ten thousand majority. When his term had expired, he was again elected to the same honorable post. While governor of New York he made her respected and admired throughout the world. He used all his influence and power for the repeal of all State laws which in any manner countenanced the institution of negro slavery. The law which permitted a southern slaveholder to retain possession of his slave while travelling through the State, was repealed. A law was also passed which allowed a fugitive the benefit of a jury-trial, and prohibiting State officers from assisting in the recovery of fugitives, and also denying the use of the jails for the confinement of fugitive slaves under arrest. The Supreme Court pronounced most of these laws unconstitutional afterward. Another law was passed, chiefly through the influence of Mr. Seward, for the recovery of kidnapped colored citizens of New York. Under the operation of this humane enactment, Solomon Northup, who for twelve years had been forced to toil upon a far distant southern plantation, was rescued and brought back to his friends. The story of his case was published afterward and had a very large sale.

To crown his official acts, Mr. Seward, just before retiring from his gubernatorial office, recommended the abolition of that law requiring a freehold qualification of negro voters.

The governor of Virginia made a requisition upon him for the surrender of certain parties accused of assisting slaves to escape from their owners. He refused to comply with the demand, upon the ground that the article in the Constitution authorizing a demand of fugitives from justice covered only such persons as were criminals by the laws of the several States and the civilized world. Aiding a slave to escape from his master, in his opinion, was no crime, and he did not feel it to be his duty to surrender the accused. A long controversy was the result of this bold decision, and retaliatory measures were tried by the State of Virginia, but Governor Seward remained firm to the end.

In 1847, Mr. Seward defended John Van Zandt, who was accused of aiding the escape of slaves from their master, at the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States. It was one of the most eloquent arguments he ever made, and he would not accept of a dollar's compensation for his great effort.

While riding once upon the banks of the beautiful Owasco Lake, the friend who was with us, pointed out a pleasant farmhouse as the scene, a few years before, of a terrible murder, and not far distant, in a lonely churchyard, we saw the graves of the victims. A negro of the name of William Freeman, at the age of sixteen, was sent to the State Prison for five years, for alleged horse-stealing. He declared his innocence of the charge, and it has since been admitted by those who tried him, that he was doubtless an innocent man; but, through the false swearing of the real thief, he was sent to prison. The injustice of his punishment, coupled with barbarous treatment while in prison, resulted in an idiotic insanity, and when, at last, he was set free, his term of imprisonment having expired, he went forth an idiot – a lunatic – with but one idea in his brain – that the outside world had most foully wronged him.

One night, without a spark of provocation, this wretched negro entered the house of a Mr. Van Nest and killed him, his wife, a child, and his mother, a woman of seventy. He was arrested the next day, and such was the terrible state of excitement in and around Auburn, that it was with great difficulty that the people were restrained from hanging the culprit up to the most convenient tree. The negro, idiot that he was, confessed the murder and laughed over it. This enraged the people still more, and they clamored for his blood. Seward had acquired much popularity in his arguments in criminal cases, and his neighbors became at once alarmed for fear he would defend the negro. He was absent then at the South, and such was the frantic state of the people of Auburn that his law-partners announced that he would not defend the case. But Mr. Seward was his own master still, and though he saw what the feeling was, and that the negro was sure to be brought in guilty, yet as the miserable man was friendless, he examined most carefully into the case and came to the deliberate conclusion that Freeman was insane. Hoping that other counsel would appear, he did not offer his services. The day of trial came, and the villagers hoped that no lawyer *dared* to defend the criminal. The indictment was read against him, and he was asked if he plead guilty or not guilty. The only reply he made was "Ha!" He was asked if he had counsel – "he didn't know." The poor wretch had no idea of what was transpiring, that he was upon his trial for life. At this juncture, Mr. Seward, who was present, was entirely overcome by his feelings, but he in a moment answered:

"May it please the court: *I shall remain counsel for the prisoner until his death*." For two weeks, in the hottest of weather, he conducted the defence, without pay. He was subjected to insult from some of his old friends, and the feeling of the town was strongly against him. The well known John Van Buren was the District Attorney, and with the predetermination of the jury, of course a verdict of "guilty," was rendered. Mr. Seward's argument was one of the finest he ever made. Alluding to the unpopularity which he had brought upon himself by his course, he said:

"In due time, gentlemen of the jury, when I shall have paid the debt of nature, my remains will rest here in your midst with those of my kindred and neighbors. It is very possible they may be unhonored, neglected, spurned! But perhaps years hence, when the passion and excitement which now agitate this community shall have passed away – some wandering stranger – some lone exile – some *Indian*, some *negro*, may erect over them a humble stone, and thereon write this epitaph, 'He was faithful.'"

An Appellate Court granted a new trial, but before it came on the criminal died. A post mortem examination revealed the fact that his brain was *one mass of disease, and nearly destroyed*! Mr. Seward was suddenly and unexpectedly set right again before the people, and was restored to the old place in their affections.

We have noticed this portion of Mr. Seward's life because it effectually disposes of that cry raised against him by certain persons, that he is a demagogue. No demagogue defends the poor and

forsaken, at the expense of personal popularity. He flatters the prejudices of the people and does not go across them to his own injury.

Mr. Seward was elected, in 1849, to the Senate of the United States, where he has remained to this day. His course is everywhere known. He was a Whig, and is of course warmly in favor of a Protective Tariff and other prominent Whig measures, though he subordinates them all to the great question of Human Freedom.

As a Whig, Mr. Seward was the friend of the slave. He opposed the famous compromise measures of 1850, struggled against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise – came slowly into the Republican movement, but when once in it, no man could excel him, and few equal, in hearty devotion to the party and its cause. From the first, he condemned the great American movement, and has lost popularity in some quarters for doing so. He is in favor of internal improvements and a homestead law, as his votes will show. He objects to any hasty, irritating attempts to buy or take Cuba – no insults – let everything be done fairly and gentlemanly; and, if the pear drops to the ground ripe, eat the fruit. *But no fruit-stealing, or buying at ruinous prices!*

A friend of Mr. Seward speaks of Mr. Seward's style in the following language:

"His rapid idealization, his oriental affluence, though not vagueness of expression, and the Ciceronian flow of his language, proceeding not from the heat of youth or the vapors of wine, but from the exceeding fertility of his imagination, combine to render him an interesting speaker. Yet his enunciation is neither clear nor distinct, and the tones of his voice often grate harshly upon the ear. He is not devoid of grace, however; he is calm and dignified, but earnest.

"His style is elegant rather than neat; elaborate rather than finished. It possesses a sparkling vivacity, but is somewhat deficient in energetic brevity. It is not always easy, for there is more labor than art; but if the wine has an agreeable *bouquet*, the connoisseur delights to have it linger. Like young D'Israeli, whose political position, in some respects, resembles his own, he has occasionally a tendency to restore declamation, a natural predilection perhaps for Milesian floridness and hyperbole, and, like Napoleon, a love for gorgeous paradoxes. But, in general, his words are well-chosen and are frequently more eloquent than the ideas. His sentences are all constructed with taste; they have often the brilliancy of Mirabeau, and the glowing fervor of Fox."

We must notice a few quotations from a very few of Mr. Seward's most prominent speeches. At Detroit, Oct. 2, 1856, he spoke upon "The Slaveholding Class," to a mass convention, in which he first argued that the aggrandizement of the slaveholding class, to the detriment of the rest of the people of the country, is a perversion of the Constitution. He then, in a masterly style, gave a sketch of the condition of the country – showed the organization of the courts, of Congress, of the departments – all – all entirely in the control of the slaveholding class – and closed with the subjoined paragraphs:

> "Mark, if you please, that thus far I have only shown you the mere governmental organization of the slaveholding class in the United States, and pointed out its badges of supremacy, suggestive of your own debasement and humiliation. Contemplate now the reality of the power of that class, and the condition to which the cause of human nature has been reduced. In all the free States, the slaveholder argues and debates the pretensions of his class, and even prosecutes his claim for his slave before the delegate of the Federal Government, with safety and boldness, as he ought. He exhorts the citizens of the free States to acquiesce, and even threatens them, in their very homes, with the terrors of disunion, if that acquiescence is withheld; and he does all this with safety, as he ought, if it be done at all. He is listened to with patience, and replied to with decorum, even in his most arrogant declamations, in the halls of Congress. Through the effective sympathy of other property classes, the slaveholding power maintains with entire safety a press and permanent political organizations in all the free States. On the contrary, if you except the northern border of Delaware, there is nowhere in any slaveholding State

personal safety for a citizen, even of that State itself, who questions the rightful national domination of the slaveholding class. Debate of its pretensions in the halls of Congress is carried on at the peril of limb and life. A free press is no sooner set up in a slaveholding State than it is demolished, and citizens who assemble peacefully to discuss even the extremest claims of slavery, are at first cautioned, and, if that is ineffectual, banished or slain, even more surely than the resistants of military despotism in the French empire. Nor, except just now, has the case been much better even in the free States. It is only as of yesterday, when the free citizens, assembled to discuss the exactions of the slaveholding class, were dispersed in Boston, Utica, Philadelphia and New York. It is only as of yesterday, that when I rose, on request of citizens of Michigan, at Marshall, to speak of the great political questions of the day, I was enjoined not to make disturbance or to give offence by speaking of free soil, even on the ground which the Ordinance of 1787 had saved to freedom. It was only as of yesterday that Protestant churches and theological seminaries, built on Puritan foundations, vied with the organs of the slaveholding class in denouncing a legislator who, in the act of making laws affecting its interests, declared that all human laws ought to be conformed to the standard of eternal justice. The day has not even yet passed when the press, employed in the service of education and morality, expurgates from the books which are put into the hands of the young all reflections on slavery. The day yet lasts when the flag of the United States flaunts defiance on the high seas over cargoes of human merchandise. Nor is there an American representative anywhere, in any of the four quarters of the globe, that does not labor to suppress even there the discussion of American slavery, lest it may possibly affect the safety of the slaveholding class at home. If, in a generous burst of sympathy with the struggling Protestant democracy of Europe, we bring off the field one of their fallen champions, to condole with and comfort him, we suddenly discern that the mere agitation of the principles of freedom tend to alarm the slaveholding class, and we cast him off again as a waif, not merely worthless, but dangerous to ourselves. The natural and ancient order of things is reversed; freedom has become subordinate, sectional and local; slavery, in its influence and combinations, has become predominant, national and general. Free, direct and manly utterance in the cause of freedom, even in the free States themselves, leads to ostracism, while superserviceability to the slaveholding class alone secures preferment in the national councils. The descendants of Franklin, and Hamilton, and Jay, and King, are unprized —

> – 'Till they learn to betray,
> Undistinguish'd they live, if they shame not their sires,
> And the torch that would light them to dignity's way,
> Must be caught from the pile when the country expires.'

"In this course of rapid public demoralization, what wonder is it that the action of the Government tends continually with fearfully augmenting force to the aggrandizement of the slaveholding class? A government can never be better or wiser, or even so good or so wise as the people over whom it presides? Who can wonder, then, that the Congress of the United States, in 1820, gave to slavery the west bank of the Mississippi quite up to the present line of Kansas, and was content to save for freedom, out of the vast region of Louisiana, only Kansas

and Nebraska! Who can wonder that it consented to annex and admit Texas, with power to subdivide herself into five slave States, so as to secure the slaveholding class a balance against the free States then expected to be ultimately organized in Kansas and Nebraska? Who can wonder, that when this annexation of Texas brought on a war with Mexico, which ended in the annexation of Upper California and New Mexico, every foot of which was free from African slavery, Congress divided that vast territory, reluctantly admitting the new State of California as a free State, because she would not consent to establish slavery, dismembered New Mexico, transferred a large portion of it to slaveholding Texas, and stipulated that what remained of New Mexico, together with Utah, should be received as slave States if the people thereof should so demand? Who can wonder that the President, without any reproof by Congress, simultaneously offered to Spain two hundred millions of dollars for the purchase of Cuba, that it might be divided into two slaveholding States, to be admitted as members of the Federal Union, and at the same time menaced the European Powers with war should they interfere to prevent the consummation of the purchase? Who can wonder that, emboldened with these concessions of the people, Congress at last sanctioned a reprisal by the slaveholding class upon the regions of Kansas and Nebraska, not on the ground of justice or for an equivalent, but simply on the ground that the original concession of them to freedom was extorted by injustice and unconstitutional oppression by the free States? Who can wonder that the slaveholding class, when it had obtained the sanction of Congress to that reprisal, by giving a pledge that the people of those territories should be perfectly free, nevertheless, to establish freedom therein, invaded the territory of Kansas with armed forces, inaugurated an usurpation, and established slavery there, and disfranchised the supporters of freedom by tyrannical laws, enforced by fire and sword, and that the President and Senate maintain and uphold the slaveholding interests in these culminating demonstrations of their power, while the House of Representatives lacks the power, because it is wanting in the virtue, to rescue the interests of justice, freedom, and humanity? Who can wonder that federal courts in Massachusetts indict defenders of freedom for sedition, and in Pennsylvania subvert the State tribunals, and pervert the *habeas corpus*, the great writ of Liberty, into a process for arresting fugitive slaves, and construe into contempt, punishable by imprisonment without bail or mainprize, the simple and truthful denial of personal control over a fugitive female slave, who has made her own voluntary escape from bondage? Who can wonder that in Kansas lawyers may not plead or juries be empannelled in the Federal Courts, nor can even citizens vote, without first swearing to support the Fugitive Slave Law and the Kansas and Nebraska act, while citizens who discuss through the press the right of slaveholders to domineer there, are punished with imprisonment or death; free bridges, over which citizens who advocate free institutions, may pass, free taverns where they may rest, and free presses through which they may speak, are destroyed under indictments for nuisances; and those who peacefully assemble to debate the grievances of that class, and petition Congress for relief, are indicted for high treason?

"Just now, the wind sets with some apparent steadiness at the North, and you will readily confess therefore that I do not exaggerate the growing aggrandizement of the slaveholding class, but you will nevertheless insist that that aggrandizement is now and may be merely temporary and occasional. A moment's reflection, however, will satisfy you that this opinion is profoundly untrue. What is now seen is only the legitimate maturing of errors unresisted through a period of more than thirty

years. All the fearful evils now upon us are only the inevitable results of efforts to extinguish, by delays, concession, and compromises, a discussion to which justice, reason and humanity, are continually lending their elemental fires.

"What, then, is the tendency of this aggrandizement of the slave interests, and what must be its end, if it be not now or speedily arrested? Immediate consequences are distinctly in view. The admission of Kansas into the Union as a slave State, the subsequent introduction of slavery, by means equally flagrant, into Nebraska, and the admission of Utah with the twin patriarchal institutions of legalized adultery and slavery, and these three achievements crowned with the incorporation of Cuba into the Republic. Beyond these visible fields lies a region of fearful speculation – the restoration of the African slave trade, and the desecration of all Mexico and Central America, by the infliction upon the half-civilized Spanish and Indian races dwelling there, by our hands, of a curse from which, inferior as they are to ourselves, they have had the virtue once to redeem themselves. Beyond this last surveyed, lies that of civil and servile wars, national decline and – ruin!

"I fear to open up these distant views, because I know that you will attribute my apprehensions to a morbid condition of mind. But confining myself to the immediate future which is so fearfully visible, I ask you in all candor, first, whether I have ever before exaggerated the aggrandizement of the slaveholding class. Secondly, whether the movement that I now forbode is really more improbable than the evils once seemed, which are now a startling reality.

"How are these immediate evils, and whatever of greater evils that are behind them, to be prevented? Do you expect that those who have heretofore counselled compromise, acquiescence, and submission, will change their course and come to the rescue of liberty? Even if this were a reasonable hope, are Cass, and Douglass, and Buchanan, greater or better than the statesmen who have opened the way of compromise, and led these modern statesmen into it? And if they indeed are so much greater and so much better, do you expect them to live forever?

"Perhaps you expect the slaveholding class will abate its pretensions, and practise voluntarily the moderation which you wish, but dare not demand at its hands. How long, and with what success, have you waited already for that reformation? Did any property class ever so reform itself? Did the patricians in old Rome, the noblesse or the clergy of France? The landholders in Ireland? The landed aristocracy in England? Does the slaveholding class even seek to beguile you with such a hope? Has it not become rapacious, arrogant, defiant? Is it not waging civil war against Freedom, wherever it encounters real resistance? No! no! you have let the lion and the spotted leopard into the sheep-fold. They certainly will not die of hunger there, nor retire from disgust with satiety. They will remain there so long as renewed appetite shall find multiplied prey. Be not self-deceived. Whenever a property class of any kind is invited by society to oppress, it will continue to oppress. Whenever a slaveholding class finds the non-slaveholding classes yielding, it will continue its work of subjugation.

"You admit all this, and you ask how are these great evils, now so apparent, to be corrected – these great dangers, now so manifest, to be avoided. I answer, it is to be done, not as some of you have supposed, by heated debates sustained by rifles or revolvers at Washington, nor yet by sending armies with supplies and Sharpe's rifles into Kansas. I condemn no necessary exercise of the right of self-defence, anywhere. Public safety is necessary to the practice of the real duties of champions of Freedom. But this is a contest in which the race is not to the physically

swift, nor the battle to those who have most muscular strength. Least of all is it to be won by retaliation and revenge. The victory will be to those who shall practise the highest moral courage, with simple fidelity to the principles of humanity and justice. Notwithstanding all the heroism of your champions in Washington and Kansas, the contest will be fearfully endangered, if the slaveholding class shall win the President and the Congress in this great national canvass. Even although every one of these champions should perish in his proper field, yet the Rights of Man will be saved, and the tide of oppression will be rolled back from our northern plains, if a President and a Congress shall be chosen who are true to freedom. The people and the people only are sovereign and irresistible, whether they will the ascendency of slavery or the triumph of liberty.

"Harsh as my words may have seemed, I do my kinsmen and brethren of the free States no such injustice as to deny that great allowances are to be made for the demoralization I have described. We inherited complicity with the slaveholding class, and with it prejudices of caste. We inherited confidence and affection toward our Southern brethren – and with these, our political organizations, and profound reverence for political authorities, all adverse to the needful discussion of slavery. Above all, we inherited a fear of the dissolution of the Union, which can only be unwholesome when it ceases equally to affect the conduct of all the great parties to that sacred compact. All these inheritances have created influences upon our political conduct, which are rather to be deplored than condemned. I trust that at last these influences are about to cease. I trust so, because, if we have inherited the demoralization of slavery, we have also attained the virtue required for emancipation. If we have inherited prejudices of caste, we have also risen to the knowledge that political safety is dependent on the rendering of equal and exact justice to all men. And if we have suffered our love for the Union to be abused so as to make us tolerate the evils that more than all others endanger it, we have discerned that great error at last. If we should see a citizen who had erected a noble edifice, sit down inactively in its hall, avoiding all duty and enterprise, lest he might provoke enemies to pull it down over his head, or one who had built a majestic vessel, moor it to the wharf, through fear that he might peradventure run it upon the rocks, we should condemn his fatuity and folly. We have learned at last that the American people labor not only under the responsibility of preserving this Union, but also under the responsibility of making it subserve the advancement of justice and humanity, and that neglect of this last responsibility involves the chief peril to which the Union is exposed.

"I shall waste little time on the newly-invented apologies for continued demoralization. The question now to be decided is, whether a slaveholding class exclusively shall govern America, or whether it shall only bear divided sway with non-slaveholding citizens. It concerns all persons equally, whether they are Protestants or Catholics, native-born or exotic citizens. And therefore it seems to me that this is no time for trials of strength between the native-born and the adopted freeman, or between any two branches of one common Christian brotherhood.

"As little shall I dwell on merely personal partialities or prejudices affecting the candidates for public trusts. Each fitly personates the cause he represents. Beyond a doubt, Mr. Buchanan is faithful to the slaveholding class, as Mr. Fillmore vacillates between it and its opponents. I know Mr. Fremont well; and when I say that I know that he combines extraordinary genius and unquestionable sincerity of purpose with

unusual modesty, I am sure that you will admit that he is a true representative of the Cause of Freedom.

"Discarding sectionalism, and loving my country and all its parts, and bearing an affection even to the slaveholding class, none the less sincere because it repels me, I cordially adopt the motto which it too often hangs out to delude us. I know no North, no South, no East, and no West; for I know that he who would offer an acceptable sacrifice in the present crisis must conform himself to the divine instructions, that neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, shall we worship the Father; but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

"Last of all, I stop not to argue with those who decry agitation and extol conservatism, not knowing that conservatism is of two kinds – that one which, yielding to cowardly fear of present inconvenience or danger, covers even political leprosy with protecting folds; and that other and better conservatism, that heals, in order that the body of the Commonwealth may be healthful and immortal.

"Fellow-citizens, I am aware that I have spoken with seriousness amounting to solemnity. Do not infer from thence that I am despondent or distrustful of present triumph and ultimate regeneration. It has required a strong pressure upon the main-spring of the public virtue to awaken its elasticity. Such pressure has reached the centre of the spring at last. They who have reckoned that its elasticity was lost, are now discovering their profound mistake. The people of the United States have dallied long with the cactus, and floated carelessly on the calm seas that always reflect summer skies, but they have not lost their preference for their own changeless *fleur de lis*, and they consult no other guidance, in their course over the waters, than that of their own bright, particular, and constant star, the harbinger of Liberty."

Mr. Seward's famous Rochester speech has been so often misquoted and misrepresented that we will quote from it a few passages:

"The slave system is one of constant danger, distrust, suspicion and watchfulness. It debases those whose toil alone can produce wealth and resources for defence, to the lowest degree of which human nature is capable, to guard against mutiny and insurrection, and thus wastes energies which otherwise might be employed in national development and aggrandizement.

"The free-labor system educates all alike, and, by opening all the fields of industrial employment, and all the departments of authority, to the unchecked and equal rivalry of all classes of men, at once secures universal contentment, and brings into the highest possible activity all the physical, moral and social energies of the State. In States where the slave system prevails, the masters, directly or indirectly, secure all political power, and constitute a ruling aristocracy. In the States where the free-labor system prevails, universal suffrage necessarily obtains, and the State inevitably becomes, sooner or later, a republic or democracy.

"Russia yet maintains slavery, and is a despotism. Most of the other European states have abolished slavery, and adopted the system of free labor. It was the antagonistic political tendencies of the two systems which the first Napoleon was contemplating when he predicted that Europe would ultimately be either all Cossack or all Republican. Never did human sagacity utter a more pregnant truth. The two systems are at once perceived to be incongruous, but they are more than incongruous, they are incompatible. They never have permanently existed together in one country, and they never can. It would be easy to demonstrate

this impossibility, from the irreconcilable contrast between their great principles and characteristics. But the experience of mankind has conclusively established it. Slavery, as I have already intimated, existed in every state in Europe. Free labor has supplanted it everywhere except in Russia and Turkey. State necessities, developed in modern times, are now obliging even those two nations to encourage and employ free labor; and already, despotic as they are, we find them engaged in abolishing slavery. In the United States, slavery came into collision with free labor at the close of the last century, and fell before it in New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, but triumphed over it effectually, and excluded it for a period yet undetermined, from Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. Indeed, so incompatible are the two systems, that every new State which is organized within our ever-extending domain makes its first political act a choice of the one and an exclusion of the other, even at the cost of civil war, if necessary. The slave States, without law, at the last national election, successfully forbade, within their own limits, even the casting of votes for a candidate for President of the United States supposed to be favorable to the establishment of the free-labor system in the new States.

"Hitherto, the two systems have existed in different States, but side by side within the American Union. This has happened because the Union is a confederation of States. But in another aspect, the United States constitute only one nation. Increase of population, which is filling the States out to their very borders, together with a new and extended net-work of railroads and other avenues, and an internal commerce which daily becomes more intimate, is rapidly bringing the States into a higher and more perfect social unity or consolidation. Thus these antagonistic systems are continually coming into closer contact, and collision results.

"Shall I tell you what this collision means? They who think that it is accidental, unnecessary, the work of interested or fanatical agitators, and therefore ephemeral, mistake the case altogether. It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation. Either the cotton and rice fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts for legitimate merchandise alone, or else the rye fields and wheat fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become once more markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men. It is the failure to apprehend this great truth that induces so many unsuccessful attempts at final compromise between the slave and free States, and it is the existence of this great fact that renders all such pretended compromises, when made, vain and ephemeral. Startling as this saying may appear to you, fellow-citizens, it is by no means an original or even a modern one. Our forefathers knew it to be true, and unanimously acted upon it when they framed the Constitution of the United States. They regarded the existence of the servile system in so many of the States with sorrow and shame, which they openly confessed, and they looked upon the collision between them, which was then just revealing itself, and which we are now accustomed to deplore, with favor and hope. They knew that either the one or the other system must exclusively prevail.

"Unlike too many of those who in modern times invoke their authority, they had a choice between the two. They preferred the system of free labor, and they determined to organize the Government, and so to direct its activity, that that system should surely and certainly prevail. For this purpose, and no other, they

based the whole structure of government broadly on the principle that all men are created equal, and therefore free – little dreaming that within the short period of one hundred years, their descendants would bear to be told by any orator, however popular, that the utterance of that principle was merely a rhetorical rhapsody; or by any judge, however venerated, that it was attended by mental reservations, which render it hypocritical and false. By the ordinance of 1787, they dedicated all the national domain not yet polluted by slavery to free labor immediately, thenceforth and forever, while by the new Constitution and laws they invited foreign free labor from all lands under the sun, and interdicted the importation of African slave labor, at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances whatsoever. It is true that they necessarily and wisely modified this policy of freedom by leaving it to the several States, affected as they were by differing circumstances, to abolish slavery in their own way, and at their own pleasure, instead of confiding that duty to Congress, and that they secured to the slave States, while yet retaining the system of slavery, a three-fifths representation of slaves in the Federal Government, until they should find themselves able to relinquish it with safety. But the very nature of these modifications fortifies my position that the fathers knew that the two systems could not endure within the Union, and expected that within a short period slavery would disappear forever. Moreover, in order that these modifications might not altogether defeat their grand design of a republic maintaining universal equality, they provided that two-thirds of the States might amend the Constitution.

"*It remains to say on this point only one word, to guard against misapprehension. If these States are to again become universally slaveholding, I do not pretend to say with what violations of the Constitution that end shall be accomplished. On the other hand, while I do confidently believe and hope that my country will yet become a land of universal freedom, I do not expect that it will be made so otherwise than through the action of the several States coöperating with the Federal Government, and all acting in strict conformity with their respective Constitutions.*"

In a speech in the Senate, last spring, March 2, 1859, Mr. Seward said – he was speaking of the "Expenses and Revenues" —

"We are for free trade to a practical extent, and we all are in favor of a judicious tariff. The exigency of this debate does not require me to survey the whole range of productive industry of the country, and to suggest a comparative system of imposts adjusted to them all. It would be labor lost to do so; for, as I have already said, it is in the House of Representatives, and not here, that the act originating any revision of the tariff must be introduced, and perfected, at least in degree. But I can say, with entire freedom, that it would present no ground of objection, in my judgment, if such a bill should be so constructed as to favor and encourage the mining and manufacture of iron. I select and distinguish this great interest, because I think that the disasters which have overtaken the National Treasury and have crushed the prosperity of the country, have resulted from neglect and improvidence in regard to it. We have been engaged, as most other civilized states have been engaged, during the last fifteen or twenty years, in adopting the great invention of railroads, or, as the Frenchmen accurately describe them, iron roads, and bringing it into universal use. If we could only have understood ourselves in the beginning of this period, and adhered persistently throughout to just convictions then formed, we should have so discriminated in our revenue system as to have made this great enterprise work out an establishment of the iron manufacture in this country, so as to derive from it our

chief supplies. But the country has not been willing to look steadily to that ultimate interest. It has asked always the cheapest iron that could be gotten, and, of course, has demanded that the imposts should be fixed at the lowest possible rates. So the protection afforded by the tariff of 1846 gave place to a lower protection in 1857; and it has not been without much difficulty that at times Congress has been stayed from remitting all duties on foreign manufactures of railroad iron. The Legislatures of the States, acting on the same erroneous principles, have authorized combinations and associations on doubtful principles to force forward the same precipitancy of action. Loans of the credit of States, of counties, cities, and even towns, have been authorized, to furnish capital to railroad corporations, and at the same time they have been continually allowed to borrow money, at usurious and ruinous rates of interest. Securities thus obtained, doubted and comparatively valueless at home, have been pledged to the iron manufacturers abroad, and their enterprise has been excessively stimulated, while that of our own manufacturers has been disheartened and suppressed. These improvement measures have at last produced their inevitable effect – an undue diversion of capital into railroad enterprises, a derangement of internal exchanges at home, and a collapse of the national credit abroad, and a suspension equally of domestic manufactures and of foreign commerce. Such are the legitimate results of the improvidence which caused roads to be built of foreign iron, over the coal and iron beds in our mountains. I hope, sir, that the House of Representatives will make the needed initial step in a return to a wise policy, and will send the miner once more with his torch into the deserted chambers where the coal and the ore are stored away by the hand of nature, and will adopt such a policy as will rekindle the slumbering fires in the forges and furnaces of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Tennessee and Missouri. It would be a benevolent work. I do not say that I would force the Government to assume it merely as a work of benevolence; but I do say, that since there is need of taxes to avoid debt, I would so levy the taxes as to secure incidentally that benevolent object."

To show that Mr. Seward indulged in no feelings of personal hostility toward any slaveholder, we quote from his remarks on the death of Senator Rusk of Texas, a man in his politics *utterly* opposed to Mr. Seward as we can suppose any southern politician, however ultra, to be.

Said Mr. Seward of his fellow-senator:

"On the last day of August, I was reëntering the port of Quebec, after a voyage of thirty days, in search of health, along the inhospitable coasts of Labrador. The sympathies of home and country, so long suppressed, were revived within me, and I was even meditating new labors and studies here, when the pilot, who came on board, handed me a newspaper which announced the death of the senator from Texas. My first emotions were those of sadness and sorrow over this bereavement of a personal friend. When these had had their time, I tried to divine why it was that he, among all the associates whom I honored, esteemed and loved here, was thus suddenly and prematurely withdrawn from the scene of our common labors; he for whom I thought higher honors were preparing, and a fuller wreath was being woven; he who seemed to me to stand a monument against which the waves of faction must break, if ever they should be stirred up from their lowest depths; he, in short, with whom I thought I might do so much, and without whom I could do almost nothing, to magnify and honor the Republic. That question I could not solve – I cannot solve it now. It is only another occasion in which I am required to trust, where I am not permitted to know, the ways of the Great Disposer.

> "Mr. President, the teeming thoughts of this solemn hour bring up once more before me the manly form and beaming countenance of my friend, though it is but for that formal parting which has, until now, been denied me. Farewell, noble patriot, heroic soldier, faithful statesman, generous friend! loved by no means the least, although among the last of friends secured. I little thought that our whisperings about travels over earth's fairest lands and broadest seas were only the suggestions of our inward natures to prepare for the sad journey [1] that leads through the gate of death."

Feb. 25, 1859, the famous night session of the Senate on the Cuba Thirty Million Bill occurred. Mr. Seward had previously spoken against the measure, and opposed the friends of the bill, but he was treated with courtesy till this night session, when Mr. Tombs made a fierce onslaught upon him. Let us recall the debate:

Mr. Dixon, of Connecticut, spoke for two hours, replying to the points of Mr. Benjamin's recent speech. Mr. Benjamin had urged, he said, that unless we acquire Cuba, Spain will emancipate the negroes. Mr. Dixon reasoned, that if negro freedom in Cuba would be injurious to the United States, in Jamaica it must be equally so; yet it is not used as an argument to buy Jamaica from Great Britain. Mr. Benjamin had reasoned that compulsory labor was necessary to develop tropical production; but Mr. Dixon thought that the sugar for the world could be grown by free labor; and if it could not, sugar was not a sufficient equivalent for the perpetuation of slavery. In the course of his remarks, Mr. Dixon had occasion to say that slavery degrades free labor.

Mr. Reid controverted this opinion, and said the doctrine was new in the South. He maintained that the white man was not degraded by labor, although he worked at the bench, or in a field, side by side with his slave.

Mr. Dixon refused to admit the correctness of this assertion as an exposition of the general southern feeling.

Mr. Bell traced the rise and progress of the filibuster spirit, until it culminated in the Ostend manifesto, and became reflected in this Cuban bill. Both were in a form offensive to Spain. No nation would be apt to receive kindly an offer made to purchase its territory when accompanied by a studied reminder of its fallen fortunes. His (Mr. Bell's) opinion was that the Ostend manifesto and the present proposal were framed on the perfect knowledge that Cuba could not be acquired, and that they were addressed to what is supposed to be the dominant traits in our national character. The committee's report is skillfully drawn up. It promises to extend the trade and commerce of the North, the peculiar industry of the South, and the agriculture of the West. It is framed to habituate the country to the cry of "war," but we are making no preparation for war. On the contrary, we are trying to get along without a revenue. For himself, he would favor our acquiring control of the island, either as a protectorate or independent power; but he likewise held that the time has not yet come when its possession was necessary, either to our development or security. We are not now in position to accept Cuba, if Spain should offer it as a gift. We cannot accept it until we have built up a navy of sufficient strength to maintain it. The first blow that would be struck in a war with a naval power would be to wrest it from us, and hold its harbors as a means of annoyance against us. The committee's promise that the acquisition of the island will give us the monopoly of sugar is equally fallacious. The increasing production of that article would soon create its production throughout the whole temperate zone. Neither is it true, as the committee says, that when a nation ceases growth, its decadence commences. History does not teach this doctrine of expansion, nor is there any parallelism between the growth of a nation and an individual man. Are our internal affairs so perfectly organized as to leave no range for our ambition? Has even the question of currency been placed on a satisfactory basis? Is our great internal domain reduced to such narrow limits as to afford no scope to our energies? Our territory is

[1] Mr. Rusk and Mr. Seward had planned a voyage around the world together.

now greater than the whole area of the Roman Empire. All this we are bound to protect and defend; and to defend the accessible points of our extended frontier would require 100,000 men, with at least 250 war steamers. The chairman of the Naval Committee says our whole guns are 1,100. The French navy alone has 15,000 cannon afloat, with 500 ships, of which half are war steamers. We are not now prepared for such a war; and yet the President announced, on a recent occasion, that our policy henceforth is expansion.

Mr. Kennedy, of Maryland, addressed the Senate, arguing that the acquisition of Cuba is subversive of the best interests of the South. Referring to the aspect of our domestic affairs, he considered that innovations had been ingrafted on the policy of this government, which inevitably betokens its dissolution. The doctrine of State Rights did well while we were a homogeneous people, bound together by common troubles; but that day has passed. The unbounded prosperity of this country, its fertile lands, and increasing wealth, have attracted to it people from every clime. There is no common interest to bind us together. The Constitution and the Supreme Court are derided, and the Constitution threatens to be but a rope of sand, unable to bind, from having no power to punish infractions of that Constitution. He had been derided as an old Federalist, and the men who so denounced him had now on the table two bills more dangerous, in consolidating the power in the hands of one man, than any that ever emanated from the old Federal party. They had also a bill to give away the public lands to the sweepings of European lazar-houses, to squat thereon, and, under an easy franchise, to control that government, before they know a word of our language, or have one idea toward a comprehension of our institutions. Yet, while offering this extraordinary bonus to the discontented spirits of the old world, they refuse to vote for and denounce the old soldiers' bill. How comes it, he asked, that there is such a diversity of opinion in the democratic party, marching under one banner, and professing common principles?

He proceeded to ask how it is possible for us to hold Cuba, with but fifty-seven ships in our navy to protect the fifty Cuban harbors? Our Paraguay armada consists of canal-boats, and side-wheel steamers. Have senators reflected on the baneful effect the acquisition of Cuba would have on slave property? He remembered the opening of Alabama. Virginia has scarcely yet recovered from the effect of that exodus of her labor to localities where it would be more remunerative. With the slave trade stopped, Cuba would be a perpetual drain, and would put planters into a more unequal contest by withdrawing the labor from their cotton fields into sugar production. It is estimated that five hundred thousand slaves will be abstracted from the southern States, and a thousand millions of capital, within five years. And if we drift into a war with England and France, we will have to maintain a contest with fifteen hundred ships on our extended coast line. These are considerations, for the American people, as they will change the whole course of our policy, and inaugurate a new era of standing armies and enormous fleets. The time is also inopportune for the acquisition of that island. In conclusion, he did not admit the right to bring in a foreign nation, with a foreign tongue and foreign teachings, and incapable of understanding our institutions. In his opinion, we were fast losing all those landmarks which characterized our early nationality, and were fast becoming a mere confederation of heterogeneous States. For these and other considerations, he was opposed to the acquisition of Cuba.

Mr. Wade here moved to adjourn. Lost by 17 to 28.

At eight o'clock in the evening the Senate was crowded – the galleries were one sea of faces. The Republicans wanted to adjourn the discussion to the next day – the Democrats were determined to force a vote on the bill that evening.

Mr. Doolittle, of Wisconsin, moved to postpone the Cuba and take up the homestead bill, and proceeded to speak on the latter.

Mr. Slidell called him to order.

Mr. Doolittle insisted on his motion.

Mr. Johnson, of Tennessee, although he had for fifteen years advocated the homestead bill, asked Mr. Doolittle to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Douglas, as a friend of the homestead bill, made the same request.

Mr. Clark, of Connecticut, as a friend of the homestead bill, moved the Senate adjourn. Lost, by 17 to 30.

Mr. Trumbull asked Mr. Hunter to pledge himself not to bring forward the appropriation bills, to prevent a vote on the homestead bill.

Mr. Hunter would give no such promise.

Mr. Trumbull appealed to Mr. Johnson to stand by and press the homestead bill.

Mr. Bigler asked Mr. Trumbull, for himself and the Republicans, to name the hour at which they would vote on both measures.

Mr. Trumbull, for himself, was ready now, but could not make any pledge for his friends.

Mr. Seward said that after nine hours' discussion on the Cuba bill, it was time to come back to the great question of the age. Two propositions now stand face to face; one is the question of land for the landless, and the other is a question of land for slaves.

Mr. Slidell here rose.

The Vice-President. Will the Senator from New York yield the floor to the Senator from Louisiana?

Mr. Seward. No, sir, I do not.

Mr. Slidell called Mr. Seward to order. He was discussing the comparative merits of the two bills.

The Vice-President decided that Mr. Seward was in order.

Mr. Seward went on with a few words, when Mr. Fitch appealed to the Chair to put the question of order to the Senate, with a view of stopping what threatened to be an interminable discussion.

The Vice-President refused to do so.

Mr. Seward went on, saying: "It is in the Thirty-fifth Congress that the homestead bill has been put aside." He then contrasted the merits of the two bills.

Mr. Toombs said, as to "land for the landless," it carried with it some demagogical power. He despised a demagogue, but despised still more those who are driven by demagogues. What are the other side afraid of? If they do not want to give $30,000,000 to carry out a great national policy, let them say so and not attempt to get rid of the issue by saying, "We want to give land to the landless."

Mr. Wade said the question was land to the landless, or niggers to the niggerless. He would antagonize these issues, and carry the appeal to the country. The whole object of the Democratic party was to go round the world hunting for niggers. They could no more sustain their party without niggers, than they could a steam engine without fuel.

Mr. Fessenden took Mr. Toombs to task, and asked if the language he had used was not in imitation of the great man at the other end of the Avenue (the President), who recently addressed an out-of-door crowd, saying none but cowards shirk this Cuban bill. He told the senator the Republicans did not tremble nor shrink. He referred to the trial of physical endurance at the last session, and hinted that they could endure as much again. He denied that the Republicans were obstructing legitimate business, but said they were opposed to this Cuban measure, by which nothing was intended but a party result.

Mr. Seward was not in the habit of impugning the courage of any man. He believed every senator had sufficient. He himself had enough for his own purposes. But other qualities are also necessary. There is moral courage. There is truthfulness to pledges. The President had power to carry out his pledges, and has he done so? Where is the Pacific Railroad bill? where his protection? where relief to the bankrupt? Lost, sunk, sacrificed, in his attempt to fasten slavery on the Spanish American States. No part of the President's policy has been carried out, but it is all sacrificed to a false and pretended issue. Out of nothing, nothing is expected to come. He (Mr. Seward) had never mistaken

the President's policy. He never mistook it for a giant in arms, but for a windmill with sails. Mr. Seward concluded by an energetic declaration that he is to be found on the side of liberty, everywhere and always.

Mr. Toombs replied at some length, till Mr. Johnson, of Arkansas, again raised a question of order, to cut off debate.

At eleven o'clock there was a crowded audience; half the senators were in their seats, while the rest were reading and smoking in the ante-room.

Mr. Doolittle finally declined to withdraw his motion.

At midnight, Mr. Chandler attempted to reply to the remarks of Mr. Toombs respecting demagogues.

The Vice-President ruled that he was not in order.

Mr. Fessenden appealed from the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. Mason again moved to adjourn. Lost by 20 to 30.

The appeal of Mr. Fessenden was then laid on the table.

Mr. Clark then spoke; after which Mr. Doolittle's motion to take up the homestead bill was voted on, and lost, by yeas 17, nays 28.

At last, wearied out, and convinced that the Republicans were not to be intimidated or driven into a vote upon the bill without more discussion, Mr. Slidell, himself, moved an adjournment, at one o'clock at night, which was of course carried.

STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

Stephen Arnold Douglas was born in the town of Brandon, Vermont, on the 23d of April, 1813. His father, S. A. Douglas, was a doctor and native of Rensselaer County, New York. The father removed to Vermont in early life, and was educated at Middlebury College. He was a physician of some eminence. He died suddenly in 1813, leaving two children – a daughter, twenty months old, and a son (the subject of this sketch) only two months of age. The mother of Mr. Douglas, was the daughter of a large farmer in Brandon, Vermont. Upon the death of her husband, she went back to the old homestead which she inherited with a bachelor brother. The brother and sister lived for many years on this retired farm in one of the valleys of the Green Mountains, caring for the two children with economy, prudence and the most ardent affection. The farm-property increased in value, and the sister and mother had no doubt that she could leave her children a comfortable competence, enough to educate them and help them to an independence in after life. After fourteen years had elapsed, the uncle visited the State of New York, and very singularly took the idea into his head of marriage, and returned with a young and handsome wife, who, at the end of a year, presented him with a son. Stephen was at this time fifteen years old, and had received a good common-school education, and he began at once to prepare for college. His uncle was applied to, who by this time began to grow selfish, and desired to keep his property for *his own son*, and he very frankly informed the young man, that he did not possess property sufficient to warrant him in getting a collegiate education, and he advised him to stay at work upon the farm. The farm and all the property attached to it was held in his uncle's name, was legally his, and his mother only possessed a few worn-out acres, barely sufficient to support her and her daughter. Until the marriage of her brother, she had not dreamed of such a contingency and had relied upon their joint property for her children, who had been great favorites with the bachelor, who had frequently promised them all he had. In this change of circumstances, young Stephen did not long hesitate what to do, but apprenticed himself to a cabinet-maker in Middlebury. He remained here for some eight months, working hard, but, at the expiration of that time, he came to some misunderstanding with his employer, and left him. He came back to his native town and entered the cabinet-shop of one Deacon Knowlton, where he remained a year, making French bedsteads of hard, curled maple, which was so severe labor as to injure his health. He was now obliged to leave his employer, and, while waiting to regain his health, he became a student in the Brandon Academy. At the end of another year, he gave up all hopes of being able to prosecute the cabinet business, and determined on trying to get an education. His sister had married Julius N. Granger, and moved to Ontario County, New York. His mother, a little later, married her daughter's husband's father, Gehazi Granger, and Stephen accompanied her, joining the Canandaigua Academy, where he pursued the classical course till the spring of 1833. At the same time, he was also studying law in the village with the Messrs. Hubbell. He was at this time, though young, an ardent politician, and gave abundant evidence that politics would, in after-life, be his chosen field for action. In the spring of 1833, he turned his face westward, and entered the law-office of S. T. Andrews, then a member of Congress. He was here attacked with a bilious fever, and was ill an entire summer, which threw him out of his place and used up his small stock of funds. When he finally recovered, he was without place and money, and in a situation which would completely dishearten most young men. He started on westward, and seeing no good opening, and being reduced to great straits, engaged to teach a school in the village of Winchester, Illinois. When he came there, he had *but thirty-seven and a half cents in his pocket*, but by a fortunate occurrence he was enabled to earn a few dollars as clerk before his school opened. The first Monday in December, 1833, he opened his school of forty scholars, at a tuition of three dollars each. He studied law evenings, and, in the course of the following spring, opened a law-office in the place, having obtained a license upon examination from the Supreme Court judges. He sprang at once into the full tide of success, for in less than a year

he was elected State's Attorney by the joint vote of the Legislature? He was but twenty-two years of age, yet, by the very nature of his office, he was pitted against the ablest and most acute lawyers in the State. Nothing but the most untiring industry held him up in this position. He endeavored to make up for his lack of experience by the closest study and application, and he very naturally exerted himself to the extent of all his abilities. The result was that he attained distinguished success. In December, 1836, he was elected to the Legislature of his State, and resigned the office of State's Attorney to sit in the Legislature. He was the youngest member of the House, yet he soon created for himself an excellent reputation as a legislator. The State was then going mad with speculation and wild-cat banking. Mr. Douglas opposed the banking institutions – their increase in any shape or manner – but was overborne by numbers. The majority were in favor of extending the then vicious system of banking, and so voted. The very same year, all the banks suspended specie payments, their paper depreciated to a frightful extent, and after a few years they were wound up. Mr. Douglas participated in the great struggle over internal improvements, giving his voice and vote in favor of any plan of public works which would stand the test of an examination. No public man could go through this ordeal without making enemies, for there were rival routes for canals, rival interests, and Mr. Douglas was too outspoken and independent not to take sides upon these local questions. Of course, he made temporary enemies. The railroad mania now began, and Mr. Douglas favored a plan which put the public works *completely* in the power of the State. The other plan was to join the State with individual stockholders, but really give the control of the works to the private stockholders. In all these local quarrels Mr. Douglas participated with the enthusiasm and energy which have always been characteristic of the man.

Soon after the adjournment of the Legislature, Mr. Douglas was appointed by the President of the United States, Register of the Land Office at Springfield, Illinois. He desired to return to the law, but the acceptance of the office would be to his pecuniary advantage, and he felt it to be his duty to accept.

In November 1837, he was nominated to Congress by a Convention of the Democratic party in his district. The time was peculiarly unfavorable to him, for the country was in a whirlpool of agitation and the Democratic party of Illinois on many questions of the day, sided with the Whigs, and were against Mr. Van Buren.

The election took place in August, 1838 – thirty-six-thousand votes were cast – and his Whig opponent was elected by a majority of *five votes*! At the ensuing Presidential election, the same district gave Harrison a majority of three thousand votes over Van Buren. Mr. Douglas devoted himself to the law till the Presidential campaign opened, when he gave himself zealously up to that. He stumped the State for seven months from one part to the other, making the acquaintance of almost the entire people. The State went democratic. In December, 1840, Mr. Douglas was elected Secretary of State, and in February, 1841, was elected by joint vote of the State Legislature a judge of the Supreme Court. He was now but twenty-eight years of age, and at first resolved to decline this fresh honor; but, upon a reconsideration, he accepted the appointment, though it was to his pecuniary hurt.

In 1843, Mr. Douglas's health became so impaired that he made a trip into the Indian country. During his absence he was nominated for Congress by his friends, and when he returned he resigned his judgship and went into the canvass with great spirit. Himself and competitor were soon prostrated with bilious fever, and they were unable to rise from their beds on election day. The result of the election was the triumph of Mr. Douglas by four hundred votes. At the next election he was reëlected by nineteen hundred majority, and on the third election by twenty-nine hundred majority. He did not take his seat in the House under the last election, for, before the time came for the Congress to meet, he had been chosen to the U.S. Senate for six years. [Note: election took place in 1847.]

In April, 1847, M. Douglas was married to a Miss Martin, only daughter of Col. Robert Martin, of Rockingham County North Carolina. A few years since, Mr. Douglas lost his wife, and in the winter of 1856-7 married Miss Cutts of Washington, his present accomplished wife. By his first wife

he had several children, and they inherited from their mother a large property in the South, consisting of land and slaves.

In 1838, Mr. Douglas took strong ground in Illinois against naturalization as a necessary pre-requisite to voting. He contended in the State courts – for the question was raised there – that though Congress has the exclusive right to prescribe uniform naturalization laws, yet that naturalization has necessarily no connection with the elective franchise, that being a privilege granted by the States. Mr. Douglas triumphed through a decision of the Supreme Court of Illinois.

In 1841, Mr. Douglas opposed the Bankrupt law of the time, which became so memorable. In the famous Oregon controversy and excitement he belonged to the "fifty-four forty or fight" party, and in his public speeches, as well as in private, took a very determined stand against the pretensions of Great Britain. Here is a paragraph from a speech of his in the House at this time:

"It therefore becomes us to put this nation in a state of defence; and when we are told that this will lead to war, all I have to say is this: preserve the honor and integrity of this country, but at the same time assert our right to the last inch, and then if war comes, let it come. We may regret the necessity which produced it, but when it does come, I would administer to our citizens Hannibal's oath of eternal enmity, and not terminate it until the question was all settled forever. I would blot out the lines on the map which now mark our national boundaries on this continent and make the area of liberty as broad as the continent itself."

To show the position of Mr. Douglas on the Oregon question, we will quote two paragraphs from one of his speeches:

"I choose to be frank and candid in this declaration of my sentiments on this question. For one, I never will be satisfied with the valley of the Columbia nor with 49°, nor with 54° 40′, nor will I be while Great Britain shall hold possession of one acre on the northwest coast of America. And I will never agree to any arrangement that shall recognize her right to one inch of soil upon the northwest coast; and for this simple reason. Great Britain never did own, she never had a valid title to one inch of that country. The question was only one of dispute between Russia, Spain and the United States. England never had a title to any part of the country. Our Government has always held that England had no title to it. In 1826, Mr. Clay, in his dispatches to Mr. Gallatin, said, 'it is not conceived that the British Government can make out even a colorable title to any part of the northwest coast!'…

"The value of the Oregon Territory is not to be measured by the number of miles upon the coast, whether it shall terminate at 49°, or at 54° 40′, or reach to 61° and the Arctic Ocean. It does not depend on the character of the country, nor the quality of the soil. It is true that consideration is not virtually of attention; but the great point at issue – the great struggle between us and Great Britain – is for the freedom of the Pacific Ocean; for the trade of China and of Japan, of the East Indies, and for the maritime ascendency on all these waters. That is the great point at issue between the two countries, and the settlement of this Oregon question involves all these interests. And in order to maintain these interests, and secure all the benefits resulting from them, we must not only go to 54° 40', but we have got to exclude Great Britain from the coast *in toto*."

In the course of the debate in committee of the House upon resolutions giving notice to Great Britain of the abrogation of the treaty between this country and Great Britain, Mr. Ramsey moved to strike out all after the word resolved (in one of the resolutions) and insert, "That the Oregon question is no longer a subject of negotiation or compromise." We quote from the record:

"Tellers were ordered and *ten* members passed between them, amid shouts of laughter, cries of 54° 40' forever, clapping of hands and stamping of feet, which the chairman was some time in suppressing; and the negative vote was then taken and stood 146. So the amendment was *rejected*."

The names of the ten "fifty-four forties," were as follows:

Archibald Bell, of Arkansas.
Alexander Ramsey, of Pennsylvania.
William Sawyer, of Ohio.

T. B. Hoge, of Illinois.
Robert Smith, of Illinois.
Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois.
John A. McCleeland, "
John Wentworth, "
Cornelius Darrah, of Pennsylvania.
Felix S. McConnel, of Alabama.

It will be noticed, that then, as now, Mr. Douglas had the faculty of carrying his State delegation with him.

Mr. Douglas has, while in Congress, favored the appropriation by the general government of money for internal improvements upon the Jackson plan of strictly confining such appropriations to objects of national and general, not of State or local importance.

He has frequently voted for river and harbor bills – voted for the Independent Treasury bill, and has, in and out of Congress, utterly denied the power of Congress over the franchise in the States. Mr. Douglas was an early supporter of the Mexican war. "He opposed the incorporation of the Wilmot proviso into the two or three million bills. He believed the people's time had not come for any action on that subject. Slavery was now prohibited in Mexico. If any portion of that country should be annexed to the United States without any stipulation being made on that point, the existing laws would remain in force. …If the question was pressed for immediate decision, he could perceive no other mode of harmonizing conflicting sentiments, but by the adoption of the Missouri Compromise Line."

Mr. Douglas voted to bring up the Homestead bill which was before the last Congress and which passed the House, showing that he is in favor of that important measure.

We now come to the history of Mr. Douglas in connection with the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

The battle which he waged with his political opponents and won upon that bill is so fresh in the memory of all our readers that it will not be safe, or necessary, to go into a minute history of the struggle. In the winter of 1852-3, Mr. Douglas reported a Nebraska bill from the Territorial Committee of which he was chairman, which contained no repeal of the Missouri Compromise or enumeration of his peculiar Popular Sovereignty doctrines. In the great debate over the compromise measures in 1850, no one ever called in question the Missouri Compromise. In the winter of 1852-3, Senator Atchison, of Missouri, declared in his seat in the Senate that the Missouri prohibition could never be repealed.

The Kansas-Nebraska bill as reported from the Committee appeared first without any repeal of the Missouri restriction – on the 7th day of January it was first presented. On the 16th, Mr. Dixon, a Whig senator from Kentucky, proposed an amendment to the bill reported from the committee which repealed the aforesaid compromise. This movement was at first opposed by leading Democrats and their organ the *Union*, but in a very few days Mr. Douglas, either because he saw the justice of the repeal of the restriction or thought it would advance his political interests, acquiesced in the amendment and made it a part of his bill. We make a few brief extracts from Mr. Douglas's argument in the Senate, Jan. 30, 1854, in support of his bill:

> "Sir, I wish you to bear in mind, too, that this geographical line, established by the founders of the Republic between free territories and slave territories, extended as far westward as our territory then reached; the object being to avoid all agitation upon the slavery question by settling that question forever, as far as our territory extended, which was then to the Mississippi River.
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> "When, in 1803, we acquired from France the territory known as Louisiana, it became necessary to legislate for the protection of the inhabitants residing therein. It will be seen by looking into the bill establishing the territorial government in 1805 for the territory of New Orleans, embracing the same country now known as

the State of Louisiana, that the ordinance of 1787 was expressly extended to that territory, excepting the sixth section, which prohibited slavery. Then that act implied that the Territory of New Orleans was to be a slaveholding territory, by making that exception in the law. But, sir, when they came to form what was then called the Territory of Louisiana, subsequently known as the Territory of Missouri, north of the thirty-third parallel, they used different language. They did not extend the ordinance of 1787 to it at all. They first provided that it should be governed by laws made by the governor and the judges, and when, in 1812, Congress gave to that territory, under the name of the Territory of Missouri, a territorial government, the people were allowed to do as they pleased upon the subject of slavery, subject only to the limitations of the Constitution of the United States. Now, what is the inference from that legislation? That slavery was, by implication, recognized south of the thirty-third parallel; and north of that, the people were left to exercise their own judgment and do as they pleased upon the subject, without any implication for or against the existence of the institution.

"This continued to be the condition of the country in the Missouri territory up to 1820, when the celebrated act which is now called the Missouri Compromise act was passed. Slavery did not exist in, nor was it excluded from the country now known as Nebraska. There was no code of laws upon the subject of slavery either way: First, for the reason that slavery had never been introduced into Louisiana and established by positive enactment. It had grown up there by a sort of common law, and been supported and protected. When a common law grows up, when an institution becomes established under a usage, it carries it so far as that usage actually goes, and no further. If it had been established by direct enactment, it might have carried it so far as the political jurisdiction extended; but, be that as it may, by the act of 1812, creating the territory of Missouri, that territory was allowed to legislate upon the subject of slavery as it saw proper, subject only to the limitations which I have stated; and the country not inhabited or thrown open to settlement was set apart as Indian country and rendered subject to Indian laws. Hence, the local legislation of the State of Missouri did not reach into that Indian country, but was excluded from it by the Indian code and Indian laws. The municipal regulations of Missouri could not go there until the Indian title had been extinguished and the country thrown open to settlement. Such being the case, the only legislation in existence in Nebraska territory at the time that the Missouri act passed, namely, the 6th of March, 1820, was a provision, in effect, that the people should be allowed to do as they pleased upon the subject of slavery.

"The territory of Missouri having been left in that legal condition, positive opposition was made to the bill to organize a state government, with a view to its admission into the Union; and a senator from my State, Mr. Jesse B. Thomas, introduced an amendment, known as the eighth section of the bill, in which it was provided that slavery should be prohibited north of 36° 30' north latitude, in all that country which we had acquired from France. What was the object of the enactment of that eighth section? Was it not to go back to the original policy of prescribing boundaries to the limitation of free institutions, and of slave institutions, by a geographical line, in order to avoid all controversy in Congress upon the subject? Hence, they extended that geographical line through all the territory purchased from France, which was as far as our possessions then reached. It was not simply to settle the question on that piece of country, but it was to carry out a great principle, by extending that dividing line as far west as our territory went, and running it onward

on each new acquisition of territory. True, the express enactment of the eighth section of the Missouri act, now called the Missouri Compromise act, only covered the territory acquired from France; but the principles of the act, the objects of its adoption, the reasons in its support, required that it should be extended indefinitely westward, so far as our territory might go, whenever new purchases should be made.

"Thus stood the question up to 1845, when the joint resolution for the annexation of Texas passed. There was inserted in that a provision, suggested in the first instance and brought before the House of Representatives by myself, extending the Missouri Compromise line indefinitely westward through the territory of Texas. Why did I bring forward that proposition? Why did the Congress of the United States adopt it? Not because it was of the least practical importance, so far as the question of slavery within the limits of Texas was concerned; for no man ever dreamed that it had any practical effect there. Then, why was it brought forward? It was for the purpose of preserving the principle, in order that it might be extended still further westward, even to the Pacific Ocean, whenever we should then acquire country that far. I will here read that clause in the joint resolution for the annexation of Texas. It is the third article, second section, and is in these words:

"'New States, of convenient size, not exceeding four in number, in addition to said State of Texas, having sufficient population, may hereafter, by the consent of said State, be formed out of the territory thereof which shall be entitled to admission under the provisions of the Federal Constitution. And such States as may be formed out of that portion of said territory, lying south of 36° 30' north latitude, commonly known as the Missouri Compromise line, shall be admitted into the Union with or without slavery, as the people of each State asking admission may desire. And in such State or States as shall be formed out of said territory north of said Missouri Compromise line, slavery or involuntary servitude (except for crime) shall be prohibited.'

"It will be seen that that contains a very remarkable provision, which is, that when States lying north of 36° 30' apply for admission, slavery shall be prohibited in their constitutions. I presume no one pretends that Congress could have power thus to fetter a State applying for admission into this Union; but it was necessary to preserve the principle of the Missouri Compromise line, in order that it might afterward be extended, and it was supposed that while Congress had no power to impose any such limitation, yet, as that was a compact with the State of Texas, that State could consent for herself, that, when any portion of her own territory, subject to her own jurisdiction and control, applied for a constitution, it should be in a particular form; but that provision would not be binding on the new State one day after it was admitted into the Union. The other provision was, that such States as should lie south of 36° 30' min. should come into the Union with or without slavery, as each should decide, in its constitution. Then, by that act, the Missouri Compromise was extended indefinitely westward, so far as the State of Texas went, that is, to the Rio del Norte; for our Government at the time recognized the Rio del Norte as its boundary. We recognized it, in many ways, and among them by even paying Texas for it, in order that it might be included in and form a portion of the territory of New Mexico.

"Then, sir, in 1848, we acquired from Mexico the country between the Rio del Norte and the Pacific Ocean. Immediately after that acquisition, the Senate, on my own motion, voted into a bill a provision to extend the Missouri Compromise indefinitely westward to the Pacific Ocean, in the same sense and with the same

understanding with which it was originally adopted. That provision passed this body by a decided majority, I think by ten at least, and went to the House of Representatives, and was defeated there by northern votes.

"Now, sir, let us pause and consider for a moment. The first time that the principles of the Missouri Compromise were ever abandoned, the first time they were ever rejected by Congress, was by the defeat of that provision in the House of Representatives in 1848. By whom was that defeat effected? By northern votes with free soil proclivities. It was the defeat of that Missouri Compromise that reopened the slavery agitation with all its fury. It was the defeat of that Missouri Compromise that created the tremendous struggle of 1850. It was the defeat of that Missouri Compromise that created the necessity for making a new compromise in 1850. Had we been faithful to the principles of the Missouri Compromise in 1848, this question would not have arisen. Who was it that was faithless? I undertake to say it was the very men who now insist that the Missouri Compromise was a solemn compact, and should never be violated or departed from. Every man who is now assailing the principle of the bill under consideration, so far as I am advised, was opposed to the Missouri Compromise in 1848. The very men who now arraign me for a departure from the Missouri Compromise are the men who successfully violated it, repudiated it, and caused it to be superseded by the compromise measures of 1850. Sir, it is with rather bad grace that the men who proved false themselves should charge upon me and others, who were over faithful, the responsibilities and consequences of their own treachery.

"Then, sir, as I before remarked, the defeat of the Missouri Compromise in 1848 having created the necessity for the establishment of a new one in 1850, let us see what that Compromise was.

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"Mr. President, I repeat that so far as the question of slavery is concerned, there is nothing in the bill under consideration which does not carry out the principle of the compromise measures of 1850, by leaving the people to do as they please, subject only to the provisions of the Constitution of the United States. If that principle is wrong, the bill is wrong. If that principle is right, the bill is right. It is unnecessary to quibble about phraseology or words; it is not the mere words, the mere phraseology, that our constituents wish to judge by. They wish to know the legal effect of our legislation.

"The legal effect of this bill, if it be passed as reported by the Committee on Territories, is neither to legislate slavery into these territories, nor out of them; but to leave the people to do as they please, under the provisions and subject to the limitations of the Constitution of the United States. Why should not this principle prevail? Why should any man, North or South, object to it? I will especially address the argument to my own section of country, and ask why should any northern man object to this principle? If you will review the history of the slavery question in the United States, you will see that all the great results in behalf of free institutions which have been worked out, have been accomplished by the operation of this principle and by it alone.

"When these States were colonies of Great Britain, every one of them was a slaveholding province. When the Constitution of the United States was formed,

twelve out of the thirteen were slaveholding States. Since that time six of those States have become free. How has this been effected? Was it by virtue of abolition agitation in Congress? Was it in obedience to the dictates of the Federal Government? Not at all; but they have become free States under the silent but sure and irresistible working of that great principle of self-government, which teaches every people to do that which the interests of themselves and their posterity, morally and pecuniarily, may require.

"Under the operation of this principle, New Hampshire became free, while South Carolina continued to hold slaves; Connecticut abolished slavery, while Georgia held on to it; Rhode Island abandoned the institution, while Maryland preserved it; New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania abolished slavery, while Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky, retained it. Did they do it at your bidding! Did they do it at the dictation of the Federal Government? Did they do it in obedience to any of your Wilmot Provisoes or Ordinances of '87? Not at all; they did it by virtue of their rights as freemen under the Constitution of the United States, to establish and abolish such institutions as they thought their own good required.

"The leading feature of the Compromise of 1850 was Congressional non-intervention as to slavery in the territories; that the people of the territories and of all the States, were to be allowed to do as they pleased upon the subject of slavery, subject only to the provisions of the Constitution of the United States.

"That, sir, was the leading feature of the compromise measures of 1850. Those measures, therefore, abandoned the idea of a geographical line as a boundary between free States and slave States – abandoned it because compelled to do it from an inability to maintain it – and in lieu of that substituted a great principle of self-government, which would allow the people to do as they thought proper. Now the question is, when that new compromise, resting upon that great fundamental principle of freedom, was established, was it not an abandonment of the old one – the geographical line? Was it not a supersedure of the old one, within the very language of the substitute for the bill which is now under consideration? I say it did supersede it, because it applied its provisions as well to the north as to the south of 36° 30'. It established a principle which was equally applicable to the country north as well as south of the parallel of 36° 30' – a principle of universal application."

Mr. Douglas's bill passed both branches of Congress and became a law, after passing through a severe ordeal both in Congress and before the people. Its passage gave the popular branch of the next Congress into the control of Mr. Douglas's political enemies, for the bill in a majority of the free States was very unpopular.

On the first Monday in December, 1857, Mr. Douglas took his seat in the Senate with many anxious eyes upon him, for it had already been rumored that he would differ with the administration upon its conduct of Kansas affairs, and would take issue with the President in his forthcoming message. Rumor was right – the message was read – it did in effect recommend the indorsement of the Lecompton Constitution – and Mr. Douglas had the courage and boldness to stand up in defence of his peculiar doctrines of popular sovereignty, which he thought had been violated by the Lecompton Constitution. His great opening speech was delivered on the ninth of December, 1857. The President's message had been read the day previous and Mr. Douglas had indicated his purpose on the next day to speak upon it. Accordingly when the Senate assembled on Tuesday, the old Senate-hall was crowded to its utmost capacity and hundreds were unable to effect an entrance. The curiosity of the public to learn the position which the Illinois senator would take upon this important question was intense, and many of the members of the house were present. Mr. D. rose, apparently as cool as he ever was in his life, although, in the opinion of some of his Democratic friends, his decision,

which after careful thought he had reached, to oppose the Lecompton Constitution, would ruin all his political prospects. He began by quoting the peculiar language of the President's message, and, perhaps in a vein of irony, contended that the President was opposed to this Lecompton Constitution, which, though under the circumstances he was for accepting, he did not like. It was evident that the President, in his absence at a foreign court, had fallen into an error in reference to the principle of the Nebraska bill. We now quote Mr. Douglas:

> "Now, sir, what was the principle enunciated by the authors and supporters of that bill, when it was brought forward? Did we not come before the country and say that we repealed the Missouri restriction for the purpose of substituting and carrying out as a general rule the great principle of self-government, which left the people of each State and each Territory free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States? In support of that proposition, it was argued here, and I have argued it wherever I have spoken in various States of the Union, at home and abroad, everywhere I have endeavored to prove that there was no reason why an exception should be made in regard to the slavery question. I have appealed to the people, if we did not all agree, men of all parties, that all other local and domestic questions should be submitted to the people. I said to them, 'We agree that the people shall decide for themselves what kind of a judiciary system they will have; we agree that the people shall decide what kind of a school system they will establish; we agree that the people shall determine for themselves what kind of a banking system they will have, or whether they will have any banks at all; we agree that the people may decide for themselves what shall be the elective franchise in their respective States; they shall decide for themselves what shall be the rule of taxation and the principles upon which their finance shall be regulated; we agree that they may decide for themselves the relations between husband and wife, parent and child, guardian and ward; and why should we not then allow them to decide for themselves the relations between master and servant? Why make an exception of the slavery question, by taking it out of that great rule of self-government which applies to all the other relations of life? The very first proposition in the Nebraska bill was to show that the Missouri restriction, prohibiting the people from deciding the slavery question for themselves, constituted an exception to a general rule, in violation of the principle of self-government; and hence that that exception should be repealed, and the slavery question, like all other questions, submitted to the people, to be decided for themselves.
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> "Sir, that was the principle on which the Nebraska bill was defended by its friends. Instead of making the slavery question an exception, it removed an odious exception which before existed. Its whole object was to abolish that odious exception, and make the rule general, universal in its application to all matters which were local and domestic, and not national or federal. For this reason was the language employed which the President has quoted; that the eighth section of the Missouri act, commonly called the Missouri Compromise, was repealed, because it was repugnant to the principle of non-intervention, established by the compromise measures of 1850, 'it being the true intent and meaning of this act, not to legislate slavery into any territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.' We repealed the Missouri restriction because that was confined to slavery. That was the only exception there was to the general principle of self-government. That exception was taken away for the avowed and express purpose of making the rule of self-government general and

universal, so that the people should form and regulate all their domestic institutions in their own way.

"Sir, what would this boasted principle of popular sovereignty have been worth, if it applied only to the negro, and did not extend to the white man? Do you think we could have aroused the sympathies and the patriotism of this broad Republic, and have carried the Presidential election last year, in the face of a tremendous opposition, on the principle of extending the right of self-government to the negro question, but denying it as to all the relations affecting white men? No, sir. We aroused the patriotism of the country and carried the election in defence of that great principle, which allowed all white men to form and regulate their domestic institutions to suit themselves – institutions applicable to white men as well as to black men – institutions applicable to freemen as well as to slaves – institutions concerning all the relations of life, and not the mere paltry exception of the slavery question.

"Sir, I have spent too much strength and breath, and health, too, to establish this great principle in the popular heart, now to see it frittered away by bringing it down to an exception that applies to the negro, and does not extend to the benefit of the white man.

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"So far as the act of the territorial Legislature of Kansas, calling this convention, was concerned, I have always been under the impression that it was fair and just in its provisions. I have always thought the people should have gone together, *en masse*, and voted for delegates, so that the voice expressed by the convention should have been the unquestioned and united voice of the people of Kansas. I have always thought that those who stayed away from that election stood in their own light, and should have gone and voted, and should have furnished their names to be put on the registered list, so as to be voters. I have always held that it was their own fault that they did not thus go and vote; but yet, if they chose, they had a right to stay away. They had a right to say that that convention, although not an unlawful assemblage, is not a legal convention to make a government, and hence we are under no obligation to go and express any opinion about it. They had a right to say, if they chose, 'We will stay away until we see the Constitution they shall frame, the petition they shall send to Congress; and when they submit it to us for ratification, we will vote for it if we like it, or vote it down if we do not like it.' I say they had a right to do either, though I thought, and think yet, as good citizens, they ought to have gone and voted; but that was their business, and not mine.

"Having thus shown that the convention at Lecompton had no power, no authority, to form and establish a government, but had power to draft a petition, and that petition, if it embodied the will of the people of Kansas, ought to be taken as such an exposition of their will, yet, if it did not embody their will, ought to be rejected. Having shown these facts, let me proceed and inquire what was the understanding of the people of Kansas when the delegates were elected? I understand, from the history of the transaction, that the people who voted for delegates to the Lecompton Convention, and those who refused to vote, both parties, understood the Territorial act to mean that they were to be elected only to frame a constitution, and submit it to the people for their ratification or rejection. I

say that both parties in that territory, at the time of the election of delegates, so understood the object of the convention. Those who voted for delegates did so with the understanding that they had no power to make a government, but only to frame one for submission; and those who stayed away did so with the same understanding.

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"Now, let us stop to inquire how they redeemed the pledge to submit the constitution to the people. They first go on and make a constitution; then they make a schedule, in which they provide that the constitution, on the 21st of December, the present month, shall be submitted to all the *bonâ fide* inhabitants of the territory, on that day, for their free acceptance or rejection, in the following manner, to wit: Thus acknowledging that they were bound to submit it to the will of the people, conceding that they had no right to put it into operation without submitting it to the people, providing in the instrument that they should take effect from and after the date of its ratification, and not before; showing that the constitution derives its vitality, in their estimation, not from the authority of the convention, but from that vote of the people to which it was to be submitted for their acceptance or rejection. How is it to be submitted? It shall be submitted in this form: 'Constitution with Slavery, or Constitution with no Slavery.' All men must vote for the constitution, whether they like it or not, in order to be permitted to vote for or against slavery. Thus a constitution made by a convention that had authority to assemble and petition for a redress of grievances, but not to establish a government. A constitution made under a pledge of honor that it should be submitted to the people before it took effect; a constitution which provides on its face, that it shall have no validity, except what it derives from such submission, is submitted to the people at an election where all men are at liberty to come forward freely, without hindrance, and vote for it, but no man is permitted to record a vote against it.

"That would be as fair an election as some of the enemies of Napoleon attributed to him when he was elected first consul. He is said to have called out his troops, and had them reviewed by his officers with a speech, patriotic and fair in its professions, in which he said to them: 'Now, my soldiers, you are to go to the election, and vote freely just as you please. If you vote for Napoleon, all is well; vote against him, and you are to be instantly shot.' That was a fair election. This election is to be equally fair. All men in favor of the constitution may vote for it – all men against it shall not vote at all. Why not let them vote against it? I presume you have asked many a man this question. I have asked a very large number of the gentlemen who framed the constitution, quite a number of the delegates, and a still larger number of persons who are their friends, and I have received the same answer from every one of them. I never received any other answer, and I presume we never shall get any other answer. What is that? They say, if they allowed a negative vote, the constitution would have been voted down by an overwhelming majority, and hence the fellows shall not be allowed to vote at all.

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"Let me ask you, why force this constitution down the throats of the people of Kansas, in opposition to their wishes and in violation of our pledges. What great object is to be attained? *Cui bono*? What are you to gain by it! Will you sustain the party by violating its principles? Do you propose to keep the party united by forcing a division? Stand by the doctrine that leaves the people perfectly free to form and regulate their institutions for themselves, in their own way, and your party will be united and irresistible in power. Abandon that great principle, and the party is not worth saving, and cannot be saved after it shall be violated. I trust we are not to be rushed upon this question. Why shall it be done? Who is to be benefited? Is the South to be the gainer? Is the North to be the gainer? Neither the North nor the South has the right to gain a sectional advantage by trickery or fraud.

"But I am beseeched to wait until I hear from the election, on the 21st of December. I am told that perhaps that will put it all right, and will save the whole difficulty. How can it? Perhaps there may be a large vote. There may be a large vote returned. But I deny that it is possible to have a fair vote on the slavery clause; and I say that it is not possible to have any vote on the constitution. Why wait for the mockery of an election, when it is provided, unalterably, that the people cannot vote when the majority are disfranchised?

"But I am told on all sides, 'Oh, just wait; the pro-slavery clause will be voted down.' That does not obviate any of my objections; it does not diminish any of them. You have no more right to force a free-State constitution on Kansas than a slave-State constitution. If Kansas wants a slave-State constitution, she has a right to it; if she wants a free-State constitution she has a right to it. It is none of my business which way the slavery clause is decided. I care not whether it is voted down or voted up. Do you suppose, after the pledge of my honor that I would go for that principle, and leave the people to vote as they chose, that I would now degrade myself by voting one way if the slavery clause be voted down, and another way if it be voted up? I care not how that vote may stand. I take it for granted that it will be voted out. I think I have seen enough in the last three days to make it certain that it will be returned out, no matter how the vote may stand.

"Sir, I am opposed to that concern, because it looks to me like a system of trickery and jugglery to defeat the fair expression of the will of the people. There is no necessity for crowding this measure, so unfair, so unjust as it is in all its aspects, upon us. Why can we not now do what we proposed to do in the last Congress? We then voted through the Senate an enabling act, called 'the Toombs bill,' believed to be just and fair in all its provisions, pronounced to be almost perfect by the senator from New Hampshire (Mr. Hale), only he did not like the man, then President of the United States, who would have to make the appointments. Why can we not take that bill, and, out of compliment to the President, add to it a clause taken from the Minnesota act, which he thinks should be a general rule, requiring the constitution to be submitted to the people, and pass that? That unites the party. You all voted, with me, for that bill, at the last Congress. Why not stand by the same bill now? Ignore Lecompton, ignore Topeka; treat both those party movements as irregular and void; pass a fair bill – the one that we framed ourselves when we were acting as a unit; have a fair election, and you will have peace in the Democratic party, and

peace throughout the country, in ninety days. The people want a fair vote. They never will be satisfied without it. They never should be satisfied without a fair vote on their constitution.

"If the Toombs bill does not suit my friends, take the Minnesota bill of the last session – the one so much commended by the President in his message as a model. Let us pass that as an enabling act, and allow the people of all parties to come together and have a fair vote, and I will go for it. Frame any other bill that secures a fair, honest vote, to men of all parties, and carries out the pledge that the people shall be left free to decide on their domestic institutions, for themselves, and I will go with you with pleasure, and with all the energy I may possess. But if this constitution is to be forced down our throats in violation of the fundamental principle of free government, under a mode of submission that is a mockery and insult, I will resist it to the last. I have no fear of any party associations being severed. I should regret any social or political estrangement, even temporarily; but if it must be, if I cannot act with you and preserve my faith and my honor; I will stand on the great principle of popular sovereignty, which declares the right of all people to be left perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way. I will follow that principle wherever its logical consequences may take me, and I will endeavor to defend it against assault from any and all quarters. No mortal man shall be responsible for my action but myself. By my action I will compromise no man."

This speech made a deep impression upon the country, but Mr. Douglas was unable to carry any considerable portion of his party in Congress with him. The history of the struggle is well known. The Republicans, a few Democrats, and a like number of Americans, united, were able to force the administration into an abandonment of the original Lecompton bill, and the English bill was substituted therefor. This bill was opposed by Mr. Douglas; but inasmuch as it gave the people of Kansas the privilege to reject the Lecompton Constitution, it passed by a small majority.

In the summer and autumn of 1858, Mr. Douglas went through a terrible ordeal in Illinois – a campaign, the issue of which was political life or death to him. He triumphed by a small majority – indeed the majority was the other way before the people – which shows that Mr. D. was wise in opposing the Lecompton measure, for if he had supported it, and thus trampled upon his own principle of Popular Sovereignty, he would have lost his election by thousands of votes.

We now come to still later issues – to the discussion between Mr. Douglas and his southern enemies, in the last session of the thirty-fifth Congress – the present year – upon Congressional intervention in favor of slavery. This great debate took place Feb. 23, 1859, in the Senate, and looked like a preconcerted attack upon Mr. Douglas by some of his southern opponents. We have not the space for the official report of the debate, and will endeavor faithfully to abridge it. The debate opened on an amendment by Senator Hale to the Appropriation bill before the Senate to repeal the restrictive clause of the Kansas Admission act. This amendment was offered the day previous, and the debate took an unexpected turn upon it.

Mr. Seward, of New York, said Congress had decided that Kansas should come in with the Lecompton Constitution, without reference to population; but, on the other hand, should not come in outside of the Lecompton Constitution unless she had 92,400 population. There was, therefore, a discrimination by the Congress of the United States, as against freedom, in favor of slavery. Oregon, because she was a Democratic State, was admitted without reference to population, and Kansas, because of her different politics, was excluded. He was glad of this occasion to renew his vote. He was glad, also, to hear that so many gentlemen on the other side will give Kansas a fair hearing. It indicates that the time is coming when any State applying for admission will be heard on its merits, apart from all other considerations. He thought it goes to show that if Texas should be divided, or free States, as he thought they would, be formed in Mexico, they will come in as free States.

Mr. Brown, of Mississippi, made a strong southern speech.

He held to the doctrine of State rights; denied the squatter sovereignty of territories; and threatened secession, with banners flying, if the South was deprived of her rights. His address was directed to northern Democrats. He placed his views frankly on record, and desired neither to cheat nor be cheated.

Mr. Douglas felt it incumbent on him, as a northern Democrat, to make a reply. He admired the frankness, candor, and directness with which Mr. Brown had approached the question. He (Douglas), too, would put his opinions on record in such a manner as will acquit him of a desire to cheat or be cheated. He agreed at the outset with Mr. Brown, and with the decision of the Supreme Court, that slaves are property, and that their owners have a right to carry them into the territories as any other property. Having the right of transit into the territory, the question arises, how far does the power of the territorial legislature extend to slave property? And the reply is, to the same extent, and no further, than to any other description of property. Mr. Brown has said that slave property needs more protection than any other description. If so, it is the misfortune of the owners of that kind of property. Mr. Douglas's remarks, from the frequent interruptions, assumed so much the form of question and reply, and running comments on the various issues started, that we can only notice the salient points of the main discussion, which extended throughout many hours, he sustaining the principal part. His general scope was, that he would leave all descriptions of property, slaves included, to the operation of the local law, and would not have Congress interfere in any way therewith. If the people of the territory want slavery there, they will foster and encourage it, and if they do not find it for their advantage, they will do otherwise. So it becomes a question of soil, climate, production, etc. He illustrated by saying, that if any discrimination is to be made in any description of property, the owner of stock, or liquors, or any other, might claim it likewise.

After some other illustrations, he went into discussion of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which, he said, was passed by a distinct understanding between northern and southern Democrats, however differing on some points, to give to the territorial legislature the full power, with appeal to the Supreme Court, to test the constitutionality of any law, but not to Congress to repeal it. If the court decides such law to be constitutional, it must stand; if not, it must fall to the ground, without action of Congress. That doctrine of non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the States and territories, has been a fundamental principle of the Democratic platform, and every Democrat is pledged to it by the Cincinnati platform. Here Mr. Douglas, in reply to a question by Mr. Clay (who also made the remark that, according to Mr. Douglas's interpretation, squatter sovereignty is superior to the Constitution), said that the limit of territorial legislation is the organic act and the Constitution. In reply to Mr. Clay's question, "Can a slaveholder take his slave property into the territory?" he would reply, Yes; and hold it as other property. To the question, "Will Congress pass a law to protect other kinds of property in the territories?" he would answer, No; for the doctrine that Congress is to legislate on property and persons without representation, is the doctrine of the parliament of George III., that brought on the Revolutionary war. We said then it was a violation of the rights of power to assume to legislate for Englishmen without their consent. Now, was he (Mr. Douglas) to be called on to force this same odious doctrine on the people of the territories without their consent? He answered, No; let them govern themselves. If they make good laws, let them enjoy the blessings; if bad, let them suffer until they are repealed. Referring to the great battles fought and gained in 1854 and 1856, he said he would like to know how many votes Mr. Buchanan would have got in Pennsylvania or Ohio, if he had then understood the doctrine of popular sovereignty as he claims to do now.

Mr. Bigler asked how many votes Mr. Buchanan would have received in 1856, had the senator from Illinois and those who acted with him told the people that the Kansas act was not intended to extend to the territories the sacred right of self-government, but simply to give the people the right to petition for redress of grievances – a right not denied to any citizen, white or black?

Mr. Douglas said that there are no colored citizens, and he trusted in God there never would be. He did not recognize the black brothers.

Mr. Bigler knew that as well as the senator, and should have said inhabitants.

Mr. Douglas resumed. In 1856, he took the same ground as now, and Mr. Buchanan, when he accepted the nomination, took the same ground. His letter of acceptance to the Cincinnati Convention shows he then understood that the people of the territories should decide whether slavery should or should not exist within their limits. When gentlemen called for Congressional intervention, they step off the Democratic platform. He (Mr. Douglas) asserted that the Democratic creed was non-intervention by Congress, and the right of the people to govern themselves. He would frankly tell gentlemen of the South, that no Democratic candidate can carry one State North but on the principles of the Cincinnati platform, as construed by Mr. Buchanan when he accepted his nomination, and which he (Mr. Douglas) stood here to-day to defend.

Mr. Davis replied to Mr. Douglas elaborately, denying that he (Douglas) rightly interpreted the obligations of the Democratic party.

Mr. Pugh said, Mr. Brown had asked if northern Democrats would vote for Congressional intervention to protect the people against local legislation. He would answer, Never. It is monstrous. It is against the plighted faith both of the South and North. Mr. Pugh discussed the question at length, and said he stood on the platform of his party with the interpretation which he explained.

Mr. Green was sorry that this subject of contention had been brought forward. It was to try and bring discord into the Democratic party, the only party able to override the Republican party. He hoped and believed there was no difference between the North and the South. A government is formed to protect persons and property; and when it ceases to do either, it ceases to perform its one great function. Mr. Hale's amendment had brought up the question, "What is property?" He (Green) maintained that, under the Constitution and by the decision of the Supreme Court, slaves are property; and he argued the subject in many aspects, concluding by calling on the Democratic party to stand united, and not permit a combination to make use of a mere figment to disorganize them. In the course of his remarks, he quoted from Mr. Douglas's Springfield speech, to show that he had therein proposed Congressional intervention in Utah. He could not see the consistency of the senator's course, then and now.

Mr. Douglas denied that he had proposed Congressional intervention to regulate the internal affairs of Utah. The intervention he proposed was alone on the ground of rebellion – not on account of their domestic affairs, but as aliens and rebels.

Mr. Green, in speaking of how territorial legislation could destroy the rights of slave property, said he had before him a copy of the bill passed by the Kansas Legislature to abolish slavery.

Mr. Douglas remarked that several speeches had been made very pointedly at him, making him out no better than an Abolitionist, for leaving the territories to carry out their own affairs. It does well to attack one man for his opinion; but when was the most aggravated act ever committed, that he did not say it was committed, in manumitting your slaves and confiscating your property? The gentleman who spoke thus, says: "It is not yet time." There is no better time than the present, to introduce a bill to repeal that act of the Kansas Legislature. Senators say that he (Douglas) may go out. No; he stands on the platform, and it is for those who jump off, to go out.

The chair called the Senate to order, threatening to clear the galleries, unless it was maintained.

Mr. Green said he had received information of the bill by telegraph; but could not legislate on such information.

Mr. Douglas would take it for granted that Mr. Green meant that he received authentic information, and would introduce a bill to repeal the act. The South, he said, had reluctantly acquiesced in the movement with the Democrats of the North to settle the question. He went at some length into a discussion and approval of the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Dred Scott. He did not agree with Senator Douglas's views as to the power of the people of a territory, and did not

believe that the Nebraska-Kansas bill gave them independent power. The senator from Virginia then gave his ideas as to the people of the territories, and the people of the States. The right of property is recognized in the former, but the inhabitants of a territory are unknown to the Constitution. Congress cannot divest itself of its power over the property of the territories, but it can grant them nothing. South of the Potomac River, to the confines of Mexico, there is not one dissentient voice. The South would be recreant to itself; if it would give one vote for its rights to be taken from the Constitution, and remitted to the pleasure of the people temporarily in the territories.

Mr. Davis took an animated part in the debate against Mr. Douglas, who in the Kansas-Nebraska act, had made a great error, and drawn the Senate into a great error.

Mr. Douglas resumed, saying it won't do to read him out, because they had fallen from the faith. There is no middle ground. It is either intervention or non-intervention.

Mr. Gwin said, if the senator from Illinois had given the same interpretation to the Kansas-Nebraska bill when it was before the Senate, he (Gwin) would not have voted for it, and believed those around him would not. When the senator proposed to speak for the Democracy of the free States, he had no right to speak for California, which thought otherwise.

Mr. Broderick contradicted Mr. Gwin's statement of the views of California. He considered the views of his State were those expressed by Mr. Douglas.

Mr. Gwin replied that he was sent here to do his duty in representing the Democracy of California, and he knew they indorse the action of the Administration, and do not at all indorse the interpretation given by the senator from Illinois.

Mr. Douglas (to Mr. Gwin.) I do say the records show a very general concurrence in the views I then expressed.

Mr. Iverson raised the question of order, that Mr. Douglas had spoken many times. He and Mr. Davis had occupied the floor four or five hours. The point of order was sustained.

Mr. Hunter said it was with reluctance that he occupied the time at the late period of the evening, but the turn the debate had taken rendered an explanation necessary, in justice to himself. He differed with the senator from Illinois, both in the history of the Kansas-Nebraska act, and what was intended by it. When the proposition was made to pass that, he maintained, as he has always done since he has had a place on that floor, that the South had a right to protection for their slave property in the territories.

Mr. Hunter read from his speech of that date, showing the views he then expressed. The case stood thus: southern men on one side maintained they had right, under the Constitution, to protection to their slave property; northern men thought the contrary, and there was no chance of agreement between them, as the act was very carefully framed, neither affirming nor disaffirming the power of the territory to abolish slavery, but reserving the question of right, and agreeing to refer to the judiciary any points arising out of it. It was in itself a compromise, in which neither party conceded their opinions or their rights. They were but placed in abeyance until a case affecting them might arise. No southern man with whom he acted ever considered he was conferring on the Territorial Legislature the absolute right to deal with this subject. They agreed to this settlement as a consequence, acting together upon points wherein they agreed, and expressing no opinion upon points where the differences were irreconcilable. By this they secured the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, upon which the Democrats were agreed, by confining the act to the general purpose to be accomplished. Justice to himself and the distinguished senator from South Carolina, now no more, with whom he had acted and consulted on the matter, required the explanation. Mr. Hunter then drew the attention of the Senate to the time consumed in the debate, and urged a vote upon the amendment.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.