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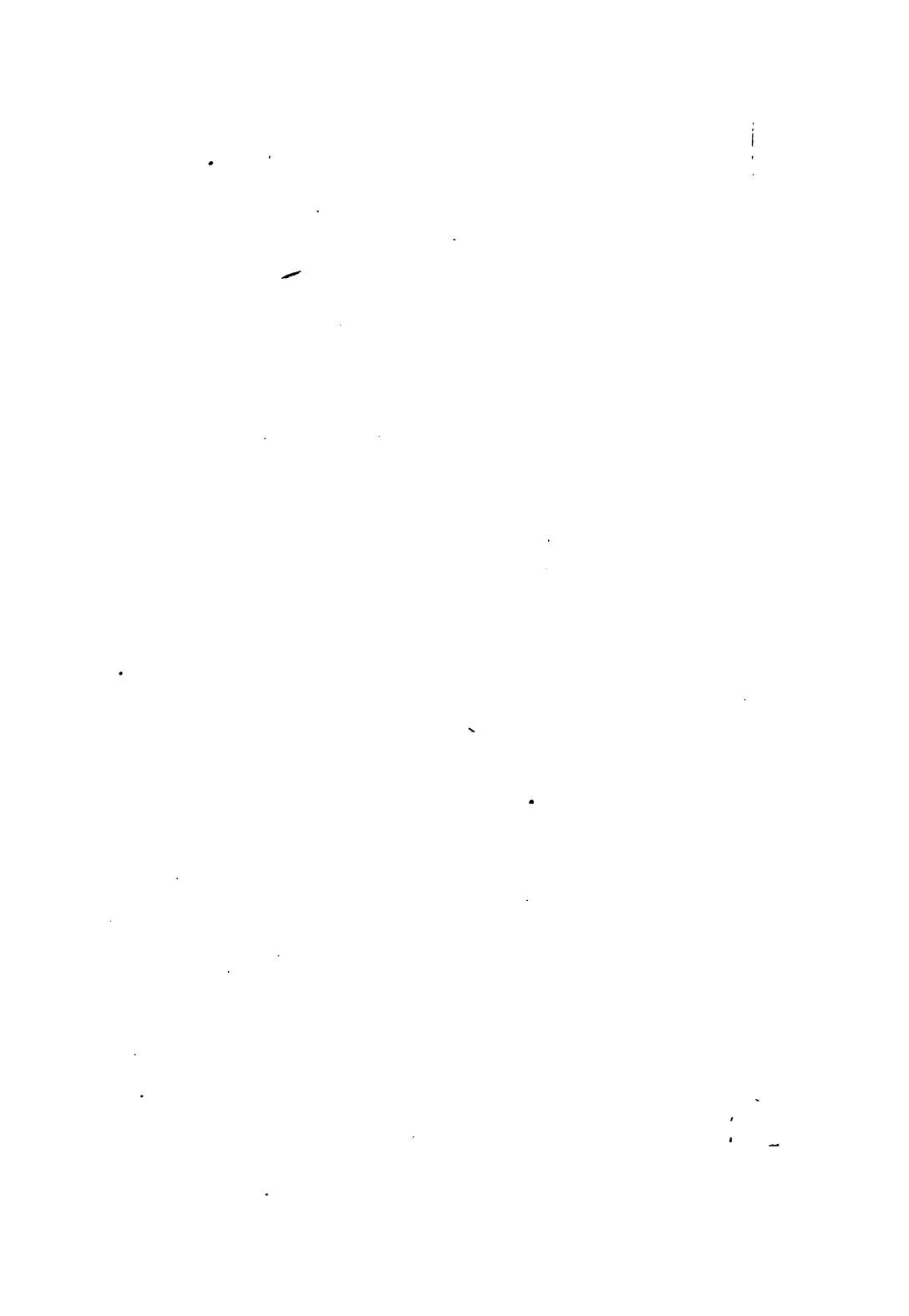


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SPEECHES

OF

CARLSCHURZ.

COLLECTED AND REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

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TO

The Union League of Philadelphia,

which, in the struggle for national existence, has stood foremost
among the loyal associations of the country,
in enlisting the energies of private
citizens for the
cause of

UNION AND LIBERTY,

in propagating just, progressive and patriotic principles
among the people, and in organizing military
forces for the national service,

This Volume is most Respectfully Dedicated.



P R E F A C E .

THE decade which elapsed between the years 1854 and 1864 will stand in the history of this country as its second revolutionary period. It commenced with the passage of the Kansas Nebraska Bill, the re-opening of the slavery question by a pro-slavery measure; and it closed with the second election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency, the solemn and emphatic declaration by a large majority of the loyal people, that the slavery question must be finally disposed of by the total abolition of slavery itself. The interval is filled with the fiercest struggles this country ever witnessed, in the domain of political discussion, as well as on the field of battle. The military campaigns of the great civil war will certainly live in history; but those who are in the habit of inquiring into the causes and results of historical events, will study with no less interest the rapid movement of ideas which marks this memorable period.

The moral merits of the slavery question have been discussed in this country almost since slavery was introduced here, and the conviction that slavery was a great wrong, was at several times almost universal among the people; the antagonism necessarily existing between the institution of slavery, and a democratic organization of society, has likewise been pointed out and urged upon the attention of the

people long before the final struggle commenced. But although slavery was considered wrong, those who possessed no slaves soothed their consciences with the idea that the slaveholders alone were responsible for it; and although the theory of the antagonism between slavery and democratic institutions seemed incontrovertible in the abstract, it was thought that, in reality, slavery might without danger be permitted to continue along with the other institutions and interests of the country, if things were only managed with prudence and a conciliatory spirit. As it is usually the case where the masses have to act for themselves, it required the element of practical impulse to produce clear intellectual perceptions, and to develop these intellectual perceptions coupled with a moral principle, into a motive for immediate action. The practical relation between slavery and other political questions of general concern, had not sufficiently penetrated the popular mind. It had to make itself practically felt, in order to be clearly understood. The Kansas Nebraska Act, involving the whole of our national domain, and seriously threatening our future growth and prosperity, went far to supply the deficiency; but when the slave power baffled in its aspirations by the election of 1860, rose up in rebellion, and thus disclosed its thoroughly anti-national tendency, the whole truth revealed itself to the eyes of the people. Forthwith it became evident to every fair-minded man that the question of Union or Disunion, although brought forward under the guise of divergent Constitutional theories, was only a new form of the slavery question, but now a form which demanded an immediate, and, at the same

time, final solution. All other political questions were at once found to be merged in this, and the people availed themselves of the first opportunity to decree a sweeping reform, destined to harmonize their social and political organization with the advanced state of their moral and intellectual enlightenment. It remains only for the representatives of the people to put this decree into a Constitutionally binding form, and for the General Government to enforce it with the strong arm of power. There are, it is true, influences which exert themselves to defeat this result even in the last stage of its final consummation ; but their strength is growing less every day, and even the interposition of great accidents, such as are beyond the reach of human foresight, has become altogether improbable. According to all reasonable calculations, we may consider the great object of the revolutionary movement, the extinction of slavery throughout this Union, undivided and indivisible, as virtually insured.

I call it a revolutionary movement, not for the reason that the slave power rose in rebellion against the legitimate government of the Republic ; for this was only a rebellion, while the true revolutionary movement was directed against the predominance of the slave power ; nor for the reason that the rebellion produced contingencies unforeseen in the Constitution of the country ; that the necessity of defending the integrity of the Republic against the people of a large number of States composing and constituting it, placed us, if I may use the expression, into an extra-constitutional condition ; and that, in order to save the Republic, we had to fall back upon those general principles, according to which a government must

inherently possess certain powers necessary for the defence of its own existence. The employment of extraordinary remedies, for the justification of which recourse was had to the resources of Constitutional construction, was, indeed, unavoidable. But it may be said, that in all the great measures that were adopted, due care was taken to conform, at least, to the spirit of our fundamental laws; and, moreover, that, in spite of the pressure of the most urgent public dangers, the government never attempted to raise its authority above the reach of popular control, but always remained virtually in the hands of the people. This is a fact, which, when describing the extraordinary circumstances under which we lived, the historian of this remarkable period ought well to remember. The correspondence between governmental action, and the current of the popular mind, was, indeed, so intimate, that Mr. Lincoln's government, if we compare its characteristic features with the characteristic traits, the peculiar ways of thinking and feeling, of the American people, may well be designated as the most representative government the world ever saw. It is to this circumstance, by the way, that Mr. Lincoln's personal success is mainly attributable.

The revolutionary character of this period, then, pertains principally to the rapid movement of public opinion, and its action upon and through the Government. It finds its parallel in nearly every revolutionary event of modern times. A dominant power, the slaveholding aristocracy, long submitted to, attempts a glaring encroachment upon the rights of the most active and progressive element of society. The

popular mind gradually rises to a clear perception and appreciation of the true nature of the conflict. After a time spent in animated discussion, the attempt at encroachment is frustrated by the Constitutional action of the people. The dominant power thus resisted and baffled by Constitutional means, resorts to a coup d'état; the popular mind advances at once to the logical conclusion, that the further existence of that dominant power is incompatible with free institutions, and decrees its annihilation. The final decision then rests with the arbitrament of arms. This is, in a few words, the history of the last ten years, and, with a change of names and technical terms, it would, in this form, be applicable to the most decisive periods in the history of other nations.

It is natural that the manner in which the popular mind proceeded from conclusion to conclusion, should have found its best illustration in the political discussions which accompanied and aided the progress of public opinion. The value of such discussions does not consist alone in their showing the *modus operandi* of individual minds. An argument addressed to the people may, indeed, in the first place, be presumed to represent the individual opinion of him who produces it; but it will never have an effect upon the people, unless it serves to disclose and develop ideas which lie already, although perhaps in a crude and dormant state, in the minds of those who receive it. Principles are, indeed, eternal and in the abstract easily intelligible; but the manner of their practical application depends upon the drift of the times, and the intellectual range of those who have to apply them. There is, then, a continual action and reaction of mind

upon mind in which we discover a current of thought common to them all, and this common current becomes the source of progressive improvement.

In studying the political discussions of the last ten years—of which the speeches contained in this volume form but a modest part,—and inquiring into the views which governed, the emotions which agitated, and the motives which impelled the people in their action, we may, therefore, gain a clearer insight into the rules of logic which shaped the events of our days; this insight will strengthen our conviction that, what has arrived, was unavoidable, and what has been accomplished, is good; and, finally, it will show us, how unwise and dangerous it would be, to stand still, before the results already obtained are carried to that measure of completion and perfection which they imperiously demand.

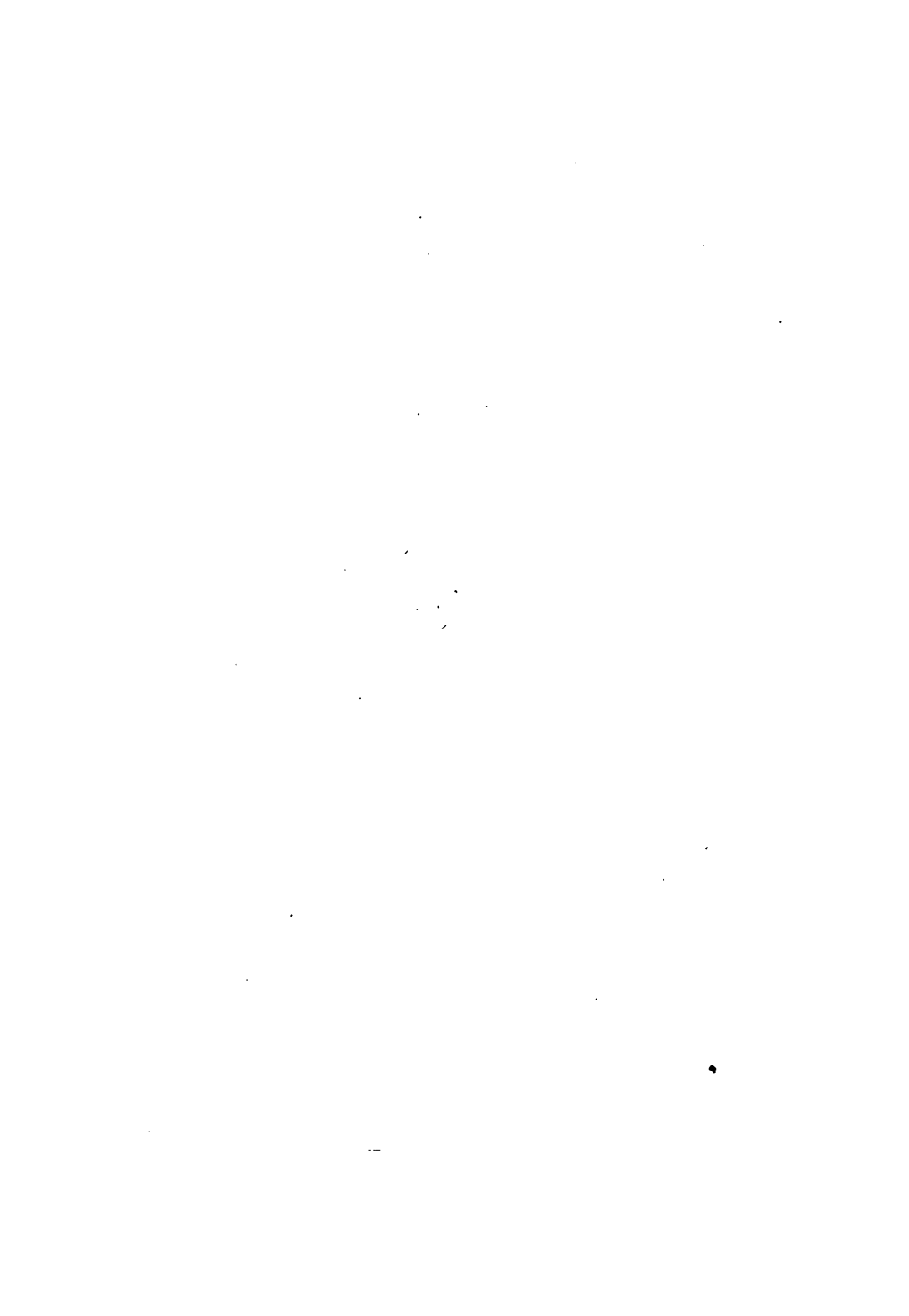
These results are, indeed, very great, but, as the primary results of all revolutionary movements, they are strictly speaking of a negative character. They consist in the removal of the great obstacle to harmonious progress. That accomplished, new fields of inquiry, knowledge, and improvement, will open themselves to the people, on which, by positive, creative action, they will have to build a solid substructure for a broader and higher development of American Civilization.

C. S.

JANUARY, 1865.

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SPEECHES BY CARL SCHURZ.

I.

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT MECHANICS' HALL, CHICAGO,
ON THE 28TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1858.

This speech was delivered in the memorable Senatorial campaign in Illinois, Mr. Lincoln being the candidate of the Republican, and Mr. Douglas the candidate of the Democratic party. The topics discussed may be presumed to be familiar to every American reader who is somewhat conversant with the politics of the day.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:—

The remarks I am going to offer will not be of the exciting and enthusiastic kind. I will speak to your understanding, and call your attention to some of the simple broad principles which rule the development of human affairs.

The destinies of nations and countries are, indeed, not governed by majorities and governmental authority alone. You will sometimes see nations struggle with almost superhuman efforts against certain impending dangers; but an overruling fatality seems to frustrate all their exertions. This overruling fatality, which stands above the power of majorities and governments, I will call by

a simple term — *the logic of things and events*. It is the close connection between cause and effect, between principle and fact — a connection which cannot be severed, and the clear knowledge of which is the only safe foundation for political wisdom.

I have been taught by history that a democratic system of government, although it may overcome local and temporary inconveniences, cannot bear a direct contradiction between political principles on the one and social institutions on the other side. Such inconsistencies will and must bring forth questions and conflicts involving the very foundations of popular liberty. They may appear in different shapes, but when they have once taken possession of the political arena, they will overshadow all other issues. Everything else will be subordinate to them; they will form the only legitimate line of distinction between parties, and all attempts to divert public attention from them, or to palliate them with compromises or secondary issues, will prove futile and abortive. Their final decision, one way or the other, will decide the practical existence of a people.

Such a contradiction is that between liberty, founded upon the natural rights of man, and slavery, founded upon usurpation; between democracy, which is the life-element of our Federal Constitution, and privilege, which is the life-element of the slaveholding system and of Southern society.

I do not intend to make an anti-slavery speech in the common understanding of the term, dwelling at length upon the sufferings of the bondman and the cruelty of the master and the sinfulness of sin in general. My purpose is to investigate, from a political stand-point, the conflicts which, as natural consequences, must spring from the mixture of the contradictory principles of slavery and democracy.

When in a democratic community there is a powerful individual, or an association or class of men, whose claims and pretensions are in conflict with the natural rights of man in general, or with the legitimate claims of other individuals, and who deem their own particular interests above all other considerations, we may well say that the liberties of the people are in danger. When such individuals, or classes of men, find that their claims and pretensions cannot stand before a free criticism, they will spare no effort to impose silence upon the organs of public opinion; they will use force, if argument is of no avail. They will endeavor to concentrate all political power in their hands, and use it as a machinery for the promotion of their own selfish ends, and as a safeguard of their own particular interests. They will resort to usurpation, when, by constitutional means, they can exercise no absolute control.

In States which are ruled by absolute monarchs, the public press is manacled for no other reason than that absolutism and its excrescences cannot stand before the free criticism of public opinion, and that, if press and speech were let free to-day, there would be a death-struggle between public opinion and the absolute power to-morrow, which would result either in the complete overthrow of the latter, or complete re-enslavement of the former. But it is not essential that this powerful and dangerous interest should have monarchical aspirations; if it be an aristocracy, or an association of great merchants or planters, or, in general, a class of persons who have common interests which are inconsistent with the natural rights of man, and who deem them superior to all other considerations, and are determined to defend them, the tendency and the ultimate result will be the same. To such an interest the people will have to submit, or against such an interest the people will have to

fight. There will be a struggle, and there must be a victory. [Applause.] Is this applicable to slavery and the slaveholders? A rapid glance at the political development of this country will answer that question.

In the slaveholding States all political life is shaped by the ruling interest. While the people of the South profess the principle of equality, one class of citizens is accustomed to rule, and the other to obey (mark, I am speaking of the whites, not of the slaves), and the whole machinery of government, even to the smallest functions, is in the hands or under the control of the slaveholding aristocracy. While they profess the principle of political liberty, you dare neither speak nor write a word against the peculiar institution. While they claim to be freemen, they have fettered the hands of the people with the most odious police regulations, dictated by the instinctive fears common to all tyrants. While they claim to be an enlightened people, they do not suffer the great leading ideas of the age to be taught in their schools and colleges, for fear they might engender a thought against slavery. While they claim to be a religious and moral people, they address even their prayers to no other God than the black God of slavery. While they pretend to be a patriotic people, they have sacrificed to slavery the liberties of speech and of the press; sacrificed even the liberty of conscience; sacrificed the welfare of the non-slaveholding whites; sacrificed the prosperity and prospects of their own States; sacrificed the peace of the Republic. [Applause.] And they will tell you as often as you want to hear it, that they stand ready to sacrifice to the preservation of slavery the Union of these States, and the last remnant of their liberties and republican institutions. Nobody can deny it, in the South slavery overrules everything else; slavery rules in all. [Applause.]

And what about the North? Look at the party in power. It considered the Missouri Compromise a sacred compact as long as it served to augment the number of Slave States. It advocated the extension of the Missouri line to the Pacific Ocean, when, by that extension, a large territory might be acquired for slavery. It became suddenly convinced of the unconstitutionality of the Missouri Compromise, and repealed it, when that compact was to augment the number of the Free States. It changed the face of popular sovereignty ten times, according to the pleasure of the slaveholders. It considered the population of Kansas numerically sufficient to form a Slave State, but sadly insufficient to form a Free State. It lavishes, with unheard of profligacy, the money of the people for the benefit of the slaveholding interest, and treats the commercial interests of the free North with contempt. It applauds the most flagrant violations of the ballot-box, the most daring usurpations of power, when they serve the interests of slavery. [Cheers.] And how are all these amazing things effected? Look at the interior organization of that party. No kingdom, no hierarchy is ruled by a more absolute despotism than that party is ruled by its leaders. As I have shown, their principles are shaped and remodelled according to the arbitrary pleasure of the South, and the masses have but to obey, and they do obey. They are watched and dogged like a flock of sheep, turned out to pasture to-day, in order to be fleeced to-morrow. Look at the executor of John C. Calhoun's last will in the White House, who, like an oriental despot, hurls his anathemas and political death-warrants where he cannot debauch the conscience of a man with a bribe. All his power and patronage he has transformed into a vast machine of corruption in the service of slavery. Cast your eye wherever you will, nothing but party despotism, nothing but the fiercest

oppression of moral independence, nothing but corruption organized into a system, and all this in the service of slavery. Will you deny it? Even in the North slavery struggles to rule it all. [Great applause.]

Where are we drifting? I will not dwell on our perverted commercial policy, nor on the question of internal improvements, and the like. I point out to you the general antagonism in which our political development is entangled.

I have often been told that the slaveholders are right in restricting the liberties of speech and of the press, etc., on the subject of slavery; for those liberties unrestrained would be a real danger to them. No doubt they would be a danger, but there is no more crushing argument against slavery than this, no more conclusive proof of its entire incompatibility with true democracy. When an institution in society cannot stand before the tribunal of free speech and free press, the question arises, shall we sacrifice our liberties to that institution, or that institution to our liberties. [Cheers.] *I hold that no interest which is incompatible with a free expression of public opinion, can have a right to exist in a democratic organization of society.* [Great applause.] And if it does exist, it will be like a chronic disease, or like an ulcer lying underneath the skin, which will leave no rest or comfort to the body politic, until it is finally extirpated and extinct. [Cheers.] It is in vain to palliate the disease by artificial means. It will break forth again and again with increased fury, and will urge on and on to a final crisis. Aye, sir, your standard-bearer is right, in spite of Douglas's sophistries. "A house that is divided against itself cannot stand." [Loud cheers.] It cannot stand! It must fall, unless it cease to be divided. [Continued applause.] By the inexorable, uncompromising logic of things, we must go either one way or the other; not as Mr. Douglas tries to

make you believe, make all States slave or free by force of arms; but we must either abandon the principle of equal rights, even among white men, and adapt the whole development of our political organization to the paramount interests of a privileged class of slaveholders; put the liberties of speech and press at the mercy of the ruling power, and sacrifice our democratic system of government to the aristocratic and despotic tendencies of the slaveholding system throughout, or we must break the political power of slavery in our national concerns, and return to the original principles on which this Republic was founded. In one word, we must formally recognize slavery as the ruling interest in our national policy, or we must deny it the recognition of any national right, and confine it to a merely local existence under positive State legislation. [Cheers.] This is the alternative.

Now, quibble as you will; devise side issues and subterfuges; invent palliative remedies; delude others and delude yourselves with fictitious compromises: this alternative will again and again push away all your plausibilities and sophistries, and say to you with the stern voice of inexorable fate: "Here am I! You have not seen me, perhaps, but here I am." [Cheers.]

And now, there comes a man, like Mr. Douglas, who ought to understand the signs of the times, and gives it as his opinion that slavery and democracy, having lived side by side these eighty years, may live on thus, and he does not see the incompatibility. Indeed! he does not see it! The same man, who once, in the name of the slaveholders, cried out to the champions of freedom in the Senate: "We will subdue you." He does not see that somebody and something must be subdued! [Applause.] A blind man does not see the sun, and yet it shines. A deaf man does not hear the thunder of heaven, and yet he will feel the

bolt of lightning when it strikes him down. [Repeated applause.] Aye, sir, slavery and democracy did live side by side these eighty years. But how did they live? Like two combatants that held each other by the throat, each watching his chance to strangle the other. [Cheers.]

Has Mr. Douglas seen or heard nothing of the din or clamor of that battle which has raged, with but short and apparent intermissions, since that time when the ruling parties of this Republic deviated from the original policy of the Revolutionary Fathers, to confine slavery within the narrowest limits, and to promote its gradual abolition by local legislation? Does he know nothing of the ridiculous failures of all the compromises that were called final settlements? May-be, he is not so blind; but what he sees, perhaps, does not suit him. [Cheers.] The conflict between slavery and democracy might have long ago been settled in the spirit of the Revolutionary times. But it was not; and it springs up in its true aspect, when Missouri claims admission as a Slave State. It is represented to be finally settled by the Missouri Compromise. And there it is again, lurking under the tariff question. It assumes threatening dimensions in the question of the annexation of Texas and the territories acquired from Mexico. It is again said to be finally settled by the compromise of 1850. But there it rises again, more terrible than ever, in the Nebraska Bill. Mr. Douglas then claims to have finally settled it by introducing his principle of squatter sovereignty. But streams of blood and smouldering ruins in Kansas give him the lie. [Cheers.] Then Mr. Buchanan's election was to settle it. But the poor old man has hardly set his foot in the White House, when the slavery question steps forth in unheard of turpitude from the hand of Judge Taney. There it is! It is like Banquo's ghost, which rises from the ground again and

again, shakes its bloody locks, and sits down at the very head of the banquet table. [Great applause.]

And there are some simpletons crying "Peace, peace! stop agitation!" Who agitates it? Who agitated it in 1820, but those who wanted to extend slavery in the free West? Who agitated it when Texas was to be annexed, but those who wanted to give to slavery an unlimited domain in the South and South-west? Who agitated it by the Nebraska Bill, but those who wanted to break down the last barrier to slavery? Who agitated it by the Dred Scott decision, but those who wanted to make slavery the rule, and liberty the exception? Who agitated it by the Lecompton question, but those who wanted to sacrifice the last safeguards of self-government to slavery? [Cheers.] And all those who did so were but obeying the logic of things. For slavery cannot live, unless it rules, and it can never keep peace, unless it dies. [Continued applause.] And still some simpletons are crying "Stop agitation!" Where will you begin? Where will you end? Stop agitation! The President of the United States makes not the most trifling appointment, or the slavery question is touched upon in the Cabinet. Congress hardly makes the most inconsiderate appropriation without considering matters from this point of view, and it is agitated! No legislative assembly in any of the States ever adjourns without discussing slavery in some way, and it is agitated. Aye, the smallest log-hamlet in the West hardly elects a constable without considering what the man's views on the subject of slavery are, and it is agitated. And now, stop agitation and cry peace, peace! There is, and there will be, war in the Cabinet of the President — war in both houses of Congress — war in every State Legislature—war in the smallest log-hamlet in the West; aye, war in every heart, until that all-absorbing conflict is settled. [Loud cheers.]

But now we stand before that awful, perplexing question: How is that conflict of contradictory principles to be appeased? How is the slavery question to be settled? There are, indeed, some persons, Democrats, affecting to be philosophers, who reason thus: "Let slavery spread wherever the slaveholders wish to carry it; let it conform the laws of the land to its principles, and adapt them to the sole purpose of its protection, nevertheless time, the natural process of development, and the spirit of the age, will do away with it." Ah! time and the spirit of the age may do wonderful things. They have even laid the Atlantic Cable; but, by the by, it required Cyrus W. Field to start the movement, and keep it going, Mr. Everett to superintend the machinery, and Captain Hudson to steer the Niagara. Aye, sir, do those men who reason thus know what the spirit of the age and the natural process of development mean? I will tell you the word—it is *action, action, and action again!* [Cheers.] I wonder whether those philosophers have ever looked into the history of the world. They would have learned there, how time, and the natural process of development, and the spirit of the age did away with the feudal system of society in Western Europe. What was that process of development, that spirit of the age, then? It is now commonly called the French Revolution. It was the sublimest phrenzy, and the bloodiest madness, of a people. It was the destruction of the Bastille. It was the decapitation of a king and of thousands of his adherents. It was the banishment of the whole nobility and the refractory priesthood. It was a sea of blood; it was twenty years of universal war; it was more terrible than an earthquake. [Cheers.] Have our philosophers a particular liking to that kind of natural process of development and spirit of the age? But as true as the sun will rise to-morrow, they will have the full benefit of it, if their policy,

unfortunately for themselves, should prevail. [Repeated applause.]

There is but one way of avoiding forcible revolutions, and that is by beginning a course of progressive reforms in time. When that season of absolute necessity may arrive, is certainly difficult to determine, but reforms will rarely be commenced too soon, and it may very soon be too late. Are the advocates of slavery sure that this "too late" is still very far off? Let them beware! If the people of the United States follow their advice, I see that kind of "process of development" advancing towards us with the steady step of Fate. I see a time drawing near when those irreconcilable contradictions will break out in a crisis more violent than any we have seen yet, and will envelop slavery, and union, and progress, and prosperity, in the flames of a universal conflagration. [Cheers.]

But now, methinks, I see Mr. Douglas standing there, with a broad smile on his face, and I hear him say with that refinement of style with which that great man endeavors to maintain the dignity of a United States Senator: "These predictions are all gammon. Haven't we got my great principle?" [Loud laughter and cheers.] Popular sovereignty! Was not popular sovereignty, according to Mr. Douglas, to appease the conflict, to remove the fight from the halls of Congress, to localize the struggle, to quell the excitement, to settle the slavery question forever? But how did it happen that the very enactment of that popular sovereignty, as embodied in the Nebraska Bill, was the signal for a new and spontaneous outburst of hostilities? How was it possible that this very remedy should fan the lingering strife into a new flame? And, indeed, the blood of American freemen spilt on the prairies of Kansas, the smouldering ruins of the pioneer's cabin — fired, not by the savage hand of the Indian, but by the hands of people that claim to be civil-

ized — the most flagrant violations of the ballot-box, the most shameless frauds, the most atrocious usurpations of power, ever known in the history of elective governments, and a struggle in Congress fiercer than ever — these are strange fruits of a measure which was to bring peace and liberty and prosperity to mankind. [Cheers.] It will no longer do to say that all this disturbance was owing to the obstinacy of a few abolitionists. The cause of all this lies deeper. It is this :

The Kansas-Nebraska Bill was but a new embodiment of the old contradiction between political principles and social institutions; it was but a new form of that old antagonism, which has convulsed the country for the last forty years. It is not the right kind of "popular sovereignty," but a worthless, treacherous counterfeit. It is a wild delusion — if you will not go so far as to call it an imposture, a lie. [Applause.] Popular sovereignty, in the true sense of the term, means the sovereignty of all individuals, so organized as to give a common expression to the collective will, limited only by the natural rights of individual man. Its foundations can be no other than the recognition of the equal rights of all men. It can be built upon no other presumption, but that all men are free, and that no institution which contradicts this principle, has, of itself, a right to exist.

But what means Mr. Douglas's great principle of popular sovereignty? He says, that the people of a territory shall decide for themselves, whether they will have slavery or not — that is to say, whether the employer may *own* his laborer, or whether he shall *hire* him. Did slavery exist in those territories at the time of the enactment of the Nebraska Bill? No, it did not. Well, now the people shall decide for themselves. But what shall be the rule, what shall be the law, *before* the people shall have given their verdict by positive legislation? Shall the presump-

tion be in favor of freedom, according to the fundamental principle of the good old Anglo-Saxon common law? No, sir, the slaveholder shall have the inherent right to go into the territory with his slaves, and to hold them there as slaves; the right of a man to *own* his laborer is, as such, recognised by the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. And here let me add, that the Dred Scott decision is a most logical construction of the Nebraska Bill [loud cheers] and acknowledged to be such by Mr. Douglas himself, and that his quibbles between his squatter sovereignty, and that decision are the most contemptible subterfuges by which ever a pettifogger made himself ridiculous. [Continued applause.] Thus Mr. Douglas's popular sovereignty is based upon a presumption in favor of *slavery!* upon the presumption that slavery exists *of right*, where it is not prohibited by positive legislation. [Cheers.]

True popular sovereignty means the removal of all barriers which the ingenuity of despotism has set to human liberty. [Cheers.] But Mr. Douglas tells you that the true foundation of American popular sovereignty is the right of slavery to exist where it is not expressly prohibited, and that it means the removal of all barriers which American patriotism has set to human bondage! [Applause.] If you could ask Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Jay, Madison, Henry Clay, for their opinions—who of them would christen this abominable mixture with the great name of popular sovereignty? They would have stigmatized it as a contemptible bastard, begotten in the adulterous embrace of Democracy and slavery, with the features of liberty on its face, but with the black venom of despotism in its heart. [Long-continued applause.]


I repeat it, sir, this so-called popular sovereignty is but a new embodiment of the old antagonism, but a new sign-board to the old concern; a new melody to the old song [cheers]; a new trap set for old fools. [Thundering ap-

plause.] It is the old mistake, the old confusion of ideas; there is nothing new in it but one feature, and that is its very worst.

It marks, indeed, a new period in the history of this country. All the compacts between freedom and slavery, struck by the fathers of this Republic and the subsequent generation of statesmen, were compromises between a principle and an interest. Endeavoring to reconcile the social institutions of this country with the fundamental ideas upon which this government was built, the fathers of this Republic labored for the gradual abolition of slavery wherever they could reach it. But, unable to extinguish it at once, they made concessions to slavery as to an unfortunately existing fact, without recognising in it any principle from which it might derive any national right. To them freedom was the ruling, the fundamental, the national principle, and slavery a local institution which existed only by sufferance, and to which concessions were made for the sake of temporary expediency. This spirit governed the councils of the nation in all acts relating to slavery, and Congress, therefore, did not hesitate to exclude from the national territories what it considered a nuisance. The manifest tendency was to remove the existing contradiction between the fundamental principles of our government and a social institution, by sacrificing the latter. [Cheers.]

Even the Missouri Compromise, so far as it excluded slavery from certain territories, was dictated by this spirit.

The Nebraska Bill, in opening the national territories to slavery, elevated slavery from the rank of a mere obnoxious fact to the rank of a national principle. According to that measure, slavery shall have the right to exist everywhere, by virtue of the national law, where it is not abolished and prohibited by local legislation. Before Mr.



Douglas's popular sovereignty slavery and freedom stand apparently as equal claimants. But in fact, slavery has acquired the right of precedence over freedom. This is the principle which Douglas has introduced into the policy of this country in place of the leading ideas of the revolution. He may claim the merit of being the first man who succeeded in displacing the political development of this Republic from the solid basis of the Declaration of Independence. The Nebraska Bill, very far from being a progressive movement, was the boldest step in the reaction against the principles of the Revolution.

Do not say that I am indulging in a mere play with abstract ideas and theoretical discriminations, and that things might look better in reality; for, I tell you, what is nonsense in theory, you will never make sense in practice.

I know, Mr. Douglas's principal position, that the people of the territories should be left free to settle the question of slavery for themselves, carries some plausibility with it. But why could it not be fairly and quietly executed? Because everybody tried to execute it as he pretended to understand it. Yes, sir, no sooner was the word spoken, than the contradiction, which lay hidden in the new measure, broke out in a practical conflict. This was not astonishing to me, for such must be the result when the construction of ambiguous measures is put into the hands of antagonistic interests. [Cheers.]

Look at the Constitution of the United States. Its words are the same for Mr. Gerrit Smith of New York, and for Mr. Hammond of South Carolina. But how does it happen that these gentlemen understand its meaning so differently? How does it happen that the same words which signify liberty to Gerrit Smith, signify slavery to Hammond? It is because their stand-points, from which they judge it, are different. The one looks at it from the

hills of free New York, the other from the miry soil of a South Carolina cotton-field. The antagonism between liberty and slavery has drawn in its whirl the current of human thought and the reasoning faculties of the human mind. But if such is the case even with the Federal Constitution, of which Madison said, that it should contain nothing which might remind coming generations that such an abomination as slavery ever existed in this Republic, what will be the fate of such measures, as are nothing but an *embodiment* of the old contradiction and antagonism between democracy and slavery? As soon as such a measure is enacted, both principles and both sections of the country representing them, will seize upon it and try to monopolize its construction, and what is construed to mean liberty here, will be construed to mean slavery there; and this is natural, for to the slaveholder the principal meaning of liberty is that man shall have the right to hold his fellow-man as property. [Cheers.]

Was it not so with the Kansas-Nebraska Bill? No sooner was that measure passed by Congress than the slaveholding interest succeeded in monopolizing its construction, and while our poor democrats in the Northern States were descanting on the beauties of territorial self-government, the South put down squatter sovereignty with a sneer, and all that remained of the "great principle" was, that the slaveholders acquired the absolute right to hold their slaves as property in all the territories of the United States "by virtue of the Federal Constitution." [Cheers.] What means the Nebraska Bill now? Ah, look at Mr. Douglas himself, how he is fluttering between the Northern and Southern construction of his "great principle;" how that happy father is hardly able to tell his own child, which is white to-day and black to-morrow [great laughter and applause]; how he bows to the Dred

Scott decision with his face towards Charleston, and then to territorial squatter sovereignty with his face towards Springfield. [Cheers.] Look at that disgusting, pitiable exhibition of a man who boasts of his greatness as a statesman with a thundering voice, and who is short-sighted enough not to see that, like a boy, he has fallen into the meshes of that eternal contradiction from which his pettifogging sophistries will never extricate him. [Thundering applause.]

Such has been the fate of squatter sovereignty, and of the man who invented it. And such will be the fate of all measures which, at the same time, concede to slavery the right to spread, and to liberty the right to restrict it. So long as our national laws countenance slavery in any way beyond that measure of right which it derives from the local legislation of the States in which it exists, the contradiction in our institutions will be the same, the agitation and the war will be the same, and no compromises, and no mock popular sovereignty will allay the struggle. It will be repeated over and over again as often as, and wherever, slavery has the slightest chance to intrude. All such measures, which embody both the antagonistic principles, are like a railroad train to which two locomotives are attached, one at each end. The name of one is Liberty—the name of the other, Slavery. If the two locomotives pull in different directions, what will be the consequence? Either the superior power of one will pull the train, together with the other locomotive, in its direction, or, the strength of both being equal, they will tear the train to pieces. And I tell you all measures like the Nebraska Bill will be torn to pieces by the different constructions put upon them.

What else, therefore, is Douglas's "great principle," but a wild delusion? What else is his policy, but a dangerous imposition? It speaks of harmony, and yet it pre-

serves the elements of strife and conflict. It speaks of peace, and yet it keeps alive the elements of war. Where is its safety?—where its blessings? [Cheers.]

There is the same struggle, everywhere, at all times. You must make up your minds to fight it out.

Since compromise measures and Mr. Douglas's "great principle" will not do it, what will? Let us learn from our opponents.

The clearest heads of the slaveholding States tell you openly that slavery cannot thrive, unless it be allowed to expand. And common sense must tell you, that the slave-power cannot rule, unless you submit to its dictation with cowardly obedience. [Cheers.]

Well, then, in the name of all that is good and great, if slavery cannot thrive, unless it be allowed to expand—pen it up! [Applause.] If the slave-power cannot rule, unless you lie prostrate on your knees—arise! [Repeated cheers.] I know Mr. Douglas will call this a revolutionary doctrine, but let him remember that he himself was called a revolutionist, when, by one of the strangest mistakes of his life, he opposed the Lecompton Constitution. [Cheers.]

In order to restrict slavery, you have but to return to the principles which dictated the ordinance of 1787, and which governed the policy of the greatest patriots American history can boast of.

In order to throw off the yoke of the slave-power, you have but to hold up your heads as men. [Cheers.] If they call this revolutionary, let them call it so. It is the revolutionary spirit to which this Republic owes its existence. [Applause.]

I will not waste your time by demonstrating that the power of Congress to exclude slavery from the national territories stood almost above all doubt and question, from the establishment of this Republic, down to the time

when Mr. Douglas thought it necessary to invent a "great principle" of his own. Every school-boy knows it; and even Mr. Douglas, who is not very timid in denying settled facts, will hardly deny this.

I will call your attention to the probable consequences of this policy which I am advocating. It has often been asserted that a great many of the Southern States would have abolished slavery long ago, had they not been annoyed by the intrusive efforts of Northern anti-slavery men; and that, in case of an anti-slavery victory in a national campaign, the slaveholding States would dissolve the Union at once;—and, sir, let me say, by the way, that I do not deem it out of place here to speak of the emergency of a national campaign; for, in my opinion, we are fighting the battle of the Union on the soil of Illinois [cheers], and a victory here in 1858, means half a victory in the federal campaign of 1860. [Tremendous cheers.] Well, what truth is there in those arguments and threats I was speaking of? Turn over the pages of our history, down to our days, and you will find that as long as the anti-slavery movement in the North was weak, distracted, irresolute, straggling, as long as the Northern mobs put down the champions of human freedom, as long as the North was more clamorous against abolitionism than the South herself, the slaveholder was more overbearing, and the institution seemed to be more firmly rooted in the South, than ever. But now look at the events of our days; behold the anti-slavery movement gaining strength, spreading, becoming powerful, forming in solid columns of defence and attack, and then with drums beating, and banners proudly flung to the breeze, rushing to a general assault on the very citadel of the slave aristocracy—the Federal Government. What are the effects now? Turn your faces Southward, see and listen! In the very heart of the Slave States the voice

of freedom begins to be heard! South Carolina trembles at the detection of abolitionists among the professors of her colleges! The warm soil of North Carolina bears crops of fiery anti-slavery books! See daring leaders putting themselves at the head of the non-slaveholding whites, and bidding defiance to the oligarchy! See a free-labor colony driving its wedge into the very heart of the Old Dominion! Aye, in spite of the election-frauds and ballot-box stuffing, all the bells of St. Louis are pealing the tocsin of emancipation [loud cheers], and before long the whole State of Missouri will respond with a triumphant echo! [Applause.] I tell you, the heroic youths in the fiery furnace of slavery are chanting the praise of freedom with fearless voices, for they have heard the wings of the angel of liberty rustling in the thunder-cloud of the northern horizon. [Long and continued applause.]

See here, the first earnest and powerful display of anti-slavery sentiments in the North; and there, right consequent upon it, the first bold effort of the anti-slavery elements in the South! Is this merely accidental? No! The emancipation movement in Missouri and the free-labor colony in Virginia are the first-born children of the Fremont campaign. [Applause.] Courage and energy here, will inspire them with boldness and energy there. Had the North acted manfully thirty years ago, Missouri, Kentucky, Virginia, Delaware and Maryland, would perhaps be Free States now. And now let us hear no more of the fanatics of the North disturbing the poor slaveholders in their meek philanthropic intentions. [Cheers.]

Such, sir, have been some of the effects of a great anti-slavery campaign, in which we were unsuccessful. Such have been the effects of a glorious defeat, which was merely a demonstration of growing strength. Now I ask you, what would be the effects of a great anti-slavery *victory*? I will undertake to answer: Give us a few years

more of firm, cheerful and successful co-operation among the anti-slavery elements of the North, and a few years more of strong encouragement and moral support to the anti-slavery elements of the South, and then a victory in a federal campaign, and who of the slaveholding aristocracy will dare to raise his hand against the result? [Cheers.] I tell you, then, Slave State will have to fight Slave State, before the South can accomplish secession. [Great cheering.]

Dissolution of the Union!* Our Northern poltroons

* It would seem that, in speaking with so much assurance of the future, the speaker ventured upon a ground which nobody can tread with safety. For what he said, however, he had two very good reasons:

1st. He did not believe that a serious attempt at secession would be made by the Southern people, and this opinion was at the time entertained and expressed by the most prominent men, and a large majority of the Republican party. He, therefore, expressed his true and sincere opinion.

2d. He believed then, and believes still, that, if such a plan was really entertained in the Southern States, a proper attitude on the part of the Northern people would have deterred them from making the attempt, and the language he used was intended not only to convey an individual opinion, but also as a demonstration of Northern spirit.

Before passing his judgment upon this matter, the reader must take into consideration the following facts:

The "fire-eaters" of the South availed themselves of every conceivable opportunity to throw out the threat of disunion. Their object was to frighten the people of the North into acquiescence in whatever they might demand, to promote the interests of slavery. In this they were aided by the Democratic party in the Northern States, who used the danger of disunion as their staple argument in their opposition to every measure tending to resist the progress and usurpations of the slave-power. In this way the slave-power achieved its most alarming successes.

This state of things presented to the anti-slavery party, or rather to the people of the Free States, the following alternative: Either they had to permit themselves to be frightened into submission to every demand the South might see fit to make, and thus to deliver the whole future of the Republic into the hands of the slave-power, or they had to disregard the threat, and to oppose to it a firmly-pronounced determination on their part to stand by the principles upon which the Union was originally founded, and to extend the dominion of free labor wherever slavery was not established by State legislation.

have been frightened to bed often enough by this bugbear. [Applause.] I have often wondered how a Northern man could repeat that stale threat without feeling the blush of shame rising to his cheeks, unless he felt his

To do the first would have been to put even the liberties and institutions of the Free States at the mercy of the slave-power; for the latter becoming convinced by fact that the disunion threat was overawing all minds and bearing down all opposition, would have boldly gone on with its demands, removed everything that stood in the way of its aspirations, and conformed our whole national policy to its interests. The onward march of the slave-power from the Missouri Compromise to the Nebraska Bill, to the Dred Scott decision, and the Lecompton Constitution, showed its ultimate tendency beyond a doubt; while such exactions as that the agitation of the slavery question should be put down, even in the Free States, and such boasts as that "they would call the roll of their slaves at the foot of Bunker Hill Monument," proved clearly that the ultimate views of the slave-power went beyond the limits of the Slave States and the territories. The disunion threat thus constituted a kind of terrorism wielded by the slave-power for the purpose of attaining general and absolute sway. To submit to it would have been to transform the Government of the United States into a mere recorder of the behests of a ruling aristocracy. This could not be done without giving up all the essential attributes of the Republic.

The Republican party adopted the other line of policy presented by the above-mentioned alternative. In doing so, it acted upon this theory: The slave-power, in holding out the threat to dissolve the Union, was either in earnest, or it was not. If it was not, then nothing better could be done than to put an end to the terrorism by boldly standing up against the terrorists. And it was, indeed, the general belief in the Republican party that there was more empty bravado than real meaning in the threat; and that, in case of an anti-slavery success in a national election, the fire-eaters would hardly dare to launch into a secession movement, or, at all events, that they would find it difficult to carry the people of the South with them. How far the preparation for the rebellion had already progressed, at that time, was probably known only to the leaders of the movement.

But if the threat was, indeed, serious, the following things were to be taken into consideration:

1. The co-operation of the Northern Democrats with the Southern leaders, in holding up the prospect of disunion as the great bugbear to intimidate the Northern people, was certainly encouraging the "fire-eaters" to persevere in their purpose. The worst thing that could be done was to make the latter believe that they would be aided and supported in their treasonable design by a large number of friends in the North. If the Southern leaders had any

swaddling clothes fluttering round his limbs. [Great cheers.] Is it so difficult to understand the bellicose humor of the South? When a coward falls in with a greater coward than he, or with a man that is even dead,

doubt of the practicability of their scheme, the attitude of the Northern Democracy was apt to remove these doubts.

2. The Southern leaders, whenever they preached secession to their own people, did so avowedly upon the supposition that the people of the North would not dare to offer any resistance to the movement, that the "Yankee would not fight." They promised to their people the establishment of a Southern Confederacy by the quiet process of peaceable separation.

Now it is quite generally understood, and has been frequently admitted, even in the South, that had not the secessionists counted upon a powerful co-operation on the part of their friends in the North, had they not believed that the Northern people were greatly afraid of them, had they anticipated that "the Yankees" would show such a unanimity in their willingness to fight for the Union, the secession movement would not have been attempted, or, at least, it would have been impossible for the secession leaders to draw the people of the South into the vortex.

The best policy, therefore, for the people of the Free States to pursue, was to present a bold and solid front to the pro-slavery element; to try to convince the Southern people that there was an overwhelming sentiment in the North against the arrogations of the slave-power; that the threat of disunion was considered a contemptible attempt to terrorize a spirited people; that this attempt would, henceforth, be treated with disdain; that a disunion movement, if indeed undertaken, would be sternly resisted by the united North; and, finally, that "the Yankee would fight."

If then, as was believed, the disunion cry was a mere empty threat, it was easily shown in its nothingness, and the terrorism was at an end; or, if it was a serious thing, we were likely, by a strong demonstration of a determined will and unity of sentiment, on the part of the North, to convince the Southern people that secession would be for them a most perilous undertaking; and that, if they understood their own interest, it was best for them to abandon the idea. At all events, this was the only policy which could vindicate the dignity of the people, save the spirit of our institutions, and rescue the future development of the Republic from the absolute control of the slave-power. Such were the considerations which dictated the language of the speaker in the above passage, and wherever he had occasion to express his opinions on the subject. (See below, St. Louis speech, page 147.)

That such demonstrations did not have the desired effect upon the people of the South, was owing principally to the following circumstances: The leaders of the secession movement were so confident of having the counte-

he is very apt to assume the attitudes of a hero. The history of the world shows few examples of more outspoken bravery than Sir John Falstaff's when he found Percy Hotspur dead as a mouse on the field of battle. [Laughter and applause.] But let Percy move one of his fists and you will see Sir John nimbly taking to his legs. [Continued laughter and cheers.] As long as the North was as tame as a chicken, the South was as overbearing as a bull-dog. But things have changed since. The North begins to understand the policy: *Si vis pacem para bellum!* in good English: to impudent fellows show your teeth! and you will see the result. [Great cheers.]

The history of the last four years, and especially that of the Kansas struggle, has shown the mighty colonels and generals of the South two great things: first, that the North can and will unite against the progress of slavery, and that some of the Slave States are becoming unreliable; and, second, *that the Yankee will fight!* [Cheers.] Aye, that the descendants of those men who fought in 1776, will fight now and again! [Applause.] And, further, that there is a solid column of German and Scandinavian anti-slavery men here, who know how to handle

nance and co-operation of the Democratic party in the Northern States, that nothing said or done by the Republicans could weaken their belief. They were assured by their friends in the North that the coercion of seceded States would not be attempted. They had reasons to rely upon the sympathy of Mr. Buchanan, then President of the United States, who, in many respects, seemed indeed to justify their expectations. And thus they calculated, that the people of the loyal States, abandoned by their own government, would be neither willing nor able to fight. All these suppositions proved erroneous, and it was certainly not the fault of the Republicans that they were entertained. One thing is eminently probable, nay, certain: if the threat of disunion had from the beginning been treated by every Northern man with becoming indignation and contempt, and if the South had been made to understand the North on that matter, no secession movement would ever have taken place. Slavery would have been gradually reduced and extinguished, as designed by the statesmen of the Revolutionary period. — C. S.

a musket, and who will fight too. [Repeated cheers.] Let them come on, then, the bragging cavaliers of the South! The Northern roundheads stand just ready for them. [Thundering applause.] Calm your warlike enthusiasm; if they are wise, they will not come. The first attempt at a forcible dissolution of the Union will show them the madness of the undertaking.

What will the South do then, if this policy prevails? I do not say that the slaveholders will at once submit, cheerfully and gracefully. They will certainly give their lungs a hearty exercise in the finest figures of speech, and in the most brilliant exclamations. They will predict fearful things, although they may not be over nice concerning the time when these fearful things are going to happen. [Laughter and cheers.] But after a while will they not stop and listen to what the North may have to say? Suppose, then, the North were to speak to them as follows: Friends, we love and esteem you as citizens of a common country. As citizens, you enjoy every right that we enjoy, and whatever legitimate ambition you entertain, there is an open field for it, in this our common Republic. But, as we claim no privileges for ourselves, we are unwilling to concede any to others. If you want to curb our necks under the yoke of your peculiar notions; if you want to adapt the laws of the land to the sole purpose of the protection of the slaveholding interest; if you make any pretensions, or claim any superiority, as a slaveholding aristocracy, you will expose yourselves to grievous disappointment. There is a solid phalanx arrayed against the arrogations of slavery beyond the limits which the Constitution and history have assigned to it. Now, this is your choice: Either govern this Republic with us, as citizens on perfectly equal terms, or, as a slaveholding aristocracy, submit to the doom of

a hopeless minority. Here is strife and disappointment—there is peace and prosperity; choose. [Cheers.]

Do you not think that such words will be apt to make them stop and consider; such words accompanied, perhaps, by the sullen thunder of an earthquake beneath their very feet? They will certainly not abolish slavery at once. They will not suddenly cast off that singular chain of ideas which has bound them to the old order of things. For, do not forget that interest is with them not the only, and, perhaps, not even the most powerful, advocate of slavery. It cannot have escaped you that the slavery question is with them a question of aristocratic pride; that they look down upon the plebeians of the North with a certain contempt, and want to rule the government of their States and the Federal Government also, not as mere citizens, but as *slaveholders*. It is the pride of an aristocracy, the ambition of a caste. Against these, mere argument is no available weapon. Vain pride and ambition are fed and grow upon concessions, and there is nothing that will disarm them but the evident impossibility of their gratification. When slaveholders see their aristocratic pretensions put down by firm majorities, and when they can no longer escape the conviction, that their aspirations to rule the country as slaveholders meet with universal contempt, they will be more apt to listen to the voice of reason, which, at the same time, is the voice of their true interest. After the blinding influence of those ruling passions has been paralyzed by irrevocable events, then, and not till then, will the true moral and economical merits of slavery be fairly investigated and thoroughly understood in the slaveholding States. Discovering that they are an isolated anomaly in the wide world, the slaveholders will find themselves obliged to conform their condition to the spirit of the age. Discovering that there are other more

productive and far more honorable sources of wealth than laziness feeding upon slave-labor, they will sacrifice old prejudices to a new spirit of enterprise, and repeated trials will produce substitutes for slave-labor, where hitherto the latter has been deemed indispensable. Whatever depravity the system of slavery may have entailed upon its devotees, the people of the South are neither devoid of noble impulses nor of the elements of common sense. Rather than kill their time in mourning over the ruins of departed glory, they will try to found new fortunes on a new order of things. And the non-slaveholding whites—now a degraded class of beings—will speedily rise to the rank of active citizens, carried forward by a general progressive movement. No doubt, slavery will linger some time in the cotton and rice growing States. But even there you will see statesmen at the head of affairs, who, abandoning old pretensions, will rather apologize for its continued existence, than boastingly parade it as the fundamental principle of democratic institutions. [Applause.] And at last that thick fog of prejudice will pass away, which hitherto has veiled from their eyes the sun of true democracy. They will, as if awakening from a dark dream, admire with astonishment the life-spreading warmth of its beams, and the glorious purity of its light. [Great cheers.]

And, at the same time, when slavery ceases to be a power, it will cease to exercise its demoralizing influence upon our national policy. No anti-democratic tendency will any longer rule the government of this country. The people will no longer be distracted and confused by the conflict of antagonistic principles. Our foreign policy will no longer be subservient to the grasping appetites of the slave aristocracy, but to the real interests of the whole country. Our influence with foreign nations will rise in the same measure as they have reason to believe

in the sincerity of our democratic professions. The policy of our political parties will no longer be determined by a sectional minority, and the most venal of our politicians no longer sell themselves to an anti-democratic interest, which will have ceased to be a ruling political power. [Cheers.]

This state of things will, according to my profound conviction, be the consequence of a consistent, peaceable, and successful anti-slavery policy. It will stop extravagant and unwarrantable claims, without interfering with constitutional rights. It will respect the privileges of the States, but it will enforce them in favor of freedom also. It will not try to abolish slavery in the States by Congressional interference, or by the force of arms. But it will give strong encouragement and moral support to progressive reforms within them, and will sap the roots of the institution by reducing it to live on its own merits. It will not endanger the safety of the Union, but it will perpetuate it by strengthening its true foundations. [Applause.]

I love this Union, and no man can be more opposed to its dissolution; not as though the free North depended upon her bankrupt partner, but because I think that the connection of the Slave States with the free North is the only thing which prevents the former from entirely losing the last remnant of democratic spirit, and from abandoning themselves without restraint to the current of a despotic tendency. [Cheers.] Let our opponents fret and threaten—I fear nothing. The question, how the Union can be preserved, may, indeed, seem a difficult one to them. But did they ever consider how infinitely more difficult is the question how to dissolve it? And yet, there is one great and real danger to the Union; it is, that by abandoning the great principles of the Revolution, it might miss the very aims and ends for which it was instituted. [Cheers.]

It is not without a profound meaning that the several States of this Union are represented by stars on the national banner. As in our solar system on high the great central sun keeps the planets in their several orbits in sublime and eternal order, so in the solar system of our Union the stars of the States move around a central sun of pure light and irresistible attraction. This central sun is true democratic liberty. As long as that stands firm and unshaken, its whole sphere will move in serene glory. But take that away, annihilate that great centre of attraction, and where hitherto has been the sublime order of a planetary system, there chaotic confusion will reign supreme, and the fondest hopes of the world will perish in destructive concussions. [Loud and long-continued applause.]

II.

POLITICAL MORALS.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT ALBANY-HALL, MILWAUKEE, ON THE 18TH OF NOVEMBER, 1858.

The meeting at which this speech was delivered, was called for the purpose of celebrating the success gained by the Republican party at the fall election of 1858, in the First Congressional District of Wisconsin, and particularly in the county and city of Milwaukee. The Democratic party had always had an overwhelming majority in the latter locality; but some of its leading members, especially men in official positions, had indulged in corrupt practices, which led to a change of feeling among the rank and file of the party, and rendered the success of the Republican candidates possible. These are the circumstances alluded to in those passages of the speech which treat of political morality. The change was particularly great among the voters of German nativity, and the speaker had been very active in bringing about this result.

GENTLEMEN:—

I did not come here for the purpose of receiving your applause for what little I may have contributed to the result of the late election. It is no affected modesty on my part when I say there are many men here, who, in a quiet way, have done and effected much more than myself; and, although I thank my friends for the good opinion they entertain of my services, yet I do not thank them for the distinction they make, and for the exclusive praises they bestow upon me, while others have so richly deserved them. I simply did a freeman's duty, and so did you, every one in his way. Let no unjust discriminations be made, which might wound the feelings of deserving

men, while they cannot fail to embarrass those for whose gratification they are intended. Equal honor to every brave man who stood to his gun in the battle! [Cheers.] Honor to the members of the American Press, who have faithfully worked for the good cause, day after day. Honor to the members of the German Republican Press, who, fighting in the minority, have, for years and years, sacrificed the comforts of life, and struggled with difficulties unknown to most of you, until, at last, they found a reward for their labors in the victories of our cause. [Applause.]

We have, indeed, achieved a surprising success in this city. But, glorious as it was, I warn my Republican friends not to mistake its meaning. It was, indeed, a most hearty endorsement of our noble representative in Congress, and a crushing verdict against the corrupt party organization which so long has ruled the destinies of this district; but the glorious majority we gained, was not a mere partizan majority; the victory we achieved, was not a mere partizan victory. It was the victory of political honesty over corruption; was the victory of moral independence over moral servitude, of manhood over servile partizanship! [Great applause.] Glory enough for the Republicans, that the voice of political independence spoke in their favor.

I know, and you all know, how this great result has been attained. It was the German vote which defeated you so often; it is the German vote that gives us now so brilliant a victory. [Cheers.] I know my countrymen, and I think I understand the true meaning of their action. I indeed have often enough endeavored to plant convictions in the place of their prejudices; but now I see that I was merely giving words to the true thoughts of my countrymen; that I merely gave an expression to their real feelings. [Cheers.] Yes, *they are shaking 'off the*

yoke of Hunkerism, which endeavored to degrade them to mere voting machines; they *are* breaking through the enslaving drill and discipline of the false Democracy.

But now, after having preached the true principles of American liberty to the Germans, you must allow me to explain the real feelings of my countrymen to the Americans. I entreat you, let not this victory lead you into the dangerous delusion, that the Germans, after having shaken off the yoke of one party despotism, are ready to take upon their necks the yoke of another. [Cheers.] After having raised the banner of moral independence to-day, they are certainly not prepared to surrender it again to-morrow. They will follow the lead of political honesty, as long as it is true honesty that leads them. [Cheers.] They have stood up for the defence of the principles of liberty, and they will remain true to that cause, so long as it is genuine and true liberty which claims their support. But I tell you, my Republican friends, and I speak with the full earnestness of my heart, I sincerely hope that my countrymen who have emancipated themselves from party despotism, will never again consent to be made use of in corrupt combinations and political tricks, that they never will again be parties to dirty political trades and corrupt bargains, *on whatever side they may be attempted.* [Great applause.] And I do not hesitate to prophesy, that if the Republican party should be unfortunate enough to entangle itself in the same net-work of corruption with which the Democracy is choking itself to death, the people will strike it down with the same crushing verdict, under which Hunkerism is sinking now. And in that case, I confess my heart would behold with grief and sorrow its degradation, but it would have no tears for its defeat. [Applause.]

Such predictions will never be fulfilled as long as the Republicans keep in mind, that it requires an honest party

to defend great principles with success, and that in order to preserve the liberties of this country and to carry out the great ideas of the fathers, it is indispensably necessary to raise the standard of political morals. [Cheers.]

The decline and decay of political morals is not owing to the more or less accidental circumstance that a number of corrupt men rose to influence and power. The real cause is, that the political action of the masses was not dictated and ruled by their consciences. [Cheers.]

When you look over the history of that party, which, for a long series of years, has shaped the destinies of the Union, you will discover that its organization is of a hierarchical and despotic character, and that its policy does not spring from the heart of the people. You must discover, that its frequent changes of principles and platforms have not arisen from spontaneous and corresponding changes in public opinion, but that they have been imposed upon the masses of the party by a foreign will, and that the masses have been but obeying the arbitrary dictation of a few superiors. Thus you see the Democratic party of the North slide, with the greatest facility, within a few years, from extreme to extreme—from the Wilmot Proviso to the most atrocious doctrines of the Dred Scott decision. How was this effected, and what was the consequence? The means was the fiercest party despotism, and the consequence was the deepest demoralization of the popular conscience. [Cheers.] People were taught that they had to sacrifice their principles to the party, and with their principles they sacrificed their moral independence and their moral worth. [Great applause.]

Indeed, what man has the right to call himself a regular Democrat now-a-days? Has he, who once with the leaders of the party, held the Missouri Compromise as sacred and inviolable as the Constitution itself? Has he, who once, with General Cass, deplored that he had no opportunity

to record his vote for the Wilmot Proviso? Has he, who once stood upon the Wisconsin platform of 1849, or who shortly after subscribed to General Cass's Nicholson letter? or he, who, in 1854, cheered for Douglas's new doctrine, that the Missouri restriction was unconstitutional, but that the people of a territory should have the power to admit or exclude slavery, even in a territorial condition? Or he, who shortly afterwards limited this right to exclude slavery to the time when the people of a territory formed a State Constitution? Or he, who now subscribes to the doctrine of the Dred Scott decision, that the right of property in a slave is originally and expressly affirmed by the Federal Constitution, and that slavery has an unlimited sway over all the property of the United States? Is he a Democrat, who to-day condemns the re-opening of the slave trade as an outrageous wrong, or will he be a Democrat that will assert to-morrow that, a slave being an ordinary article of merchandize, we have no right to limit the freedom of trade in that article? He certainly is no Democrat who has stood faithful and true to any one of these principles, however loudly he may have professed them. But he is a regular Democrat who has successively endorsed every one of them, who has jumped from one platform on another, without scruple or hesitation, and who was always ready to swear that the leaders of "the party" were right whatever they might command, and that the whole world besides was wrong. [Great applause.] He is a "regular Democrat" who is readiest in yielding the most slavish obedience to superior dictation. The true party test of Democracy is neither the Nebraska Bill nor the Dred Scott decision; it is unconditional submission and ever ready obedience. [Loud and continued applause.] How is this? Is it probable that a man should have been truly and deeply convinced of the truth of any one of these principles, if he

was always ready to abandon it for another? Is it possible that those who changed leading doctrines as easily as they changed their clothes, should have cared for principle at all? Could it be true conviction that ruled them? And if it was not conviction that ruled them, what concern could their consciences have in their politics?

Oh, what a sight is this! In the old world I saw the spirit of noble nations subdued by the bayonets of hireling armies. I have seen their battalions, themselves formed of the children of the people, shoulder their muskets and march against their own friends and brothers, the defenders of their common rights and liberties; but it was not their choice to do so, for the terror of command overawed their hearts, and brutal necessity directed their steps. And I have seen other thousands sacrifice all they had, and fight and suffer and die, in order to bequeath to the people the right to express their true convictions and their free-will at the ballot-box, and for no other cause has humanity struggled more, and for no other has more of the noblest blood of mankind been shed. To see the efforts of a liberty-loving nation crushed down by brute violence is a spectacle that fills our soul with sadness, but we do reverence to those who perish in their noble attempts. More deplorable still, because less honorable, is the lot of those who are forced to fight against their own rights and their own liberty; they are the victims of despotism, without being the champions of freedom. But what feelings have our hearts, what designation has our language, for those who, in a free country like this, unfettered by any kind of despotism, with no terror to overawe and no force to coerce them, sacrifice their convictions and their consciences to a moral tyranny of their own making? [Cheers.] And these we find in our midst. Do not try to disguise the fact. There are no bayonets here against convictions. There is no power here that could prevent

the lowest child of the people from having a will and convictions of his own, and from expressing them freely. Every one is the sovereign master of his own self. And yet how many are there who immolate their consciences, their convictions, all their moral independence, on the altar of a savage idol, whose name is "Party!" [Great cheers.] How many submit to a thralldom, which is the more shameful as it is unsupported by force, and rests only on the slavish propensities of its devotee! [Applause.]

Is it not so? Are not the real feelings of the masses trampled upon with impunity, and public opinion treated with contempt? Are not the most atrocious constitutional doctrines imposed upon the people with as much arbitrariness as that with which the despots of the old world impose ukases on their subjects? And yet the rank and file of "the party" stifle the warning voice of conscience, and obey, obey, obey! [Loud applause.] Do not call that rebellion, which recently broke out in the camp, an indication of moral independence. What is it, but that one pretender rises against another, each eager to wield the rod of command alone? What is it, but that, as in the play of Capuletti and Montechi, the house of Douglas rises against the house of Buchanan, the white rose fights the red, an antipope fighting against the pope, but both trying to rule their clients and followers with the same rule, and to whip them in with the same whip? Who is the greater despot of the two? Does not Douglas, on the one side, dictate principles in the same absolute way that Buchanan does on the other? It is nothing but double-headed despotism. [Loud cheers.] Those who were sincerely fighting for principle will have to leave the party. The South will soon declare her sovereign pleasure, the greedy courtiers will crowd the antechamber of the victor, and order will reign in Warsaw. [Applause.]

Such is the party which has stood so long at the helm

of affairs. Its history and its present condition are full of instruction for the people; for not the politicians, but the masses who supported them, are responsible for the curse of demoralization which that party has brought upon us. [Cheers.]

It is said that there are but few men, who, however honest otherwise, can withstand the seductions of power. If this is true, what effect must it have on political leaders, when they see that, in point of principle and political doctrine, they can do with the masses whatever they please? When they find out that they will be obeyed and applauded whatever their commands may be? That there is no somerset so glaring, no sophistry so absurd, and no doctrine so atrocious, but that the rank and file will accept them? That they may sell themselves, and sell others, without being rebuked? That they may even squander the money and rob the treasury of the people, without being held to account? Nay, that their very depravity gives them a claim on the protection of their party? Let me tell you, that not only the politicians debauch the conscience of the people by contempt of principle, but that the masses demoralize the politicians by culpable indulgence. [Great cheers.] Yes, when that party put an honest man in office, they did all they could in order to make a rascal out of him, while he was in power [loud applause]; and the virtue of many a man has thus been victimized by his constituency. And when, at last, such a man had become a downright scoundrel, he did in his turn all he could to demoralize those who had made him so. We might call this Democratic reciprocity, and it is in full operation everywhere. [Tremendous applause.]

Where this course would lead, if the masses persevered in it, I do not know. But I do know that there is no remedy, unless we put the axe to the roots of the evil, and I

consider this one of the most important parts of the mission of Republicanism. It must be our principal object, not only to catch the people's votes for our candidates, but enlist in our cause the people's conscience. [Great cheers.] We must encourage moral independence in politics; we must admonish every man to think and to reason for himself, to form his own convictions, and to stand by them; we must entreat him never to accept, unseen and uninvestigated, the principles and opinions of others, even if they be our own. Let those who follow your lead, believe in your words, because what you say is true, and not because you say it. [Applause.] Do not object that this will loosen the party organization and destroy its efficiency. For our cause is great, and the principles of Republicanism stand on the firm ground of the rights of man. The closer they are investigated, the clearer they stand in the open light of day, the more invincible they are. If what you say is true, you need no tricks and deception in order to make people believe. Address yourselves to their moral nature, and their conscience will enlighten their understanding. [Loud applause.] Then you will organize the party of independent men. This independence will keep the rank and file vigilant, and this vigilance will keep the leaders upright and honest. It will put an end to the omnipotence of wire-pulling, and nip republican Hunkerism in the bud. [Loud applause.] I know it will require incessant work to keep up something like discipline in that party, but it will be an object worth working for; for such an organization will never become a mere tool in the hand of selfish ambition, and its discipline will never degenerate into a mere machinery of despotism. I know that volunteers sometimes will not fight as well as regular troops, and that drill will sometimes beat enthusiasm. But enthusiasm also may be disciplined, and then it will be irresistible. [Cheers.]

I have no faith in the wisdom of that policy of expediency which consists in forming alliances with heterogeneous elements, and in compromising leading principles for the sake of gaining numerical strength. [Cheers.] Temporary successes may, indeed, be achieved by such operations, and short-sighted men who consider themselves eminently practical, may glory in their exploits. But they are only too apt to forget, that serious moral defeats have sometimes been suffered in apparent victories, and moral victories have been won in apparent defeats. And both will bear their fruits in the future. [Loud applause.] It may soon turn out that, what by such expedients they may have gained in point of numbers to-day, they have lost in moral strength for all the future. Our leaders must not forget that we are not working merely for the sake of overthrowing an administration, or of achieving some temporary successes to-day and to-morrow, but that our true end, which consists in setting a limit to the slave-power and the demoralization of political life, will require our united efforts for years to come. They ought never to forget, that ours is a party of volunteers who act on principle and conviction, and that nothing tends so much to break up such a party as that fickle policy which shifts from expedient to expedient, from alliance to alliance, from compromise to compromise. [Cheers.] A party like ours can never be ruled by secret diplomacy. [Loud applause.] Our true strength consists in the honest confidence of the people, which cannot but be endangered by secret combinations, however ingenious and clever they may be. As for me, I believe in an open and straightforward fight. [Cheers.] I believe that even in politics honesty is the best policy. [Loud applause.] I believe in the possibility of reforming our political life, and I will tell you how I think you can do it.

It is true we cannot expect every Republican to be a perfect angel. Even when advocating the purest principles, a man will not at once cast off all the frailties of human nature; and so it may happen, and, I am sorry to say, it has happened, that some Republicans, in the discharge of official duties, fell victims to severe temptations. But one thing we can do, we must do, and we shall do. We must not hesitate to denounce every member of our own party who prostitutes his trust and power by dishonest and corrupt transactions, as a contemptible villain. [Loud applause.] And not only that, we must consider and denounce and treat him as a traitor to his party! [Thundering cheers.] What we can and must do, is to make all dishonest and corrupt practices high treason, and to take every such traitor and pitch him overboard [applause]; to condemn him to political death without regard to person or station, without the benefit of clergy. [Long and continued cheers.] That is the way to stem the flood of demoralization among the people and among the politicians, and to root out that most alarming, that most hideous popular notion—a notion horrible in its consequence, which has been started and fostered by the speculating demagogues—the notion that a politician who is not knave enough to steal must necessarily be a fool! [Loud cheers.] To a corrupt Republican let no other alternative be presented but to be buried in the grave of infamy and oblivion, or to go over to the other side, where such knaves thrive and prosper. [Tremendous applause.]

Republicans, if you claim the right to be severe on your opponents, you must be no less severe against yourselves. Let the Republican organization be a permanent investigating committee, watching its own members, and let it be understood that, if it is not a sufficient excuse for a scoundrel to be a Democrat, a scoundrel is, in your

eyes, ten times more damnable if he pretends to be a Republican. [Loud applause.] Although you may not be perfect, yet you will show by your acts that you are honestly endeavoring to do your best, while, on the other side, corruption stalks abroad with the disgusting impudence of a prostitute who delights in exhibiting her vices naked to the world. I repeat it, and I cannot impress it upon your minds too strongly, or too solemnly: our liberties and the honor and prestige of this Republic *cannot* be preserved, unless you raise the standard of political morals, and this is the way to do it. In the place of every hypocrite unmasked, of every rascal struck down by your hands, ten honest men will flock to your banner. [Loud applause.]

This is the policy which our principles demand. If we follow it sincerely and faithfully, then the light of truth will soon pierce even the thickest darkness of Egypt. [Cheers.] The revolution has begun, and I greet its first symptoms with heartfelt satisfaction; whether it will have an unimpeded progress depends in a large measure upon those who, by these first upheavings of the popular spirit, have been carried into responsible positions.

Let me entreat our republican legislators elect, never to forget that they have not been elected by a strict party vote; that they are, indeed, expected to stand true to their party, but only so long as the party is true to the cause of liberty and honesty. [Loud applause.] Let them never forget that the trust imposed upon them is of unusual importance; upon their shoulders rest the destinies of a State, whose reputation is tainted by venal legislatures and administrations, and whose credit is ruined by legislative blunders. Let them never forget that in a society organized like ours, stability of legislation is the principal safeguard of public credit, [Cheers,]

and that, whatever changes in our laws may be desirable, vested rights and existing contracts must be religiously respected. [Loud and continued applause.] Let them never forget that true economy does not consist in close parsimony alone, but in a wise and appropriate application of the moneys expended. [Cheers.] Let our legislators and county officers bear in mind that it may be easy to gain the confidence of the people, but difficult to preserve it, and that they will be held responsible for the result of the next election. In one word, let this celebration of one of the most surprising successes ever achieved, be solemnized by a deeper consciousness of our duties and responsibilities. [Cheers.]

A last word, my friends. I cannot deny an expression to the feeling of joy with which I am beholding a sight, for which my heart has longed years and years. It is the honest and liberty-loving German joining hands with the honest and liberty-loving American. [Thundering and long-continued applause.] Look over this broad land; at Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, aye, and Milwaukee, also, the Germans, together with the Americans, crowding around the banner of human liberty! See there the old Germanic idea showing its true identity in all the branches of the good old Germanic stock. [Loud cheers.] Let the bond of this wedlock be sacred and inviolable! Your interests are the same, and in your inmost hearts your principles are the same—why should you not be true to each other? Let this alliance spread and flourish all over this State, all over this Republic—and the cause of liberty will triumph and our honor will be safe! [Long and continued applause.]

III.

TRUE AMERICANISM.

SPEECH DELIVERED IN FANEUIL-HALL, BOSTON, ON
THE 18TH OF APRIL, 1859.

The speaker had been invited to Boston to participate in a public dinner on the anniversary of Jefferson's birth-day. Several prominent gentlemen of Massachusetts arranged for him a public reception in Faneuil-Hall, which took place a few days after the Jefferson dinner, Hon. Henry Wilson, United States Senator, presiding. The speech was made in response to the introduction by Senator Wilson. The line of argument pursued in the speech was not without a special object. The Legislature of Massachusetts had adopted an amendment to the Constitution of the State, by which foreigners should not be permitted to vote until two years after they had become citizens of the United States. This amendment, generally known as the "two-years'-amendment," was to be voted upon by the people. It was one of the measures brought forth by the so-called "Know-nothing" or "American" movement, which for a few years had been sweeping all over the United States. It was against this spirit of proscription for the sake of birth, creed, or opinion, styling itself "Americanism," that the speaker directed his arguments.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN :—

A few days ago I stood on the cupola of your State-house, and overlooked for the first time this venerable city and the country surrounding it. Then the streets, and hills, and waters around me began to teem with the life of historical recollections; recollections dear to all mankind, and a feeling of pride arose in my heart, and I said to myself, I, too, am an American citizen. [Applause.] There was Bunker Hill, there Charlestown, Lexington,

and Dorchester Heights not far off; there the harbor into which the British tea was sunk; there the place where the old liberty-tree stood; there John Hancock's house; there Benjamin Franklin's birth-place—and now I stand in this grand old hall, which so often resounded with the noblest appeals that ever thrilled American hearts, and where I am almost afraid to hear the echo of my own feeble voice;—oh, sir, no man that loves liberty, wherever he may have first seen the light of day, can fail on this sacred spot to pay his tribute to Americanism. And here, with all these glorious memories crowding upon my heart, I will offer mine. I, born in a foreign land, pay my tribute to Americanism? Yes, for to me, the word Americanism, *true* Americanism, comprehends the noblest ideas which ever swelled a human heart with noble pride. [Applause.]

It is one of the earliest recollections of my boyhood, that one summer night our whole village was stirred up by an uncommon occurrence. I say our village, for I was born not far from that beautiful spot where the Rhine rolls his green waters out of the wonderful gate of the Seven Mountains, and then meanders with majestic tranquillity through one of the most glorious valleys of the world. That night our neighbors were pressing around a few wagons covered with linen sheets and loaded with household utensils and boxes and trunks to their utmost capacity. One of our neighboring families were moving far away across a great water, and it was said that they would never again return. And I saw silent tears trickling down weather-beaten cheeks, and the hands of rough peasants firmly pressing each other, and some of the men and women hardly able to speak when they nodded to one another a last farewell. At last the train started into motion, they gave three cheers for *America*, and then in the first gray dawn of the morning I saw them wending their way over the hill until they disappeared in the shadow

of the forest. And I heard many a man say, how happy he would be if he could go with them to that great and free country, where a man could be himself. [Applause.]

That was the first time that I heard of America, and my childish imagination took possession of a land covered partly with majestic trees, partly with flowery prairies, immeasurable to the eye, and intersected with large rivers and broad lakes—a land where everybody could do what he thought best, and where nobody need be poor, because everybody was free.

And later, when I was old enough to read, and descriptions of this country and books on American history fell into my hands, the offspring of my imagination acquired the colors of reality, and I began to exercise my brain with the thought what man might be and become, when left perfectly free to himself. And still later, when ripening into manhood, I looked up from my school-books into the stir and bustle of the world, and the trumpet-tones of struggling humanity struck my ear and thrilled my heart, and I saw my nation shake her chains in order to burst them, and I heard a gigantic, universal shout for Liberty rising up to the skies; and at last, after having struggled manfully and drenched the earth of Fatherland with the blood of thousands of noble beings, I saw that nation crushed down again, not only by overwhelming armies, but by the dead weight of customs and institutions and notions and prejudices, which past centuries had heaped upon them, and which a moment of enthusiasm, however sublime, could not destroy; then I consoled an almost despondent heart with the idea of a youthful people and of original institutions clearing the way for an untrammelled development of the ideal nature of man. Then I turned my eyes instinctively across the Atlantic Ocean, and America and Americanism, as I fan-

ced them, appeared to me as the last depositories of the hopes of all true friends of humanity. [Applause.]

I say all this, not as though I indulged in the presumptuous delusion that my personal feelings and experience would be of any interest to you, but in order to show you what America is to the thousands of thinking men in the old world, who, disappointed in their fondest hopes and depressed by the saddest experience, cling with their last remnant of confidence in human nature, to the last spot on earth where man is free to follow the road to attainable perfection, and where, unbiassed by the disastrous influence of traditional notions, customs, and institutions, he acts on his own responsibility. They ask themselves: Was it but a wild delusion when we thought that man has the faculty to be free and to govern himself? Have we been fighting, were we ready to die, for a mere phantom, for a mere product of a morbid imagination? This question downtrodden humanity cries out into the world, and from this country it expects an answer.

As its advocate I speak to you. I will speak of Americanism as the great representative of the reformatory age, as the great champion of the dignity of human nature, as the great repository of the last hopes of suffering mankind. I will speak of the ideal mission of this country and of this people.

You may tell me that these views are visionary, that the destiny of this country is less exalted, that the American people are less great than I think they are or ought to be. I answer, ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them you will reach your destiny. I invite you to ascend with me the watchtower of history, overlooking the grand panorama of the development of

human affairs, in which the American Republic stands in so bold and prominent relief.

He who reviews the past of this country in connection with the history of the world besides, cannot fail to discover a wonderful coincidence of great events and fortunate circumstances, which were destined to produce everlasting results, unless recklessly thrown away by imbecile generations.

Look back with me four or five centuries. The dark period of the middle ages is drawing near its close. The accidental explosion of that mysterious black powder, discovered by an obscure German monk, is the first flash of lightning prelude to that gigantic thunder-storm which is to shatter the edifice of feudal society to pieces. The invention of gunpowder strips the feudal lord of his prestige as a *warrior*; another discovery is to strip him of his prestige as a *man*! Guttenberg, another obscure German, invents the printing-press, and as gunpowder blows the castles of the small feudal tyrants into the air, so the formidable artillery of printed letters batters down the citadels of ignorance and superstition. [Loud applause.] Soul and body take up arms and prepare themselves for the great battle of the Reformation. Now the mighty volcano of the German mind bursts the crust of indolence which has covered it. Luther's triumphant thunder rattles against the holy see of Rome. [Applause.] The world is ablaze, all the elements of society are rising up in boiling commotion — two ages are battling against each other.

This is the time, when the regeneration of the old world is to take place. But the old order of things, fortified in customs and prejudices and deeply-rooted institutions, does not surrender at the first blast of trumpets. The grand but fearful struggle of the reformatory movement plunges all Europe into endless confusion. The

very wheel of progress seems to grind and crush one generation after another. The ideas which concerned the highest and most sacred relations of humanity, seem at the same time to call into their service the basest and most violent passions of the human heart, and in all Europe the wars of great principles degenerate into wars of general devastation.

But, meanwhile, a new country has opened its boundless fields to those great ideas, for the realization of which the old world seems no longer to be wide enough. It is as though the earth herself had taken part in the general revolution, and had thrown up from her sea-covered womb a new battle-ground for the spirit of the new era. That is America. Not only the invention of gunpowder and of the printing-press, but also the discovery of America, inaugurates the modern age.

There is the new and immense continent. The most restless and enterprising elements of European society direct their looks towards it. First, the greediness of the gold-hunting adventurer pounces upon the new conquest; but his inordinate appetites being disappointed, he gradually abandons the field to men in whose hearts the future of the new world is sleeping, unborn.

While the coast of Virginia is settled by a motley immigration, led and ruled by men of ideas and enterprise, the sturdiest champions of principle descend upon the stony shores of New England. [Applause.] While the southern colonies are settled under the auspices of lordly merchants and proprietaries, original democracy plants its stern banner upon Plymouth Rock. [Applause.] Mercantile speculation, aristocratic ambition, and stern virtue that seeks freedom and nothing but freedom, lead the most different classes of people, different in origin, habits and persuasion, upon the virgin soil, and entrust to them the task of realizing the great principles of the age. Nor is

this privilege confined to one nationality alone. While the Anglo-Saxon takes possession of New England, Virginia and Pennsylvania, the Frenchman plants his colonies on the soil of French Florida and the interior of the continent; the Hollander locates New Netherlands on the banks of the Hudson; the Swede, led there by the great mind of Oxenstiern, occupies the banks of the Delaware; the Spaniard maintains himself in Peninsular Florida, and a numerous immigration of Germans, who follow the call of religious freedom, and of Irishmen, gradually flowing in, scatters itself all over this vast extent of country. Soon all the social and national elements of the civilized world are represented in the new land. Every people, every creed, every class of society has contributed its share to that wonderful mixture out of which is to grow the great nation of the new world. It is true, the Anglo-Saxon establishes and maintains his ascendancy, but without absolutely absorbing the other national elements. They modify each other, and their peculiar characteristics are to be blended together by the all-assimilating power of freedom. This is the origin of the American nationality, which did not spring from one family, one tribe, one country, but incorporates the vigorous elements of all civilized nations on earth. [Applause.]

This fact is not without great importance. It is an essential link in the chain of historical development. The student of history cannot fail to notice that when new periods of civilization break upon humanity, the people of the earth cannot maintain their national relations. New ideas are to be carried out by young nations. From time to time, violent, irresistible hurricanes sweep over the world, blowing the most different elements of the human family together, which by mingling reinvigorate each other, and the general confusion then becomes the starting-point of a new period of progress. Nations which

have long subsisted exclusively on their own resources, will gradually lose their original vigor, and die the death of decrepitude. But mankind becomes young again by its different elements being shaken together, by race crossing race, and mind penetrating mind. [Applause.]

The oldest traditions of history speak of such great revulsions and general migrations, and if we could but lift the veil, which covers the remotest history of Asiatic tribes, we should discover the first scenes and acts of the drama, of which the downfall of the Roman empire is a portion. When that empire had exhausted its natural vitality, the dark forests of the North poured forth a barbarous but vigorous multitude, who trampled into ruins the decrepit civilization of the Roman world, but infused new blood into the veins of old Europe, grasping the great ideas of Christianity with a bloody but firm hand—and a new period of original progress sprang out of the seeming devastation. The German element took the helm of history. But, in the course of time, the development of things arrived at a new turning-point. The spirit of individualism took possession of the heart of civilized humanity, and the reformatory movement of the sixteenth century was its expression. But continental Europe appeared unable to incorporate the new and progressive ideas growing out of that spirit, in organic political institutions. While the heart of Europe was ravaged by a series of religious wars, the Anglo-Saxons of England attempted what other nations seemed unable to accomplish. But they also clung too fast to the traditions of past centuries; they failed in separating the Church from the State, and did not realize the cosmopolitan tendency of the new principle. Then the time of a new migration was at hand, and that migration rolled its waves towards America. [Applause.] The old process repeated itself under new forms, milder and more congenial to the humane ideas it represented. It is now

not a barbarous multitude pouncing upon old and decrepit empires; not a violent concussion of tribes accompanied by all the horrors of general destruction; but we see the vigorous elements of all nations, we see the Anglo-Saxon, the leader in the practical movement, with his spirit of independence, of daring enterprise, and of indomitable perseverance; the German, the original leader in the movement of ideas, with his spirit of inquiry and his quiet and thoughtful application; the Celt, with the impulsive vivacity of his race; the Frenchman, the Scandinavian, the Scot, the Hollander, the Spaniard, and Italian — all these peaceably congregating and mingling together on virgin soil, where the backwoodsman's hatchet is the only battle-axe of civilization; led together by the irresistible attraction of free and broad principles; undertaking to commence a new era in the history of the world, without first destroying the results of the progress of past periods; undertaking to found a new cosmopolitan nation without marching over the dead bodies of slain millions. Thus was founded the *great colony of free humanity*, which has not old England alone, but the *world*, for its mother-country. [Cheers.]

This idea is, perhaps, not palatable to those who pride themselves on their unadulterated Anglo-Saxondom. To them I have to say, that the destinies of men are often greater than men themselves, and that a good many are swerving from the path of glory by not obeying the true instincts of their nature, and by sacrificing their mission to one-sided pride. [Applause.]

The Anglo-Saxon may justly be proud of the growth and development of this country, and if he ascribes most of it to the undaunted spirit of his race, we may not accuse him of overweening self-glorification. He possesses, in an eminent degree, the enviable talent of acting when others only think; of promptly executing his own

ideas, and of appropriating the ideas of other people to his own use. [Applause.] There is, perhaps, no other race that, at so early a day, would have founded the stern democracy of the Plymouth settlement, no other race that would have defied the trials and hardships of the original settler's life so victoriously. No other race, perhaps, possesses in so high a degree not only the daring spirit of independent enterprise, but at the same time the stubborn steadfastness necessary to the final execution of great designs. The Anglo-Saxon spirit has been the locomotive of progress [applause]; but do not forget, that this locomotive would be of little use to the world, if it refused to draw its train over the iron highway, and carry its valuable freight towards its destination; that train consists of the vigorous elements of all nations; that freight is the vital ideas of our age; that destination is universal freedom and the ideal development of man. [Cheers.] That is the true greatness of the Anglo-Saxon race; that ought to be the source of Anglo-Saxon pride. I esteem the son who is proud of his father, if, at the same time, he is worthy of him.

Thus, I say, was founded the colony of free humanity on virgin soil. The youthful elements which constitute people of the new world, cannot submit to rules which are not of their own making; they must throw off the fetters which bind them to an old decrepit order of things. They resolve to enter the great family of nations as an independent member. And in the colony of free humanity, whose mother-country is the world, they establish *the Republic of equal rights, where the title of manhood is the title to citizenship*. [Applause.] My friends, if I had a thousand tongues, and a voice strong as the thunder of heaven, they would not be sufficient to impress upon your minds forcibly enough the greatness of this idea, the overshadowing glory of this result. This

was the dream of the truest friends of man from the beginning; for this the noblest blood of martyrs has been shed; for this has mankind waded through seas of blood and tears. There it is now; there it stands, the noble fabric in all the splendor of reality.

They speak of the greatness of the Roman Republic! Oh, sir, if I could call the proudest of Romans from his grave, I would take him by the hand and say to him, Look at this picture, and at this! The greatness of thy Roman Republic consisted in its despotic rule over the world; the greatness of the American Republic consists in the secured right of man to govern himself. [Applause.] The dignity of the Roman citizen consisted in his exclusive privileges; the dignity of the American citizen consists in his holding the natural rights of his neighbor just as sacred as his own. [Continued applause.] The Roman Republic recognized and protected the *rights of the citizen*, at the same time disregarding and leaving unprotected the *rights of man*; Roman citizenship was founded upon monopoly, not upon the claims of human nature. What the citizen of Rome claimed for himself, he did not respect in others; his own greatness was his only object; his own liberty, as he regarded it, gave him the privilege to oppress his fellow-beings. His democracy, instead of elevating mankind to its own level, trampled the rights of man into the dust. The security of the Roman Republic, therefore, consisted in the power of the sword;—the security of the American Republic rests in the equality of human rights! [Loud applause.] The Roman Republic perished by the sword; the American Republic will stand as long as the equality of human rights remains inviolate. [Cheers.] Which of the two Republics is the greater — the Republic of the Roman, or the Republic of *man*?

Sir, I wish the words of the Declaration of Independ-

ence, "that all men are created free and equal, and are endowed with certain inalienable rights," were inscribed upon every gate-post within the limits of this Republic. From this principle the Revolutionary Fathers derived their claim to independence; upon this they founded the institutions of this country, and the whole structure was to be the living incarnation of this idea. This principle contains the programme of our political existence. It is the most progressive, and at the same time the most conservative one; the most progressive, for it takes even the lowliest members of the human family out of their degradation, and inspires them with the elevating consciousness of equal human dignity; the most conservative, for it makes a common cause of individual rights. [Tumultuous applause.] From the equality of rights springs identity of our highest interests; you cannot subvert your neighbor's rights without striking a dangerous blow at your own. And when the rights of one cannot be infringed without finding a ready defence in all others who defend their own rights in defending his, then, and only then, are the rights of all safe against the usurpations of governmental authority.

This general identity of interests is the only thing that can guarantee the stability of democratic institutions. Equality of rights, embodied in general self-government, is the great moral element of true democracy; it is the only reliable safety-valve in the machinery of modern society. There is the solid foundation of our system of government; there is our mission; there is our greatness; there is our safety; there, and nowhere else! This is true Americanism, and to this I pay the tribute of my devotion. [Long and loud applause.]

Shall I point out to you the consequences of a deviation from this principle? Look at the Slave States. There is a class of men who are deprived of their natural

rights. But this is not the only deplorable feature of that peculiar organization of society. Equally deplorable is it, that there is another class of men who keep the former in subjection. That there are slaves is bad ; but almost worse is it, that there are masters. Are not the masters freemen ? No, sir ! Where is their liberty of the press ? Where is their liberty of speech ? Where is the man among them who dares to advocate openly principles not in strict accordance with the ruling system ? They speak of a republican form of government — they speak of democracy, but the despotic spirit of slavery and mastership combined pervades their whole political life like a liquid poison. They do not dare to be free, lest the spirit of liberty become contagious. The system of slavery has enslaved them all, master as well as slave. [Applause ; “true !”] What is the cause of all this ? It is that you cannot deny one class of society the full measure of their natural rights without imposing restraints upon your own liberty. If you want to be free, there is but one way ; it is to guarantee an equally full measure of liberty to all your neighbors. There is no other.

True, there are difficulties connected with an organization of society founded upon the basis of equal rights. Nobody denies it. A large number of those who come to you from foreign lands are not as capable of taking part in the administration of government as the man who was fortunate enough to drink the milk of liberty in his cradle. And certain religious denominations do, perhaps, nourish principles which are hardly in accordance with the doctrines of true democracy. There is a conglomeration on this continent of heterogeneous elements ; there is a warfare of clashing interests and unruly aspirations ; and with all this, our democratic system gives rights to the ignorant and power to the inexperienced. And the billows of passion will lash the sides of the ship, and the

storm of party warfare will bend its masts, and the pusillanimous will cry out—"Master, master, we perish!" But the genius of true democracy will arise from his slumber, and rebuke the winds and the raging of the water, and say unto them—"Where is your faith?" Aye, where is the faith that led the fathers of this republic to invite the weary and burdened of all nations to the enjoyment of equal rights? Where is that broad and generous confidence in the efficiency of true democratic institutions? Has the present generation forgotten that true democracy bears in itself the remedy for all the difficulties that may grow out of it?

It is an old dodge of the advocates of despotism throughout the world, that the people who are not experienced in self-government, are not fit for the exercise of self-government, and must first be educated under the rule of a superior authority. But at the same time the advocates of despotism will never offer them an opportunity to acquire experience in self-government, lest they suddenly become fit for its independent exercise. To this treacherous sophistry the fathers of this republic opposed the noble doctrine, that liberty is the best school for liberty, and that self-government cannot be learned but by practising it. [Loud applause.] This, sir, is a truly American idea; this is true Americanism, and to this I pay the tribute of my devotion. [Cheers.]

You object that some people do not understand their own interests? There is nothing that, in the course of time, will make a man better understand his interests than the independent management of his own affairs on his own responsibility. You object that people are ignorant? There is no better schoolmaster in the world than self-government, independently exercised. You object that people have no just idea of their duties as citizens? There is no other source from which they can derive a just no-

tion of their duties, than the enjoyment of the rights from which they arise. You object that people are misled by their religious prejudices, and by the intrigues of the Roman hierarchy? Since when have the enlightened citizens of this Republic lost their faith in the final invincibility of truth? Since when have they forgotten that if the Roman or any other church plants the seed of superstition, liberty sows broadcast the seed of enlightenment? [Applause.] Do they no longer believe in the invincible spirit of inquiry, which characterizes the reformatory age? If the struggle be fair, can the victory be doubtful? As to religious fanaticism, it will prosper under oppression; it will feed on persecution; it will grow strong by proscription; but it is powerless against genuine democracy. [Applause.] It may indulge in short-lived freaks of passion, or in wily intrigues, but it will die of itself, for its lungs are not adapted to breathe the atmosphere of liberty. [Prolonged applause.] It is like the shark of the sea; drag him into the air, and the monster will perhaps struggle fearfully and frighten timid people with the powerful blows of his tail, and the terrible array of his teeth, but leave him quietly to die and he will die. [Hearty applause.] But engage with him in a hand to hand struggle even then, and the last of his convulsions may fatally punish your rash attempt. Against fanaticism genuine democracy wields an irresistible weapon—it is *Toleration*. Toleration will not strike down the fanatic, but it will quietly and gently disarm him. But fight fanaticism *with* fanaticism, and you will restore it to its own congenial element. It is like Antæus, who gained strength when touching his native earth.

Whoever reads the history of this country calmly and thoroughly, cannot but discover that religious liberty is slowly but steadily rooting out the elements of superstition, and even of prejudice. It has dissolved the war

of sects, of which persecution was characteristic, into a contest of abstract opinions, which creates convictions without oppressing men. By recognizing perfect freedom of inquiry, it will engender among men of different belief that mutual respect of true convictions, which makes inquiry earnest, and discussion fair. It will recognize as supremely inviolable, what Roger Williams, one of the most luminous stars of the American sky, called the sanctity of conscience. Read your history, and add the thousands and thousands of Romanists and their offspring together, who, from the first establishment of the colonies, gradually came to this country, and the sum will amount to many millions; compare that number with the number of Romanists who are now here, and you will find that millions are missing. Where are they? You did not kill them; you did not drive them away; they did not perish as the victims of persecution. But where are they? The peaceable working of the great principles which called this Republic into existence, has gradually and silently absorbed them. True Americanism, toleration, the equality of rights, has absorbed their prejudices, and will peaceably absorb everything that is not consistent with the victorious spirit of our institutions. [Cheers.]

Oh, sir, there is a wonderful vitality in true democracy, founded upon the equality of rights. There is an inexhaustible power of resistance in that system of government, which makes the protection of individual rights a matter of common interest. If preserved in its purity, there is no warfare of opinions which can endanger it—there is no conspiracy of despotic aspirations that can destroy it. But if not preserved in its purity! There are dangers which only blindness can not see, and which only stubborn party prejudice will not see.

I have already called your attention to the despotic

tendency of the slaveholding system. I need not enlarge upon it; I need not describe how the existence of slavery in the South affected and demoralized even the political life of the Free States; how they attempted to press us, you and me, into the posse of the slave-catcher by that abominable act, which, worse than the "alien and sedition laws," still disgraces our statute-book; how the ruling party, which has devoted itself to the service of that despotic interest, shrinks from no violation of good faith, from no adulteration of the constitutional compact, from no encroachment upon natural right, from no treacherous abandonment of fundamental principles. And I do not hesitate to prophesy, that if the theories engendered by the institution of slavery be suffered to outgrow the equalizing tendency of true democracy, the American Republic will, at no distant day, crumble down under the burden of the laws and measures which the ruling interest will demand for its protection, and its name will be added to the sad catalogue of the broken hopes of humanity.

But the mischief does not come from that side alone; it is in things of small beginning, but fearful in their growth. One of these is the propensity of men *to lose sight of fundamental principles, when passing abuses are to be corrected.*

Is it not wonderful how nations who have won their liberty by the severest struggles, become so easily impatient of the small inconveniences and passing difficulties, which are almost inseparably connected with the practical working of general self-government? How they so easily forget that rights may be abused, and yet remain inalienable rights? Europe has witnessed many an attempt for the establishment of democratic institutions; some of them were at first successful, and the people were free, but the abuses and inconveniences connected with liberty became at once apparent. Then the ruling classes of

society, in order to get rid of the abuses, restricted liberty ; they did, indeed, get rid of the abuses, but they got rid of liberty at the same time. You heard liberal governments there speak of protecting and regulating the liberty of the press ; and, in order to prevent that liberty from being abused, they adopted measures, apparently harmless at first, which ultimately resulted in an absolute censorship. Would it be much better if we, recognizing the right of man to the exercise of self-government, should, in order to protect the purity of the ballot-box, restrict the right of suffrage ?

Liberty, sir, is like a spirited housewife ; she will have her whims, she will be somewhat unruly sometimes, and, like so many husbands, you cannot always have it all your own way. She may spoil your favorite dish sometimes ; but will you, therefore, at once smash her china, break her kettles, and shut her out from the kitchen ? Let her practise, let her try again and again, and even when she makes a mistake, encourage her with a benignant smile, and your broth will be right after a while. [Laughter.] But meddle with her concerns, tease her, bore her, and your little squabbles, spirited as she is, will ultimately result in a divorce. What then ? It is one of Jefferson's wisest words that "he would much rather be exposed to the inconveniences arising from too much liberty, than to those arising from too small a degree of it." [Immense applause.] It is a matter of historical experience, that nothing that is wrong in principle can be right in practice. [Sensation.] People are apt to delude themselves on that point ; but the ultimate result will always prove the truth of the maxim. A violation of equal rights can never serve to maintain institutions which are founded upon equal rights. [Loud applause.] A contrary policy is not only pusillanimous and small, but it is senseless. It reminds me of the soldier who, for fear of

being shot in battle, committed suicide on the march; or of the man who would cut off his foot, because he had a corn on his toe. [Laughter.] It is that ridiculous policy of premature despair, which commences to throw the freight overboard when there is a suspicious cloud in the sky.

Another danger for the safety of our institutions, and perhaps the most formidable one, arises from the general propensity of political parties and public men to act on a policy of mere expediency, and to sacrifice principle to local and temporary success. [Great sensation.] And here, sir, let me address a solemn appeal to the consciences of those with whom I am proud to struggle side by side against human thralldom.

You hate kingcraft, and you would sacrifice your fortunes and your lives in order to prevent its establishment on the soil of this Republic. But let me tell you that the rule of political parties which sacrifice principle to expediency, is no less dangerous, no less disastrous, no less aggressive, of no less despotic a nature, than the rule of monarchs. Do not indulge in the delusion, that in order to make a government fair and liberal, the only thing necessary is to make it elective. When a political party in power, however liberal their principles may be, have once adopted the policy of knocking down their opponents instead of voting them down, there is an end of justice and equal rights. [Applause.] The history of the world shows no example of a more arbitrary despotism, than that exercised by the party which ruled the National Assembly of France in the bloodiest days of the great French Revolution. I will not discuss here what might have been done, and what not, in those times of a fearful crisis; but I will say that they tried to establish liberty by means of despotism, and that in her gigantic struggle against the united monarchs of Europe, revolutionary France won the victory, but lost her liberty.

Remember the shout of indignation that went all over the Northern States when we heard that the border ruffians of Kansas had crowded the free-state men away from the polls and had not allowed them to vote. That indignation was just, not only because the men who were thus terrorized were free-state men and friends of liberty, but because they were deprived of their right of suffrage, and because the government of that territory was placed on the basis of force, instead of equal rights. Sir, if ever the party of liberty should use their local predominance for the purpose of disarming their opponents instead of convincing them, they will but follow the example set by the ruffians of Kansas, although legislative enactments may be a genteeler weapon than the revolver and bowie knife. [Cheering.] They may perhaps achieve some petty local success, they may gain some small temporary advantage, but they will help to introduce a system of action into our politics which will gradually undermine the very foundations upon which our republican edifice rests. Of all the dangers and difficulties that beset us, there is none more horrible than the hideous monster, whose name is "Proscription for opinion's sake." [Cheers, and cries of "good."] I am an anti-slavery man, and I have a right to my opinion in South Carolina just as well as in Massachusetts. My neighbor is a pro-slavery man; I may be sorry for it, but I solemnly acknowledge his right to his opinion in Massachusetts as well as in South Carolina. You tell me, that for my opinion they would mob me in South Carolina? Sir, there is the difference between South Carolina and Massachusetts. [Prolonged cheering.] There is the difference between an anti-slavery man, who is a freeman, and a slaveholder, who is himself a slave. [Continued applause.]

Our present issues will pass away. The slavery question will be settled, liberty will be triumphant, and other

matters of difference will divide the political parties of this country. What if we, in our struggle against slavery, had removed the solid basis of equal rights, on which such new matters of difference may be peaceably settled? What if we had based the institutions of this country upon a difference of rights between different classes of people? What if, in destroying the generality of natural rights, we had resolved them into privileges? There is a thing which stands above the command of the most ingenious of politicians: *it is the logic of things and events*. It cannot be turned and twisted by artificial arrangements and delusive settlements; it will go its own way with the steady step of fate. It will force you, with uncompromising severity, to choose between two social organizations, one of which is founded upon privilege, and the other upon the doctrine of equal rights.

Force instead of right, privilege instead of equality, expediency instead of principle, being once the leading motives of your policy, you will have no power to stem the current. There will be new abuses to be corrected, new inconveniences to be remedied, new supposed dangers to be obviated, new equally exacting ends to be subserved, and your encroachments upon the natural rights of your opponents now, will be used as welcome precedents for the mutual oppression of parties then. Having once knowingly disregarded the doctrine of equal rights, the ruling parties will soon accustom themselves to consult only their interests where fundamental principles are at stake. Those who lead us into this channel will be like the sorcerer who knew the art of making a giant snake. And when he had made it, he forgot the charm-word that would destroy it again. And the giant snake threw its horrid coils around him, and the unfortunate man was choked to death by the monster of his own creation.

On the evening of the 2d day of November, 1855, there stood on this very platform a man, known and loved by every true son of Massachusetts, who, unmoved by the whirlwind of proscriptive movement howling around him, spoke the following words:—

“It is proposed to attain men for their religion, and also for their birth. If this object can prevail, vain are the triumphs of civil freedom in its many hard-fought fields; vain is that religious toleration which we all profess. The fires of Smithfield, the tortures of the inquisition, the proscription of the Non-conformists, may all be revived. Slowly among the struggling sects was evolved the great idea of the equality of all men before the law, without regard to religious belief; nor can any party now organize a proscription merely for religious (and I may add political) belief, without calling in question this unquestionable principle.”

The man who said so was Charles Sumner. [Long-continued applause, and three hearty cheers “for Charles Sumner.”] Then the day was not far off when suddenly the whole country was startled by the incredible news, that his noble head had drooped under the murderous blows of a Southern fanatic, and that his warm blood had covered the floor of the Senate Chamber, the noblest sprinkling that ever fertilized a barren soil. [Laughter and applause.] And now I tell you, when he lay on the lounge of the ante-chamber, his anxious friends busy around him, and his cowardly murderers slinking away like Cain—if at that solemn moment the first question addressed to his slowly returning senses had been: Shall those who support your dastardly assailants with their votes be deprived of their suffrage? he would have raised his bleeding head, and with the fire of indignation kindling in his dim eye, he would have answered: “No! In the name of my country, no! For the honor of Massa-

chusetts, no! For the sake of the principles for which my blood is flowing, no! Let them kill me, but let the rights of man be safe!" [Tremendous applause.]

Sir, if you want to bestow a high praise upon a man, you are apt to say he is an old Roman. But I know a higher epithet of praise; it is—He is a true American! Aye, Charles Sumner is a true American; he is a representative of the truest Americanism, and to him I pay the tribute of my enthusiastic admiration. [Enthusiastic cheering.]

Sir, I am coming to the close of my remarks. But I cannot refrain from alluding to a circumstance which concerns myself. I understand it has been said, that in speaking a few words on the principles of Jeffersonian democracy a few evenings since, I had attempted to interfere with the home affairs of this State, and to dictate to the Republicans their policy. Ah, sir, is there a man in Massachusetts, except he be a servant of the slave-power, who cannot hear me advocate the equal rights of man, without feeling serious pangs of conscience? [Laughter.] Is there a son of this glorious old Commonwealth who cannot hear me draw logical conclusions from the Declaration of Independence—who cannot hear me speak of the natural right of man to the exercise of self-government, without feeling a blush fluttering upon his cheeks? If so, sir, I am sorry for him; it is his fault, not mine. [Loud applause.]

Interfere with your local matters! How could I? What influence could I, an humble stranger among you, exercise on the action of Massachusetts? But one thing I must tell you. It ought never to be forgotten that this old Commonwealth occupies a representative position. Her history is familiar to the nation; even South Carolina knows it. [Laughter and applause.] The nation is so accustomed to admire her glorious deeds for freedom, that

with this expectation their eyes are turned upon her. Massachusetts can do nothing in secret; Massachusetts can do nothing for herself alone; every one of her acts involves a hundred-fold responsibility. What Massachusetts does is felt from the Atlantic to the Pacific. But Massachusetts need only be herself, in order to be great. This is her position among the Free States, recognised by all. Can there be a more honorable one? Sons of Massachusetts, you may be proud of it. Do not forget that from her greatness you cannot separate your responsibility.

No, I will not meddle with your home concerns. I will, however, say a word for the West. Strenuous advocate of individual rights and of local self-government as I am, if you ever hear of any movement in the West against the integrity of the fundamental principles underlying our system of government, I invite you, I entreat you, I conjure you, come one and all, and make our prairies resound and our forests shake, and our ears ring and tingle, with your appeals for the equal rights of man. [Loud and continued cheering.]

Sir, I was to speak on Republicanism at the West, and so I did. This is Western republicanism. These are its principles, and I am proud to say its principles are its policy. These are the ideas which have rallied around the banner of liberty not only the natives of the soil, but an innumerable host of Germans, Scandinavians, Scotchmen, Frenchmen, and a goodly number of Irishmen, also. And here I tell you, those are mistaken who believe that the Irish heart is devoid of those noble impulses which will lead him to the side of justice, where he sees his own rights respected and unendangered. [Applause.] Under this banner, all the languages of civilized mankind are spoken, every creed is protected, every right is sacred. There stands every element of Western society, with en-

thusiasm for a great cause, with confidence in each other, with honor to themselves. This is the banner floating over the glorious valley which stretches from the Western slope of the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains—that Valley of Jehoshaphat, where the nations of the world assemble to celebrate the resurrection of human freedom. [Tremendous applause.] The inscription on that banner is not “Opposition to the Democratic party for the sake of placing a new set of men into office;” for this battle-cry of speculators our hearts have no response. Nor is it “Restriction of slavery and restriction of the right of suffrage,” for this—believe my words, I entreat you—this would be the signal of deserved, inevitable and disgraceful defeat. But the inscription is “Liberty and equal rights, common to all as the air of Heaven—Liberty and equal rights, one and inseparable!” [Enthusiastic cheers.]

With this banner we stand before the world. In this sign—in this sign alone, and no other—there is victory. And thus sir, we mean to realize the great cosmopolitan idea, upon which the existence of the American nation rests. Thus we mean to fulfill the great mission of true Americanism—thus we mean to answer the anxious question of down-trodden humanity—“Has *man* the faculty to be free and to govern himself?” The answer is a triumphant “Aye,” thundering into the ears of the despots of the old world that “a man is a man for all that;” proclaiming to the oppressed that they are held in subjection on false pretences; cheering the hearts of the despondent friends of man with consolation and renewed confidence.

This is true Americanism, clasping mankind to its great heart. Under its banner we march; let the world follow. [Loud applause, and three cheers for the champion of freedom in the West.]

IV.

THE POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY DOCTRINE.

SPEECH DELIVERED IN HAMPDEN HALL, SPRINGFIELD,
MASS., ON THE 4TH OF JANUARY, 1860.

Not long after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act it became apparent how little this act was calculated to settle the slavery question, or even to allay the excitement of the contest. Within the Democratic party itself angry controversies sprang up concerning the construction to be put upon that measure; Mr. Douglas himself, in consequence of his opposition to the Lecompton Constitution, became involved in a fierce struggle with the Buchanan Administration and the Southern leaders. This had the effect of increasing, for a time at least, his popularity at the North, but as he admitted the doctrine, that slavery could go into a territory without being introduced by local legislation, he remained as obnoxious as ever to the anti-slavery element of the North. Still, many Northern people permitted themselves to be caught by the apparent liberality of Mr. Douglas's doctrines, which were set forth with great plausibility in many of his speeches, and especially in an essay which he brought before the public through Harper's Magazine, and which at the time attracted much attention. The appearance of that essay was the occasion which led to the composition of the speech here presented.

GENTLEMEN :—

When great political or social problems, difficult to solve, and impossible to put aside, are pressing upon the popular mind, it is a common thing to see a variety of theories springing up, which purport to be unfailing remedies, and to effect a speedy cure. Men who look only at the surface of things, will, like bad physicians, pretend to remove the disease itself by palliating its most violent symptoms, and will astonish the world by their inventive ingenuity, no less than by their amusing assurance. But

a close scrutiny will, in most cases, show that the remedies offered are but new forms of old mistakes.

Of all the expedients which have been invented for the settlement of the slavery question, Mr. Douglas's doctrine of popular sovereignty is certainly the most remarkable, not only by the apparent novelty of the thing, but by the pompous assurance with which it was offered to the nation as a perfect and radical cure. Formerly, compromises were made between the two conflicting systems of labor, separating them by geographical lines. These compromises did indeed produce intervals of comparative repose, but the war commenced again with renewed acrimony, as soon as a new bone of contention presented itself. The system of compromises as a whole proved a failure. Mr. Douglas's doctrine of popular sovereignty proposed to bring the two antagonistic elements into immediate contact, and to let them struggle hand to hand for the supremacy on the same ground. In this manner, he predicted, the slavery question would settle itself in the smooth way of ordinary business. He seemed to be confident of success; but hardly is his doctrine, in the shape of a law for the organization of territories, put upon the statute-book, when the struggle grows fiercer than ever, and the difficulties ripen into a crisis. This does not disturb him. He sends forth manifesto upon manifesto; and even during the State campaign of last fall, he mounts the rostrum in Ohio, in order to show what he can do; and, like a second Constantine, he points his finger at the great principle of "popular sovereignty," and says to his followers: "In this sign you will conquer." But the tendency of events appears unwilling to yield to his prophecy. There seems to be no charm in his command; there is certainly no victory in his sign. He has hardly defined his doctrine more elaborately than ever before, when his friends are routed everywhere,

and his great party is on the point of falling to pieces. The failure is magnificently complete.

There certainly was something in his theories that captivated the masses. I do not speak of those who joined their political fortunes to his, because they saw in him a man who some day might be able to scatter favors and plunder around him. But there were a great many, who, seduced by the plausible sound of the words "popular sovereignty," meant to have found there some middle ground, on which the rights of free labor might be protected and secured, without exasperating those interested in slave labor. They really did think that two conflicting organizations of society, which are incompatible by the nature of things, might be made compatible by legislative enactments. But this delusion vanished. No sooner was the theory put to a practical test, than the construction of the Nebraska Bill became no less a matter of fierce dispute than the construction of the Constitution had been before. Is this pro-slavery, or is it anti-slavery? it was asked. The South found in it the right to plant slave labor in the territories unconditionally, and the North found in it the right to drive slavery out of them. Each section of the country endeavored to appropriate the results of the Nebraska Bill to itself, and the same measure which was to transfer the struggle from the halls of Congress into the territories, transferred it from the territories back into Congress; and there the Northern and the Southern versions of the Nebraska Bill fought each other with the same fury with which the Southern and the Northern versions of the Constitution had fought each other before. What does the Constitution mean in regard to slavery? That question remains to be settled. What does the Nebraska Bill mean? This question depends upon the settlement of the former.

Of all men, Mr. Douglas ought to be the first to know

what the true intent and meaning of the Nebraska Bill and the principle of popular sovereignty is. He is said to be a statesman, and it must be presumed that his measure rests upon a positive idea; for all true statesmanship is founded upon positive ideas.

In order to find out Mr. Douglas's own definition of his own "great principle," we are obliged to pick up the most lucid of his statements as we find them scattered about in numerous speeches and manifestoes. After multifarious cruising upon the sea of platforms and arguments, Mr. Douglas has at last landed at the following point:—

"A slave," says he, in his famous Harper's Magazine article, "a slave, within the meaning of the Constitution, is a person held to service or labor in one State, "under the laws thereof"—not under the Constitution of the United States, or under the laws thereof, nor by virtue of any Federal authority whatever, but *under the laws of the particular State where such service or labor may be due.*"

This is clear; and with his eyes firmly fixed upon the people of the North, he goes on: "If, as Mr. Buchanan asserts, slavery exists in the Territories by virtue of the Constitution of the United States, then it becomes the imperative duty of Congress, *to the performance of which every member is bound by his conscience and his oath, and from which no consideration of policy or expediency can release him*, to provide by law such adequate and complete protection as is essential to the enjoyment of an important right secured by the Constitution—in one word, to enact a general slave-code for the Territories."

But Mr. Douglas is not satisfied with this. In order to strengthen his assumption, and to annihilate Mr. Buchanan's construction of the Nebraska Bill still more, he proceeds: "The Constitution being uniform everywhere within the dominions of the United States, and

“being the supreme law of the land, anything in the Constitution or laws of any of the States to the contrary notwithstanding, why does not slavery exist in Pennsylvania, just as well as in Kansas or in South Carolina, by virtue of the same Constitution, since Pennsylvania is subordinate to the Constitution in the same manner and to the same extent as South Carolina and Kansas?”

Just so. Mr. Douglas having been so positive, he cannot deny us the privilege of making a few logical deductions from his own premises. We expect him to proceed in the following manner: “Since a slave is held under the laws of a State, and not under the Constitution or the laws of the United States, *slavery exists only by virtue of local law,*” or, as the Court of Appeals of Kentucky expresses it, “the right to hold a slave exists only by *positive law of a municipal character*, and has no foundation in the law of nature or the unwritten and common law.” If slavery cannot exist except by virtue of local law of a municipal character, it follows, as an irresistible consequence, that a slaveholder cannot hold a slave as property in a territory where there is no local law of a municipal character establishing that right of property. And, further, the right to hold a slave, having no foundation in the law of nature or the unwritten and common law, we are forced to the conclusion that a slave, brought by his owner upon the soil of a Territory before the Territorial Legislature has enacted laws establishing slavery, becomes of necessity free, for there is no local law of a municipal character under which he can be held as a slave. This principle is recognized by the decisions of several Southern courts. Having gone so far (and, indeed, I cannot see how a logical mind can escape these conclusions from Mr. Douglas’s own premises), Mr. Douglas would be obliged to define his popular sovereignty to be the right of the people of a Territory, represented in the Territorial Legis-

lature, to admit slavery by positive enactment, if they see fit, *but it being well understood that a slaveholder has not the least shadow of a right to take his slave property into the Territory before such positive legislation has been had.* This definition would have at least the merit of logical consistency.

But what does Mr. Douglas say? "Slavery," so he tells us in his Harper's Magazine article, "being the creature of local legislation, and not of the Constitution of the United States, it follows that the Constitution does not establish slavery in the Territories *beyond the power of the people to control it by law.*" What? The Constitution does not establish slavery in the Territories beyond a certain something! What does that mean? If slavery is the creature of local law, how can the Constitution, by its own force, permit slavery to go into a Territory *at all?*

Here is a dark mystery — a pit-fall; and we may well take care not to fall into the trap of some sophistry. Why does he not speak of the admission of slavery by positive enactment? Why not even of the power of the people to *exclude* it by law? We look in vain for light in Harper's Magazine (and it is indeed true, what Judge Black intimates, that that article is one of the obscurest documents by which ever a politician attempted to befog his followers), but we may gather Mr. Douglas's real opinion from another manifesto preceding this. In his New Orleans speech, delivered after his recent success in Illinois, he defined his position, in substance, as follows: "The Democracy of Illinois hold that a slaveholder has the same right to take his slave property into a Territory as any other man has to take his horse or his merchandise."

What? Slavery is the creature of local law, and yet a slaveholder has the right to take his slave property into a Territory before any local law has given him that right? A slave does not become free, when voluntarily brought

by his owner upon the soil of a Territory where no positive local law establishing slavery exists? How is this possible? How can even the elastic mind of a Democratic candidate for the Presidency unite these contradictory assumptions? [Applause.] And yet there it stands, and nothing that Mr. Douglas ever said can be more unequivocal in its meaning. And here, again, we may claim the privilege of drawing a few logical deductions from Mr. Douglas's own premises. If, as Mr. Douglas distinctly and emphatically tells us, a slaveholder has a right to take his slave, as property, into a Territory, and to hold him there as property, before any legislation on that point is had, from what source does that right arise? Not from the law of nature, for the right to hold a slave is "unfounded in the law of nature, or in the unwritten and common law;" and even Mr. Douglas, little as he may care about nature and her laws, will hardly dare to assert that the system of slave labor is the natural and normal condition of society. It must, then, spring from positive law. But from what kind of positive law? Not from any positive law of a local and municipal character, for there is none such in the Territory so far. Where is its source, then? There is but one kind of positive law to which the Territories are subject before any local legislation has been had, and *that is the Constitution of the United States*. If, therefore, Mr. Douglas asserts, as he does, that a slaveholder has a right to take his slave, as property, into a Territory, he must, at the same time, admit that, in the absence of local legislation positively establishing slavery, the Constitution of the United States, the only valid law existing there, is the source of that right. What else does Mr. Buchanan assert, but that slavery exists in the Territories by virtue of the Federal Constitution? Where is, then, the point of difference between Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Douglas? Why all this pomp and

circumstance of glorious war? Whence these fierce battles between the Montechi and Capuletti of the Democratic camp? Are ye not brothers? [Cheers.]

But Mr. Douglas is a statesman (so they are all, all statesmen), and pretends that the Constitution does not establish slavery in the Territories, "*beyond the power of the people to control it by law.*" What does that mean? It means that the people of a Territory shall have the power to embarrass the slaveholder in the enjoyment of his right by "unfriendly legislation." "The right to hold slaves," says he, in another place, "is a worthless right, unless protected by appropriate police regulations. If the people of a Territory do not want slavery, they have but to withhold all protection and all friendly legislation." Indeed, a most ingenious expedient.

But, alas! Here is one of those cases where the *abstract* admission of a right is of decisive importance. Suppose, for argument's sake, a slave might escape from his owner in a Territory, without being in actual danger of recapture; would that in any way affect the constitutional right of the slaveholder to the possession and enjoyment of his property? I have already quoted Mr. Douglas's own answer to this question:—

"If," says he, "slavery exists in the Territories by "virtue of the Constitution" (that is, *if a slaveholder has a right to introduce his "slave property" where there is no other law but the Constitution*), "*then it becomes the imperative duty of Congress, to the performance of which every member is bound by his oath and conscience, and from which no consideration of policy or expediency can release him, to provide by law such adequate and complete protection as is essential to the enjoyment of that important right.*"

And Mr. Douglas, after having emphatically admitted the right of property in a slave, where that right can spring from no other law but the Constitution, then dares

to speak of unfriendly legislation. Where is his conscience? Where is his oath? Where is his honor? [Applause.]

But Mr. Douglas says more:—

“The Constitution being the supreme law of the land, “in the States as well as in the Territories, then slavery “exists in Pennsylvania just as well as in Kansas and in “South Carolina, and the irrepressible conflict is there?”

Aye, the irrepressible conflict *is* there, not only between the two antagonistic systems of labor, but between Mr. Douglas's own theories; not only in the States and Territories, but in Mr. Douglas's own head. [Laughter and cheers.] Whatever ambiguous expressions Mr. Douglas may invent, the dilemma stares him in the face—and here I put myself on his own ground: either slavery is excluded from the Territories so long as it is not admitted by a special act of Territorial legislation, or, if a slaveholder has the right to introduce his slave property there before such legislation is had, he can possess that right by virtue of no other but the only law existing there, the Constitution of the United States. Either slavery has no rights in the Territories, except those springing from positive law of a local or municipal character, or, according to Judge Douglas's own admission, the Southern construction of the Constitution and of the principle of popular sovereignty is the only legitimate one: that the Constitution, by its own force, carries slavery wherever it is the supreme law of the land, that Congress is obliged to enact a slave-code for its protection, and that popular sovereignty means the power of the people to vote *for* slavery, but by no means against it. There is no escape from this dilemma.

Which side will Mr. Douglas take? Will he be bold enough to say that slavery, being the creature of local law only, is excluded from the Territories in the absence of positive law establishing it; or will he be honest

enough to concede that, according to his own proposition in his New Orleans speech, slavery exists in the Territories by virtue of the Federal Constitution? He will neither be bold enough to do the first, nor honest enough to do the second; he will be just bold and honest enough to do neither. [Applause.] He is in the position of that Democratic candidate for Congress in the West, who, when asked, "Are you a Buchanan or a Douglas man?" answered, "I am." [Great laughter and cheers.] If you ask Mr. Douglas, "Do you hold that slavery is the creature of local law, or that the slaveholder has the right to introduce his slave property where there is no local law?" he will answer, "I do." [Continued laughter and applause.]

Such is Mr. Douglas's doctrine of popular sovereignty. But after having given you Mr. Douglas's own definitions in his own words, I see you puzzled all the more, and you ask me again: "What is it?" I will tell you what judgment will be passed upon it by future historians, who may find it worth while to describe this impotent attempt to dally and trifle with the logic of things. They will say: "It was the dodge of a man who was well aware that, in order to be elected President of the United States, the vote of a few Northern States must be added to the united vote of the South. Knowing by experience that the Democratic road to the White House leads through the slaveholding States, he broke down the last geographical barrier to the extension of slavery. So he meant to secure the South. But in conceding undisputed sway to the slaveholding interest, he saw that he was losing his foothold in the Northern States necessary to his election; he availed himself of the irresistible pressure of the free-state movement in Kansas, and opposed the Lecompton Constitution. So he saved his Senatorship in Illinois as the 'champion of free labor.' But the South frowned, and immediately after his vic-

tory he went into the slaveholding States, and admitted in his speeches that slavery may go into the Territories without a special act of Territorial legislation. Believing the South satisfied, and seeing his chances in the North endangered, he wrote his Harper's Magazine essay, assuming that slavery can exist only by virtue of local law. The South frowning again, he endeavored to make his peace with the slaveholders by declaring that he would submit to the Charleston Convention, and instructing his nearest friends in the House to vote for the Administration candidate for the Speakership. So he endeavored to catch both sections of the Union successively in the trap of a double-faced sophistry. He tried to please them both, in trying to cheat them both. But he placed himself between the logic of liberty on one, and the logic of slavery on the other side. He put the sword of logic into the hands of his opponents, and tried to defend himself with the empty scabbard of 'unfriendly legislation.' [Applause.] Unfriendly legislation, which in one case would have been unnecessary, in the other unconstitutional—the invention of a mind without logic, and of a heart without sympathies; recognized on all sides as a mere subterfuge, behind which the moral cowardice of a Presidential candidate entrenched itself." [Cheers.]

Such will be the verdict of future historians. They will indulge in curious speculations about the times when such doctrines could be passed off as sound statesmanship—a statesmanship, indeed, the prototype of which may be found, not in Plutarch, but in Aristophanes—but they will be slow to believe that there were people dull enough to be deceived by it. [Applause.]

Leaving aside the stern repudiation which Mr. Douglas's popular sovereignty has received at the hands of the people at the last State elections all over the Union, it is a characteristic sign of the times, that even one of his

political friends, an Anti-Lecompton Democrat, recently went so far as to declare, on the floor of Congress, that he would not vote for Mr. Douglas, if nominated by the Charleston Convention, unless a clear and unequivocal construction were affixed to the reaffirmation of the Cincinnati platform. A wise precaution, indeed! But whatever construction might be given to the Cincinnati platform, what will that gentleman do with the double-faced platform which Mr. Douglas has laid down for himself? What will the abstract pledge of a Convention be worth to him, if Mr. Douglas's principles pledge him to nothing? What will he do with a man who, when pressed to take an unequivocal position, is always ready to sneak behind a superior authority, declaring that "these are questions to be settled by the courts?" [Laughter and applause.]

Mr. Douglas's situation is certainly a very perplexing one. On one side, he is ostracised by the Administration-Democracy for his illogical and unconstitutional doctrine, that the Legislature of a Territory has control over slavery; and, on the other hand, one of his nearest friends, Mr. Morris, of Illinois, in his recent speech on the President's message, denounces the doctrine, that slave property may be carried into the Territories just like other property, as an atrocious "abomination." Was Mr. Morris not aware that this "abomination" is the identical doctrine advocated by Mr. Douglas in his New Orleans speech? Let Mr. Morris examine the record of Judge Douglas, and he will find out that, whatever abominations Mr. Buchanan may bring forward in his message, he advocates none that is not a direct logical consequence of Mr. Douglas's own admissions.

I see the time coming when many of those who rallied around Douglas's colors, because they believed in his principles, will, from his most devoted friends, become

his most indignant accusers. They are already, unwittingly, denouncing his doctrines, even while trying to defend him; they will not be sparing in direct denunciations as soon as they discover how badly they have been deceived, and how ignominiously they were to be sold. We might, indeed, feel tempted to pity him, if we had not to reserve that generous emotion of our hearts for those who are wrong by mistake and unfortunate without guilt. [Applause.]

Mr. Douglas's ambiguous position, which is to make it possible for him to cheat either the North or the South, without adding a new inconsistency to those already committed, makes it at the same time necessary for him to put his double-faced theories upon an historical basis, which may relieve him of the necessity of expressing a moral conviction on the matter of slavery either way. To say that slavery is right, would certainly displease the North; to say that slavery is wrong, would inevitably destroy him at the South. In order to dodge this dangerous dilemma, he finds it expedient to construe the history of this country so as to show that this question of right or wrong in regard to slavery had nothing whatever to do with the fundamental principles upon which the American Republic was founded. Dealing with slavery only as a matter of fact, and treating the natural rights of man and the relation between slavery and republican institutions as a matter of complete indifference, he is bound to demonstrate that slavery never was seriously deemed inconsistent with liberty, and that the black never was seriously supposed to possess any rights which the white man was bound to respect.

But here he encounters the Declaration of Independence, laying down the fundamental principles upon which the Republic was to develop itself; he encounters the ordinance of 1787, the practical application of those prin-

ciples; both historical facts, as stern and stubborn as they are sublime. But as Mr. Douglas has no logic to guide him in his theories, so he has no conscience to restrain him in his historical constructions. To interpret the Declaration of Independence according to the evident meaning of its words would certainly displease the South; to call it "a self-evident lie" would certainly shock the moral sensibilities of the North. So he recognizes it as a venerable document, but makes the language, which is so dear to the hearts of the North, express a meaning which coincides with the ideas of the South.

We have appreciated his exploits as a logician; let us follow him in his historical discoveries.

Let your imagination carry you back to the year 1776. You stand in the hall of the old Colonial Court-house of Philadelphia. Through the open door you see the Continental Congress assembled; the moment of a great decision is drawing near. Look at the earnest faces of the men assembled there, and consider what you may expect of them. The philosophy of the eighteenth century counts many of them among its truest adepts. They have heartily welcomed in their scattered towns and plantations the new ideas brought forth by that sudden progress of humanity, and, meditating them in the dreamy solitude of virgin nature, they have enlarged the compass of their thoughts, and peopled their imaginations with lofty ideals. A classical education (for most of them are by no means illiterate men) has put all the treasures of historical knowledge at their disposal, and enabled them to apply the experience of past centuries to the new problem they attempt to solve. See others there of a simple but strong cast of mind, whom common sense would call its truest representatives. Wont to grapple with the dangers and difficulties of an early settler's life, or, if inhabitants of young uprising cities, wont

to carry quick projects into speedy execution, they have become regardless of obstacles and used to strenuous activity. The constant necessity to help themselves has developed their mental independence; and, inured to political strife by the continual defence of their colonial self-government, they have at last become familiar with the idea of introducing into practical existence the principles which their vigorous minds have quietly built up into a theory.

The first little impulses to the general upheaving of the popular spirit—the tea tax, the stamp act—drop into insignificance; they are almost forgotten; the revolutionary spirit has risen far above them. It disdains to justify itself with petty pleadings; it spurns diplomatic equivocation; it places the claim to independence upon the broad basis of eternal rights, as self-evident as the sun, as broad as the world, as common as the air of heaven. The struggle of the colonies against the usurping government of Great Britain has risen to the proud dimensions of a struggle of *man* for liberty and equality. Behold, five men are advancing towards the table of the President. First, Thomas Jefferson, whose philosophical spirit grasps the generality of things and events; then, Benjamin Franklin, the great apostle of common sense, the clear wisdom of real life beaming in his serene eye; then, the undaunted John Adams, and two others. Now Jefferson reads the Declaration of Independence, and loudly proclaims the fundamental principle upon which it rests: "All men are created free and equal!" It is said; history tells you what it means. The sceptre of royalty is flung back across the ocean; the prerogatives of nobility are trodden into the dust; every man a king, every man a baron; in seven of the original colonies the shackles of the black man struck off; almost everywhere the way prepared for gradual emancipation. "No recognition of

the right of property in man!" says Madison. "Let slavery be abolished by law!" says Washington. Not only the supremacy of Old England is to be shaken off, but a new organization of society is to be built up, on the basis of liberty and equality. That is the Declaration of Independence! That is the American Revolution. All men free and equal! Not even the broad desert of the Atlantic ocean stops the triumphant shout. Behold, the nations of the Old World are rushing to arms. Bastiles are blown into the dust, as by the trumpets of Jericho, and, like a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of cloud by day, the great watchword of the American Revolution shows forever the way to struggling humanity. [Long-continued applause.] All men are created free and equal! Whence the supernatural power in these seven words?

Turn your eyes away from the sublime spectacle of 1776, from that glorious galaxy of men whose hearts were large enough for all mankind, and let me recall you to the sober year of 1857. There is Springfield, the capital of Illinois, one of those States which owe their greatness to an ordinance originally framed by the same man whose hand wrote the Declaration of Independence. In the hall of the Assembly, there stands Mr. Douglas, who initiates an eager crowd into the mysteries of "popular sovereignty." He will tell you what it meant, when the men of 1776 said that "all men are created free and equal." He says:

"No man can vindicate the character, the motives, and the conduct of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, except upon the hypothesis that they referred to the white race alone, and not to the African, when they declared all men to have been created free and equal—that they were speaking of British subjects on this continent being equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain—that they were entitled to the same

"inalienable rights, and among them were enumerated "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Declaration of Independence was adopted merely for the purpose of justifying the colonists in the eyes of the civilized world, in withdrawing their allegiance from the British crown, and dissolving their connection with the "mother-country."

What? Is that all? Is that little heap of quicksand the whole substructure on which a new organization of society was to be built? the whole foundation upon which the proud and ponderous edifice of the United States rests? They did, then, *not* mean *all* men, when they said all men. They intended, perhaps, even to disfranchise those free blacks, who, in five of the original thirteen colonies, enjoyed the right of voting. They meant but the white race. Oh, no! by no means the *whole* white race; not the Germans, not the French, not the Scandinavians; they meant but British subjects: "British subjects on this continent being equal to British subjects born and residing on the other side of the great water!" [Laughter and applause.]

There is your Declaration of Independence, a diplomatic dodge, adopted merely for the purpose of excusing the rebellious colonies in the eyes of civilized mankind. There is your Declaration of Independence, no longer the sacred code of the rights of man, but a hypocritical piece of special pleading, drawn up by a batch of artful pettifoggers, who, when speaking of the rights of man, meant but the privileges of a set of aristocratic slaveholders, but styled it "the rights of man," in order to throw dust into the eyes of the world, and to inveigle noble-hearted fools into lending them aid and assistance. [Applause.] These are your boasted Revolutionary Sires, no longer heroes and sages, but accomplished humbuggers and hypocrites, who said one thing and meant another;

who passed counterfeit sentiments as genuine, and obtained arms and money and assistance and sympathy on false pretences! There is your great American Revolution, no longer the great champion of universal principles, but a mean Yankee trick—[bursts of applause and laughter]—a wooden nutmeg—[renewed cheers]—the most impudent imposition ever practised upon the whole world. [Applause.]

This is the way Mr. Douglas wants you to read and to understand the proudest pages of American history. That is the kind of history with which he finds it necessary to prop his mongrel doctrine of popular sovereignty. That is what he calls vindicating the character and the motives and the conduct of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Thus did he not blush to slander Jefferson, who, when speaking of his country, meant the world, and, when speaking of his fellow-citizens, meant mankind; and Franklin, in whose clear head theory and practice were the same, and who, having declared "all men to be created free and equal," became the first President of the first great Abolition Society; and John Adams, the representative of that State which abolished slavery within its limits with one great stroke of legislation; and Washington, who declared it to be "his fondest wish to see slavery abolished by law," and affixed to the Declaration of Independence the broad signature of his heroic sword; and Madison, who deemed it "absurd to admit the idea of property in man;" and of the framers of the Constitution, who took care not to disgrace that instrument with the word "slavery," and, before adopting it finally, blotted out from the extradition clause the word "servitude," *avowedly, because it signified the condition of a slave*, and substituted the word "service," *avowedly, because it signified the condition of a freeman*. Thus Mr. Douglas dares to speak of all those true men, who, after having proclaimed

their principles in the Declaration, endeavored to introduce them into practical life in almost every State, in the way of *gradual emancipation*. That they have failed in this, is it a fault of theirs? It shows not that they were less great and sincere, but that subsequent generations were hardly worthy of so noble an ancestry. [Applause.]

There is Mr. Douglas's version of your history. He despairs of converting you without slandering your fathers. His present doctrines cannot thrive, unless planted in a calumny on the past. *He* vindicate the signers of the Declaration of Independence! Indeed, they need it sadly. I see the illustrious committee of five rise from their graves, at their head Thomas Jefferson, his lips curled with the smile of contempt, and I hear him say to Mr. Douglas: "Sir, you may abuse us as much as you please, but have the goodness to spare us with your vindications of our character and motives." [Great laughter and applause.]

It is a common thing for men of a coarse cast of mind so to lose themselves in the mean pursuit of selfish ends, as to become insensible to the grand and sublime. Measuring every character and every event in history by the low standard of their own individualities, applying to everything the narrow rule of their own motives, incapable of grasping broad and generous ideas, they will belittle every great thing they cannot deny, and drag down every struggle of principles to the sordid arena of aspiring selfishness, or of small competing interests. Eighteen hundred years ago, there were men who saw nothing in incipient Christianity but a mere wrangle between Jewish theologians, got up by a carpenter's boy, and carried on by a few crazy fishermen. Three hundred years ago, there were men who saw in the great reformatory movement of the sixteenth century, not the emancipation of

the individual conscience, but a mere fuss kicked up by a German monk who wanted to get married. Two hundred years ago, there were men who saw in Hampden's refusal to pay the ship-money, not a bold vindication of constitutional liberty, but the crazy antics of a man who was mean enough to quarrel about a few shillings. And now, there are men who see in the Declaration of Independence, and the American Revolution, not the reorganization of human society upon the basis of liberty and equality, but a dodge of some English colonists who were unwilling to pay their taxes. [Continued applause.]

But the dignity of great characters and the glory of great events find their vindication in the consciences of the people. [Cheers.] It is in vain for demagogism to raise its short arms against the truth of history. The Declaration of Independence stands there. No candid man ever read it without seeing and feeling that every word of it was dictated by deep and earnest thought, and that every sentence of it bears the stamp of philosophical generality. It is the summing up of the results of the philosophical development of the age; it is the practical embodiment of the progressive ideas, which, very far from being confined to the narrow limits of the English colonies, pervaded the very atmosphere of all civilized countries. That code of human rights has grown on the very summit of civilization, not in the miry soil of a South Carolina cotton-field. He must have a dull mind or a disordered brain, who misunderstands its principles; but he must have the *heart of a villain*, who knowingly misrepresents them. [Loud cheers.]

Mr. Douglas's ambition might have been satisfied with this ignominious exploit. But the necessities of the popular sovereignty doctrine do not stop there. After having tried to explain away the fundamental principles underlying this Republic, which are hostile to slavery

and its extension, Mr. Douglas finds it exceedingly inconvenient to encounter facts which prove, beyond doubt, that these principles, from a mere theoretical existence, rose to practical realization. "Popular sovereignty," which is at war with the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence, demands the slaughter of the ordinance of 1787, and Mr. Douglas is up to the task. He does not stop at trifles.

And here we must return to the Harper's Magazine manifesto. He leads us through a century of colonial history, in order to show that the people of the colonies claimed the right to legislate on the subject of slavery. And, remarkable enough, all the instances quoted show a uniform tendency adverse to the peculiar institution. Mr. Douglas then proceeds to discover the germs of his popular sovereignty doctrine in the first Congressional legislation, concerning the Territories. I will not undertake to criticise that singular historical essay, although some of its statements are such as to make the freshmen of our colleges smile. The "statesman" Douglas does not seem to be aware that the ability to read history ought to precede the attempt to write it. [Laughter and cheers.] He leads us back to the Congress of 1784. Mr. Jefferson and his colleagues have just executed the deed of cession of the North-western Territory, and the same Mr. Jefferson, as chairman of a committee, then submits "a plan for the temporary government of the territories ceded or to be ceded by the individual States to the United States." Mr. Douglas proceeds to describe how the Territorial governments were to be organized, what rights and powers were put into the hands of the people, and how they were to be exercised; and, after having demonstrated that the term "new States" meant the same thing which is now designated by "Territories," he comes to the conclusion that the spirit pervading that plan was

in exact consonance with his doctrine of "popular sovereignty." Mr. Douglas ostentatiously calls this "the Jeffersonian plan." "It was," says he, "the first plan of government for the Territories ever adopted in the United States. It was drawn by the author of the Declaration of Independence, and revised and adopted by those who shaped the issues which produced the Revolution, and formed the foundations upon which our whole system of American government rests." But Mr. Douglas skips rather nimbly over the significant fact, that the same "author of the Declaration of Independence" put into that plan a proviso, *excluding slavery from the Territories*. Was that a mere accident? Mr. Jefferson showed thereby, conclusively, that, in his opinion, the exclusion of slavery by Congressional legislation was by no means inconsistent with the spirit of "popular sovereignty" which Mr. Douglas discovers in the plan of 1784; but this does not disturb Mr. Douglas. "The fifth article," says he, "relating to the prohibition of slavery, having been rejected by Congress, never became a part of the Jeffersonian plan of government for the Territories, as adopted, April 23d, 1784." Although with a large numerical majority in its favor (sixteen to seven), this article did, indeed, fail to obtain a constitutional majority, the vote of New Jersey not being counted, in consequence of there being but one delegate from that State present; yet it had been drawn up by Mr. Jefferson, introduced by Mr. Jefferson, and sustained by Mr. Jefferson's vote. Nevertheless, Mr. Douglas persists in calling a plan, *from which the peculiar Jeffersonian feature had been struck out*, the "Jeffersonian plan." This is indeed the play of Hamlet, with the character of Hamlet omitted. [Laughter.]

"This charter of compact," proceeds Mr. Douglas, "with its fundamental conditions, which were unalterable without the joint consent of the people interested in

them, as well as of the United States, then stood upon the statute-book unrepealed and irrevocable, when, on the 14th day of May, 1787, the Federal Convention met at Philadelphia." Does Mr. Douglas not know that on the 16th of March, 1785, a proposition was introduced in Congress by Rufus King, to exclude slavery from the States described in the resolve of April 23d, 1784, and to make this provision part of the compact established by that resolve? Does he not know that this provision, restoring the Jeffersonian feature to the "Jeffersonian plan," was committed, by the vote of eight States against four? Does he not know that the plan of 1784 never went into practical operation, but was expressly set aside by Congress in 1787? Does he not know that the ordinance of 1787 was the first legislative act ever practically organizing a Territory of the United States, and that one of its most prominent features was the proviso excluding slavery from all the Territories then in possession of the United States?

Mr. Douglas's historical recollections of the ordinance of 1787 seem to be very indistinct. Indeed, he deems it only worthy of an occasional, passing, almost contemptuous notice. He speaks of it as "the ordinance of the 12th of July, 1787, which was passed by the remnant of the Congress of the Confederation, sitting in New York, while its most eminent members were at Philadelphia, as delegates to the Federal Convention." For three-quarters of a century, people were in the habit of thinking that the ordinance of 1787 was an act of the highest order of importance, but we now learn that it was a rather indifferent affair, passed on an indifferent occasion, by an exceedingly indifferent set of fellows, while the plan of 1784, a mere abstract programme, completely overruled by subsequent legislation, is represented as the true glory of the age. How is this? The reason is obvious. Mr. Douglas

belongs to that class of historians who dwell upon those facts which suit their convenience, and unceremoniously drop the rest. I once heard of a Jesuit college where they used a text book of history, in which the French Revolution was never mentioned, while the Emperor Napoleon figured there only as a modest Marquis Bonaparte, who held a commission under Louis XVII., and fought great battles for the glory of the Catholic Church. [Laughter and applause.] So it is with Mr. Douglas and the history of this country. He ignores the universal principles of the Declaration of Independence, and represents the great founders of the Republic as merely paving the way for his "great principle," while a few village politicians get up an obscure ordinance, adverse to the general tendency of things. But as those Jesuits never could prevent their students from peeping out of their college windows into the wide world, where they perceived a very different state of things, so Mr. Douglas cannot prevent us from travelling out of the yellow covers of Harper's Magazine, into the open records of history, where we find Mr. Jefferson's anti-slavery clause, although accidentally lost in 1784, strenuously insisted upon by the leading spirits of the Republic, incorporated in the great act of 1787, solemnly reaffirmed by the first Congress under the Constitution, and firmly maintained even against the petition of the people of one of the Territories. [Cheers.] This is the true "Jeffersonian plan;" the plan which Jefferson framed, voted for, and which was carried out in his spirit; not that mangled report of 1784, which Mr. Douglas wants us to take as the foundation of all Territorial government, because an historical accident happens to coincide with his schemes.

That true Jeffersonian plan rested, indeed, on the principle of popular sovereignty; but it will be conceded that Mr. Jefferson's great principle was as widely different

from that of Mr. Douglas as the ordinance of 1787 is different from the Nebraska Bill. While Mr. Jefferson's notion of popular sovereignty sprang from the idea that man has certain inalienable rights which the majority shall not encroach upon, Mr. Douglas's doctrine rests upon the idea that the highest development of liberty consists in the right of one class of men to hold another class of men as slaves, if they see fit to do so. [Applause.] While Mr. Jefferson excluded slavery from the Territories, *in order to make room for true popular sovereignty*, Mr. Douglas invents his false popular sovereignty, in order to make room for slavery. The ordinance of 1787, the true "Jeffersonian plan," was indeed no mere accident, no mere occasional act of legislation. It sprang from the idea, as Madison expressed it, "that republican institutions would become a fallacy where slavery existed;" and in order to guarantee republican institutions to the Territories, they excluded slavery.

The ordinance of 1787 was the logical offspring of the principles upon which your independence and your Constitution are founded; it is the practical application of the Declaration of Independence to the government of the Territories. Its very existence sets completely at nought Mr. Douglas's doctrine and historical construction, and the dwarfish hand of the demagogue tries in vain to tear this bright page out of your annals. [Cheers.] The ordinance of 1787 stands written on the very gate-posts of the North-western States; written on every grain-field that waves in the breeze, on every factory that dots the course of their rushing waters, on every cottage that harbors thrifty freemen; written in every heart that rejoices over the blessings of liberty. [Long-continued applause.] There it stands, in characters of light. Only a blind man cannot see it; only a fool can misunderstand it; only a knave can wilfully misinterpret it. [Repeated cheers.]

Such is Mr. Douglas's principle of popular sovereignty in its logical and historical aspect; apparently adopting the doctrine that slavery is the creature of local law only, and fighting against a Congressional slave-code, but, on the other hand, admitting the very principle on which protection to slave property becomes a logical necessity; and again assuming the ground that slave property may be introduced where there is no local law, but explaining away the logical consequences of that doctrine by the transparent sophistry of unfriendly legislation; dragging the proudest exploits of American statesmanship into the dust; emasculating the Declaration of Independence, because incompatible with its principles; setting aside the ordinance of 1787, because that stern fact is a conclusive historical argument against it; a Jesuitical piece of equivocation and double-dealing, unable to stand before the criticism of a logical mind, because it is a mixture of glaring contradictions; *unable to stop the war of principles and interests, because it is at war with itself.* [Applause.]

It is true, its principal champion worked hard to cover with bullying boisterousness the moral cowardice from which it sprang; but in vain. He mistakes the motive-power which shapes the actions of free nations. Having no *moral* convictions of his own to stand upon, he could never address himself to *the moral sense of the people.* [Sensation.] Having no moral convictions of his own! This is a grave charge, but I know what I say. I respect true convictions wherever I find them. Among the fire-eaters of the South, there are men who speak of the moral basis of slavery, and believe in it; who speak of the blessings of servitude, and believe in it; who assert that slavery is right, and believe it. Atrocious as their errors may be, and deeply as I deplore them, yet I respect their convictions as soon as I find them to be such. But look into the record of the champion of "popular sovereignty;" scan

it from syllable to syllable; and then tell me, you Douglasites of the South, do you find one word there indicating a moral conviction that slavery is right? And you Douglassites of the North, who are in the habit of telling us that you are the true anti-slavery men, and that popular sovereignty will surely work the overthrow of slavery, did your master ever utter a similar sentiment? Do you find in his record one word of sympathy with the down-trodden and degraded? One spark of the humane philosophy of our age? One syllable in vindication of the outraged dignity of human nature? One word which might indicate a moral conviction that slavery is *wrong*? Not one!

But one thing he does tell you: "*I do not care whether slavery be voted up or down!*" There is then a human heart that does not care! Sir, look over this broad land, where the struggle has raged for years and years; and across the two oceans, around the globe, to the point where the far West meets the far East; over the teeming countries where the cradle of mankind stood; and over the workshops of civilization in Europe; and over those mysterious regions, under the tropical sun, which have not emerged yet from the night of barbarism to the daylight of civilized life—and then tell me, how many hearts do you find that do not tremble with mortal anguish or exultant joy, as the scales of human freedom or human bondage go up or down? Look over the history of the world, from the time when infant mankind felt in its heart the first throbbings of aspiring dignity, down to our days, when the rights of man have at last found a bold and powerful champion in a great and mighty Republic; where is the page that is not spotted with blood and tears, shed in that all-absorbing struggle; where a chapter which does not tell the tale of jubilant triumph or heart-breaking distress, as the scales of freedom or slavery went up or

down? [Loud applause.] But to-day, in the midst of the nineteenth century, in a Republic whose programme was laid down in the Declaration of Independence, there comes a man to you, and tells you, with cynical coolness, that he does not care! And *because* he does not care, he claims the confidence of his countrymen and the highest honors of the Republic! *Because* he does not care, he pretends to be the representative statesman of this age!

I always thought that he can be no true statesman whose ideas and conceptions are not founded upon profound moral convictions of right and wrong. [Applause.] What, then, shall we say of him who boastingly parades his indifference as a virtue? May we not drop the discussion about his statesmanship, and ask, What is he worth *as a man*? [Repeated cheers.] Yes; he mistakes the motive power which shapes the events of history. I find that in the life of free nations, mere legal disquisitions never turned the tide of events, and mere constitutional constructions never determined the tendency of an age. The logic of things goes its steady way, immovable to eloquence and deaf to argument. It shapes and changes laws and constitutions according to its immutable rules, and those adverse to it will prove no effectual obstruction to its onward march. In times of great conflicts, the *promptings and dictates of the human conscience* are more potent than all the inventive ingenuity of the human brain. The conscience of a free people, when once fairly ruling the action of the masses, will never fail to make new laws, when those existing are contrary to its tendency, or it will put its own construction upon those that are there. Your disquisitions and plausibilities may be used as weapons and stratagems in a fencing-match of contending parties; but, powerless as they are before the conscience of man, posterity will remember them only as mere secondary incidents of a battle of great princi-

ples, in which the strongest motive powers of human nature were the true combatants.

There is the slavery question; not a mere occasional quarrel between two sections of country divided by a geographical line; not a mere contest between two economical interests for the preponderance; not a mere wrangle between two political parties for power and spoils; but the great struggle between two antagonistic systems of social organization; between advancing civilization and retreating barbarism; between the human conscience and a burning wrong. [Cheers.] In vain will our impotent mock giants endeavor to make the test-question of our age turn on a ridiculous logical quibble, or a paltry legal technicality. [Applause.] In vain will they invent small dodges, and call them "great principles;" in vain will they attempt to drag down the all-absorbing contest to the level of a mere pothouse quarrel between two rival candidates for a Presidential nomination. [Applause.] The wheel of progressing events will crush them to atoms, as it has crushed so many abnormities. [Cheers.] And a future generation will perhaps read on Mr. Douglas's tombstone the inscription: "Here lies the queer sort of a statesman, who, when the great battle of slavery was fought, pretended to say that he did not care whether slavery be voted up or voted down." [Cheers.]

But as long as the moral vitality of this nation is not entirely exhausted, Mr. Douglas, and men like him, will in vain endeavor to reduce the people to that disgusting state of moral indifference which he himself is not ashamed to boast of. I solemnly protest that the American people are not to be measured by Mr. Douglas's self-made moral standard. However degraded some of our politicians may be, the progress of the struggle will show that the popular conscience is still alive, and that the people DO CARE! [Long-continued applause.]

V.

RATIFICATION OF MR. LINCOLN'S FIRST NOMINATION FOR THE PRESIDENCY.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT ALBANY HALL, MILWAUKEE,
ON THE 26TH OF MAY, 1860.

The meeting at which this speech was delivered was called for the purpose of ratifying the nomination made by the Republican National Convention at Chicago in 1860. Before the Convention met, it was generally expected that a strong effort would be made by certain delegations to carry a platform and to nominate candidates calculated to conciliate, by concessions, the Old Line Whigs and the Know-Nothings. This circumstance is referred to in the opening paragraphs of the speech. The delegation from Wisconsin had been instructed to vote for the nomination of Mr. Seward, who enjoyed an immense popularity in the State, and was then looked upon as the head of the more advanced wing of the Republican party. The news of his defeat in the Convention was received with marks of dissatisfaction by many of his friends, and to the latter the closing appeal of this speech is addressed.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:—

As one of the delegates who had the honor to represent the Republicans of Wisconsin in the National Convention, I feel called upon to give you a brief account of our doings, and of the views which guided us in our course. We have faithfully endeavored to do our duty as we understood it, and I am bold enough to assume that our understanding of it did not differ from yours.

We went there not only for the purpose of subserving the interests of the party, but above all of promoting the interests of our *cause*.

The question to be solved at Chicago, as we understood it, was not only how we could beat the Democracy, but whether a defeat of the Democracy would be a victory of Republicanism. We do not forget that there are triumphs which are no victories, and that such triumphs, dangerous and treacherous as they always will be, may become even worse than defeats; for, being the triumphs of politicians instead of the cause, they will loosen the moral bonds which hold a party together, and substitute in their place the mere cohesive power of public plunder.

We were well aware that, for some time previous to the meeting of the National Convention, in some Republican newspapers, in speeches, and private circulars, an extreme tenderness was shown for the prejudices and susceptibilities of those who had never acted with us, while much less regard was paid to the feelings and preferences of the Republican masses. We expected to see this policy urged upon the National Convention, and we were determined to present to it a bold and unflinching opposition. [Applause.] For, we thought we appreciated the true element of our strength. We knew that mere drill and discipline, and party dictation would never drive the Republican masses into silent obedience to the mandates of that Convention, if those mandates ran contrary to the popular conscience. We kept in mind that the Republican party had sprung from the indignation of the people aroused by a flagrant breach of trust, and had gained its strength by the uprising of the popular heart for great positive ideas; that it is a party of volunteers held together not by drill and command, but by the moral power of a great common cause [cheers], that by joining the Republican organization, not one of us gave up his moral and political independence; that we did not deed away our consciences in inscribing our names upon its roll; that its claims on our support depend on the hold it has on our convictions,

that its tenure is on good behavior, and that it can not and shall not be ruled by the wily arts of secret diplomacy. [Applause.]

I have heard it said that, in consequence of all this, the Republican party is a very difficult party to be managed—but nothing in the world can be easier, as long as the simple but great truth is kept in view, that the masses will remain true to the Republican party as long as the Republican party remains true to itself. [Great applause.] It was our conviction, that if the Convention should fall into the fatal error of attempting to change the faith and policy of the party, as we would change our dress, it would quickly find out that the Republican party is essentially the party of independent men, that its power rests upon public opinion, and that it can do no wrong with impunity. [Cheers.]

With these ideas uppermost in our minds, we went into that Convention, determined to preserve in its purity the original idea upon which the party was founded; determined never to sell out the moral character and the great future of the Republican cause for the treacherous glitter of plausible combinations, brought about by trade and compromise; determined rather to risk a defeat than to lose our own identity in the chase after a delusive phantom of party success; in one word, determined to have a Republican platform, and upon it a Republican candidate. [Great applause.] I leave it to the people of Wisconsin to decide whether they were misrepresented by their delegates. [Cheers.]

By the partiality of our delegation, I was placed upon the committee on platforms and resolutions. The spirit which animated that committee was that the standard of Republicanism should not be lowered one single inch. [Great applause.] We endeavored to lift the creed of the party far above the level of mere oppositional policy.

The platform gives it a positive character. The Republicans stand before the country, not only as the anti-slavery party, but emphatically as the party of free labor. [Loud cheers.] While penning up slave labor within the limits which the legislation of States has assigned to it, we propose to plant free labor in the Territories by the Homestead Bill, and to promote free labor all over the land by the encouragement of home industry. [Applause.] In throwing its shield over the eternal principles of human rights, the platform presents the anti-slavery policy of the party in its logical connection with the great material interests of the country. *To man, his birthright; to labor, freedom; to him that wants to labor, work and independence; to him that works, his dues.* This is the Republican platform. [Loud and prolonged cheering.]

It affords me special satisfaction to state that the resolutions, the passage of which was recommended by the Republican State Convention of Wisconsin, I mean those concerning the Homestead Bill, and the rights of naturalized citizens, were successfully advocated, and form part of our national creed. [Applause.]

Our platform, adopted without opposition, and almost without discussion—adopted amidst the most spontaneous and sublime outbursts of enthusiasm human eyes ever witnessed, is before the people. It is the boldest, the plainest, the most liberal ever presented to the nation by a political party, and the enthusiastic shouts of millions, from Maine to the Rocky Mountains, have already sanctioned it with their approval. [Cheers.]

Mr. President, the delegates of this State were instructed to cast their votes for the nomination of William H. Seward. It was certainly not for reasons of superior availability that Mr. Seward's name was brought forward. But we were accustomed to look up to him as the intel-

lectual head of the political anti-slavery movement. From him we received the battle-cry in the turmoils of the contest; for he was one of those spirits who sometimes will go ahead of public opinion, instead of tamely following its footprints. He would compress into a single sentence—a single word—the whole issue of a controversy; and those words became the inscriptions on our banners, the pass-words of our combatants. His comprehensive intellect seemed to possess the peculiar power of penetrating into the interior connection and grasping the general tendency of events and ideas, things and abstractions; he charmed our minds with panoramic views of our political and social condition and the problems to be solved; his telescopic eye seemed to pierce even the veil which covers future developments; and while all his acts and words were marked by a thorough-going and uncompromising consistency, they were, at the same time, adorned with the peculiar graces of superior mental culture. [Cheers.]

The same qualities which made him the object of the fiercest and most acrimonious hostility on the part of our opponents, could not fail to assign to him, in the hearts of his friends, a place which hardly another man in the nation could fill. But a popularity like this is not apt to become general. He was one of the earliest champions of our cause. He fought for it, sometimes single-handed and alone, standing firm and unmoved in the storm of fanaticism and vituperation; he fought for it when it was unpopular, and all the prejudice that existed against his principles, all the odium that was cast upon his doctrine, centred upon his person. He was the bugbear with which political children were frightened, and a great many were accustomed to couple with the name of Seward all that was detestable and dangerous. His principles emerged from that cloud of prejudice, but his name did

not, and although a daily increasing number of friends gathered around him, yet a great many could not divest themselves of their early impressions.

And so this became one of the instances, which you so frequently meet with in the history of mankind, in which individuals have to pay a tribute of self-denial to their own greatness. The success of the cause they serve is apt to bring with it the disappointment of their personal aspirations. This is a melancholy fate, but it is no less glorious and sublime, for even the highest positive merit may receive a still higher lustre from the divine anointment of self-sacrifice. [Cheers.] History does not judge men by the outward emblems of power and preferment. The greatest names are those which need no title in order to be great. [Great cheers.] Seward has lost nothing in the Convention. He is to-day, what he was yesterday. He can hardly stand higher; he certainly does not stand lower. [Loud applause.]

We, the delegates from Wisconsin, voted for him to the last. I may say that a few hours after my arrival at Chicago I saw that Seward's nomination was very improbable. I do not lay claim to any particular sagacity for that, for it was a plain arithmetical problem. The causes which brought about his defeat I will not detail; suffice it to say, that they were not of a futile nature. But we stood by him, determined to carry his name as high as possible. Nor did we follow the example of those who changed their votes after the decisive ballot, before the final result was announced; not as though we had been opposed to Mr. Lincoln, than whom there is no truer man in the nation [cheers]; but because we thought we owed it to our old chieftain, that, if fall he must, he should withdraw with the honors of war, surrounded by an unbroken column of true and devoted friends. [Loud cheers.] So the delegations from New York, Wisconsin, and some

delegates from other States stood together to the last. Thus was this debt of honor discharged; we considered it honestly due, and it was honestly paid. [Great applause.]

I need hardly say, sir, that when the motion was made to make Mr. Lincoln's nomination unanimous, we seconded it without any sacrifice of feeling, and, when it was carried, we heartily joined in the general enthusiasm. [Cheers.] We had not gone there, to have our candidate nominated, or none; but with the loyal intention to subordinate our individual judgment to the judgment of the majority, provided the Convention asked of us nothing inconsistent with our consciences as anti-slavery men and the dignity of the Republican cause [cheers]; and I do not hesitate to say that, if Governor Seward had not been in the field, Mr. Lincoln, unless I mistake the temper of our people, would, in all probability, have been the first choice of Wisconsin. Although Governor Seward failed, Mr. Lincoln's nomination nailed the good old Republican banner to the mast as boldly and defiantly as ever. [Prolonged applause.]

Mr. President, I had the honor to be a member of that committee who were to carry to Mr. Lincoln the official announcement of his nomination. The enthusiasm with which we were received at Springfield was boundless. There we saw Mr. Lincoln's neighbors, and it became at once apparent that those who knew him best, loved and esteemed him most. [Cheers.] And then I saw Mr. Lincoln again; for I had met him before in that memorable Senatorial campaign in Illinois, when he, as a man of true and profound convictions, although discountenanced and discouraged by many leading Republicans, who thought it good policy to let Mr. Douglas return to the Senate without opposition, threw himself forward for the imperiled purity of our principles, grasped with a bold hand the Republican banner, which was in danger of sinking

into the mire of compromise and unnatural combinations, and held it up proudly aloft in one of the fiercest struggles the country ever witnessed. [Great applause.] I met him then, in the thick of the fight, when he bearded the lion of demagogism in his den, when the brilliant sallies of his wit and sarcasm drew shouts of delight from the multitude, when the thunderbolts of his invective rattled triumphantly against the brazen front of Stephen A. Douglas [applause], when the lucid, unanswerable logic of his arguments inspired every patriotic heart with new confidence in the justice of our cause, and when, under his powerful blows, the large Democratic majority of Illinois dwindled down to nothing. Then I saw him do what perhaps no other man in the nation would have done. Then I learned to confide in the patriot and the defender of profound convictions, to esteem the statesman, and to love the man. [Great applause.]

And, now, I saw him again, surrounded by the Committee of the National Convention, who had come to lay into his hands the highest honor and the greatest trust which a political party has to bestow—an honor which he had not thought of in his hard-fought battles, which he had not craved, and had hardly been sanguine enough to expect. There he stood silently listening to the address of our chairman; his eyes downcast; in his soul, perhaps, a feeling of just pride struggling with the overawing consciousness of responsibility. Then he answered, thanking them for the honors bestowed upon him, and accepting the leadership in the great struggle, not with the exultant tone of one who has achieved a personal triumph, not with the pompous airs and artificial dignity of one who is conscious of standing upon the great stage of the world, but with that unaffected, modest simplicity of a man who is strong in the consciousness of his ability and his honest intention to do right. [Great cheers.]

Many of those who now surrounded him, had voted for other candidates in the Convention, and some, still laboring under a feeling of personal disappointment, had come there not without some prejudice unfavorable to Mr. Lincoln. But when they saw the man who had worked his way from the humblest station in life to his present eminence, not by fast speculations or adventurous efforts; not on the wings of good luck, but by quiet, steady labor, by unswerving fidelity to principle and his private and public duties, by the vigor of his genius, and by the energy of his character—the man who had won the confidence of the people and was now lifted upon the shield of a great national party, not by ingenious combinations and adroit management, but by the popular instinct—unfettered by promises, unpledged to anybody and anything but the people and the welfare of our country; his hands free to carry out the honest dictates of his pure conscience; a life behind him, not only above reproach, but above suspicion; a problem before him, for the solution of which he was eminently fitted by the native virtues of his character, the high abilities of his mind, and a strong, honest purpose;—then they all felt, that with this pure and patriotic statesman, all those great qualities would return to the White House, which makes republican government what it ought to be,—a government founded upon virtue. [Enthusiastic cheers.] And an Eastern delegate who had voted against him in the Convention, whispered to me in a tone of the highest satisfaction: “Sir, we might have done a more daring thing, but we certainly could not have done a better thing.” [Prolonged applause.]

I cannot find words strong enough to designate the silliness of those who sneeringly affect to see in Mr. Lincoln but a second or third rate man, who, like Polk and Pierce, had been taken up merely for the sake of expe-

diency. Let them ask Mr. Douglas, from whose hands he wrested the popular majority in Illinois; let them ask those who once felt the magic touch of his lucid mind and honest heart; let his detractors ask their own secret misgivings, and in their own fears they will read the cause of the joy and assurance of his friends. [Applause.] They whistle in order to keep up their courage; but, methinks, it is a doleful sound. [Laughter and cheers.] So, then, we stand before the people, with the platform of free labor, and upon it a true representative of free labor as a candidate for the Presidency. On this attitude we challenge our enemies to the battle.

On our flank we are threatened by the Constitutional-Union Nondescript; by that party of dry hearts and dead weights, who recently assembled at Baltimore, and, conscious of their inability to make a platform, adopted a sentence from a Fourth of July oration as their common creed, and will in all probability circulate Mr. Everett's Mount Vernon papers as their principal campaign documents. [Great laughter and cheers.] They know no North, no South, no East, no West, no anything, and least of all they know themselves. [Laughter.] See them march on, ready to charge, but gently and with forbearance, lest they step upon somebody's toes [laughter], and slowly and noiselessly, lest their own soldiers, frightened by their own impetuosity, suspect themselves of sinister designs — for theirs is an army which, by the accidental explosion of a percussion cap, might be thrown into the most frightful disorder. [Great laughter and applause.] It is said that one of their candidates contemplates declining the nomination. Let him well ponder what he is doing. Let him not, with his accustomed rashness in political matters, skip over so awful a responsibility: upon his resolution, so or so, may depend a difference of

five to ten votes at the next national election. [Shouts of laughter and applause.]

In front we face the Democracy. Thanks to the restless impatience of Mr. Douglas's ambition, and to his unscrupulous duplicity, the Democratic party is fast falling to pieces. [Cheers.] Indeed, we are greatly indebted to that man. When, by the Nebraska bill and the invention of the popular sovereignty dodge, he tried to gain the favor of the South, he helped build up the Republican party in the North; and when, by refusing to acknowledge the logical consequences of his own position, he tried to retrieve his fortunes at the North, he disorganized the Democratic party at the South. And even lately he demonstrated the existence of the irrepressible conflict more clearly and forcibly, with due deference to Governor Seward be it said, than ten Rochester speeches could have done. He is like the fellow who, in order to get at the apples that hung rather high, cut down the tree. [Applause.]

Yes, that gentleman has done much of our work, and he did it voluntarily, gratis, for nothing. Let us be honest enough to confess it; for, sir, I really do not see why the Church should refuse to acknowledge its obligations to the devil. [Laughter and cheers.]

Is it not owing to his laudable exertions that the Democracy have opened the campaign with two platforms and no candidate? [Shouts of laughter.] In fact, when taking all his kind services into consideration, I am almost sorry of ever having said anything against him. But the thing is done, and Mr. Douglas must be satisfied with as humble an apology as I am able to offer. [Continued laughter and applause.]

The first attempt of the Democratic party to unite upon a platform and to nominate a candidate failed. It could not but fail as long as some of them insisted on laying

down a party creed that meant something. A Democratic platform in order to be satisfactory, must mean nothing and everything, as the Cincinnati platform did. [Cheers.] But they will try again to repress the irrepressible conflict which rages in their own ranks, and as the day for doing so they have with great propriety chosen the 18th of June, the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. [Applause.] What the result of that Convention will be, whether one of the contesting factions will carry the day, or whether they will succeed in uniting them, by conceding to one the platform and to the other the candidate, thus cheating each other in attempting to cheat the people, is to me a matter of supreme indifference. The Democrats undoubtedly thought they had done a very smart thing in adjourning their Convention without nominating a candidate, so as to deprive us of the supposed advantage of knowing what antagonist we shall have to deal with. Without being aware of it, they have indeed done a great thing for us; for they have obliged us to rely for success upon the positive strength of our own cause, instead of the accidental weakness of an opposing candidate. [Enthusiastic cheers.] And in this noble and manly attitude we stand before them, the only united National party in the land.

While the Union-savers did not dare to lay down a common party creed, while the Democrats, with unscrupulous duplicity, attempt to commit a new fraud upon the people, the Republican party has with manly fearlessness proclaimed its principles and nominated a candidate who fairly and honestly represents them. We have undertaken to defeat our opponents, not by concession and subterfuge, but by boldly and unequivocally re-asserting the principles in which we believe. We have undertaken to disarm the prejudices that are against us, not by pandering to them, but by opposing to them the language

of truth. No greediness of a speedy party triumph has betrayed us into the abandonment of a single position; no desire to conclude advantageous alliances has betrayed us into a single compromise. I am proud to say, we have disdained to purchase, at the price of a single article of our creed, the support of that small set of amphibious politicians who claim to hold the balance of power, and whose office it seems to have been for years to demoralize parties with their treacherous promises of support [applause], of those heartless men who, when a whole continent is on fire, calculate with bloodless coolness from what side they can draw the greatest advantage. [Cheers.] They may feel big with the vain boast that they will be strong enough to defeat us—we have shown them unequivocally enough, that they will never be strong enough to corrupt us. [Enthusiastic cheers.] We have, indeed, invited the support of all citizens, whatever their party affiliations may have been. But we will not gain it by false pretences. We will speak to them the language of great principles; we will appeal to their sense of right and justice; we will assault their understandings with irrefutable arguments; we will storm their hearts with solemn invocations, but we have disdained to descend to ambiguous tricks, which, by showing that we do not dare to be ourselves, would make us unworthy of being supported by others. [Loud cheers and applause.]

Such is the Republican party of to-day. It is strong, for it seeks and finds its strength in the greatness of the cause it defends. It will be victorious, for it deserves success. Its success will be a decisive triumph of our cause, and if the worst should come, even a defeat would be a mere delay of certain victory. And so we are ready to give battle, armed with that scrupulous jealousy of principle, that will make us rather perish than compromise the right; with that honest pride of conviction

which springs from a deep consciousness of good faith and true devotion to a just cause. [Great applause.] And the signs of the times show that even in politics honesty is the best policy, for all those honest men who mean to do right, although they formerly stood against us, are fast flocking around our banners. [Cheers.]

Sir, I have heard here and there a murmur of disappointment. What! with a cause and a platform like ours? With such standard-bearers as LINCOLN and HAMLIN? It is hardly credible. Listen to me a single moment. Standing as we do on the threshold of great decisions, I cannot suffer my mind to be engaged in the walls of this house, or in the narrow line of party interest and party policy, not even in the boundaries of this country. There is the wide world around us with its manifold races and nations of men, all of them for thousands of years engaged in an arduous struggle for happiness and freedom; now advancing with spasmodic force and rapidity, now falling back again exhausted and discouraged; always struggling to disentangle their feet from the treacherous coils of despotic rule, and always baffled in their efforts; so much noble blood spilled, so many noble hearts broken, so many noble aspirations turned into despair!

And in this world of strife and anguish there arose this Republic—a world of promise. It was the gospel of liberty translated into fact. It was to be the beacon of humanity. [Cheers.] But, alas! the abolition of despotic rule did not work the abolition of the baser passions of human nature. But half a century elapses and this free government is ruled by a despotic interest; the Republic sinks into the mire of slavery and corruption, sinks deeper and deeper, and the hope of humanity sinks with it. The advocates of despotism predict its downfall from day to day, and proclaim with exultation that

the great experiment of human self-government has failed. It is in vain that the best men of the nation, like the prophets of old, rise up against the growing demoralization. They are sneered at and persecuted, or, at best, their efforts remain isolated and apparently fruitless. Suddenly a great startling outrage is perpetrated; the slave power with its train of corruption and demoralization shows itself in its naked deformity, and threatens to swallow down the whole future of the country at one gulp.

Now the popular conscience wakes up. The people of the North rise to a great effort. The first attempt to rescue the development of the Republic from the grasp of that despotic power fails, but the movement grows in dimensions and intensity. We press on and on, and the day of deliverance is at hand. Oh, it comes at last! How we have longed to see it! How we have counted every minute by the impatient throbbings of our hearts! We rally in formidable array; every fibre of our being trembles with eagerness for the greatest of struggles; every pulsation of our blood beats the charge! We place one of the purest, noblest, and ablest men of the nation at the head of our army—victory is within our grasp;—and there stand some who call themselves patriots, mouthing like children that they cannot do as much as they would have done, if their particular favorite had been nominated for the Presidency!

Oh, sir, if we ever have a right to grow impatient with our fellows, it is when we see them at a moment of a great crisis, governed by small and paltry considerations. [Loud and prolonged applause.]

I do not plead the cause of party discipline. That is not one of the deities at whose shrine I worship. It never will be. But must I, born in a foreign land, speak to you of devotion to the great interests of your country?

Must I entreat you to sacrifice the small whim of a personal preference to the greatest cause of this age? No, no! it cannot be. No man in whose soul glows a spark of sympathy with struggling humanity, can now stand idle. No heart that ever was fired by the divine breath of liberty, can now remain cold. [Great applause.]

Let Wisconsin stretch her hand across the great lakes and grasp that of New York. Let it be known that New York and Wisconsin, who stood together to the last for Seward in the Convention, will be the first and foremost in the battle for Lincoln and Liberty! [Enthusiastic and long-continued cheering.]

VI.

THE DOOM OF SLAVERY.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT VERANDAH HALL, ST. LOUIS,
MISSOURI, ON THE 1ST OF AUGUST, 1860.

The speaker had been invited to St. Louis by the Emancipationists of that city. The Presidential campaign of 1860, with Mr. Lincoln as the candidate of the Republicans, Mr. Douglas and Mr. Breckinridge as the two rival candidates of the Democrats, and Mr. Bell as the candidate of the Constitutional Union party, had fairly begun, and the popular excitement was running high. The anti-slavery movement had grown to imposing dimensions in the city of St. Louis, but was still weak in the interior of the State. His speech was, in the first place, intended to aid the Emancipationists in electing their Congressional candidates, but the speaker availed himself of this opportunity to address a direct argument to the people of the Slave States.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:—

To deny the existence of an evil they do not mean to remedy, to ascribe to paltry causes the origin of great problems they do not mean to solve, to charge those who define the nature of an existing difficulty with having originated it—these are expedients which the opponents of reformatory movements have resorted to since mankind has a history. An appeal to ignorance or timidity is their last hope, when all resources of logic and argument are exhausted. The old comedy is repeated again and again.

The assertions that the great contest between free and slave labor has no foundation in fact, that the origin of the slavery controversy is to be found in the fanaticism of a few Northern abolitionists, and that those who speak

of an "irrepressible conflict" are to be made responsible for its existence—these form the argumentative staple of those who possess either not sagacity enough to discern or not courage enough to state facts as they are.

In investigating the causes of the great struggle which has for years kept the minds of the people in constant uneasiness and excitement, I shall endeavor to act with the most perfect fairness. I shall not indulge in any denunciations. I shall impeach the motives of no one. I shall not appeal to prejudice or passion. I invite you to pass in review the actual state of things with calmness and impartiality.

It is one of the best traits of human nature, that we form our first opinions on matters of general interest from our innate sense of right and wrong. Our moral impressions, the dictates of our consciences, the generous impulses of our hearts, are the sources from which our first convictions spring. But custom, material interest, and our natural inclination to acquiesce in that which is, whether right or wrong, that *vis inertix* which has brought so much suffering upon humanity, are apt to overrule the native instincts of our moral nature. They are "sicklied over by the pale cast" of calculation; the freshness of their impelling powers is lost, and questions essentially moral are imperceptibly changed into questions of material interest, national economy, or political power.

The people of the South have evidently gone through that process with regard to the institution of slavery; they have become accustomed to identify its existence with the existence of Southern society, while even a large majority of the people of the North were rather inclined to silence their moral objections to it, and to acquiesce, until its immediate interference with matters of general interest gave a new impulse to their native antipathy. Although I am not ashamed to confess that the moral

merits of the question would alone have been more than sufficient to make me an anti-slavery man, yet I will confine myself to a discussion of its practical effects, in order to make myself intelligible even to those who do not sympathize with me.

This is the first time that I have had the honor to address a meeting in a Slave State, and even now I owe the privilege of expressing my opinions freely and without restraint to the circumstance that, although in a Slave State, I stand upon the soil of a free city, and under the generous protection of free men. [Applause.] Must I call "a *privilege*" what ought to be universally respected as the sacred birthright of every American citizen? Ask any slaveholder who may be present in this vast assembly, whether he does not deem it wrong and unjustifiable that I, an anti-slavery man, should be permitted to give a public expression of my views in a Slave State; whether he would not be in favor of silencing me by whatever means within his reach; whether he would not silence me at once in a strong slaveholding community? I do not mean to blame him for it. Let us give him a fair hearing. The slaveholder will state his political views substantially as follows:—

"On a point of astronomy, or chemistry, or medicine, you may entertain and express whatever opinion you please; but we cannot permit you to discuss the relation between master and servant, as it exists here in the Slave States; for, in doing so, you would endanger our safety, and undermine our social system. Our condition is such, that the slightest movement of insubordination, once started, is apt to grow with uncontrollable rapidity; we have, therefore, to guard against everything that may start it; we cannot allow a free discussion of the subject; we have to remove from our midst every incendiary element; we cannot be expected to tolerate

“opinions or persons among us that are opposed to the ruling order of things. Whenever a mischievous attempt is made, we are obliged to repress it with such energy and severity as to strike terror into the hearts of those who might be capable of repeating the attempt. Our condition requires the promptest action, and when, in cases of imminent danger, the regular process of the courts is too slow or uncertain, we are obliged to resort to lynch-law in order to supply its deficiencies.

“Moreover, we must adapt our rules and customs of government to the peculiar wants of our social organization. In order to be safe, we must intrust the Government, in its general administration, as well as its details, to those who, by their own interests, are bound to be the natural guardians of the system. Hence our safety requires that the political power in our States should be put into the hands of slaveholders; and where we have no law to that effect, custom upholds the rule.

“In order to put the political ascendancy of those who are most interested in the preservation of slavery upon a solid basis, we must put down anything that would produce and foster independent aspirations among the other classes of society. It would not only be insane to educate the slaves, but highly dangerous to extend to the great mass of poor white non-slaveholders the means of education; for in doing so we might raise an element to influence and power, whose interests are not identical with those of the slaveholder. This is our policy of self-preservation, and we are bound to enforce it.”

Sir, I mean to be just to the slaveholders, and, strange as it may sound, as to the propriety of their policy I agree with them. Having identified their social existence with the existence of slavery, they cannot act otherwise.

It is necessity that urges them on. It is true that slavery is an inflammable element. A stray spark of thought

or hope may cause a terrible conflagration. The torch of free speech and press, which gives light to the house of Liberty, is very apt to set on fire the house of Slavery. What is more natural than that the torch should be extinguished where there is such an abundance of explosive material?

It is true that in a slaveholding community the strictest subordination must be enforced, that the maintenance of established order requires the most rigorous preventive and repressive measures, which will not always allow of a strict observance of the rules of legal process; it is equally true that the making and the execution of the laws can be safely intrusted only to those who, by their position, are bound to the ruling interest; true, that popular education is dangerous to the exclusive rule of an exclusive class; true, that men must be kept stupid in order to be kept obedient. What is more consistent, therefore, than that fundamental liberties should be disregarded whenever they become dangerous; that the safeguards of human rights in the administration of justice should be set aside whenever the emergency calls for prompt and energetic action; that the masses should be left uneducated, in order to give the slaveholding oligarchy an undisputed sway? In one word, that the rights, the liberties, and the security of the individual should have to yield to the paramount consideration of the safety of the ruling interest? All this is true; and accepting the premises, all these necessities exist. You seem startled at this proposition, and ask, What is the institution that demands for its protection such measures? The Slave States are by no means original in this respect. Look at the Kingdom of Naples, where the ruling power is governed by similar exclusive interests, and acts on the same instinct of self-preservation. Does it not resort to the same means? You tell me that the principles under-

lying our system of government are very different from those of the Kingdom of Naples, and that the means of protection I spoke of run contrary to the spirit of our institutions. Indeed, so it seems to be. What does that prove? Simply this: that a social institution which is in antagonism with the principles of democratic government cannot be maintained and protected by means which are in accordance with those principles; and, on the other hand, that a social institution which cannot be protected by means which are in accordance with the democratic principles of our Government, must essentially be in antagonism to those principles. It proves that the people in the slaveholding States, although pretending to be freemen, are, by the necessities arising from their condition, the slaves of slavery. That is all.

But I am told that the Slave States are sovereign as to their domestic institutions, and may shape and govern their home concerns according to their own notions, subject only to the Constitution of the United States. Granted. But the necessities of slavery do not stop there. The Slave States are members of a Federal family, and, as the King of Naples in his foreign policy is governed by his peculiar interests, so is the policy of the Slave States in our Federal affairs governed by their peculiar necessities.

I hear much said of the aggressive spirit of the slave power, but I am almost inclined to acquit it of that charge, for all its apparently aggressive attempts are no less dictated by instinct of self-preservation, than the most striking features of its home policy.

Let us listen to the slaveholder again. He says: "What will become of the security of our slave property, if, inside of this Union, a slave may finally escape from the hands of his master by simply crossing the line of his State? But the fanatical anti-slavery spirit prevailing in

“the Free States will avail itself of every facility the common legal process affords, as the trial by jury and the writ of *habeas corpus*, to aid the fugitive in his escape. We are therefore obliged to demand such legislation at the hands of our General Government as will remove these obstacles thrown in the way of the recapture of our property, and oblige the citizens, by law, to assist us in the reapprehension of the fugitive.” So the trial by jury and the writ of *habeas corpus* will have to yield, and the good old common-law principle, that in all cases concerning life and liberty the presumption be in favor of liberty, goes by the board. This may seem rather hard, but is it not eminently consistent?

The necessities of slavery do not stop there. Let us hear how the slaveholder proceeds: “In order to obtain such legislation from our national councils, it is necessary that the prejudices against slavery existing in the Free States be disarmed. It is impossible that the slave interest should deem itself secure as long as a violent agitation is kept up against it, which continually troubles us at home, and exercises upon the National Legislature an influence hostile to slavery. We are therefore obliged to demand that measures be taken to stop that agitation.” Nothing more natural than that. The right of petition, held sacred even by some despotic governments, must be curtailed. Post-office regulations have to prevent the dissemination of anti-slavery sentiments by the newspapers. Even in the Free States willing instruments are found, who urge the adoption of measures tending to suppress the very discussion of this question. Laws are advocated in Congress (and that “champion of free labor,” Douglas, takes the lead), making it a criminal offence to organize associations hostile to slavery, and empowering the General Government to suppress them by means of a centralized police. [Loud cheers.] This

may seem somewhat tyrannical, but is it not eminently consistent? [Applause.]

But in order to succeed in this, slavery needs a controlling power in the General Government. It cannot expect to persuade us, so it must try to subdue and rule us. Hear the slaveholder: "It is impossible that we should consider our interests safe in this Union, unless the political equilibrium between the Free and Slave States be restored. If the Free States are permitted to increase, and the Slave States stand still, we shall be completely at the mercy of a hostile majority. We are therefore obliged to demand accessions of territory, out of which new Slave States can be formed, so as to increase our representation in Congress, and to restore the equilibrium of power." Nothing more sensible. The acquisition of foreign countries, such as Cuba and the northern states of Mexico, is demanded; and, if they cannot be obtained by fair purchase and diplomatic transaction, war must be resorted to; and, if the majority of the people are not inclined to go to war, our international relations must be disturbed by filibustering expeditions, precipitating, if possible, this country into wars, and thus forcing the peaceable or cheating the enthusiastic into subserviency to the plans of the slave power. You may call this piracy, disgracing us in the eyes of the civilized world. But can you deny that slavery needs power, and that it cannot obtain that power except by extension?

So pressed by its necessities, it lays its hand upon our national Territories. Time-honored compacts, hemming in slavery, must be abrogated. The Constitution must be so construed as to give slavery unlimited sway over our national domain. Hence your Nebraska Bills and Dred Scott decisions and slave-code platforms. You may call that atrocious, but can you deny its consistency?

"But," adds the slaveholder, "of what use is to us the

“abstract right to go with our slave property into the Territories, if you pass laws which attract to the Territories a class of population that will crowd out slavery; if you attract to them the foreign immigrant by granting him the immediate enjoyment of political rights; if you allure the paupers from all parts of the globe by your pre-emption laws and homestead bills? We want the negro in the Territories. You give us the foreign immigrant. Slavery cannot exist except with the system of large farms, and your homestead bills establish the system of small farms, with which free labor is inseparably connected. We are therefore obliged to demand that all such mischievous projects be abandoned.” Nothing more plausible. Hence the right of the laboring man to acquire property in the soil by his labor is denied, your homestead bills voted down, the blight of oppressive speculation fastened upon your virgin soil, and attempts are made to deprive the foreign immigrant in the Territories of the immediate enjoyment of political rights, which, in the primitive state of social organization, are essential to his existence. All this in order to give slavery a chance to obtain possession of our national domain. This may seem rather hard. But can you deny that slavery, for its own protection, needs power in the General Government? that it cannot obtain that power except by increased representation? that it cannot increase its representation except by conquest and extension over the Territories? and that with this policy all measures are incompatible which bid fair to play the Territories into the hands of free labor?

This is not all. Listen to the slaveholder once more: “Our States,” he tells us, “are essentially agricultural, producing States. We have but little commerce, and still less manufacturing industry. All legislation tending to benefit the commercial and manufacturing interests, prin-