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A REVIEW
OF THE
DEFENCE OF GENERAL CASS'S COURSE
ON
THE WILMOT PROVISIO.

5-10

The Washington "*Union*" of Saturday, September 23d, contained an elaborate argument, if a bundle of misstatements may be thus dignified, the object of which was to prove that General CASS has been always consistent in his course on the Wilmot Proviso, and, as a consequence of this, always opposed to that measure. It may not be proper, perhaps, to charge General CASS with its authorship, but the editor of the *Union* has disclosed enough to justify us in characterizing it as General CASS's own defence. He tells us, in plain language, that, "to prevent any further misrepresentation on the subject, *he* states what *he* knows, and in doing so *he* wishes it to be distinctly understood that *he* makes the statement, not only on *his* own responsibility and understanding of the facts as they occurred at the time, but on the authority of General Cass himself." It is, then, General CASS who speaks on this occasion, and not the "organ" of the Administration; and we shall, therefore, as we are in duty bound, unless we would be considered uncourteous, pay our respects to him. Indeed, were it not for the authoritative tone of this impotent effort to rescue General CASS from the odium of his deceitful and time-serving conduct—conduct which honest men, much more great men, have always despised, and to which none but demagogues, in their wildest gambling for popularity, have ever descended—it might well be passed without notice. As it is, however, and especially as the character of a gentle man who stands deservedly high in the estimation of all who know him, we allude to Senator MILLER, of New Jersey, has been wantonly assailed, we shall undertake to expose more fully than has yet been done, the desperate shifts to which Gen. CASS and his friends are put, in their wily exertions to circumvent and delude the People of the South.

Those who are familiar with the proceedings of the late session of Congress, will recollect that the first resolution on that subject which passed in the House of Representatives, fixed the 17th of July as the day of adjournment. That resolution gave rise, under the leadership of Mr. FOOLE, who particularly distinguished himself in setting up a "Platform" for General CASS, and in pulling down one for General TAYLOR, to a general partisan debate in the Senate. With others, Mr. Miller replied to Mr. FOOLE, and in the course of his speech made the following statement:

"But the Senator (said Mr. Miller) insists upon trying the issue here. At first, I was at a loss to know the precise issue intended? The Senator, however, has with his usual frankness told us what the issue is. It is the Wilmot proviso.

Is he ready to make a true issue upon that point? I know that the last expressed opinions of General Cass are against the proviso, but I also know that, within two years past, he was the open and strenuous advocate of that measure; that he was so during the last two sessions of Congress is known to many Senators here.

"At the first session of the twenty-ninth Congress, the three million bill, as it was called, came to the Senate from the House, with the Wilmot proviso in it. On the last day of the session, (10th of August, 1846,) and about half an hour before the time fixed for the adjournment of Congress, the bill came up for consideration, when the Senator from Alabama (Mr. LEWIS) moved to strike out the proviso. The Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. DAVIS) took the floor against the amendment and in favor of the proviso, and spoke until a few minutes before the adjournment. No vote was taken upon the question, and the bill was lost for want of time to act upon it.

"As soon as Mr. Davis had taken his seat, General Cass came over to this side of the Senate, and with much earnestness said, in the presence of the Senators, THAT HE REGRETTED MUCH THAT MR. DAVIS HAD BY HIS SPEECH PREVENTED THE VOICE

FROM BEING TAKEN; THAT HE (GEN. CASS) AND EVERY DEMOCRATIC SENATOR FROM THE FREE STATES, WOULD HAVE VOTED TO SUSTAIN THE PROVISIO; that Mr. Allen would have led off, and all the rest would have followed; that he was very sorry that they had been deprived of the opportunity of voting upon it; that it would have settled the question, and Gov. Davis was responsible for defeating that result."

"At the next session of Congress, (March 1, 1847,) the three million bill came before the Senate, but without the Wilmot Proviso in it. The Senator from Vermont (Mr. Upham) moved to amend the bill by inserting the proviso, when Mr. Cass rose, and, in a speech of some length, opposed the amendment. This speech is reported, and I refer Senators to it. Recollecting what had taken place at the previous session, I rose at once and expressed my astonishment at the course of the Senator from Michigan, so directly at variance with his sentiments declared at the last session, when the same measure was before the Senate. I also stated what had taken place on that occasion, and repeated what I understood General Cass to have said in the Senate, as I have before stated, and then called upon him to give to the Senate and to the country his reasons for this sudden change in his opinions upon a subject of so much importance.

"Gen. Cass, in reply to me, commenced by saying that he was surprised at the extraordinary course of the Senator from New Jersey in calling him to an account for his opinions, but said he was prepared for it, and then took from the drawer of his desk a manuscript speech, memoranda, which he read to the Senate. He did not deny the statement made by me; but said, in substance, that he had not changed his opinions expressed the session before upon the subject of the proviso, but that that was not the occasion nor the bill in which to apply the proviso. That the object of the bill then before the Senate was to enable the President to conclude a treaty of peace with Mexico. That he did not wish to do anything which might delay peace. That it would be of no use to attach the proviso to this bill, but that the question should be reserved until we acquired the territory. It was a question of time with him. That this was not the time nor the occasion. He also spoke of the resolutions of instructions from Michigan, which he had presented during the session, and to which I had referred him, and said that he had examined them, together with resolutions from other non-slaveholding States, and that all these resolutions looked to some permanent provision or fundamental law; he did not think they were intended to apply to the bill then under consideration. This was the position of General Cass in March, 1847. At that time he was still in favor of the Wilmot proviso, but doubting as to the time when and the nature and character of the law by which it should be enforced. He continued to maintain this position, as far as the public were informed, until December last, when it became necessary for certain candidates for the Presidency to declare their views on the subject of the Wilmot proviso."

This occurred on the 22d of June last, and the debate of that day, including the speech of Mr. Miller, was reported at length in the 95th No. of the "official debates" in the Senate, published by Houston. It was, also, reported in the "Congressional Globe," and is to be found at page 866 of that publication. A brief notice of it was taken, also, in the "National Intelligencer" of the succeeding day, while the speech of Mr. Miller is published entire in the paper of Monday, the 27th of June. And yet the article in the Union gravely quotes it, or rather a portion of it, (for the four first paragraphs, which we have supplied, were wholly suppressed,) from the "Charleston News," and at the same time pretends, that the speech was never published elsewhere than "in Southern Whig papers." That there may be no mistake about it, we give the precise language of the article itself. It says:

"The following extract from a speech of Senator Miller, purporting to have been delivered in the Senate—Heaven knows when, but certainly in the absence of General Cass—has been published in the Southern Whig papers, to prove that his views of the constitutional rights of the South are of recent origin, and not the result of fixed principles. That our readers may understand the full extent of this fraud and misrepresentation, we copy the extract from the Charleston News.

"As to the remarks of Mr. Miller, we do not know when they were made, or whether ever made, in the Senate. Certain it is, they were never made in the presence of General Cass."

Let us turn now to the columns of the Union, and see if we cannot discover, at a respectable distance this side of "Heaven," and without recourse to the "Charleston News" even, some traces, feint though they be, of this speech which has so suddenly caught the eye and provoked the wrath of the distinguished "hero of Hull's surrender." In the Union of Friday, June 23d, we find, under the editorial head the usual "Congressional sum-

mary," in which the debate is noticed, and the following remark made: "After a reply from Mr. Mangum, and a rejoinder from Mr. Foote, the debate was continued by Mr. MILLER, (!) Mr. Foote, and Mr. Mangum." It seems, therefore, that the individual, who, "to prevent any further misrepresentation," makes a statement not only on his own responsibility, and understanding of the facts "*as they occurred at the time,*" but on the authority of Gen. CASS, *did* know, if, indeed, he did not hear it, when the speech of Mr. Miller was delivered. We have been thus particular in this matter, because it was evidently thereby intended to create the impression, that no such speech was ever made in the Senate, and that the whole was an afterthought of Mr. Miller, put forth since the adjournment of Congress, to injure General CASS in the South. That it was not delivered in his presence is most true, because General CASS deemed it expedient to resign his seat in the Senate a few days after his nomination at Baltimore, in order to escape the cross-examination on this and other questions to which he would have been exposed; and was then, most probably, at his residence in Michigan. It was delivered, however, in the presence of his chosen friends, in the presence of Allen and Bright, and Hannegan and Breese, and yet they never undertook to question the truth of its disclosures. It was delivered in the presence of one Senator at least from General CASS's own State, Governor Felch, and yet he sat as mute as an oyster. And even Mr. Foote, with all his fondness for contradiction and dispute, did not dare to say, "I deny what you state, Mr. Miller; you wrong General Cass, sir; he has never been guilty of such vacillation and weakness."

But let us proceed to examine the merits of the defence itself, which, after this statement of Mr. Miller has been three months before the country, and everywhere circulated, is finally set up "on the authority of General Cass" and the "understanding" of Mr. Ritchie. To our view it is an exceedingly weak production, weaker, indeed, than we ever presumed Mr. Ritchie *weak enough* to publish on his own responsibility, much less on the authority of his patron. It resolves itself wholly into somewhat explicit denials of portions of Mr. Miller's statement, and those, for the most part, the least material. Let us, therefore, group them together, and test them, not by "our understanding," but by "the facts as they occurred at the time." Here, then, is the first allegation of the defence:

"Mr. Miller says 'he (Gen. Cass) said, in substance, he had not changed his opinions expressed the session before upon the subject of the proviso.' He did not say this, or anything like it. No such language is to be found in his speech. It is an out and out assumption."

This may be as Gen. Cass says, and as the Union wishes us to believe, for aught we know, but unfortunately the record is against them. The Union of March 2d, 1847, published the speech to which Mr. Miller alludes, and at the close of it, in the same column, the conversation which ensued between him and Gen. CASS is thus reported:

"Mr. MILLER expressed his great surprise at the change in the sentiments of the Senator from Michigan, who had been regarded as the great champion of freedom in the Northwest, of which he was a distinguished ornament. *Last year the Senator was understood to be DECIDEDLY IN FAVOR OF the Wilmot Proviso;* and, as no reason had been stated for the change, he (Mr. M.) could not refrain from the expression of his surprise.

"Mr. CASS said the course of the Senator from New Jersey was most extraordinary. *Last year he (Mr. C.) SHOULD HAVE VOTED for the proposition, had it come up.* But circumstances had altogether changed. The honorable Senator then read several passages from the remarks as given above, (his speech on the bill,) *which he had committed to writing, in order to refute such a charge as that of the Senator from New Jersey.*"

Now what does this mean? Why it reads, so far as we can understand it, that Gen. CASS was charged by Mr. Miller with having changed his views on the Wilmot Proviso, between the adjournment of one session of Congress and the meeting of another, and that he read from the manuscript

of the speech he had just concluded "*to refute the charge.*" He had not, therefore, changed his opinions then, but circumstances had changed, and they must control his action. "Last year he should have voted for the proposition had it come up," and, surely then, as no statesman ever votes for so grave a proposition as this, when he is opposed to it, it must be, that the whole object of Gen. CASS was to vindicate his consistency of opinion, and to justify a seeming inconsistency of conduct by the force of surrounding circumstances.

The second and last material allegation of the defence is as follows:

"Again he [Mr. Miller] says Gen. Cass, said 'it was a question of time with him.' Not one word of it true. He says 'at the time he was in favor of the Wilmot proviso.' There is not one word in the speech to justify such an assertion. They are all sheer fabrications."

Then Gen. CASS did not say, if this by-authority defence may be credited, in his speech of March 1st, 1847, that "it was a question of time with him" when the Wilmot Proviso should be extended over our Mexican acquisitions. Well, if he did not, he certainly possesses, in an eminent degree, the faculty of saying one thing and meaning another. Here are the points, and we quote from the Union of March 2, 1847, on which he based his opposition at that time to the Proviso:

"I shall (said Mr. C.) vote against the proviso, because,

"1. The present IS NO PROPER TIME FOR THE INTRODUCTION INTO THE COUNTRY, and into Congress, of an exciting topic, tending to divide us, when our united exertions are necessary to prosecute the existing war.

"2. It will be QUITE IN SEASON to provide for the government of territory, not yet acquired from foreign countries AFTER WE SHALL HAVE OBTAINED IT.

"3. The proviso can only apply to British and Mexican territories, as there are no others continuous to us. Its phraseology would reach either, though its application is pointed to Mexico. It seems to me, that to express so much confidence in the successful result of this war, as to legislate at this time, if not over this anticipated acquisition, at least, for it, and to lay down a partial basis for its government, would do us no good in the eyes of the world, and would irritate, still more, the Mexican people.

"4. LEGISLATION NOW WOULD BE WHOLLY INOPERATIVE, because no territory hereafter to be acquired can be governed without an act of Congress providing for its government. And such an act, on its passage, would open the whole subject, and would leave the Congress called upon to pass it, free to exercise its own discretion, entirely uncontrolled by any declaration found on the statute book.

"5. There is great reason to think, that the adoption of this proviso would, in all probability, BRING THE WAR TO AN UNTIMELY ISSUE, by the effect it would have on future operations.

"6. ITS PASSAGE WOULD CERTAINLY PREVENT THE ACQUISITION OF ONE FOOT OF TERRITORY; thus defeating a measure called for by a vast majority of the American people, and defeating it, too, by the very act purporting to establish a partial basis for its government.

"7. The progress of public opinion upon the question of the adoption of this proviso, as the circumstances of the country have become more and more difficult, seems to me to indicate very clearly that since its introduction at the past session of Congress, the conviction has been gaining ground, that THE PRESENT IS NO TIME for the agitation of this subject, and as the foreign war becomes more embarrassing, in a greater degree than many anticipated, it is best to avoid a domestic dispute, which would raise bitter questions at home, and add confidence to the motives for resistance abroad. And certainly the fact now ascertained, that the war would be put to hazard, and the acquisition of territory defeated, by the adoption of this proviso, renders it impossible for me to vote for it, connected, as I deem both of these objects, with the dearest rights and honor of the country."

What other conclusion could any man draw from these seven propositions than that the application of the Wilmot Proviso was with Gen. CASS a mere "question of time." He spoke of nothing else but "time;" the word danced through his mind as rapidly as through the note book of an usurer. He said "the present is no time for its introduction," "legislation now would be wholly inoperative," "it will be quite in season to provide for the government of territory, not yet acquired from foreign countries, after we shall have obtained it," and yet, human credulity, how much are you expected

to swallow! "there is not a word in the speech to justify Mr. Miller's assertion." And it is "a sheer fabrication," also, to say that Gen. CASS was at that time in favor of the Wilmot Proviso! Whether he was in favor of it or not, the principle we mean, there is nothing in this speech to show that he was against it. He did not pretend to oppose it on constitutional grounds; nor did he anywhere declare it to be mischievous or wrongful in principle. He merely declared, that he could not vote for it *then*, because its passage would "in all probability bring the war to an untimely issue," and "prevent the acquisition of one foot of territory." That was the ground he occupied, and there is every reason to believe he would have occupied it still, had not opportunity to betray the North and barter away the opinions of a lifetime, presented itself. He was then simply for acquiring territory first, and for applying the Proviso afterwards. At least we do not see how his speech will bear a different construction. He was in fact against the Proviso in 1847, for precisely the same reason he assigned in his letter of February 19, 1848, to his friend R. S. Wilson, Esq., of Michigan, for being against it then. He was against it because "*It would be death to the War—DEATH TO ALL HOPES OF GETTING AN ACRE OF TERRITORY—Death to the Administration, and Death to the Democratic Party.*"

The defence admits, however, that the statement of Mr. Miller is true so far as it is not contradicted. It follows, then, that "the side-bar speech" on the Whig side of the Senate Chamber, in which Gen. CASS so bitterly complained of the conduct of Mr. Davis, of Massachusetts, in depriving him of an opportunity to record his vote in favor of the Proviso, is true. This is a very good admission, although we doubt if it were intended to be made, and it suggests a question which is particularly pertinent to the defence of Gen. CASS from the "misrepresentations" of Senator Miller. It is, "Why neither Mr. Rathbun nor Mr. Brinkerhoff have been brought to trial." They have made statements implicating to a much greater extent than Mr. Miller's the honor of Gen. CASS, and yet we have never seen any contradiction given to them. Mr. Rathbun, in a speech at the "Utica Convention" of the New York Barnburners, fully corroborated every word which Mr. Miller has uttered on the subject. He stated further, that when he called on Gen. CASS, in company with Mr. Brinkerhoff, in the winter of 1847, some three weeks before the vote was taken on the Proviso, (it was then Gen. CASS made the speech we have discussed,) in speaking of the necessity of pushing the question to a vote at that session of Congress, Gen. CASS said, "OH, IF IT COMES TO THE VOTE, I AM WITH YOU, YOU KNOW." And Mr. Brinkerhoff held similar language at the Buffalo Convention:

"If the Wilmot Proviso (said Mr. Brinkerhoff) is not democracy, then Gen. Cass's democracy is entirely new. It is very green. For, not longer ago than one year, he was loud in his complaints against John Davis for talking against time, and thus preventing him from having an opportunity for voting in its favor. Lewis Cass was then no Democrat, according to the logic of his advocates, or else he has flopped over.

"I heard Gen. Cass speak in the Senate of the United States. He then professed to be in favor of the principle, but said it was not the time to act upon it. But a short time before, he thought it was both the time for action and expedient to act. Now, I cannot turn with him. I defy Gen. Cass to contradict this statement. If he attempt it, I can bring the testimony of nine men—every one of them as good as myself—to substantiate what I have said. He knows it is true, and hence the expression in his letter, "he thinks there has been a change going on in the public mind, and in his own." I would respect Gen. Cass's opinions, if I thought they were SINCERE. I respect the sincere opinions of any man, though they lead to a change, for I have experienced such myself. But I believe that General Cass thinks as I do, that the Proviso is BOTH EXPEDIENT AND CONSTITUTIONAL."

Here then are Democratic witnesses, Mr. Rathbun, of New York, and Mr. Brinkerhoff, of Ohio, both of them members of the 29th Congress,

and both of them at the time intimate friends of Gen. CASS, who give unequivocal testimony as to his advocacy of the Wilmot Proviso, and yet it is proclaimed on *his* authority, that he never was in favor of the measure. If it be true, that he never favored it, how is it that he says, in his celebrated Nicholson letter: "*I am strongly impressed with the opinion that a great change has been going on in the public mind upon this subject [the Wilmot Proviso] IN MY OWN as well as others.*" Certainly, it is rather unnatural for a man to change an opinion, which he never held. Again; if he has not changed his opinion, why did a gentleman from his own State, a Democratic member of the House of Representatives, Mr. Charles E. Stuart, declare that "Gen. CASS had written it in black and white, and spread before the world [in the Nicholson letter] that *he had changed his mind* on the subject of the Wilmot Proviso"?

This is not all; we charge the editor of the Union, who thus plumes himself on making statements not only on his own responsibility, but on the authority of Gen. CASS himself, with being ignorant, superlatively ignorant of Gen. CASS's real opinions on the Wilmot Proviso. Of this there can be no doubt, unless we adopt the more uncharitable belief that he is deliberately playing the part of hypocrite and deceiver. Now for the proof. In the Union of August 1st, 1848, we read the following:

"At all events, we are happy to understand by private letters that General CASS firmly stands the ground which he has taken. Being applied to formally by a man of the Wilmot stamp, he declared, unhesitatingly, that he adhered to his Nicholson letter, and to the Baltimore platform; and that, if elected President, HE WOULD VETO the Wilmot Proviso. Dare General Taylor make such a declaration?"

And in the paper of the 5th of August, only four days later, the annexed article appeared:

"The 'New York Herald' of Thursday, in its summary of telegraphic news, states that 'A letter from Gen. CASS, avowing his intention to veto the Wilmot Proviso, in case of his election to the Presidency, is said to be in the possession of the editors of the Washington Union.' A letter-writer from Washington to the same paper says: 'It is ascertained, beyond doubt, that Mr. Ritchie has a letter from Gen. CASS, in which he states that, if elected to the Presidency, he would veto the Wilmot Proviso, or any equivalent of it, should it pass Congress.'

"It is due to the public to state, that we have received no such letter; nor has any such letter been exhibited to us. We have received no letter, despatch, or message from Gen. CASS, since he left Washington; nor have we addressed a single one to him. We have seen no letter that he has written to any other person; nor have we heard of any such letter. We understand, indeed, that Gen. CASS has not written a political letter since his acceptance of the Baltimore nomination. We hear from private sources, that, when interrogated upon the Wilmot proviso, he gives one uniform answer—that he adheres to the sentiments of his letter to Mr. Nicholson, and the resolutions of the Baltimore Convention. It seems to us, that no one who has read his letter can doubt his position. Unlike Gen. Taylor, it were not necessary for him to write to us, or to any one else, explaining his views upon a question which he has clearly defined. He has never skulked or dodged this or any other measure; *but we protest against any inferences we may draw from private letters, or the statements in such letters themselves, being taken as any new declarations of the General himself*, especially as he has said in his letter of acceptance, that 'it closes his profession of political faith.'

Than this a handsomer specimen of political juggling is seldom witnessed—it is "craw-fishing" immensely distanced. On the 1st of August it is heralded with an air of triumph, that "Gen. CASS firmly stands his ground," and that "*he would veto the Wilmot Proviso*;" but on the 5th, owing, it is presumed, to the flash of a northern light in his pathway, the editor assures the country that he' has received neither letter, despatch, nor message from Gen. CASS since he left Washington, and vehemently protests against any inferences which "*he may draw from private letters, or the statements in such letters being taken as new declarations*" of Gen. CASS's opinions. This needs no further comment; it is plain enough almost for the blind to see through. As further evidence that the editor of the Union either misunderstands Gen. CASS's opinions, or wilfully perverts

them, we subjoin extracts from a Democratic paper, the Cleveland Plain-Dealer, a near neighbor, of Gen. Cass, and his principal "organ" in the Northwest:

From the Cleveland (Ohio) Plain-Dealer of July, 1848.

"**RICH—RICH.**—Every day brings us new subscribers from the South. Our circulation is no longer limited by Mason and Dixon's line. It has been a mystery to us how simultaneously subscribers from Florida, Mississippi, and Texas, should see such virtues in our paper. Yesterday we got a clue to the mystery. A gentleman in Mississippi wrote to a friend here to send him the Plain Dealer. From that friend we learned the character of these Southern subscribers. *They are Taylor Whigs, who want to show to their Democratic neighbors the free soil articles in this paper, by way of convincing them that Gen. Cass is a "Free Soil" man.* Well, now, gentlemen subscribers of the South, you who will read this very article, let us say to you in all candor and frankness, ☞ *if you want to support a slavery propagandist, vote for Gen. Taylor—Gen. Cass is not your man!* Were he so, the Plain Dealer would not support him." ☞

Hear another of Gen. Cass's Northwestern "Organs:"

From the Guernsey, (Ohio,) Jeffersonian, July, 1848.

"**GEN. CASS AGAINST THE EXTENSION OF SLAVERY.**—The Whigs having nominated a slave extensionist for the Presidency, are wont to make it appear that the Democrats are similarly situated, by charging that General Cass is an avowed slave extensionist. *This charge is unqualifiedly false.* ☞ General Cass stands pledged to oppose the extension of slavery. In his Nicholson letter he expresses his views of the constitutional power of Congress over the institution of slavery. He gives it as his deliberate opinion, ☞ that *Congress has no power to institute slavery where it does not exist.* ☞ Suppose then, that General Cass is elected to the Presidency, and that Congress should pass an act to institute slavery in free territory, ☞ what does General Cass, in effect, stand pledged to do? Why, to veto it; ☞ because he has told the American people that *such an act would be unconstitutional.* It is, then, clear as the noonday sun, that General Cass stands before the country ☞ as the avowed opponent of slavery extension, and pledged to veto any act of Congress having for its object the institution of slavery in free territory. ☞

"We ask the honest and candid men of all parties—all who are opposed to the extension of slavery, no matter to what party they may belong, to ponder well this matter. Remember that either Lewis Cass or Zachary Taylor will preside over the destinies of this Republic for the next Presidential term—and that, therefore, our ☞ only hope for the prevention of slavery extension exists in the election of the former to the Presidency." ☞

We dismiss the newspapers—similar extracts from which we could, had we space, multiply *ad infinitum*—to make room for the resolution of the Legislature of Michigan, which General Cass presented to the Senate of the United States, without a word of dissent to the principle therein avowed. The resolution, which is submitted with no other comment than that the same Legislature nominated General Cass as a candidate for the Presidency, is as follows:

Resolved, That HOSTILITY TO THE EXTENSION OF HUMAN SLAVERY is now and ever has been one of the PRINCIPLES OF THE DEMOCRATIC CREED, and that to abandon it at the present crisis would be a crime against the free principles upon which our institutions are based."

We commend these newspaper extracts, and the resolution of the Legislature of Michigan, to the author of the defence, in the firm conviction that he may profit by the information they afford, should he be again required to prepare a paper for the public "on the authority of Gen. Cass himself." And as Gen. Cass "has never skulked or dodged this or any other measure," we have the satisfaction, also, to lay before him a correspondence between two distinguished characters, whom he will readily recognise, which may be usefully dovetailed into the next edition of Gen. Cass's life for Southern readers. Here it is:

Correspondence between Mr. Moses, of Florida, and Gen. Lewis Cass.

COLEMAN'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON, May, 19, 1848.

GEN. LEWIS CASS: *Dear Sir:* As your name will, in all probability, be prominent before the Baltimore Convention, to be holden on Monday next, for the purpose of nominating a candidate for President of the United States, and as I shall have to cast the vote of the State of Florida, in conjunction with my colleagues, should they arrive, (or alone in any other contingency,) it is desirable that the Delegation should be informed of your views upon the right of slaveholders to

migrate to new territory with their slaves, that we may know how far they accord with the instructions under which we are directed to act. I will therefore respectfully inquire—

1st. Whether you still adhere to the positions taken in your letter to A. O. P. Nicholson, Esq., of December last.

2d. If so, am I correct in construing it to mean that you consider that the inhabitants of a territory, before they form a State Government, have a right to establish or prohibit slavery, as they may deem most consistent with their local policy?

3d. And that the policy so expressed is the paramount law during the territorial probation, changeable only by the people of the territory upon the formation of a State Government, or under such Legislative sanction as they may direct?

There is another matter, but slightly alluded to in your Nicholson letter, to which I will also direct your attention.

Do you consider that the slaveholders would have the undeniable right to migrate, with their slaves, to any Mexican territory that may be annexed to the United States—or would you regard it a doubtful matter, in consequence of the institution of slavery not having been recognised in said territory by the Mexican authorities immediately preceding the acquisition of such territory, (supposing it should be acquired.)

Your reply will enable the delegation to determine whether, under certain circumstances, they can consistently with their instructions, cast the vote of Florida in your behalf as a candidate for the Presidency.

Yours, respectfully,

R. J. MOSES,

Delegate from the State at large.

[*General Cass's reply.*]

UNITED STATES HOTEL, May 21, 1848.

DEAR SIR: I did not receive your esteemed favor until yesterday, and I have been so much occupied that I could not answer it before.

I had supposed that my sentiments upon the subject to which you refer were fully understood by my Southern friends; but as you seem to desire information, I enclose you my Nicholson letter, which contains all that I have to say upon the subject.

Respectfully yours,

To R. J. MOSES, Esq.

LEWIS CASS.

Gen. CASS never skulks or dodges a question—his opinions are always freely spoken—but when a friend applies to him to learn whether he has placed the proper construction on his Nicholson letter, instead of manfully answering negatively or affirmatively, as the case might be, he quietly encloses him a copy of the letter itself! And yet this man, who boasted in his Protest against the Quintuple treaty that he “was no slaveholder,” that he “never had been and never should be;” that “he deprecated its existence, and prayed for its abolition everywhere;” this “Northern man with Southern principles,” who has deserted the North with a view to cheat the South, now appeals to Southern slaveholders, to assist in his elevation to the Presidency, on the faith of a paltering letter, which he dare not explain, by declaring what he means when he assumes to plant himself on the Southern “Platform!” The “noise and confusion” which confounded him at Cleveland a few months since may satisfy, perhaps, sycophants and tricksters who cling to his fortunes, as the surest means of advancing theirs; but a jealous, reflecting People will never be duped into surrendering Southern rights to the keeping of a man whose greatest claim to their confidence is the proclamation of his own infamy in the base, because insincere, abandonment of Northern opinions and Northern interests.

WASHINGTON, September, 1847.

Towers, printer, Washington.





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