

SPEECH

OF

MR. JAMES S. CARPENTER,

ON THE RESOLUTIONS OF Mr. FISHER, OF HARDIN.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OHIO, FEB. 24, 1840.

Correspondence.

TO J. S. CARPENTER, Esq.

SIR :

We have been informed that you have, in your possession a manuscript report of a speech, which was delivered by you in the House of Representatives, during the late session of the Legislature, upon the pro-slavery resolutions that were introduced by Mr. Fisher. Being desirous to see that speech in print ourselves, and believing that its publication will be productive of good, and the perusal of it, gratifying to your constituents generally, we therefore, respectfully solicit a copy thereof for publication.

Yours, &c.

TIMOTHY BURK,
M. LOOMIS,
OVIATT COLE,
CHESTER C. AMBLER,
NATHAN PRENTISS,
SCOVILL D. FOOT,
H. G. BLAKE,
B. DURHAM,
JAS. W. WELD,
L. B. NETTLETON,
I. R. HENRY,
S. W. MCCLURE.

Medina, June 11th, 1840.

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To Messrs. Burr, Loomis, Cole, Ambler, Prentiss, Foot, Blake,
Durham, Weld, Nettleton, Henry, and M'Clure.

GENTLEMEN :

You request the publication of a speech delivered by me, in the House of Representatives, on the pro-slavery resolutions introduced by Mr. Fisher.— Having preserved a manuscript report of it, I acknowledge your right, as my constituents, to DEMAND it as your property ; and here it is,

Your obedient servant,

J. S. CARPENTER.

Medina, June 11, 1840.

SPEECH

Of J. S. Carpenter, of Medina, in the House of Representatives of Ohio, Feb. 24, 1840—on the following resolutions introduced by Mr. Fisher, and taken up on motion of Mr. Flood.

Resolved, That the false, violent, and inflammatory speeches, resolutions and garbled statements of the abolitionists respecting slavery, are a gross violation of the spirit of compromise which built up, and now cements the union of the States, and a concealed attempt at the dissolution of the union.

Resolved, That the most efficient means should be resorted to, to counteract the attempt now being made by the abolitionists to organize a political abolition party, for the purpose of arraying the north against the south.

Resolved, That the conduct of the abolitionists is calculated to excite insurrection among the slaves ; and is (if not directly) indirectly a guarantee on the part of the abolitionists, to assist the slave in the indiscriminate butchery and murder of the slaveholders.

Resolved, That slavery, as it exists in the southern portion of the confederacy, is guaranteed by the constitution of the U. States ; and that the northern States are bound to protect the southern, in the peaceable enjoyment of their domestic institutions, as they now exist.

Resolved, That the person secreting a runaway negro slave, or aiding the same to escape, should be punished by imprisonment in the penitentiary, and be answerable to the party injured in four-fold damages.

Resolved, That in the opinion of the House, the black and white races were never designed by Providence to intermingle together, as one people.

Resolved, That the abolitionists, in inducing and procuring the settlement of large numbers of blacks within the limits of this State, are directly injuring the character of the State, endangering the peace of citizens, and promoting vice and immorality.

Resolved, That a law should be passed, prohibiting the settlement of blacks within the limits of the State.

Resolved, That the attempt of the abolitionists to extinguish the Anglo-Saxon race, by amalgamation with the black race, deserves the execration of every friend of his country, and of mankind ; therefore,

Resolved, That the judiciary committee be instructed to examine the subject in the foregoing resolutions, and report to this House such amendments and provisions to the law relating to that subject, as may be deemed necessary to preserve the character of the State, & the security of our citizens.

Mr. Carpenter rose and said,

MR. SPEAKER :

When a vote is about to be taken in a legislative body, upon a series of resolutions which indicate some fearful calamity impending over our state, and which propose a direful punishment upon a portion of our citizens, we might expect, that some facts and arguments would be set forth to justify such alarms and such precautionary measures.— It is but natural to expect, that he who introduced these resolutions would lead off in their discussion, unless there is something preconcerted between him and his friends, and concealed in the end, they aim at. As however, the gentleman from Hardin [Mr. Fisher] has seemed unwilling to move in advance on this question, and as these resolutions involve matter of great moment to the state and the whole country, I feel impelled to ask the ear of this House, for a time. And the more earnestly, and the more confidently do I ask an attentive ear, because, I apprehend, it is understood, that the previous question shall instantly follow the reply of the gentleman from Hardin. For, I see the member from Portage (Mr. Spalding) ready in his seat, blushing beneath the laurels which his laudable zeal for the previous question shed upon him this morning. As this however, is a question which concerns the whole country, and not especially the citizens of Columbus. I have the livelier hope, that the patience of that member may endure for a while, notwithstanding his brilliant triumph in the previous question this morning, and his recent horror of investigation!

Sir, the gentleman from Hardin will pardon me, I hope, if I attempt to arrange this parcel of heterogeneous propositions, in some kind of order, and give to them an aggregate shape. I can discover in his arrangement of them nothing consecutive, either logically or chronologically. He will excuse me, then, nor impute it to any disposition to truant him, when I say it is impossible to consider this chaotic mass, without first instituting some division of it, by which I can regulate a train of thought.

I propose, therefore, sir, to classify these resolutions into three branches.

First. “Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the black and white races were never designed by Providence to intermingle together, as one people.

“That the attempt of the abolitionists, to extinguish the Anglo-Saxon race by amalgamation with the black race, deserves the execration of every friend of his country and mankind; therefore,

Resolved, That the judiciary committee be instructed to examine the subject in the foregoing resolutions, and to report to this House such amendments and provisions to the law relating to that subject, as may be deemed necessary to preserve the character of the State and the security of our citizens.”

Sir, the first remarkable proposition in this branch of the resolutions is, that this House is to assert its opinion upon a theological question. “In the opinion of this House the black and white races were never designed by Providence to intermingle together, as one people.” The gentleman’s piety is alarmed lest the two races should intermingle in spite of the design of Providence; and after deciding by legislation what is the design of Providence, he most devoutly brings to the design of Providence a little legislative aid.

The next remarkable proposition is, the attempt of the abolitionists to extinguish the Anglo-Saxon race by amalgamation with the black race. The gentleman’s peculiar care is for what to him is a peculiar race—the Anglo-Saxon race. For this race, exclusive of all others, he would legislate—for the preservation of this race, distinct from all contamination with any other, he invokes the legislative yearnings of his competitors in his Hall.

Sir, before we go about this exclusive legislation for the Anglo-Saxon race, it may be proper to inquire, who are of the Anglo-Saxon race and who are not, for, as I understand it, this exclusive legislation for one race, is a legislative exemption, equivalent to a legislative proscription of all other races.

What then, was the Anglo-Saxon race?—The Anglo-Saxons, if there is any truth in history, were a people who constituted one of the old Saxon confederations, and were a pretty numerous portion among those Saxon invaders, who from time to time overran a part of the Island of Great Britain, and settled down to enjoy the “spoils of victory.” The descendants of all these Saxon immigrants were indiscriminately called *Anglo-Saxons*; and, as this distinctive name and rite upon the continent, were, soon after, totally lost amidst national conquests, revolutions, and intermixtures, these British immigrants remained the only distinguishable inheritors of Anglo-Saxon blood. What, then, became of this precious race, whose pure blood we are at this remote age, by a grave legislative enactment to secure against contaminating intermixture? Do we find them

wherever they come in contact with other races to have been their conquerors, as Governor McDuffie declared them to have been? For, the gentleman from Hardin will pardon me again, if I more than insinuate, that this benevolent thought of preserving the purity of Anglo-Saxon blood, did not originate with him. No, sir, the country is indebted to Gen. George McDuffie for the discovery of this obligation to preserve the purity of the Anglo-Saxon blood—a discovery contemporaneous with another discovery of his—that “slavery is the corner stone of this republic.” Both these discoveries, sir, were published to the world by this potent king of Carolina in the same manifesto. And, yet, after these barbarian invaders—in the imagination of Governor McDuffie, the conquerors of mankind—had revelled for a time on “the spoils of the vanquished,” where next do we find them? Bowing their submissive necks to the Norman yoke. William the conqueror and his proud race stalk over the precious tenements of this Anglo-Saxon blood and trample it foully in the dust.—Yet, at this late day, after its ever varying commixture, century after century, with the Welch or ancient Briton—the Anglo-Norman—the Scotch—the Irish—the German and the Dutch—and with almost every other blood under heaven, we are to preserve it from commixion by a legislative act! And it is the Anglo-Saxon blood we are to preserve—none but the Anglo-Saxon. All other blood is foul and tainted and not worth preserving! It is only the blooded breed that deserves our care! Sir, if there be any profit in it, I am ready to legislate for blooded horses, and for blooded dogs. But before I give my vote to preserve from impure mixture this blooded breed of men, I must inquire what other men and the descendants of what other men would be excluded from my legislative care.

Surely, the veneration of the gentleman from Hardin is paradoxical. It recognizes only things the most remote, the most uncertain, yea, even things that are not; while it takes no cognizance of things, names or persons dear to the heart of every other true American. He has a monomania, I fear, for Anglo-Saxon blood. How can it be otherwise, when, with his prodigious enthusiasm for a once renowned but now undistinguishable race, he virtually proscribes the memory and the descendants of many of our most celebrated revolutionary heroes.

Who, sir, was General Stark, had he Anglo-Saxon blood? Not a particle in his veins, for he was of pure Irish descent. And Gen.

Montgomery, that early martyr to American liberty, was he fired by this precious Anglo-Saxon blood? He never bore a drop of it in his veins. He, too, descended from the Irish, General Francis Marion, did he derive his bravery from Anglo-Saxon blood? He was the descendant of French Huguenots, and had not a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood, unless by amalgamation—which the gentleman so piously deprecates. Lafayette—had he any Anglo-Saxon blood? Not a drop. The gentleman thrusts him and his posterity beyond the reach of our reverence or our good will. Kosiusco, Dekalb, Pulaski, were they and their zeal for liberty inflamed by Anglo-Saxon blood? I never heard that they had a particle of it in their veins.

Passing the revolutionary heroes and several of the signers of the Declaration of Independence who made no pretension to Anglo-Saxon blood, what find we among the more modern heroes and worthies of this republic? Whom first should the gentleman from Hardin arraign before this dread tribunal,—instituted to adjudicate upon lineage and the purity of blood? Him, undoubtedly, who is best able to bear it. He upon whom prescription will be the most impotent—he—should stand before this high tribunal ere the keen edge of its scrutiny is worn off by the vast multitude of cases, which you begin to perceive, sir; it will have to try.

General Andrew Jackson, then—let him be arraigned. Sir, the whole world knows that he stands condemned under these resolutions—that he is the son of an Irish father and an Irish mother—that he never had a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood about him, unless it gushed upon him in furious conflict.

Martin Van Buren, no body pretends has a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood in his veins.—Commodore McDonough, the hero of Champlain, and Gen. McComb, the sharer of his glory at Plattsburgh, had neither of them a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood, unless by that foul amalgamation which the gentleman from Hardin so much deprecates. One of our evered supreme judges—Fredrick Grimke—is a descendant from the French Huguenots, and without one drop of Anglo-Saxon blood, unless by amalgamation. His brother Thomas S. Grimke, one of the most distinguished scholars that our country has ever boasted, lived and died and was honored by all sensible men, without this high prerogative of Anglo-Saxon blood. William Wirt, the celebrated orator and scholar, was of Swiss origin and without one drop of Anglo-Saxon blood—if a momentary recollection serves me—even by amalga-

mation. James Buchanan, the distinguished Senator from Pennsylvania, unless his name belies his lineage, has not a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood, except by foul amalgamation. Thomas Buchanan, my early and intimate friend and correspondent, now Governor of Liberia and consul at Sierra Leone, has to my certain knowledge, not a particle of Anglo-Saxon blood, his parentage being Scotch on both sides.

Even Governor George McDuffie, the founder of this antiquarian sect of conservators of Anglo-Saxon blood—even he, unless his name too belies his parentage, is proscribed by his own disinterested benevolence, wanting, as he does, the first drop of Anglo-Saxon blood, except by that foul amalgamation which his theory has condemned as of all things most foul and unnatural. So suicidal is the fanaticism of some men!

Sir, how fearfully would the same suicidal stroke fall upon this House! Look around you, sir. Who are, and who are not to be the victims of this fanaticism here. My friend from Tuscarawas, [Mr. Everhard] my friend from Columbiana, [Mr. Lepper] my friend from Richland, [Mr. Riblet] all claim their German descent, without any account of Anglo-Saxon mixture; and, yet, I never perceived that they felt degraded by any want of heroic blood. My friend from Wayne [Mr. Shreves] will make no pretension to Anglo-Saxon blood, while he bears an Irish name. My friend from Fairfield [Mr. Hite] claims a Swiss origin, I believe, without boasting of Anglo-Saxon mixture. My friend from Logan [Mr. Casad] boasts a descent from the French Huguenots, and not a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood, unless by this impure commixtion which his neighbor from Hardin [Mr. Fisher] so deplures. My friends from Miami, [Mr. Shideler] Darke, [Mr. Purviance] Coshocton, [Mr. Ravenscraft] Harrison, [Mr. Rea] Greene, [Mr. Scott] Highland, [Mr. Baskin] Holmes, [Mr. Hoagland] Lucas, [Mr. McAulhey] and Muskingum, [Mr. Pollock] unless their names belie their descent, will lay no claim to pure Anglo-Saxon blood. Even my friend from Cuyahoga [Mr. Lloyd] shows a Spanish origin in his sign manual. [Mr. Lloyd indicated dissent.] Well, sir, the double consonant might point to such an origin. At any rate, it is not Anglo-Saxon.*

Sir, the Speaker of our Senate, nay, even our excellent and venerated Governor will make no pretensions to Anglo-Saxon blood. They both have Irish names.

*Mr. Lloyd is of Welch extraction.

But, sir, a committee, is to be instructed to report such a law "as may be deemed necessary to preserve the character of the State and the security of our citizens."

"To preserve the character of our State and the security of our citizens" from what? From their predisposition to amalgamate with the black race! We, the representatives, the servants of the people of Ohio, are to enact a law to curb our masters, the Anglo-Saxons of Ohio, from amalgamating with the negroes! All this to preserve the Anglo-Saxon blood of Ohio from contamination! The 500,000 Germans of Ohio have nothing to do with our legislative providence in this behalf! The Scotch, the Irish, the Welch, the French, and the descendants of almost every other people under heaven, that make up the 1,500,000 souls of Ohio are to have no benefit from this conservative act of us their servants!

So ridiculous sometimes are the impulses of fanaticism. Why, sir, when I look around this Hall, I cannot but fear you must draw upon some other than Anglo-Saxon blood to constitute this potent committee.

The second branch of the resolutions, according to my arrangement, includes the following:

"Resolved, That the abolitionists in inducing and procuring the settlement of large numbers of blacks within the limits of this state are directly injuring the character of the State, endangering the peace of citizens and promoting vice and immorality.

"That a law should be passed prohibiting the settlement of blacks within the limits of the State."

Upon this branch of the resolutions, sir, I have very little to say. The constitution of Ohio inhibits slavery. If bound to recognise it at all, it is as citizens of the United States. As citizens of Ohio we have no right to countenance, aid or recognize it. If the abolitionists insist, that this prohibitory principle of our constitution should be adhered to—if they will not consent, that the fundamental principles of liberty and human rights guaranteed in our constitution, should be trampled down in the persons of colored men, natives of our own state, entitled to its immunities by the laws of nature—if these are the means by which they are inducing and procuring the settlement of large numbers of blacks within the limits of this state, it may perhaps be a grave question with some men, whether the constitution should not be broken down in order to prevent a result so deplorable. That the abolitionists use any other means to procure the settlement of blacks within this

state, I utterly deny. If they are indeed, as the resolution declares, "directly injuring the character of the State and endangering the peace of its citizens" by maintaining the constitution, the first step towards the prevention of a result so alarming, must, I presume, be, to amend that instrument—having first of all, however, be it well understood, improved and amended the laws of nature.

As to promoting vice and immorality by "procuring the settlement of blacks," even if the abolitionists were guilty of the charge, I could conceive of such a consequence only by our citizens copying the vicious example of the blacks; or by their amalgamating with them. If the gentleman from Hardin chooses to presume the former, of our citizens, I leave him to answer to them for such a presumption; if he prefers to presume the latter, I will read him an authority on that point, which neither he nor his party, will be over-anxious to contest.

Sir, I read from a decision of Judge Tappan, then a democratic judge, now a Senator in the Congress of the United States, and elected to that high station by the democratic legislature of this democratic State of Ohio.

The decision which I am about to read is, *Barrett vs. Jarvis*, Tappan's Reports, page 211. It was an action of slander for speaking and publishing false, scandalous and defamatory words.

[Mr. Carpenter here read the decision of Judge Tappin, of which the following is an extract.]

"We are called upon to decide, whether the words laid in this declaration are actionable—the words amount to charging the plaintiff with being of kin to negroes—is such a charge slanderous in law?"

"And why should the action lie for imputing a kindred with the negro race? Is it because they are slaves? I presume not; the Russian peasant, the Polish serf and recently the feudal vassal were alike slaves—who is there of European extraction who can be sure that no one of his ancestors was bought and sold like the cattle of a feudal lord? And surely it could not be slanderous to charge one with being of kin to the Russian boor or Scalvonian serf.

"Is it because the negro is black? but on this ground the action should as well be for imputing kindred with the native of Malabar, and many other parts of India; with Brazilian, the Californian, the New Zealander, the Laplander, the Greenlander, who are all of a swarthy hue and many as black as the na-

tive of Congo—and if being of kin to negroes is a slanderous imputation, it must be so to say of a person, that he is of kin to the Quinteron, a name used in the West Indies for a person who is fifteen sixteenths white and one sixteenth black; for this would be to charge him with being of kin to the negroes; and yet the Quinteron is free by law even in the Spanish Colonies, and cannot be distinguished in external appearance from the fairest European or American.

"I fully agree with the court in the case of *Row vs. Clargis*, Sir Thomas Ray, Rep. 489.—"that the law doth alter with the time," when the sense of words alter, as in the case and in all cases coming within the like reason, but before I can decide that words of this kind are slanderous, I must be satisfied that they are of very different import from what they now appear to be; besides if the law of slander is to be thus extended, I do not see where we are to stop; we may have actions of slander for calling persons Irish or French, or Yankees, if persons who are so called, feel their pride and self importance wounded by the imputation.

"Whether God hath made of one blood all men who dwell upon the face of the earth and the appearance of distinct races is produced by climate and other causes, or whether distinct races of men were created, the history of mankind, experience and observation teach us that the perpetual migration of tribes, of families and individuals produces a mixture and blending of all the various races of men—and I know of no principle of ethics or law which would forbid a descendant of the fair-haired Tuetone from marrying the swarthy native of Africa; good taste and refinement but neither law or morals forbid such a connexion.

"I cannot in any point of view in which I have been able to examine the question see how this action can be supported: We live under a government which recognizes the natural equality of man, which by a fundamental law hath preserved us from the dangers and the curse of slavery, and as a magistrate in a free commonwealth, I will never sanction any doctrine which directly or indirectly contravenes that principle on which our Government rests, that all men are created equal."

Sir, I leave this controversy upon the moral character of an amalgamation, to the gentleman from Hardin, and the paragon of his party, Senator Tappan. Abolitionists, as such, have nothing to do with it. I am not ignorant of the widespread calumny, that abolitionists are amalgamators. I know

what pains have been taken to excite the popular prejudice against them by so false an issue. Sir, no honest man ever invented it; no sensible man ever believed it; no man both sensible and honest, save the gentleman from Hardin, ever propagated it.

Abolitionists, sir, have no communion with that genius of amalgamation, adored by the slaves of slavery, the slave masters, as the patron spirit of their blessed institution. No people on earth can loathe more than abolitionists do, that sink of amalgamation, which, like a sea of bestial turpitude is heaving its billowy surface all over the south.— They, sir, are willing to confide this question of intermixture to the good taste of Americans, wherever the natural defence of chastity is not wrenched away by statute.

Mr. Speaker, the third branch of these resolutions, as I have taken the liberty to arrange them, includes the first five of the string, for I cannot call them a series; and I shall consider them in the same order in which the gentleman introduced them, except that I shall beg the liberty to make the first and second exchange places.

The first to be considered, then, is this.

“Resolved, That the most efficient means should be resorted to, to counteract the attempt now being made by the abolitionists to organize a political abolition party for the purpose of arraying the north against the south.”

Sir, I understand this whole matter. I know the purpose for which these resolutions were introduced. The leaders of a certain political party in this state have consulted the signs of the times. They began some time ago to apprehend the necessity of instituting some new issue between theirs and the other great political party. They know the odium which clings to abolitionism throughout the country. If they can seize upon this odium and hurl it against the other party and make it stick there, it will be a broad target for all their shots. And some device of this kind they must resort to. To leave the political questions legitimately between these parties to be discussed upon their own merits, would leave one party to contend against too fearful odds. It would leave them to fight against their own professions while wading middle-deep amidst their own corruptions.

Accordingly, the administration party have thought best to have these resolutions introduced and the question of abolition agitated in this House. They have deliberately fixed on the measure. They have selected their man for the work; they have found an ad-

venturer willing to run the risk; and it is none of my business to inquire, how much or how little that selection depended on their low estimate of the loss in case the adventure should prove his destruction. It is a party manœuvre. The beginning, end and aim of the scheme, is to adopt by a party vote a set of resolutions so violent, false and fanatical, that the most violent Whig anti-abolitionist cannot vote for them; and then to exhibit the vote as proof positive that the Whig party are all abolitionists, and the Van Buren party all anti-abolitionists.

But, sir, your party has most unfortunately deferred this manœuvre too long. They will have to push it up a stream of obstinate facts. I know they have the capital excuse, that they have always had use for abolitionists among them, and use for abolition votes. I admit, they are not to be censured for availing themselves of talents and influence like those of Thomas Morris. I presume it was good policy to make the most of such talents and influence up to the nick of time when it was necessary to create the new issue, and then to put the seal of sincerity upon their renunciation of all abolitionism, by thrusting, in the rudest, the most indecorous manner imaginable, their strongest man from the party. I dare say, sir, this was good policy. But still, it is truly unfortunate, that there is so much evidence of your party having had largely to do with abolitionism; and of their having been both the efficient and the final cause of their own complaints about it.

Sir, I claim to know something personally about this matter, and to be a legitimate witness here in the case. Sir, I am an abolitionist. Gentlemen may doubt it, on the ground, that they have never yet seen me armed with a fire-brand—and yet I repeat, that I am an abolitionist. I know my situation here in making this avowal. I know how angry and apprehensive one party will be, that I give too much color to the ribaldrous, cowardly, timeserving charge, that the Whigs are abolitionists. I know how elated the other party will feel, that I am giving some little countenance to a charge, which, though false in fact and false in design, and mean and foul in purpose, is still the hopeful, because the new-made weapon of affrighted partizans. I foresee the odium that must attach to me from both parties for this avowal. I remember the odium which both parties have always thought prudent to attach to abolitionists, and the persecution which one party has deemed it necessary to visit upon them. I know, too, that as an abolitionist I stand in this Hall almost, if not entirely,

alone. And yet, sir, for all the aspersions of these resolutions, for all this affected hate, for all this prinked, this puffed, this starched, this made-up, this new-fashioned, this band-box rage against abolitionists, I shall presume to show my sovereign contempt, by repeating here in my place and elsewhere, that I am an abolitionist—one of the fanatical, heated, wild, maniacal, audacious, blood-thirsty, insurrectionary kind.

Still, after this surcharged manifesto, even, I shall claim exemption from all the anathemas of the Van Buren party. And I shall quote very high authority in my defence.

Sir, the gentleman from Clermont (Mr. Buchanan) the other day, in pouring out the sweeping denunciations of his party against the abolitionists, suddenly seemed to recollect himself, when he threw in a kind of parenthetical salvo for all except *political abolitionists*. It was the *political* abolitionists who were to be the victims of his stormy execrations. The other abolitionists, by far the greater number, he might be very fond of. There was a benevolent care, a kindly saving clause, that the charities of his bosom should not be shut up against all abolitionists. To me, sir, this well-timed salvo was peculiarly gratifying. For I perceived at once, that for anything he had then said the gentleman from Clermont and myself might, as to the great question, stand on precisely the same ground. For, I, sir, am no political abolitionist, in the accepted sense of the phrase. Nor have I ever been. I have always opposed, with all the humble powers I possessed, everything like political organization of abolitionists, and any the slightest connection of their noble cause with common politics. For the sake of their noble cause itself, sir, I have always taken this ground. The recollection of that saving clause of the gentleman from Clermont, is to me a precious guaranty, that, whenever I find it expedient, I may flee the solitude in my position here as an abolitionist, to the genial converse of now and then a freeman of his own party. Sir, when that parenthesis escaped him, I fancied I could discover in many a face among his political adherents, the almost irrepressible inquiry, 'How many good democratic votes will probably slip into the ballot box through that loophole?'

But, sir, there is one strong reason why that conciliatory exception of the great mass of abolitionists, that accommodating parenthesis, could never catch my vote. It is because yours is emphatically the party which is and has been endeavoring to organize that

political abolition party, so deprecated in this resolution.

Sir, I have said, that I have some knowledge of this matter. I do know something about it. I do know it has for some time been the effort of the administration party to create, to organize and to invigorate this political abolition party. Sir, the very number of your host in this Legislature, is proof of this.

Why, sir, this matter is well understood now in the north part of the State. I will give an instance of these operations in my own county; and I am much misinformed if it will not be of a piece with operations in every county on the Western Reserve. A short time previous to the election of 1838 a meeting was holden in Medina county for the public discussion of matters of this sort. Some half dozen or more of the Van Buren party urged the carrying of abolition into politics. They were opposed; and when the debaters had all taken their positions, it was found that the line of the two political parties divided the disputants on each side of the question. All who advocated political action, except one, were Van Buren men. All who opposed political action, without exception, were Whigs. These discussions were repeated, sir, from time to time, the year round, and always with about the same result.

As time drew near the last election these efforts were redoubled. Just before the Van Buren Convention for nomination, Mr. Humphreville, who was then and there made a candidate for this House, and who I take pleasure in saying would do no discredit to this Hall—exerted himself most vigorously to induce the abolitionists to a distinct political organization, or, at all events to question their candidates on the subject of abolition. Not that he avowed himself an abolitionist; but he urged it for the sake of their consistency. The man who stood in that convention next to him as candidate for nomination, was an active and avowed abolitionist; and not less zealous or influential than the other in urging abolitionists to political action.—To both these men, I stood not less opposed on this question, than on that of general politics.

In that, as in nearly every instance within my knowledge, the movers of political abolition were men who had a strong partiality for the Van Buren party. And, yet, it has become the very talisman of this party to fling the reproach of political abolition upon the Whigs!

Sir, I much fear there is many an honest man in your party, who little knows what

ful company he keeps. They have probably never heard that William Leggett, the editor of a newspaper devoted with equal zeal to the cause of the administration politics and that of abolition, was a Van Buren candidate for Congress in the city of New York. Usually ignorant, I presume they are, that Gerrit Smith—the man who in 1838 rebuked abolitionists of Western New York with vehemence seldom found in the English language, because their votes indicated that other considerations as well as abolition moved them at the polls, was recently the candidate for the Senate of the United States—opposed to Mr. Tallmadge in the Legislature of New York. They may never have heard of E. D. Barber, of Middlebury, Vermont, a zealous uncompromising abolitionist, was the last Van Buren candidate opposed to that shrinking abolitionist in Congress, William Slade. They may not have heard of Carpenter, a Van Buren abolitionist in Congress, elected by abolition votes in Massachusetts; nor of Governor Morton in the same state, who, as all that do know, admitted his late, slow-grown, frost-bitten harvest, to abolition votes. Yet it is the Whigs who court the abolitionists!

Sir, it is most unlucky for this charge, that the principal sticklers for political abolition are men of strong predilection for the dominant party. The late Theodore Sedgwick was of this number. The editor of the *Emancipator* and Myron Holly and their associates, who have lately made so mighty an effort to organize an abolition party in politics, are evidently, either on the score of old associations, or of promised favors, or of some or other of the nameless ties that bind willing hearts together, yielding a kindly influence to the party in power. The most distinguished lecturer on abolition in the country, C. G. Burleigh, the man whose eloquence has been strikingly compared to a perpetual cataract, told me not six months ago, that if he were to vote at all, it would be with the Democratic party. This remark he so far explained, that by *Democratic*, he knew I understood him to mean the Van Buren party.

The Whigs courting the abolitionists!—Sir, it is more true of the other side. As abolitionists we have received both more solicitation and more abuse from the Van Buren party. Why sir, I can point you to a time, not very far ago, when the whole Van Buren party in Ohio were courtesying and bowing to us on all sides—when Thomas L. Hamer, at that critical time before election, too late to counteract a misrepresenta-

tion, published a soul-moving letter commiserating Rev. J. B. Mahan, bitterly denouncing Governor Vance for yielding him to the clutches of the Kentucky officers, and rallying the abolitionists under his banner in opposition to a chief magistrate, who would perpetrate such an indignity upon the rights of man.

[During the delivery of this sentence the Speaker standing on the floor, some other member in the chair, interrupted Mr. Carpenter in a very angry tone.] Mr. C. said,

Sir, I did not hear the gentleman distinctly. Mr. Buchanan.—“Does the member from Medina say upon his own authority that Thomas L. Hamer wrote that letter? Does he speak that upon his own authority?”

Mr. Carpenter resumed: Sir, I never saw the manuscript. I cannot say from positive knowledge. But the writing of that letter has always been attributed to T. L. Hamer. I believe he wrote it. I believe he wrote it for political effect. I believe the Rev. J. B. Mahan applied to him for assistance in procuring a writ of habeas corpus to deliver him from the emissaries of a slaveholding power, and, that Thomas L. Hamer refused to lend him assistance in that hour of distress; but, that some weeks afterwards, on the eve of an election, when it could be used for political effect, he then wrote a letter to his organ here, so full of pity and indignation as to stir men's blood. This letter was published by the organ of the administration party, and sent forth in hand bills to every extremity of the state. Sir, I took some interest in that election. I met the fluttering hand-bills on the morning of election, thick as the falling leaves of the forest. They denounced the decision of Governor Vance in the most bitter words. They rallied the abolitionists to the rescue. Sir, I remember that conflict well. I found a breach between Governor Vance and a part of the abolitionists.—I flung myself into that breach; and defended Governor Vance. I thought the point he decided was disputable—one on which clear-sighted men might honestly differ. I had no doubt he decided conscientiously. But, sir, I found a large portion of the abolitionists in this State arrayed against me, and with them stood, shoulder to shoulder, the whole Van Buren party of Ohio.

Sir, I believe upon authority, which, I repeat it, I have never yet heard contradicted, that the abolitionists were then mustered against the Whig candidate for Governor by the influence, and, I regret to say, the misrepresentations of Thomas L. Hamer and his associates—the very men who are now so

indignant at the Whigs for making league with the abolitionists, and the same, the very same, sir, whose anger is so irrepressible at the abolitionists for carrying their doctrines into politics!

And now, sir, if this statement of facts is not satisfactory to the gentleman from Clermont, he is at liberty, even at this late day to contradict them for the first time.

As to whether I have spoken this upon my own authority, I do not know, nor shall I take the trouble to inquire, what the gentleman will do about it if I have.

Sir, it is hardly proper, perhaps, that I should pass in silence the uncourteous and menacing tones in which the gentleman chose to put his interrogatory. It would, however, be exactly proper, and I would strictly observe the propriety, were it not that I stand here perhaps the solitary defender of the abolitionists.

As it is, sir, it may as well be understood once and forever, by the gentleman from Clermont and by all that while I stand up on this floor the representative of freemen, no brow-beating, no insinuated threats, nor flows of a surrounding host shall deter me from uttering what I think.

[Mr. C. spoke of the avidity with which certain gentlemen in the House had recently seized upon the votes in Congress on Mr. Calhoun's resolutions, to prove an alliance between the Whigs and abolitionists, and the opposition which the latter met with from the administration party. He said, that, by the construction which they put upon such votes, he could prove an alliance between Senator Allen of Ohio, Senator Wall of New Jersey, Senator Buchanan of Pennsylvania, and other distinguished men of that party, and the abolitionists. He then read from the proceedings of the United States Senate, the remarks of Mr. Hubbard of N. Hampshire, charging Messrs. Allen and Morris of Ohio, with an attempt to defeat Mr. Calhoun's resolutions by certain amendments which they offered. Mr. Carpenter read many other passages from the proceedings of the United States Senate of the same character.]

Sir, continued Mr. Carpenter, who have been the agitators of this great question in legislative bodies in this country? Who has made the most noise about it in the Senate of the United States? What expiation has John C. Calhoun made for this sin? I have just given you Senator Hubbard's own testimony upon his instrumentality in agitating it in the legislature of New Hampshire. How does he expiate the crime?

Mr. Speaker, where shall my friend from

Jardin (Mr. Fisher) seek absolution for introducing the agitation of the question in this Hall? Will the priests of the party solve him from an offence, against which I have hurled the thunder of the so resolutions? Has the day of buying indulgences returned? My friend must have been most reckless, unless he purchased his indulgence beforehand. And the great pope of the party may have granted it, on the ground, that the end sanctifies the means.

But, sir, I pass from this branch of the discussion, declaring my firm conviction—a conviction produced by an intimacy with the whole abolition movement, by a frequent and long continued correspondence with abolitionists—that the formation of a political abolition party has been more promoted by the efforts and the designs of the administration party, than by all other means put together. I have opposed it from the beginning as I now do; and I have watched it narrowly because I have opposed it.

Sir, I think, I comprehend the design, the means and the end of this matter. The formation of a political abolition party would strike off many a clog from the cabinet party, and permit them to rush on the more securely in their barbarous attacks upon the constitution and the rights of man. It is for this, I am opposed to such an organization.—As an abolitionist, I ask nothing from Whiggism. As a Whig I ask nothing from abolitionism. I wish those who call themselves democrats, could be content to observe the same rule. I am not inconsistent. I hold my abolitionism where I do my religion—an elementary part of humanity, felt by all in common; but too subtil to be safely made a test in the grosser movings of political contest.

And, yet, sir, if both these great political parties would follow out those certain fundamental principles which neither of them does, professedly dissent from, they would find themselves, in the last analysis, standing upon the indestructible and eternal rock of abolitionism.

The next resolution to be considered is—“That the false, violent and inflammatory speeches, resolutions and garbled statements of the abolitionists respecting slavery, are a gross violation of the spirit of compromise which built up and now cements the union of the states, and a concealed attempt at a dissolution of the Union.

“False, violent and inflammatory.” Well, sir, we will test this. I know not whether such evidence as I shall bring would be admissible before a tribunal which discrimi-

ages between Anglo Saxon and other kinds of blood.

Sir, the charge against the abolitionists is, that they overrate the cruelties of slavery; and, that their speeches are for this reason of a incendiary tendency. If I shall show, that the strongest expressions of the abolitionists against slaveholders and their institution, have been predicated on the testimony of slaveholders themselves, I presume the most natural effort to get rid of conviction will be to slur the character of the witnesses. Now, sir, if I show, that these witnesses were not only slaveholders, but men above suspicion; that they were among the most distinguished men of the country, of the whole world, that, except one of them, they even inherited as great a share of Anglo-Saxon blood, that essence of all excellence, as had fallen to the lot of any men of their day—their warfare will gentlemen adopt to protect their consciences? What shield will they bear to ward off conviction?

Sir, I will read a passage from Jefferson's Notes on Virginia—page 251.

"The whole intercourse between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passion, the most unremitting despotism on the one part and degrading submission on the other. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives loose to the worst of passions; and thus nursed, educated and daily exercised in tyranny cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities."

In one of his congressional speeches John Randolph of Roanoke, says:—Avarice alone can drive as it does drive this infernal traffic; and the wretched victims of it like so many post-horses whipped to death in a mail coach. Avarice has its coverlets in the pride and pomp and circumstance of glorious war; but where are the trophies of avarice? The ruffian, the mantle, the blood-stained mantle! What man is worse received in society for being a hard master? Who decried the hand of a sister or daughter to such masters?"

Slavers! An epithet applied by a slaveholder to slaveholders—by one who had of his own eye and seen the whole, to those who were so far distinguished from their fellow slaveholders, as to be worse received in society, or decried the hand of a sister or a daughter! And what slaveholder too was John Randolph of Roanoke! Think of this, my countrymen, think of this—and judge ye, whether the charge of the abolitionists is false!

Permit me to read, sir, the testimony of the Hon. William Pinckney, of Maryland.—In a speech before the Maryland House of Delegates in 1789, Mr. Pinckney called slavery in that state, "a speaking picture of abominable oppression. It will not do, thus to act like unrelenting tyrants, perpetually sermonizing it with liberty for our text and actual oppression for our commentary. Is she (Maryland) not the foster mother of petty despots—the patron of wanton oppression."

The next, sir, is the Hon. B. Swain of N. Carolina. He too was a slaveholder.

"Let any man of spirit and feeling for a moment cast his thoughts over this land of slavery. Think of the nakedness of some, the hungry yearnings of others, the glowing tears and heaving sighs of parting relations, the wailings and woe, the bloody cut of the keen lash, and the frightful scream that rends the very skies—and all this to gratify ambition, lust, pride, avarice, vanity and other depraved feelings of the human heart.

"The worst is not generally known.—Were all the miseries, the horrors of slavery to burst at once into view, a peal of seven fold thunder could scarce strike greater alarm."

"The bloody cut of the keen lash and the frightful scream that rends the very skies?"

Sir, what does this mean? Spoken by a slaveholder in the midst of a people upon whom he makes these charges, can you suppose he exaggerates? And when we only reiterate these very charges which are thus self-preferred and self-confessed, they are false, violent and inflammatory!

Sir, I pass to the next resolution, always apologizing to the gentleman from Hardin for disturbing his arrangement.

"Resolved, That the conduct of the abolitionists is calculated to excite insurrection among the slaves; and is (if not directly) indirectly a guarantee on the part of the abolitionists, to assist the slave in the indiscriminate butchery and murder of the slaveholders."

"Insurrection—indiscriminate butchery & murder!"

Sir, I will not doubt the sincerity of the gentleman's fears. But if I show from the testimony of slaveholders themselves, that they understand abolitionists better, it may perhaps alleviate the gentleman's dread forebodings a little, and bring back some color to his cheeks.

I introduce, then, the testimony of Duff Green,—then editor of the Southern Review, a periodical got up for the special benefit &

maintenance of the slave system. Surely, if any thing could be legitimate authority for the use of abolitionists themselves, it must be the editorial matter of such a paper.

'We are of those who believe the south has nothing to fear from a servile war. We do not believe that the abolitionists intend, nor could they if they would, excite the slaves to insurrection. The danger of this is remote. We believe that we have most to fear from the organized action upon the consciences and fears of the slaveholders themselves; from the insinuations of their dangerous heresies into our schools, our pulpits and our domestic circles. It is only by alarming the consciences of the weak and feeble, and diffusing among our people a morbid sensibility on the question of slavery, that the abolitionists can accomplish their object.'

Next comes the testimony of John C. Calhoun.

'Do they,' he says, (the Southerners) expect the abolitionists will resort to arms, will commence a crusade to liberate our slaves by force? Is that what they mean when they speak of the attempt to abolish slavery? Let me tell our friends of the South who differ from us, that the war which the abolitionists wage against us is of a very different character and far more effective,—it is waged not against our lives but our character.'

Before I proceed farther with the testimony of this witness, sir, I beg leave to inquire of the gentleman from Hardin, whether or not he intends in his reply, to maintain the pro-slavery ground? to defend slavery in the abstract?

[Mr. Fisher made no reply.]

Sir, I have seen the gentleman busily taking notes, as I presume for a reply. I presume, too, that the previous question lies in wait to cut me off from a rejoinder. In such circumstances, I think an answer, to my inquiry can be no more than fair; more especially as the gentleman introduced the resolutions and refused to lead in the discussion.

[Mr. F. said, he would let the gentleman know his position in his reply.]

Very well, sir. I shall take it for granted, that no representative of the citizens of Ohio, will dare defend slavery in the abstract, whatever he may do to promote it in practice.

In the Senate of the United States, Mr. Rives admitted, that slavery was abstractly wrong; but justified its continuance in the Southern States, on the ground of expediency or necessity.

Mr. Calhoun replied, that to admit slavery

to be abstractly wrong, was to yield a whole argument to the abolitionists. Surely he said was not abstractly wrong; were, nothing could make it practice right, and the abolitionists were justified their war against it.

How stands the gentleman from Hardin then? He does not defend slavery on ground of right. He admits it is wrong. Mr. Calhoun, than whom a more subtle debater this age has not furnished, standing too, in the front rank of the gentleman's party, and head and shoulders above them all, his penetrating mind cannot brook the absurdity of calling slavery wrong, and yet denouncing abolitionism. Take these two admissions—that of the gentleman from Hardin and that of the distinguished Senator, my friend must believe, that, to be consistent, Mr. Calhoun must be an abolitionist; Mr. Calhoun must also believe, that, to be consistent, my friend from Hardin must be an abolitionist? Here, then, within the great democratic party are all the elements of abolitionism—John C. Calhoun holding one half; and the hopeful successor to his name, my friend from Hardin, the other. Sir, much fear the defection your party underwent on the 8th of January, did not clear its soul bosom of all the perilous stuff of wars against its soul.

Sir, here is the testimony, and I leave for the gentleman from Hardin to settle the dispute between himself on the one side, and Duff Green and J. C. Calhoun on the other—three the most renowned defenders of slavery on the globe.

The next resolution is,—'That slavery, as it exists in the southern portion of the confederacy, is guaranteed by the constitution of the United States; and that the northern States are bound to protect the southern States in the peaceable enjoyment of their domestic institutions, as they now exist.'

The northern States are bound to protect the Southern! That is—the Southern while the Southern Anglo-Saxons—are to have one class of men to feed and clothe them and another class of men to protect them. Adorable distribution of labor! They are to have one class of men, the very end of whose being it should be to minister to the immediate gratification of their desires; and another class, as a kind of standing army, to intercept, the first moment their violation of the rights man should provoke retaliatory vengeance from their tortured, hundred, ravished and menials! This was the bargain was it? Sir, I leave this point for gentlemen to think

But 'slavery as it exists in the Southern portion of the confederacy, is guarantied by the Constitution of the United States.' Sir, I couple this with what is said about 'the spirit of compromise,' in the second resolution of the third branch of this torrent of resolutions, and we have then the core of nearly every pro-slavery argument, promulgated for the last five years.

[Mr. Carpenter here went at great length into an examination of the nature of human rights—he explained the Declaration of Independence, as lying at the foundation of our system of Government; and that its truths could not be applicable to a part of mankind without including all. He said, that the doctrines of the abolitionists were legitimately deduced from these great truths; and, that the political press of both parties was wont, inadvertently, to acknowledge it. He illustrated this assertion by reading some verses from a recent number of the Statesman. During these remarks, Mr. C. was frequently interrupted with questions of order. The Speaker pro. tem. (Mr. West) acquiesced in Mr. C's explanations and permitted him to proceed.]

Mr. Speaker,—After, as we have just seen, our fathers had drawn up this Declaration of Independence as an indelible charter of human liberty—after they had appealed to the consciousness of every human being for the existence of rights known and felt as an elementary law of the human mind—after this Declaration thus drawn out they had held up before the whole world as a justification for tearing away their allegiance from the crown of Britain—after thus shielding themselves with the law of nature and claiming their right to its protection only because of its self-evident application to every man on earth—after demanding the full immunities of this law sword in hand, through the carnage, the toil and discouragements of a war of eight years—after all this, our fathers it is said, made a compromise with the spirit of slavery, every motion and impulse of which is in violation of that great law upon which they had taken their appeal to the nations. Slavery is guarantied by the constitution, it is said: and the constitution is a compromise between slavery and liberty.

Let us not dispute about it. Let us take it all for granted. Let us say, that our fathers were compelled to submit to this, in order to find rest from the toils of war. A rule so old, that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, so common, that none but barbarians ever dissent from it, is, that any law agreement or compact which oper-

ates to restrain natural rights, shall be construed strictly. The rule says, that in such case, nothing shall be implied against rights; all construction upon the agreement shall be as far as possible in favor of natural rights.

Now, sir, is it not strange that a part of our countrymen demand a strict construction of the constitution in every case except where liberty is involved; but, that, in a question of liberty, nay a question involving every human right—involving the whole end and aim of man's creation, they demand the loosest construction conceivable?

Sir, I insist on a strict construction: at least a strict construction upon their construction.

When we have granted that a constitution which contains no where the words slave or slavery, nor any synonymous word or phrase, was nevertheless, intended to protect slavery; when we have permitted them to go so far by mere implication, I insist, that they shall then put a strict construction upon this implied construction. I insist, that implication upon this subject, should not be what it always has been, a measure longer or shorter as the slaveholder had, or fancied he had, need.

When we grant that the constitution so far protects slavery as to leave the question of its existence to the people of the several states respectively, I insist, that this mere implication shall mean but so much and no more;—that the slaveholder when he feels himself firmly seated upon this, shall not then bolster himself up with an implication raised upon this implication, to interdict the rights of speech, the rights of feeling and the rights of action in the free states.

What if we grant, that the constitution has impliedly left the question of slavery in Virginia to the people of Virginia; and has bound us on a certain contingency to protect the masters against their slaves; are we, of course, to take on this additional implication also, that the people of Ohio are never to open their mouths about slavery unless in its praise? What if the law of nature has left it to the judgment of the people of Britain to use ships of dangerous construction if they choose to do so; and what if it has also bound us upon certain contingencies to afford them relief in case of shipwreck; should this, of course, imply, that we are never to open our mouths against that unsafe mode of shipbuilding? Should it forbid our forming societies to spread information on the subject? Should it forbid our preaching, praying and writing against it? And can

our compromise with the south be more binding than the law of nature? What if we are bound to feed the pauper emigrants whom the cruelty of a foreign nation has flung upon our shores? Does it follow that we are never to open our mouths against that cruelty?

If we have thus restrained ourselves as to slavery it must be by the letter of the constitution. But where is it found? Sir, if by a very loose construction the constitution has guaranteed slavery, it has without any construction at all guaranteed the freedom of speech. If the framers of the constitution deemed it necessary to compromise with the foul spirit of slavery, so far as to afford it some little countenance, the people took care to insert an amendment that the freedom of speech and of the press shall not be abridged. The people saw the danger of this tolerated enemy, and they placed a sentinel over it in the freedom of speech and of the press. They knew, that this enemy, which they were ashamed at having countenanced for a moment, was base and mean and dishonest and cruel and treacherous, and would be ever struggling to gain some new accession in its savage gripe. They knew it would endeavor to disarm the sleepless sentinel of nature,—the right to speak and to publish in defence of liberty; and they would not leave their posterity within the monsters reach, without securing to them the natural, and inalienable defences against its attacks. Sir, the right of the freedom of speech is made no stronger by the constitution. It would have been inalienable and indestructible without a constitution. But the people knew how insidious would be the influence of slavery; how grasping would be the cupidity and how impatient and peevish the pride of its votaries; & they prudently set off this amendment of the constitution, this guaranty of the freedom of speech, against the permission that slavery might exist.

The most favorable construction that proslavery men can ask with any show of reason, is, that the constitution recognizes two antagonistic principles—slavery on the one side, and the freedom of speech and of the press on the other.

Now sir, to say nothing of the comparative merit of these two principles—to forget that the one is an essential part of the law of nature, and the other an unequalled violation of it—what are we to presume the framers of the constitution expected from the operation of these two antagonistic principles? Why, of course, sir, that they would conflict with each other—that so long as both existed in

the constitution, they would keep up a perpetual warfare; and, that the stronger of the two principles would ultimately prevail in the extermination of the weaker. No other presumption as to the views of the framers of the constitution can award the character for sagacity which history has awarded to that convention of sages. What have we lately seen sir—how strikingly have appearances proved the correctness of their judgment! The whole pro-slavery party in these United States, imploring, threatening, arguing, legislating, and resolving,—contriving, building, stoning, burning, hunting, imprisoning and butchering, now for the six or seven years last past, to extinguish the freedom of speech and of the press. and why all this? Why, that slavery in this country may live and flourish still. What have the slaveholders declared to us by this mighty effort to exterminate an inalienable right guaranteed in the constitution? That slavery cannot survive the free exercise of that right. They have stretched forth their hands, now in petition, now in menace, that we would cease from the exercise of that right, lest their beloved institution of slavery should die under its influence.

We have replied, that the right is inalienable, is guaranteed by the constitution, and is too sacred to be relinquished. They have rejoined, "But you must and shall relinquish it, for that our southern institution is guaranteed in the great national compact and you violate this great compact if you destroy slavery." We reply, that we do not destroy slavery. We leave that work to the constitution. Freedom of speech and of the press is of the essence of the constitution. It is the life-blood of our body politic; whose health depends upon its free circulation. We wish to flow on perpetually, and, if this body politic has a feverish, noxious plague-spot, which this healthful flow can purify—God grant it speedily may! If tyranny is incompatible with justice; if slavery cannot repose upon the conscience of a christian,—we are not bound to annul the constitution or to forego a right which it guarantees, lest the slaveholder should hear of this fact. Must we be silent lest he should be convicted?

No sir, our fathers adopted the constitution with a very different understanding. They left slavery to wane or to flourish, as best it might, under the scorching influence of that clause, which guarantees freedom of speech, and which no any of them insisted on as a prerequisite to any adoption of the constitution.

They said to the sticklers for slavery, "We

adopt the constitution as it reads. Take us
Go on with your degrading traffic. Carry on
your business of domestic plunder and home-
bred robbery. We agree to defend your
throats from the vengeful knife. But you are
to take this concession with its needed letter.
Do not expect us to acknowledge your right
to play the tyrant; or, that we shall soon a-
bandon the hope that truth and justice may
one day work upon your posterity—a convic-
tion, which shall be effectual upon them,
though it is unavailing upon you?

Could pro-slavery impudence demand any
thing more?

Sir, after all the commentaries which I
have read upon the national compact, I be-
lieve, that such was the understanding of
both parties when the constitution was a-
dopted. The anti-slavery feeling was then
by no means confined to what are now the
free states. Whoever will read the history of
the public mind at that period, and espe-
cially so much of it as was developed in the
convention which framed the constitution,
will find abundant evidence, that the entire
abolition of slavery was expected to result
from the potency of truth in free discussion;
and, that this expectation was by no means
confined to the States north of Mason and
Dixon's line.

The next and last of this volley of resolu-
tions reads thus:

“Resolved, That the person secreting a
runaway negro slave, or aiding the same to
escape, should be punished by imprisonment
in the penitentiary, and be answerable to the
party injured in four-fold damages.”

“Imprisonment in the penitentiary!”—an-
swerable to the party injured in four-fold
damages!”

Sir, I perceive, that the evening is fast
spent; and that the members of this House
and this large assembly, for whose indul-
gent attention I am especially grateful, have
heard enough, perhaps more than enough,
upon the subject of these resolutions. Sir,
by far the greater portion of the last four or
five hours' time of this House, might have
been spent in any other way than listening
to this cracked and husky voice, had not the
usual courtesy of an adjournment been de-
nied, and clamorous interruptions shadowed
forth the rigor of the previous question.

But, sir, wearied as I know you are, and
wornout as I am, I cannot turn my eyes
from this ‘imprisonment’ contemplated in
this pious resolution—and this answering ‘to
the party injured in fourfold damages!’

‘The party injured!’ Sir, I will not now
go on to show who is ‘the party injured’ in

the case of a runaway slave. After having
your attention for an hour, or so, upon the
self-evident truth of the inalienable and uni-
versal nature of human rights, not even the
fear of a reply backed by the previous ques-
tion shall compel me now to go once more
through the analysis of the question—who is
and ever must be the only injured party,
where the runaway slave is but helped to the
enjoyment of those rights which our decla-
ration of independence declares to be inalien-
able in every human being. To whom are
we to restore four-fold damages, when the
victim of robbery recovers that which God
and nature declare to be always his own?

Damages to the party injured for aiding a
runaway slave!—a man who is running to
secure what is and always was his own prop-
erty!

And this, too, from a professed disciple,
the great founder of Democracy, and author
of the Declaration of Independence!

Perhaps the gentleman from Hardin will
teach us in his reply, that a more charitable
construction upon the phrase ‘damages to
the party injured,’ would represent him con-
templating a very different party than the
one I have supposed—the Great Democratic
party, beside which, in his estimation, there
is none other among the mortal race, unless
he should deem it worth his while to recog-
nize those stunted remnants—those few
shreds and clippings of mortality, who have
none of the pure Anglo Saxon blood.

If, in these resolutions, the party injured
really means the great patent Democratic
party, I am not so much surprised that they
who acknowledge no higher obligation than
that of allegiance to party, should for any
aid we might render one of its miserable
slaves in fleeing from its thralldom, hold us
answerable in four-fold damages, and victor
in its penitentiary imprisonment to boot. It
would be but a regular progression of their
party despotism.

The last legislature of Ohio deemed it ne-
cessary to enact a severe penalty against
him, who should in any way, harbor or as-
sist a fugitive slave. They did this, though
our constitution prohibits slavery of all
kinds. They did this though as citizens, as
representatives of Ohio, they had no more
to do with Southern slavery, than the Brit-
ish parliament. They legislated, then, I
suppose as citizens of the U. States, when
they laid upon our neck, the yoke of the in-
famous Black Law. Though perfectly in
order to examine the operation of this law,
and show its ample sufficiency without these
resolutions to secure our allegiance to slave

under a constitution shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in this State, still to comment on it in the style it deserves, I am aware might not be thought in the strictest sense, in order, and, sir, I am admonished by the events of this evening, if never before, to expect no parliamentary indulgence here. On some more auspicious occasion, the Black Law may be unveiled and held before the reluctant eyes of this House. For the present, however, I leave, buried in the contempt of the people, dead and putrid in the folds of your statute book, that law—or rather that statute, for it should never be dignified with the name of LAW—that statute which forbids & punishes the kindest charities of our nature; which makes it an offence to befriend the injured & alleviate the distressed: which, if it had life, if it were not strangled by the indignation of an insulted people, would vault over the constitution, despise the citizenship of the state, and, though the creature of the Legislature of Ohio, assume to protect the accursed institution of a foreign state, by drying up the chief sources of happiness in our own—those unfailing, though, to some, I fear, undiscovered sources, which flow from an obedience to the laws of nature, from benevolence, fellow-feeling and heartfelt charity.

Sir, I forego all attempts to measure the despotism of that statute, and to note from it the progress of pro-slavery fanaticism within one year.

But, sir, we are not without a measure for these resolutions. The history of mankind is before us. Its blackest pages are the records of fanaticism. We find there the exact measure of this persecuting spirit. When it falls the mind with a dreadful delusion that shuts out the common light and leaves it to the glimmerings of fires within, picturing fellow-man as a malignant fiend, possessed, infuriate for mischief—we have its measure in the history of the Salem witchcraft. We wonder at the delusion of those times. We fancy that our country has outlived the barbarian spirit. We are mistaken. It is a suggestion of pride, not of the judgement. It proves how dark is the delusion that prevails. The fires which consumed the Salem victims have long since gone out; and their ashes have been scattered by the winds of heaven. But the fires which the delusion or the malignity of these times has kindled, have scarcely ceased to blaze. Their smouldering embers may yet impede the passenger in some of our cities; and the bones of the slow-burnt victims in our slavehold-

even now, too hot to trample upon. If it is otherwise, sir, if the combustion has been more rapid than I have presumed, these resolutions can fan the dying spark, and light up the flame again. How proud will be the majority of this House, to watch the progress of the devouring element; and to remember, that they saved it from extinguishment.

But, sir, history has another parallel for the fanaticism of these resolutions. It is the imperious spirit which cannot brook dissent; which will not bear with argument. It must needs propagate opinions by imprisonment & bonds; by stripes and fire and sword. It may be the fanaticism of religion—it may be the fanaticism of impiety. The condition on which it exists is a particular state of the human mind; and whenever that condition has been fulfilled, and its elements have met in the same individual, or the same community, mankind has always felt a dreadful visitation proportionate to its power. It is a heated enthusiasm for its object, urged onward by the malign emotions. Talk not of the freedom of our government. Talk not of the light of the age. Read these resolutions—and know, that, whether they were inspired by a pseudo-religious or an atheistic fanaticism, it was THAT fanaticism which never yet had its scope without reveling in blood.

The blood of righteous Abel was early evidence of its rancor. The Husses and the Jeromes, the Rogerses and the Cranmers have flashed the testimony almost upon our own age, and, probably, furnished to the author of these resolutions a more inspiring example. They were martyrs to a faith dearer to them than life, but which the dominant party rejected. We are to be martyrs to a law of nature, which all the world acknowledge. They would proclaim the truth; and they were burnt at the stake. We will not belie humanity. We will obey its eternal law; and we must be imprisoned—what next depends on the farther impulse of an impious fanaticism. This malignant enthusiasm, this spiteful zeal, needs but firmness and expansive intellect, wants but courage and capacity for enlarged ambition, to transform it from the bearer of the torch to that of the banner—to transfer it from the stake to the field.

Sir, the spite—the virulence is here. God knoweth how long his mercy will withhold the intellect and the courage.

[On motion of Mr. Jenkins the resolutions were recommitted to Messrs. Jenkins, Fisher and Spalding—and were never reported back to the House.]