SPEECHES

OF

HAYNE AND WEBSTER

IN THE

UNITED STATES SENATE,

ON THE

RESOLUTION OF MR. FOOT,

JANUARY, 1830.

ALSO,

MR. WEBSTER'S CELEBRATED SPEECH

ON THE

SLAVERY COMPROMISE BILL,

MARCH 7, 1850.

BOSTON:
A. T. HOTCHKISS & W. P. FETRIDGE.
1853.

One or two preliminary remarks upon the establishment of the administrations of 1825 and 1829 may render some of the allusions in these speeches more intelligible to those readers who are not familiar with the political history of the day.

The election of a President of the United States for the term beginning March 4, 1825, devolved upon the House of Representatives. The whole electoral vote was 261 — of which Andrew Jackson had 99, John Quincy Adams 84, William H. Crawford 41, and Henry Clay 37. The house, by the constitution, was limited to the first three in making a choice; and the vote was by states. Until the election actually took place, there was much doubt as to the result, but on the first ballot Adams received the votes of thirteen states, Jackson seven, and Crawford four; and Adams was thus elected. The vote was so close, however, that a rumor was put in circulation of a corrupt understanding between Adams and Clay, by which the friends of the latter, who was not a constitutional candidate, voted for Adams, in consideration of the bestowal of the office of secretary of state upon Clay by Adams in forming his cabinet. This calumny was disproved by all the testimony which could be brought to bear upon a negative proposition; and although at present it is probably not credited by any body, the suspicion of such a "coalition" seriously affected the popularity of both Adams and Clay at the time, and Colonel Hayne in his speech alluded to it, intimating that Webster had hopes of the office of secretary of state himself, which were frustrated by the appointment of Clay.

At the next presidential election, that of 1828, Adams and Jackson were opposing candidates, and the latter was chosen by a large popular majority. This result was brought about by the active coöperation with Jackson's original supporters of the friends of Mr. Calhoun and many of the friends of the other candidates of 1824. This coöperation implied the combination of the most discordant materials. The friends of Calhoun generally gave their aid, in the expectation that their favorite would be the next candidate, and in this way would receive the support of Jackson's other present supporters. How unfounded was any such expectation was proved by the actual result, by which Jackson was elected for a second term, and after him Van Buren, Calhoun being entirely neglected. It was in prophecy of this result that Mr. Webster quoted Shakspeare to the Vice President, Calhoun, reminding him that those who had foully removed Banquo had placed

> "A barren sceptre in their gripe,
> Thence to be wrenched by an unlineal hand,
> No son of theirs succeeding."

Although at the time of the speech there was the most perfect cordiality between Jackson and Calhoun and their friends and supporters.

MR. HAYNE'S SPEECH.

Debate in the Senate on Mr. Foot's Resolution, Thursday, January 21, 1830.

Mr. Foot's resolution being under consideration, —

[When Mr. Webster concluded his first speech on Wednesday, the 20th, Mr. Benton followed with some remarks in reply to Mr. W., but as they were principally embodied in his more extended speech some days after, those remarks are omitted. On the day following, Mr. Hayne took the floor in the following rejoinder to Mr. Webster.]

Mr. HAYNE said, when he took occasion, two days ago, to throw out some ideas with respect to the policy of the government, in relation to the public lands, nothing certainly could have been further from his thoughts, than that he should have been compelled again to throw himself upon the indulgence of the Senate. Little did I expect, said Mr. H., to be called upon to meet such an argument as was yesterday urged by the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Webster.) Sir, I questioned no man's opinions; I impeached no man's motives; I charged no party, or state, or section of country with hostility to any other, but ventured, as I thought, in a becoming spirit, to put forth my own sentiments in relation to a great national question of public policy. Such was my course. The gentleman from Missouri, (Mr. Benton,) it is true, had charged upon the Eastern States an early and continued hostility towards the west, and referred to a number of historical facts and documents in support of that charge. Now, sir, how have these different arguments been met? The honorable gentleman from Massachusetts, after deliberating a whole night upon his course, comes into this chamber to vindicate New England; and instead of making up his issue with the gentleman from Missouri, on the charges which *he had preferred*, chooses to consider me as the author of those charges, and losing sight entirely of that gentleman, selects me as his adversary, and pours out all the vials of his mighty wrath upon my devoted head. Nor is he willing to stop there. He goes on to assail the institutions and policy of the south, and calls in question the principles and conduct of the state which I have the honor to represent. When I find a gentleman of mature age and experience, of acknowledged talents and profound sagacity, pursuing a course like this, declining the contest offered from the west, and making war upon the unoffending south, I must believe, I am bound to believe, he has some object in view which he has not ventured to disclose. Mr. President, why is this? Has the gentleman discovered in former controversies with the gentleman from Missouri, that he is overmatched by that senator? And does he hope for an easy victory over a more feeble adversary? Has the gentleman's distempered fancy been disturbed by gloomy forebodings of "new alliances to be formed," at which he hinted? Has the ghost of the

murdered COALITION come back, like the ghost of Banquo, to "sear the eyeballs of the gentleman," and will it not down at his bidding? Are dark visions of broken hopes, and honors lost forever, still floating before his heated imagination? Sir, if it be his object to thrust me between the gentleman from Missouri and himself, in order to rescue the east from the contest it has provoked with the west, he shall not be gratified. Sir, I will not be dragged into the defence of my friend from Missouri. The south shall not be forced into a conflict not its own. The gentleman from Missouri is able to fight his own battles. The gallant west needs no aid from the south to repel any attack which may be made on them from any quarter. Let the gentleman from Massachusetts controvert the facts and arguments of the gentleman from Missouri, if he can — and if he win the victory, let him wear the honors; I shall not deprive him of his laurels.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, in reply to my remarks on the injurious operations of our land system on the prosperity of the west, pronounced an extravagant eulogium on the paternal care which the government had extended towards the west, to which he attributed all that was great and excellent in the present condition of the new states. The language of the gentleman on this topic fell upon my ears like the almost forgotten tones of the tory leaders of the British Parliament, at the commencement of the American revolution. They, too, discovered that the colonies had grown great under the fostering care of the mother country; and I must confess, while listening to the gentleman, I thought the appropriate reply to his argument was to be found in the remark of a celebrated orator, made on that occasion: "They have grown great in spite of your protection."

The gentleman, in commenting on the policy of the government in relation to the new states, has introduced to our notice a certain *Nathan Dane*, of Massachusetts, to whom he attributes the celebrated ordinance of '87, by which he tells us, "*slavery* was forever excluded from the new states north of the Ohio." After eulogizing the wisdom of this provision in terms of the most extravagant praise, he breaks forth in admiration of the greatness of Nathan Dane — and great indeed he must be, if it be true, as stated by the senator from Massachusetts, that "he was greater than Solon and Lycurgus, Minos, Numa Pompilius, and all the legislators and philosophers of the world," ancient and modern. Sir, to such high authority it is certainly my duty, in a becoming spirit of humility, to submit. And yet, the gentleman will pardon me, when I say, that it is a little unfortunate for the fame of this great legislator, that the gentleman from Missouri should have proved that he was not the author of the ordinance of '87, on which the senator from Massachusetts has reared so glorious a monument to his name. Sir, I doubt not the senator will feel some compassion for our ignorance, when I tell him, that so little are we acquainted with the modern great men of New England, that until he informed us yesterday that we possessed a Solon and a Lycurgus in the person of Nathan Dane, he was only known to the south as a member of a celebrated assembly, called and known by the name of the "Hartford Convention." In the proceedings of that assembly, which I hold in my hand, (at p. 19,) will be found, in a few lines, the history of Nathan Dane; and a little farther on, there is conclusive evidence of that ardent devotion to the interest of the new states, which, it seems, has given him a just claim to the title of "Father of the West." By the 2d resolution of the "Hartford Convention," it is declared, "that it is expedient to attempt

to make provision *for restraining Congress in the exercise of an unlimited power to make new states*, and admitting them into the Union." So much for Nathan Dane, of Beverly, Massachusetts.

In commenting upon my views in relation to the public lands, the gentleman insists, that it being one of the conditions of the grants that these lands should be applied to "the common benefit of all the states, they must always remain *a fund for revenue;*" and adds, "they must be *treated as so much treasure.*" Sir, the gentleman could hardly find language strong enough to convey his disapprobation of the policy which I had ventured to recommend to the favorable consideration of the country. And what, sir, was that policy, and what is the difference between that gentleman and myself on that subject? I threw out the idea that the public lands ought not to be reserved forever, as "a great fund for revenue;" that they ought not to be "treated as a great treasure;" but that the course of our policy should rather be directed towards the creation of new states, and building up great and flourishing communities.

Now, sir, will it be believed, by those who now hear me, — and who listened to the gentleman's denunciation of my doctrines yesterday, — that a book then lay open before him — nay, that he held it in his hand, and read from it certain passages of his own speech, delivered to the House of Representatives in 1825, in which speech he himself contended for the very doctrines I had advocated, and almost in the same terms? Here is the speech of the Hon. Daniel Webster, contained in the first volume of Gales and Seaton's Register of Debates, (p. 251,) delivered in the House of Representatives on the 18th of January, 1825, in a debate on the *Cumberland road* — the very debate from which the senator read yesterday. I shall read from the celebrated speech two passages, from which it will appear that both as to *the past* and the *future policy* of the government in relation to the public lands, the gentleman from Massachusetts maintained, in 1825, substantially the same opinions which I have advanced, but which he now so strongly reprobates. I said, sir, that the system of *credit sales* by which the west had been kept constantly in debt to the United States, and by which their wealth was drained off to be expended elsewhere, had operated injuriously on their prosperity. On this point the gentleman from Massachusetts, in January, 1825, expressed himself thus: "There could be no doubt, if gentlemen looked at the money received into the treasury from the sale of the public lands to the west, and then looked to the whole amount expended by government, (even including the whole amount of what was laid out for the army,) the latter must be allowed to be very inconsiderable, and *there must be a constant drain of money from the west to pay for the public lands.* It might indeed be said that this was no more than the refluence of capital which had previously gone over the mountains. Be it so. Still its practical effect was to produce inconvenience, *if not distress, by absorbing the money of the people.*"

I contended that the public lands ought not to be treated merely as "a fund for revenue;" that they ought not to be hoarded "as a great treasure." On this point the senator expressed himself thus: "Government, he believed, had received eighteen or twenty millions of dollars from the public lands, and it was with the greatest satisfaction he adverted to the change which had been introduced in the mode of paying for them; *yet he could never think the national domain was to be regarded as any great source of revenue.* The great object of the government, in respect of these lands, was not so much *the money derived from their sale*, as it was

charged. The gentleman from Massachusetts will then be released from the obligation which now makes him desirous of paying the debt; and, let me tell the gentleman, the holders of the stock will not only release us from this obligation, but they will implore, nay, they will even *pay us* not to pay them. But, adds the gentleman, so far as the debt may have an effect in binding the debtors to the country, and thereby serving as a link to hold the states together, he would be glad that it should exist forever. Surely then, sir, on the gentleman's own principles, he must be opposed to the payment of the debt.

Sir, let me tell that gentleman, that the south repudiates the idea that a *pecuniary dependence* on the federal government is one of the legitimate means of holding the states together. A moneyed interest in the government is essentially a base interest; and just so far as it operates to bind the feelings of those who are subjected to it to the government, — just so far as it operates in creating sympathies and interests that would not otherwise exist, — is it opposed to all the principles of free government, and at war with virtue and patriotism. Sir, the link which binds the public creditors, *as such*, to their country, binds them equally to all governments, whether arbitrary or free. In a free government, this principle of abject dependence, if extended through all the ramifications of society, must be fatal to liberty. Already have we made alarming strides in that direction. The entire class of manufacturers, the holders of stocks, with their hundreds of millions of capital, are held to the government by the strong link of *pecuniary interests;* millions of people — entire sections of country, interested, or believing themselves to be so, in the public lands, and the public treasure — are bound to the government by the expectation of *pecuniary favors*. If this system is carried much further, no man can fail to see that every generous motive of attachment to the country will be destroyed, and in its place will spring up those low, grovelling, base, and selfish feelings which bind men to the footstool of a despot by bonds as strong and enduring as those which attach them to free institutions. Sir, I would lay the foundation of this government in the affections of the people — I would teach them to cling to it by dispensing equal justice, and above all, by securing the "blessings of liberty" to "themselves and to their posterity."

The honorable gentleman from Massachusetts has gone out of his way to pass a high eulogium on the state of OHIO. In the most impassioned tones of eloquence, he described her majestic march to greatness. He told us, that, having already left all the other states far behind, she was now passing by Virginia and Pennsylvania, and about to take her station by the side of New York. To all this, sir, I was disposed most cordially to respond. When, however, the gentleman proceeded to contrast the state of Ohio with Kentucky, to the disadvantage of the latter, I listened to him with regret; and when he proceeded further to attribute the great, and, as he supposed, acknowledged superiority of the former in population, wealth, and general prosperity, to the policy of Nathan Dane, of Massachusetts, which had secured to the people of Ohio (by the ordinance of '87) *a population of freemen*, I will confess that my feelings suffered a revulsion which I am now unable to describe in any language sufficiently respectful towards the gentleman from Massachusetts. In contrasting the state of Ohio with Kentucky, for the purpose of pointing out *the superiority of the former*, and of attributing that superiority to *the existence of slavery* in the one state, and its absence in the other, I

thought I could discern *the very spirit of the Missouri question*, intruded into this debate, for objects best known to the gentleman himself. Did that gentleman, sir, when he formed the determination to cross the southern border, in order to invade the state of South Carolina, deem it prudent or necessary to enlist under his banners *the prejudices of the world*, which, like *Swiss troops*, may be engaged in any cause, and are prepared to serve under any leader? Did he desire to avail himself of those remorseless allies, *the passions of mankind*, of which it may be more truly said than of the savage tribes of the wilderness, "that their known rule of warfare is an indiscriminate slaughter of all ages, sexes, and conditions"? Or was it supposed, sir, that, in a premeditated and unprovoked attack upon the south, it was advisable to begin by a gentle admonition of *our supposed weakness*, in order to prevent us from making that firm and manly resistance due to our own character and our dearest interests? Was the *significant hint* of the *weakness of slaveholding states*, when contrasted with *the superior strength of free states*, — like the glare of the weapon half drawn from its scabbard, — intended to enforce the lessons of prudence and of patriotism, which the gentleman had resolved, out of his abundant generosity, gratuitously to bestow upon us? Mr. President, the impression which has gone abroad of the *weakness of the south*, as connected with the *slave question*, exposes us to such constant attacks, has done us so much injury, and is calculated to produce such infinite mischiefs, that I embrace the occasion presented by the remarks of the gentleman of Massachusetts, to declare that we are ready to meet the question promptly and fearlessly. It is one from which we are not disposed to shrink, in whatever form or under whatever circumstances it may be pressed upon us.

We are ready to make up the issue with the gentleman, as to the influence of slavery on individual or national character — on the prosperity and greatness, either of the United States or of particular states. Sir, when arraigned before the bar of public opinion, on this charge of slavery, we can stand up with conscious rectitude, plead not guilty, and put ourselves upon God and our country. Sir, we will not consent to look at slavery in the abstract. We will not stop to inquire whether the black man, as some philosophers have contended, is of an inferior race, nor whether his color and condition are the effects of a curse inflicted for the offences of his ancestors. We deal in no *abstractions*. We will not look back to inquire whether our fathers were guiltless in introducing slaves into this country. If an inquiry should ever be instituted in these matters, however, it will be found that the profits of the slave trade were not confined to the south. Southern ships and southern sailors were not the instruments of bringing slaves to the shores of America, nor did our merchants reap the profits of that "accursed traffic." But, sir, we will pass over all this. If slavery, as it now exists in this country, be an evil, we of the present day *found it ready made to our hands*. Finding our lot cast among a people whom God had manifestly committed to our care, we did not sit down to speculate on abstract questions of theoretical liberty. We met it as a practical question of *obligation and duty*. We resolved to make the best of the situation in which Providence had placed us, and to fulfil the high trusts which had devolved upon us as the owners of slaves, in the only way in which such a trust could be fulfilled, without spreading misery and ruin throughout the land. We found that we had to deal with a people whose physical, moral, and intellectual habits and

character totally disqualified them from the enjoyment of the blessings of freedom. We could not send them back to the shores from whence their fathers had been taken; their numbers forbade the thought, even if we did not know that their condition here is infinitely preferable to what it possibly could be among the barren sands and savage tribes of Africa; and it was wholly irreconcilable with all our notions of humanity to tear asunder the tender ties which they had formed among us, to gratify the feelings of a false philanthropy. What a commentary on the wisdom, justice, and humanity of the southern slave owner is presented by the example of certain benevolent associations and charitable individuals *elsewhere!* Shedding weak tears over sufferings which had existence in their own sickly imaginations, these "friends of humanity" set themselves systematically to work to seduce the slaves of the south from their masters. By means of missionaries and political tracts, the scheme was in a great measure successful. Thousands of these deluded victims of fanaticism were seduced into the enjoyment of freedom in our northern cities. And what has been the consequence? Go to these cities now and ask the question. Visit the dark and narrow lanes, and obscure recesses, which have been assigned by common consent as the abodes of those outcasts of the world, the free people of color. Sir, there does not exist, on the face of the whole earth, a population so poor, so wretched, so vile, so loathsome, so utterly destitute of all the comforts, conveniences, and decencies of life, as the unfortunate blacks of Philadelphia, and New York, and Boston. Liberty has been to them the greatest of calamities, the heaviest of curses. Sir, I have had some opportunities of making comparison between the condition of the free negroes of the north and the slaves of the south, and the comparison has left not only an indelible impression of the superior advantages of the latter, but has gone far to reconcile me to slavery itself. Never have I felt so forcibly that touching description, "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," as when I have seen this unhappy race, naked and houseless, almost starving in the streets, and abandoned by all the world. Sir, I have seen in the neighborhood of one of the most moral, religious, and refined cities of the north, a family of free blacks, driven to the caves of the rocks, and there obtaining a precarious subsistence from charity and plunder.

When the gentleman from Massachusetts adopts and reiterates the old charge of weakness as resulting from slavery, I must be permitted to call for the proof of those blighting effects which he ascribes to its influence. I suspect that when the subject is closely examined, it will be found that there is not much force even in the plausible objection of the want of physical power in slaveholding states. The power of a country is compounded of its population and its wealth, and in modern times, where, from the very form and structure of society, by far the greater portion of the people must, even during the continuance of the most desolating wars, be employed in the cultivation of the soil and other peaceful pursuits, it may be well doubted whether slaveholding states, by reason of the superior value of their productions, are not able to maintain a number of troops in the field fully equal to what could be supported by states with a larger white population, but not possessed of equal resources.

It is a popular error to suppose that, in any possible state of things, the people of a country could ever be called out *en masse*, or that a half, or a third, or even a fifth part of the physical force of any country could ever

be brought into the field. The difficulty is, not to procure men, but to provide *the means of maintaining them;* and in this view of the subject, it may be asked whether the Southern States are not a source of *strength* and *power*, and not of *weakness*, to the country — whether they have not contributed, and are not now contributing, largely to the wealth and prosperity of every state in this Union. From a statement which I hold in my hand, it appears that in ten years — from 1818 to 1827, inclusive — the whole amount of the domestic exports of the United States was $521,811,045; of which three articles, (*the product of slave labor,*) viz., cotton, rice, and tobacco, amounted to $339,203,232 — equal to *about two thirds of the whole.* It is not true, as has been supposed, that the advantage of this labor is confined almost exclusively to the Southern States. Sir, I am thoroughly convinced that, at this time, *the states north of the Potomac actually derive greater profits from the labor of our slaves than we do ourselves.* It appears from our public documents, that in seven years — from 1821 to 1827, inclusive — the six Southern States *exported* $190,337,281, and *imported* only $55,646,301. Now, the difference between these two sums (near $140,000,000) *passed through the hands of the northern merchants*, and enabled them to carry on their commercial operations with all the world. Such part of these goods as found its way back to our hands came charged with the duties, as well as the profits, of the merchant, the ship owner, and a host of others, who found employment in carrying on these immense exchanges; and for such part as was consumed at the north, we received in exchange *northern manufactures*, charged with an increased price, to cover all the taxes which the northern consumer had been compelled to pay on the imported article. It will be seen, therefore, at a glance, how much slave labor has contributed to the wealth and prosperity of the United States, and how largely our northern brethren have participated in the profits of that labor. Sir, on this subject I will quote an authority, which will, I doubt not, be considered by the senator from Massachusetts as entitled to high respect. It is from the great father of the "American System," *honest Matthew Carey* — no great friend, it is true, at this time, to southern rights and southern interests, but not the worst authority on that account, *on the point in question.*

Speaking of the *relative importance to the Union* of the SOUTHERN and the EASTERN STATES, Matthew Carey, in the sixth edition of his Olive Branch, (p. 278,) after exhibiting a number of statistical tables to show the decided superiority of the former, thus proceeds: —

"But I am tired of this investigation — I sicken for the honor of the human species. What idea must the world form of the arrogance of the pretensions of the one side, [the east,] and of the folly and weakness of the rest of the Union, to have so long suffered them to pass without exposure and detection. The naked fact is, that the demagogues in the Eastern States, not satisfied *with deriving all the benefit from the southern section of the Union that they would from so many wealthy colonies* — with making princely fortunes by the carriage and exportation of its bulky and valuable productions, and *supplying it with their own manufactures*, and the productions of Europe and the East and West Indies, to an enormous amount, and at an immense profit, have uniformly treated it with outrage, insult, and injury. And, regardless of their vital interests, the Eastern States were lately *courting their own destruction*, by allowing a few restless, turbulent men to lead them blindfolded *to a separation* which was

pregnant with their certain ruin. Whenever that event takes place, they sink into insignificance. If a separation were desirable to any part of the Union, it would be to the Middle and Southern States, particularly the latter, who have been so long harassed with the complaints, the restlessness, the turbulence, and the ingratitude of the Eastern States, that their patience has been tried almost beyond endurance. '*Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked*' — and he will be severely punished for his kicking, in the event of a dissolution of the Union." Sir, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I do not adopt these sentiments as my own. I quote them to show that very different sentiments have prevailed in former times as to the weakness of the slaveholding states from those which now seem to have become fashionable in certain quarters. I know it has been supposed by certain ill-informed persons, that the south exists only by the countenance and protection of the north. Sir, this is the idlest of all idle and ridiculous fancies that ever entered into the mind of man. In every state of this Union, except one, the free white population actually preponderates; while in the British West India Islands, (where the average white population is *less than ten per cent. of the whole,*) the slaves are kept in entire subjection: it is preposterous to suppose that the Southern States could ever find the smallest difficulty in this respect. On this subject, as in all others, we ask nothing of our northern brethren but to "let us alone." Leave us to the undisturbed management of our domestic concerns, and the direction of our own industry, and we will ask no more. Sir, all our difficulties on this subject have arisen from interference from abroad, which has disturbed, and may again disturb, our domestic tranquillity just so far as to bring down punishment upon the heads of the unfortunate victims of a fanatical and mistaken humanity.

There is *a spirit*, which, like the father of evil, is constantly "walking to and fro about the earth, seeking whom it may devour:" it is the spirit of FALSE PHILANTHROPY. The persons whom it possesses do not indeed throw themselves into the flames, but they are employed in lighting up the torches of discord throughout the community. Their first principle of action is to leave their own affairs, and neglect their own duties, to regulate the affairs and duties of others. Theirs is the task to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, of other lands, while they thrust the naked, famished, and shivering beggar from their own doors; to instruct the heathen, while their own children want the bread of life. When this spirit infuses itself into the bosom of a statesman, (if one so possessed can be called a statesman,) it converts him at once into a visionary enthusiast. Then it is that he indulges in golden dreams of national greatness and prosperity. He discovers that "liberty is power," and not content with vast schemes of improvement at home, which it would bankrupt the treasury of the world to execute, he flies to foreign lands, to fulfil obligations to "the human race" by inculcating the principles of "political and religious liberty," and promoting the "general welfare" of the whole human race. It is a spirit which has long been busy with the *slaves of the south;* and is even now displaying itself in vain efforts to drive the government from its wise policy in relation to the *Indians.* It is this spirit which has filled the land with thousands of wild and visionary projects, which can have no effect but to waste the energies and dissipate the resources of the country. It is the spirit of which the aspiring politician dexterously avails himself, when, by inscribing on his banner the magical

words LIBERTY and PHILANTHROPY, he draws to his support that class of persons who are ready to bow down at the very name of their idols.

But, sir, whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the effect of slavery on national wealth and prosperity, if we may trust to experience, there can be no doubt that it has never yet produced any injurious effect on *individual or national character*. Look through the whole history of the country, from the commencement of the revolution down to the present hour; where are there to be found brighter examples of intellectual and moral greatness than have been exhibited by the sons of the south? From the FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY down to the DISTINGUISHED CHIEFTAIN who has been elevated by a grateful people to the highest office in their gift, the interval is filled up by a long line of orators, of statesmen, and of heroes, justly entitled to rank among the ornaments of their country, and the benefactors of mankind. Look at the "Old Dominion," great and magnanimous Virginia, "whose jewels are her sons." Is there any state in this Union which has contributed so much to the honor and welfare of the country? Sir, I will yield the whole question — I will acknowledge the fatal effects of slavery upon character, if any one can say, that for noble disinterestedness, ardent love of country, exalted virtue, and a pure and holy devotion to liberty, the people of the Southern States have ever been surpassed by any in the world. I know, sir, that this *devotion to liberty* has sometimes been supposed to be at war with our institutions; but it is in some degree the result of those very institutions. Burke, the most philosophical of statesmen, as he was the most accomplished of orators, well understood the operation of this principle, in elevating the sentiments and exalting the principles of the people in slaveholding states. I will conclude my remarks on this branch of the subject, by reading a few passages from his speech "on moving his resolutions for conciliation with the colonies," the 22d of March, 1775..

"There is a circumstance attending the southern colonies which makes the spirit of liberty still more high and haughty than in those to the northward. It is, that in Virginia and the Carolinas they have a *vast multitude of slaves*. Where this is the case, in any part of the world, those who are free are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. Freedom is to them not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. Not seeing there, as in countries where it is a common blessing, and as broad and general as the air, that it may be united with much abject toil, with great misery, with all the exterior of servitude, liberty looks among them like something more noble and liberal. I do not mean, sir, to commend the superior morality of this sentiment, which has, at least, as much pride as virtue in it — but I cannot alter the nature of man. The fact is so; and these people of the southern colonies are much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit, attached to liberty than those to the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths — such were our Gothic ancestors — such, in our days, were the Poles — *and such will be all masters of slaves who are not slaves themselves*. In such a people, the haughtiness of domination combines with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, *and renders it invincible*."

In the course of my former remarks, Mr. President, I took occasion to deprecate, as one of the greatest evils, *the consolidation of this government*. The gentleman takes alarm at the sound. "*Consolidation*," "like the *tariff*," grates upon his ear. He tells us, "we have heard much of late about consolidation; that it is the rallying word of all who are endeavoring to

Yes, sir, that was the propitious moment, when our country stood alone, the last hope of the world, struggling for her existence against the colossal power of Great Britain, "concentrated in one mighty effort to crush us at a blow;" that was the chosen hour to revive the grand scheme of building up "a great northern confederacy"—a scheme which, it is stated in the work before me, had its origin as far back as the year 1796, and which appears never to have been entirely abandoned.

In the language of the writers of that day, (1796,) "rather than have a constitution such as the anti-federalists were contending for, (such as we are now contending for,) the Union ought to be dissolved;" and to prepare the way for that measure, the same methods were resorted to then that have always been relied on for that purpose, exciting prejudice against the south. Yes, sir, our northern brethren were then told, "that if the negroes were good for food, their southern masters would claim the right to destroy them at pleasure." (Olive Branch, p. 267.) Sir, in 1814, all these topics were revived. Again we hear of "a northern confederacy." "The slave states by themselves;" "the mountains are the natural boundary;" we want neither "the counsels nor the power of the west," &c., &c. The papers teemed with accusations against the *south* and the *west*, and the calls for a dissolution of all connection with them were loud and strong. I cannot consent to go through the disgusting details. But to show the height to which the spirit of disaffection was carried, I will take you to the temple of the living God, and show you *that sacred place*, which should be devoted to the extension of "peace on earth and good will towards men," where "*one day's truce* ought surely to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind," converted into *a fierce arena of political strife*, where, from the lips of the priest, standing between the horns of the altar, there went forth the most *terrible denunciations* against all who should be true to their country in the hour of her utmost need.

"If you do not wish," said a reverend clergyman, in a sermon preached in Boston, on the 23d July, 1812, "to become the slaves of those who own slaves, and who are themselves the slaves of French slaves, you must either, *in the language of the day*, CUT THE CONNECTION, or so far alter the national compact as to insure to yourselves a due share in the government." (Olive Branch, p. 319.) "The Union," says the same writer, (p. 320,) "has been long since virtually dissolved, and it is full time that this part of the disunited states should take care of itself."

Another reverend gentleman, pastor of a church at Medford, (p. 321,) issues his anathema—"LET HIM STAND ACCURSED"—against all, all who, by their "personal services," for "loans of money," "conversation," or "writing," or "influence," give countenance or support to the unrighteous war, in the following terms: "That man is an accomplice in the wickedness—he loads his conscience with the blackest crimes—he brings the guilt of blood upon his soul, and in the sight of God and his law, *he is a* MURDERER."

One or two more quotations, sir, and I shall have done. A reverend doctor of divinity, the pastor of a church at Byfield, Massachusetts, on the 7th of April, 1814, thus addresses his flock, (p. 321:) "The Israelites became weary of yielding the fruit of their labor to pamper their splendid tyrants. They left their political woes. THEY SEPARATED; where is our Moses? Where the rod of his miracles? Where is our Aaron? Alas! no voice from the burning bush has directed them here."

MR. WEBSTER'S SPEECH.

In Senate, January 26, 1830.

FOLLOWING Mr. HAYNE in the debate, Mr. WEBSTER addressed the Senate as follows: —

Mr. PRESIDENT: When the mariner has been tossed, for many days, in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and before we float farther, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are. I ask for the reading of the resolution.

[The secretary read the resolution, as follows: —

"*Resolved*, That the committee on public lands be instructed to inquire and report the quantity of the public lands remaining unsold within each state and territory, and whether it be expedient to limit, for a certain period, the sales of the public lands to such lands only as have heretofore been offered for sale, and are now subject to entry at the minimum price. And, also, whether the office of surveyor general, and some of the land offices, may not be abolished without detriment to the public interest; or whether it be expedient to adopt measures to hasten the sales, and extend more rapidly the surveys of the public lands."]

We have thus heard, sir, what the resolution is, which is actually before us for consideration; and it will readily occur to every one that it is almost the only subject about which something has not been said in the speech, running through two days, by which the Senate has been now entertained by the gentleman from South Carolina. Every topic in the wide range of our public affairs, whether past or present, — every thing, general or local, whether belonging to national politics or party politics, — seems to have attracted more or less of the honorable member's attention, save only the resolution before us. He has spoken of every thing but the public lands. They have escaped his notice. To that subject, in all his excursions, he has not paid even the cold respect of a passing glance.

When this debate, sir, was to be resumed, on Thursday morning, it so happened that it would have been convenient for me to be elsewhere. The honorable member, however, did not incline to put off the discussion to another day. He had a shot, he said, to return, and he wished to discharge it. That shot, sir, which it was kind thus to inform us was coming, that we might stand out of the way, or prepare ourselves to fall before it, and die with decency, has now been received. Under all advantages, and with expectation awakened by the tone which preceded it, it has been discharged, and has spent its force. It may become me to say no more of its effect than that, if nobody is found, after all, either killed or wounded by it, it is not the first time in the history of human affairs

that the vigor and success of the war have not quite come up to the lofty and sounding phrase of the manifesto.

The gentleman, sir, in declining to postpone the debate, told the Senate, with the emphasis of his hand upon his heart, that there was something rankling *here*, which he wished to relieve. [Mr. HAYNE rose and disclaimed having used the word *rankling*.] It would not, Mr. President, be safe for the honorable member to appeal to those around him, upon the question whether he did, in fact, make use of that word. But he may have been unconscious of it. At any rate, it is enough that he disclaims it. But still, with or without the use of that particular word, he had yet something *here*, he said, of which he wished to rid himself by an immediate reply. In this respect, sir, I have a great advantage over the honorable gentleman. There is nothing *here*, sir, which gives me the slightest uneasiness; neither fear, nor anger, nor that which is sometimes more troublesome than either, the consciousness of having been in the wrong. There is nothing either originating *here*, or now received here by the gentleman's shot. Nothing original, for I had not the slightest feeling of disrespect or unkindness towards the honorable member. Some passages, it is true, had occurred, since our acquaintance in this body, which I could have wished might have been otherwise; but I had used philosophy, and forgotten them. When the honorable member rose, in his first speech, I paid him the respect of attentive listening; and when he sat down, though surprised, and I must say even astonished, at some of his opinions, nothing was farther from my intention than to commence any personal warfare; and through the whole of the few remarks I made in answer, I avoided, studiously and carefully, every thing which I thought possible to be construed into disrespect. And, sir, while there is thus nothing originating *here*, which I wished at any time, or now wish, to discharge, I must repeat, also, that nothing has been received *here*, which *rankles*, or in any way gives me annoyance. I will not accuse the honorable member of violating the rules of civilized war — I will not say that he poisoned his arrows. But whether his shafts were, or were not, dipped in that which would have caused rankling if they had reached, there was not, as it happened, quite strength enough in the bow to bring them to their mark. If he wishes now to find those shafts, he must look for them elsewhere; they will not be found fixed and quivering in the object at which they were aimed.

The honorable member complained that I had slept on his speech. I must have slept on it, or not slept at all. The moment the honorable member sat down, his friend from Missouri rose, and, with much honeyed commendation of the speech, suggested that the impressions which it had produced were too charming and delightful to be disturbed by other sentiments or other sounds, and proposed that the Senate should adjourn. Would it have been quite amiable in me, sir, to interrupt this excellent good feeling? Must I not have been absolutely malicious, if I could have thrust myself forward to destroy sensations thus pleasing? Was it not much better and kinder, both to sleep upon them myself, and to allow others, also, the pleasure of sleeping upon them? But if it be meant, by sleeping upon his speech, that I took time to prepare a reply to it, it is quite a mistake: owing to other engagements, I could not employ even the interval between the adjournment of the Senate and its meeting the next morning in attention to the subject of this debate. Nevertheless, sir, the mere matter of fact is undoubtedly true — I did sleep on the

murder, that the gory locks were shaken. The ghost of Banquo, like that of Hamlet, was an honest ghost. It disturbed no innocent man. It knew where its appearance would strike terror, and who would cry out, A ghost! It made itself visible in the right quarter, and compelled the guilty, and the conscience-smitten, and none others, to start, with

> "Prithee, see there! behold! — look! lo!
> If I stand here, I saw him!"

Their eyeballs were seared — was it not so, sir? — who had thought to shield themselves by concealing their own hand, and laying the imputation of the crime on a low and hireling agency in wickedness; who had vainly attempted to stifle the workings of their own coward consciences, by ejaculating, through white lips and chattering teeth, "Thou canst not say I did it!" I have misread the great poet, if it was those who had no way partaken in the deed of the death, who either found that they were, *or feared that they should be*, pushed from their stools by the ghost of the slain, or who cried out to a spectre created by their own fears, and their own remorse, "Avaunt! and quit our sight!"

There is another particular, sir, in which the honorable member's quick perception of resemblances might, I should think, have seen something in the story of Banquo, making it not altogether a subject of the most pleasant contemplation. Those who murdered Banquo, what did they win by it? Substantial good? Permanent power? Or disappointment, rather, and sore mortification — dust and ashes — the common fate of vaulting ambition overleaping itself? Did not even-handed justice, ere long, commend the poisoned chalice to their own lips? Did they not soon find that for another they had "filed their mind"? — that their ambition, though apparently for the moment successful, had but put a barren sceptre in their grasp? Ay, sir, —

> "A barren sceptre in their gripe,
> *Thence to be wrenched by an unlineal hand,*
> *No son of theirs succeeding.*"

Sir, I need pursue the allusion no further. I leave the honorable gentleman to run it out at his leisure, and to derive from it all the gratification it is calculated to administer. If he finds himself pleased with the associations, and prepared to be quite satisfied, though the parallel should be entirely completed, I had almost said I am satisfied also — but that I shall think of. Yes, sir, I will think of that.

In the course of my observations the other day, Mr. President, I paid a passing tribute of respect to a very worthy man, Mr. Dane, of Massachusetts. It so happened, that he drew the ordinance of 1787 for the government of the North-western Territory. A man of so much ability, and so little pretence; of so great a capacity to do good, and so unmixed a disposition to do it for its own sake; a gentleman who acted an important part, forty years ago, in a measure the influence of which is still deeply felt in the very matter which was the subject of debate, might, I thought, receive from me a commendatory recognition.

But the honorable member was inclined to be facetious on the subject. He was rather disposed to make it matter of ridicule that I had introduced into the debate the name of one Nathan Dane, of whom he assures us he had never before heard. Sir, if the honorable member had never before heard of Mr. Dane, I am sorry for it. It shows him less acquainted

with the public men of the country than I had supposed. Let me tell him, however, that a sneer from him at the mention of the name of Mr. Dane is in bad taste. It may well be a high mark of ambition, sir, either with the honorable gentleman or myself, to accomplish as much to make our names known to advantage, and remembered with gratitude, as Mr. Dane has accomplished. But the truth is, sir, I suspect that Mr. Dane lives a little too far north. He is of Massachusetts, and too near the north star to be reached by the honorable gentleman's telescope. If his sphere had happened to range south of Mason and Dixon's line, he might, probably, have come within the scope of his vision!

I spoke, sir, of the ordinance of 1787, which prohibited slavery in all future times north-west of the Ohio, as a measure of great wisdom and foresight, and one which had been attended with highly beneficial and permanent consequences. I supposed that on this point no two gentlemen in the Senate could entertain different opinions. But the simple expression of this sentiment has led the gentleman, not only into a labored defence of slavery in the abstract, and on principle, but also into a warm accusation against me, as having attacked the system of domestic slavery now existing in the Southern States. For all this there was not the slightest foundation in any thing said or intimated by me. I did not utter a single word which any ingenuity could torture into an attack on the slavery of the south. I said only that it was highly wise and useful in legislating for the north-western country, while it was yet a wilderness, to prohibit the introduction of slaves; and added, that I presumed, in the neighboring state of Kentucky, there was no reflecting and intelligent gentleman who would doubt that, if the same prohibition had been extended, at the same early period, over that commonwealth, her strength and population would, at this day, have been far greater than they are. If these opinions be thought doubtful, they are, nevertheless, I trust, neither extraordinary nor disrespectful. They attack nobody and menace nobody. And yet, sir, the gentleman's optics have discovered, even in the mere expression of this sentiment, what he calls the very spirit of the Missouri question! He represents me as making an onset on the whole south, and manifesting a spirit which would interfere with and disturb their domestic condition. Sir, this injustice no otherwise surprises me than as it is done here, and done without the slightest pretence of ground for it. I say it only surprises me as being done here; for I know full well that it is and has been the settled policy of some persons in the south, for years, to represent the people of the north as disposed to interfere with them in their own exclusive and peculiar concerns. This is a delicate and sensitive point in southern feeling; and of late years it has always been touched, and generally with effect, whenever the object has been to unite the whole south against northern men or northern measures. This feeling, always carefully kept alive, and maintained at too intense a heat to admit discrimination or reflection, is a lever of great power in our political machine. It moves vast bodies, and gives to them one and the same direction. But the feeling is without adequate cause, and the suspicion which exists wholly groundless. There is not, and never has been, a disposition in the north to interfere with these interests of the south. Such interference has never been supposed to be within the power of government, nor has it been in any way attempted. It has always been regarded as a matter of domestic policy, left with the states themselves, and with which the federal government had nothing to do.

Certainly, sir, I am, and ever have been, of that opinion. The gentleman, indeed, argues that slavery in the abstract is no evil. Most assuredly I need not say I differ with him altogether and most widely on that point. I regard domestic slavery as one of the greatest of evils, both moral and political. But, though it be a malady, and whether it be curable, and if so, by what means; or, on the other hand, whether it be the *vulnus immedicabile* of the social system, I leave it to those whose right and duty it is to inquire and to decide. And this I believe, sir, is, and uniformly has been, the sentiment of the north. Let us look a little at the history of this matter.

When the present constitution was submitted for the ratification of the people, there were those who imagined that the powers of the government which it proposed to establish might, perhaps, in some possible mode, be exerted in measures tending to the abolition of slavery. This suggestion would, of course, attract much attention in the southern conventions. In that of Virginia, Governor Randolph said, —

"I hope there is none here, who, considering the subject in the calm light of philosophy, will make an objection dishonorable to Virginia — that, at the moment they are securing the rights of their citizens, an objection is started, that there is a spark of hope that those unfortunate men now held in bondage may, by the operation of the general government, be made free."

At the very first Congress petitions on the subject were presented, if I mistake not, from different states. The Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery took a lead, and laid before Congress a memorial, praying Congress to promote the abolition by such powers as it possessed. This memorial was referred, in the House of Representatives, to a select committee, consisting of Mr. Foster, of New Hampshire, Mr. Gerry, of Massachusetts, Mr. Huntington, of Connecticut, Mr. Lawrence, of New York, Mr. Sinnickson, of New Jersey, Mr. Hartley, of Pennsylvania, and Mr. Parker, of Virginia; all of them, sir, as you will observe, northern men, but the last. This committee made a report, which was committed to a committee of the whole house, and there considered and discussed on several days; and being amended, although in no material respect, it was made to express three distinct propositions on the subjects of slavery and the slave trade. First, in the words of the constitution, that Congress could not, prior to the year 1808, prohibit the migration or importation of such persons as any of the states then existing should think proper to admit. Second, that Congress had authority to restrain the citizens of the United States from carrying on the African slave trade for the purpose of supplying foreign countries. On this proposition, our early laws against those who engage in that traffic are founded. The third proposition, and that which bears on the present question, was expressed in the following terms: —

"*Resolved*, That Congress have no authority to interfere in the emancipation of slaves, or in the treatment of them in any of the states; it remaining with the several states alone to provide rules and regulations therein, which humanity and true policy may require."

This resolution received the sanction of the House of Representatives so early as March, 1790. And, now, sir, the honorable member will allow me to remind him, that not only were the select committee who reported the resolution, with a single exception, all northern men, but also

that of the members then composing the House of Representatives, a large majority, I believe nearly two thirds, were northern men also.

The house agreed to insert these resolutions in its journal; and, from that day to this, it has never been maintained or contended that Congress had any authority to regulate or interfere with the condition of slaves in the several states. No northern gentleman, to my knowledge, has moved any such question in either house of Congress.

The fears of the south, whatever fears they might have entertained, were allayed and quieted by this early decision; and so remained, till they were excited afresh, without cause, but for collateral and indirect purposes. When it became necessary, or was thought so, by some political persons, to find an unvarying ground for the exclusion of northern men from confidence and from lead in the affairs of the republic, then, and not till then, the cry was raised, and the feeling industriously excited, that the influence of northern men in the public councils would endanger the relation of master and slave. For myself, I claim no other merit, than that this gross and enormous injustice towards the whole north has not wrought upon me to change my opinions, or my political conduct. I hope I am above violating my principles, even under the smart of injury and false imputations. Unjust suspicions and undeserved reproach, whatever pain I may experience from them, will not induce me, I trust, nevertheless, to overstep the limits of constitutional duty, or to encroach on the rights of others. The domestic slavery of the south I leave where I find it — in the hands of their own governments. It is their affair, not mine. Nor do I complain of the peculiar effect which the magnitude of that population has had in the distribution of power under this federal government. We know, sir, that the representation of the states in the other house is not equal. We know that great advantage, in that respect, is enjoyed by the slaveholding states; and we know, too, that the intended equivalent for that advantage — that is to say, the imposition of direct taxes in the same ratio — has become merely nominal; the habit of the government being almost invariably to collect its revenues from other sources, and in other modes. Nevertheless, I do not complain; nor would I countenance any movement to alter this arrangement of representation. It is the original bargain, the compact — let it stand; let the advantage of it be fully enjoyed. The Union itself is too full of benefit to be hazarded in propositions for changing its original basis. I go for the constitution as it is, and for the Union as it is. But I am resolved not to submit, in silence, to accusations, either against myself individually, or against the north, wholly unfounded and unjust — accusations which impute to us a disposition to evade the constitutional compact, and to extend the power of the government over the internal laws and domestic condition of the states. All such accusations, wherever and whenever made, all insinuations of the existence of any such purposes, I know and feel to be groundless and injurious. And we must confide in southern gentlemen themselves; we must trust to those whose integrity of heart and magnanimity of feeling will lead them to a desire to maintain and disseminate truth, and who possess the means of its diffusion with the southern public; we must leave it to them to disabuse that public of its prejudices. But, in the mean time, for my own part, I shall continue to act justly, whether those towards whom justice is exercised receive it with candor or with contumely.

Having had occasion to recur to the ordinance of 1787, in order to

defend myself against the inferences which the honorable member has chosen to draw from my former observations on that subject, I am not willing now entirely to take leave of it without another remark. It need hardly be said, that that paper expresses just sentiments on the great subject of civil and religious liberty. Such sentiments were common, and abound in all our state papers of that day. But this ordinance did that which was not so common, and which is not, even now, universal; that is, it set forth and declared, *as a high and binding duty of government itself*, to encourage schools and advance the means of education; on the plain reason that religion, morality, and knowledge are necessary to good government, and to the happiness of mankind. One observation further. The important provision incorporated into the constitution of the United States, and several of those of the states, and recently, as we have seen, adopted into the reformed constitution of Virginia, restraining legislative power, in questions of private right, and from impairing the obligation of contracts, is first introduced and established, as far as I am informed, as matter of express written constitutional law, in this ordinance of 1787. And I must add, also, in regard to the author of the ordinance, who has not had the happiness to attract the gentleman's notice heretofore, nor to avoid his sarcasm now, that he was chairman of that select committee of the old Congress, whose report first expressed the strong sense of that body, that the old confederation was not adequate to the exigencies of the country, and recommending to the states to send delegates to the convention which formed the present constitution.

An attempt has been made to transfer from the north to the south the honor of this exclusion of slavery from the North-western Territory. The journal, without argument or comment, refutes such attempt. The session of Virginia was made March, 1784. On the 19th of April following, a committee, consisting of Messrs. Jefferson, Chase, and Howell, reported a plan for a temporary government of the territory, in which was this article: "That after the year 1800, there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, in any of the said states, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been convicted." Mr. Speight, of North Carolina, moved to strike out this paragraph. The question was put, according to the form then practised: "Shall these words stand, as part of the plan," &c. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania — seven states — voted in the affirmative; Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina in the negative. North Carolina was divided. As the consent of nine states was necessary, the words could not stand, and were struck out accordingly. Mr. Jefferson voted for the clause, but was overruled by his colleagues.

In March of the next year, (1785,) Mr. King, of Massachusetts, seconded by Mr. Ellery, of Rhode Island, proposed the formerly rejected article, with this addition: "*And that this regulation shall be an article of compact, and remain a fundamental principle of the constitution between the thirteen original states and each of the states described in the resolve*," &c. On this clause, which provided the adequate and thorough security, the eight Northern States, at that time, voted affirmatively, and the four Southern States negatively. The votes of nine states were not yet obtained, and thus the provision was again rejected by the Southern States. The perseverance of the north held out, and two years afterwards the object was attained. It is no derogation from the credit, whatever that may

be, of drawing the ordinance, that its principles had before been prepared and discussed, in the form of resolutions. If one should reason in that way, what would become of the distinguished honor of the author of the Declaration of Independence? There is not a sentiment in that paper which had not been voted and resolved in the assemblies, and other popular bodies in the country, over and over again.

But the honorable member has now found out that this gentleman, Mr. Dane, was a member of the Hartford Convention. However uninformed the honorable member may be of characters and occurrences at the north, it would seem that he has at his elbows, on this occasion, some high-minded and lofty spirit, some magnanimous and true-hearted monitor, possessing the means of local knowledge, and ready to supply the honorable member with every thing, down even to forgotten and moth-eaten twopenny pamphlets, which may be used to the disadvantage of his own country. But, as to the Hartford Convention, sir, allow me to say, that the proceedings of that body seem now to be less read and studied in New England than farther south. They appear to be looked to, not in New England, but elsewhere, for the purpose of seeing how far they may serve as a precedent. But they will not answer the purpose — they are quite too tame. The latitude in which they originated was too cold. Other conventions, of more recent existence, have gone a whole bar's length beyond it. The learned doctors of Colleton and Abbeville have pushed their commentaries on the Hartford collect so far that the original text writers are thrown entirely into the shade. I have nothing to do, sir, with the Hartford Convention. Its journal, which the gentleman has quoted, I never read. So far as the honorable member may discover in its proceedings a spirit in any degree resembling that which was avowed and justified in those other conventions to which I have alluded, or so far as those proceedings can be shown to be disloyal to the constitution, or tending to disunion, so far I shall be as ready as any one to bestow on them reprehension and censure.

Having dwelt long on this convention, and other occurrences of that day, in the hope, probably, (which will not be gratified,) that I should leave the course of this debate to follow him at length in those excursions, the honorable member returned, and attempted another object. He referred to a speech of mine in the other house, the same which I had occasion to allude to myself the other day; and has quoted a passage or two from it, with a bold though uneasy and laboring air of confidence, as if he had detected in me an inconsistency. Judging from the gentleman's manner, a stranger to the course of the debate, and to the point in discussion, would have imagined, from so triumphant a tone, that the honorable member was about to overwhelm me with a manifest contradiction. Any one who heard him, and who had not heard what I had, in fact, previously said, must have thought me routed and discomfited, as the gentleman had promised. Sir, a breath blows all this triumph away. There is not the slightest difference in the sentiments of my remarks on the two occasions. What I said here on Wednesday is in exact accordance with the opinions expressed by me in the other house in 1825. Though the gentleman had the metaphysics of Hudibras — though he were able

> "to sever and divide
> A hair 'twixt north and north-west side,"

MR. WEBSTER'S SPEECH.

In the Senate of the United States, March 7, 1850, on the Slavery Compromise.

THE VICE PRESIDENT. The resolutions submitted by the senator from Kentucky were made the special order of the day at 12 o'clock. On this subject the senator from Wisconsin (Mr. Walker) has the floor.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. President, this vast audience has not assembled to hear me; and there is but one man, in my opinion, who can assemble such an audience. They expect to hear him, and I feel it to be my duty, as well as my pleasure, to give the floor therefore to the senator from Massachusetts. I understand it is immaterial to him upon which of these questions he speaks, and therefore I will not move to postpone the special order.

Mr. WEBSTER. I beg to express my obligations to my friend from Wisconsin, (Mr. Walker,) as well as to my friend from New York, (Mr. Seward,) for their courtesy in allowing me to address the Senate this morning.

Mr. President: I wish to speak to-day, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a northern man, but as an American, and a member of the Senate of the United States. It is fortunate that there is a Senate of the United States; a body not yet moved from its propriety, not lost to a just sense of its own dignity, and its own high responsibilities, and a body to which the country looks with confidence for wise, moderate, patriotic, and healing counsels. It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations, and are surrounded by very considerable dangers to our institutions of government. The imprisoned winds are let loose. The east, the west, the north, and the stormy south, all combine to throw the whole ocean into commotion, to toss its billows to the skies, and to disclose its profoundest depths. I do not affect to regard myself, Mr. President, as holding, or as fit to hold, the helm in this combat of the political elements; but I have a duty to perform, and I mean to perform it with fidelity — not without a sense of surrounding dangers, but not without hope. I have a part to act, not for my own security or safety, for I am looking out for no fragment upon which to float away from the wreck, if wreck there must be, but for the good of the whole, and the preservation of the whole; and there is that which will keep me to my duty during this struggle, whether the sun and the stars shall appear, or shall not appear, for many days. I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union. "Hear me for my cause." I speak to-day, out of a solicitous and anxious heart, for the restoration to the country of that quiet and that harmony which make the blessings of this Union so rich and so dear to us all. These are the topics that I propose to myself to discuss; these are

the motives, and the sole motives, that influence me in the wish to communicate my opinions to the Senate and the country; and if I can do any thing, however little, for the promotion of these ends, I shall have accomplished all that I desire.

Mr. President, it may not be amiss to recur very briefly to the events which, equally sudden and extraordinary, have brought the political condition of the country to what it now is. In May, 1846, the United States declared war against Mexico. Her armies, then on the frontiers, entered the provinces of that republic; met and defeated all her troops; penetrated her mountain passes, and occupied her capital. The marine force of the United States took possession of her forts and her towns on the Atlantic and on the Pacific. In less than two years a treaty was negotiated, by which Mexico ceded to the United States a vast territory, extending seven or eight hundred miles along the shores of the Pacific; reaching back over the mountains, and across the desert, and until it joined the frontier of the state of Texas. It so happened that in the distracted and feeble state of the Mexican government, before the declaration of war by the United States against Mexico had become known in California, the people of California, under the lead of American officers, overthrew the existing provincial government of California — the Mexican authorities — and run up an independent flag. When the news arrived at San Francisco that war had been declared by the United States against Mexico, this independent flag was pulled down, and the stars and stripes of this Union hoisted in its stead. So, sir, before the war was over, the powers of the United States, military and naval, had possession of San Francisco and Upper California, and a great rush of emigrants from various parts of the world took place into California in 1846 and 1847. But now, behold another wonder.

In January of 1848, the Mormons, it is said, or some of them, made a discovery of an extraordinary rich mine of gold — or, rather, of a very great quantity of gold, hardly fit to be called a mine, for it was spread near the surface — on the lower part of the South or American branch of the Sacramento. They seem to have attempted to conceal their discovery for some time; but soon another discovery, perhaps of greater importance, was made of gold, in another part of the American branch of the Sacramento, and near Sutter's Fort, as it is called. The fame of these discoveries spread far and wide. They excited more and more the spirit of emigration towards California, which had already been excited; and persons crowded in hundreds, and flocked towards the Bay of San Francisco. This, as I have said, took place in the winter and spring of 1848. The digging commenced in the spring of that year, and from that time to this the work of searching for gold has been prosecuted with a success not heretofore known in the history of this globe. We all know, sir, how incredulous the American public was at the accounts which reached us at first of these discoveries; but we all know now that these accounts received, and continue to receive, daily confirmation; and down to the present moment I suppose the assurances are as strong, after the experience of these several months, of mines of gold apparently inexhaustible in the regions near San Francisco, in California, as they were at any period of the earlier dates of the accounts. It so happened, sir, that although in the time of peace, it became a very important subject for legislative consideration and legislative decision to provide a proper territorial government for California, yet differences of opinion in the counsels of

the government prevented the establishment of any such territorial government for California, at the last session of Congress. Under this state of things, the inhabitants of San Francisco and California — then amounting to a great number of people — in the summer of last year, thought it to be their duty to establish a local government. Under the proclamation of General Riley, the people chose delegates to a convention: that convention met at Monterey. They formed a constitution for the state of California, and it was adopted by the people of California in their primary assemblages. Desirous of immediate connection with the United States, its senators were appointed and representatives chosen, who have come hither, bringing with them the authentic constitution of the state of California; and they now present themselves, asking, in behalf of their state, that the state may be admitted into this Union as one of the United States. This constitution, sir, contains an express prohibition against slavery or involuntary servitude in the state of California. It is said, and I suppose truly, that of the members who composed that convention, some sixteen were natives, and had been residents of the slaveholding states, about twenty-two were from the non-slaveholding states, and the remaining ten members were either native Californians or old settlers in that country. This prohibition against slavery, it is said, was inserted with entire unanimity.

Mr. Hale. Will the senator give way until order is restored?

The Vice President. The sergeant-at-arms will see that order is restored, and no more persons admitted to the floor.

Mr. Cass. I trust the scene of the other day will not be repeated. The sergeant-at-arms must display more energy in suppressing this disorder.

Mr. Hale. The noise is outside of the door.

Mr. Webster. And it is this circumstance, sir, the prohibition of slavery by that convention, which has contributed to raise — I do not say it has wholly raised — the dispute as to the propriety of the admission of California into the Union under this constitution. It is not to be denied, Mr. President — nobody thinks of denying — that, whatever reasons were assigned at the commencement of the late war with Mexico, it was prosecuted for the purpose of the acquisition of territory, and under the alleged argument that the cession of territory was the only form in which proper compensation could be made to the United States by Mexico for the various claims and demands which the people of this country had against that government. At any rate, it will be found that President Polk's message, at the commencement of the session of December, 1847, avowed that the war was to be prosecuted until some acquisition of territory was made. And, as the acquisition was to be south of the line of the United States, in warm climates and countries, it was naturally, I suppose, expected by the south, that whatever acquisitions were made in that region would be added to the slaveholding portion of the United States. Events have turned out as was not expected, and that expectation has not been realized; and therefore some degree of disappointment and surprise has resulted, of course. In other words, it is obvious that the question which has so long harassed the country, and at some times very seriously alarmed the minds of wise and good men, has come upon us for a fresh discussion — the question of slavery in these United States.

Now, sir, I propose — perhaps at the expense of some detail and con-

sequent detention of the Senate — to review, historically, this question of slavery, which, partly in consequence of its own merits, and partly, perhaps mostly, in the manner it is discussed in one and the other portion of the country, has been a source of so much alienation and unkind feeling between the different portions of the Union. We all know, sir, that slavery has existed in the world from time immemorial. There was slavery in the earliest periods of history, in the Oriental nations. There was slavery among the Jews; the theocratic government of that people made no injunction against it. There was slavery among the Greeks, and the ingenious philosophy of the Greeks found, or sought to find, a justification for it exactly upon the grounds which have been assumed for such a justification in this country; that is, a natural and original difference among the races of mankind, the inferiority of the black or colored race to the white. The Greeks justified their system of slavery upon that ground precisely. They held the African, and in some parts the Asiatic, tribes to be inferior to the white race; but they did not show, I think, by any close process of logic, that, if this were true, the more intelligent and the stronger had, therefore, a right to subjugate the weaker.

The more manly philosophy and jurisprudence of the Romans placed the justification of slavery on entirely different grounds.

The Roman jurists, from the first, and down to the fall of the empire, admitted that slavery was against the natural law, by which, as they maintained, all men, of whatsoever clime, color, or capacity, were equal; but they justified slavery, first, upon the ground and authority of the law of nations — arguing, and arguing truly, that at that day the conventional law of nations admitted that captives in war, whose lives, according to the notions of the times, were at the absolute disposal of the captors, might, in exchange for exemption from death, be made slaves for life, and that such servitude might extend to their posterity. The jurists of Rome also maintained that, by the civil law, there might be servitude — slavery, personal and hereditary; first, by the voluntary act of an individual who might sell himself into slavery; second, by his being received into a state of slavery by his creditors in satisfaction of a debt; and, thirdly, by being placed in a state of servitude or slavery for crime. At the introduction of Christianity into the world, the Roman world was full of slaves, and I suppose there is to be found no injunction against that relation between man and man in the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ, or of any of his apostles. The object of the instruction imparted to mankind by the Founder of Christianity was to touch the heart, purify the soul, and improve the lives of individual men. That object went directly to the first fountain of all political and all social relations of the human race — the individual heart and mind of man.

Now, sir, upon the general nature, and character, and influence of slavery, there exists a wide difference between the northern portion of this country and the southern. It is said on the one side that, if not the subject of any injunction or direct prohibition in the New Testament, slavery is a wrong; that it is founded merely in the right of the strongest; and that it is an oppression, like all unjust wars, like all those conflicts by which a mighty nation subjects a weaker nation to their will; and that slavery, in its nature, whatever may be said of it in the modifications which have taken place, is not, in fact, according to the meek spirit of the gospel. It is not kindly affectioned; it does not "seek another's, and not its own." It does not "let the oppressed go free." These are sentiments that are

cherished, and recently with greatly augmented force, among the people of the Northern States. It has taken hold of the religious sentiment of that part of the country, as it has more or less taken hold of the religious feelings of a considerable portion of mankind. The south, upon the other side, having been accustomed to this relation between the two races all their lives, from their birth — having been taught in general to treat the subjects of this bondage with care and kindness — and I believe, in general, feeling for them great care and kindness — have yet not taken this view of the subject which I have mentioned. There are thousands of religious men, with consciences as tender as any of their brethren at the north, who do not see the unlawfulnesss of slavery; and there are more thousands, perhaps, that, whatsoever they may think of it in its origin, and as a matter depending upon natural right, yet take things as they are, and, finding slavery to be an established relation of the society in which they live, can see no way in which — let their opinions on the abstract question be what they may — it is in the power of the present generation to relieve themselves from this relation. And in this respect candor obliges me to say, that I believe they are just as conscientious, many of them, and of the religious people all of them, as they are in the north in holding different opinions.

Why, sir, the honorable senator from South Carolina, the other day, alluded to the separation of that great religious community, the Methodist Episcopal Church. That separation was brought about by differences of opinion upon this peculiar subject of slavery. I felt great concern, as that dispute went on, about the result, and I was in hopes that the difference of opinion might be adjusted, because I looked upon that religious denomination as one of the great props of religion and morals throughout the whole country, from Maine to Georgia. The result was against my wishes and against my hopes. I have read all their proceedings, and all their arguments, but I have never yet been able to come to the conclusion that there was any real ground for that separation; in other words, that no good could be produced by that separation. I must say I think there was some want of candor and charity. Sir, when a question of this kind takes hold of the religious sentiments of mankind, and comes to be discussed in religious assemblies of the clergy and laity, there is always to be expected, or always to be feared, a great degree of excitement. It is in the nature of man, manifested by his whole history, that religious disputes are apt to become warm, and men's strength of conviction is proportionate to their views of the magnitude of the questions. In all such disputes there will sometimes men be found with whom every thing is absolute — absolutely wrong, or absolutely right. They see the right clearly; they think others ought so to see it, and they are disposed to establish a broad line of distinction between what is right and what is wrong. And they are not seldom willing to establish that line upon their own convictions of the truth and the justice of their own opinions; and are willing to mark and guard that line, by placing along it a series of dogmas, as lines of boundary are marked by posts and stones. There are men who, with clear perceptions, as they think, of their own duty, do not see how too hot a pursuit of one duty may involve them in the violation of others, or how too warm an embracement of one truth may lead to a disregard of other truths equally important. As I heard it stated strongly, not many days ago, these persons are disposed to mount upon some particular duty as

upon a war horse, and to drive furiously, on, and upon, and over all other duties that may stand in the way. There are men who, in times of that sort, and disputes of that sort, are of opinion that human duties may be ascertained with the exactness of mathematics. They deal with morals as with mathematics, and they think what is right may be distinguished from what is wrong with the precision of an algebraic equation. They have, therefore, none too much charity towards others who differ from them. They are apt, too, to think that nothing is good but what is perfect, and that there are no compromises or modifications to be made in submission to difference of opinion, or in deference to other men's judgment. If their perspicacious vision enables them to detect a spot on the face of the sun, they think that a good reason why the sun should be struck down from heaven. They prefer the chance of running into utter darkness, to living in heavenly light, if that heavenly light be not absolutely without any imperfection. There are impatient men — too impatient always to give heed to the admonition of St. Paul, "that we are not to do evil that good may come" — too impatient to wait for the slow progress of moral causes, in the improvement of mankind. They do not remember, that the doctrines and the miracles of Jesus Christ have, in eighteen hundred years, converted only a small portion of the human race; and among the nations that are converted to Christianity, they forget how many vices and crimes, public and private, still prevail, and that many of them — public crimes especially, which are offences against the Christian religion — pass without exciting particular regret or indignation. Thus wars are waged, and unjust wars. I do not deny that there may be just wars. There certainly are; but it was the remark of an eminent person, not many years ago, on the other side of the Atlantic, that it was one of the greatest reproaches to human nature that wars were sometimes necessary. The defence of nations sometimes causes a war against the injustice of other nations.

Now, sir, in this state of sentiment upon the general nature of slavery, lies the cause of a great portion of those unhappy divisions, exasperations, and reproaches which find vent and support in different parts of the Union. Slavery does exist in the United States. It did exist in the states before the adoption of this constitution, and at that time.

And now let us consider, sir, for a moment, what was the state of sentiment, north and south, in regard to slavery, at the time this constitution was adopted. A remarkable change has taken place since; but what did the wise and great men of all parts of the country think of slavery? — in what estimation did they hold it then, when this constitution was adopted? Now, it will be found, sir, if we will carry ourselves by historical research back to that day, and ascertain men's opinions by authentic records still existing among us, that there was no great diversity of opinion between the north and the south upon the subject of slavery; and it will be found that both parts of the country held it equally an evil — a moral and political evil. It will not be found that either at the north or at the south there was much, though there was some, invective against slavery, as inhuman and cruel. The great ground of objection to it was political; that it weakened the social fabric; that, taking the place of free labor, society was less strong and labor was less productive; and, therefore, we find, from all the eminent men of the time, the clearest expression of their opinion that slavery was an evil. And they ascribed its existence

here, not without truth, and not without some acerbity of temper and force of language, to the injurious policy of the mother country, who, to favor the navigator, had entailed these evils upon the colonies. I need hardly refer, sir, to the publications of the day. They are matters of history on the record. The eminent men, the most eminent men, and nearly all the conspicuous politicians of the south, held the same sentiments; that slavery was an evil, a blight, a blast, a mildew, a scourge, and a curse. There are no terms of reprobation of slavery so vehement in the north of that day as in the south. The north was not so much excited against it as the south, and the reason is, I suppose, because there was much less at the north, and the people did not see, or think they saw, the evils so prominently as they were seen, or thought to be seen, at the south.

Then, sir, when this constitution was framed, this was the light in which the convention viewed it. The convention reflected the judgment and sentiments of the great men of the south. A member of the other house, whom I have not the honor to know, in a recent speech, has collected extracts from these public documents. They prove the truth of what I am saying, and the question then was, how to deal with it, and how to deal with it as an evil. Well, they came to this general result. They thought that slavery could not be continued in the country, if the importation of slaves were made to cease, and therefore they provided that after a certain period the importation might be prevented by the act of the new government. Twenty years were proposed by some gentleman, — a northern gentleman, I think, — and many of the southern gentlemen opposed it as being too long. Mr. Madison especially was something warm against it. He said it would bring too much of this mischief into the country to allow the importation of slaves for such a period. Because we must take along with us, in the whole of this discussion, when we are considering the sentiments and opinions in which this constitutional provision originated, that the conviction of all men was, that, if the importation of slaves ceased, the white race would multiply faster than the black race, and that slavery would therefore gradually wear out and expire. It may not be improper here to allude to that, I had almost said, celebrated opinion of Mr. Madison. You observe, sir, that the term "slave" or "slavery" is not used in the constitution. The constitution does not require that "fugitive slaves" shall be delivered up. It requires that "persons bound to service in one state, and escaping into another, shall be delivered up." Mr. Madison opposed the introduction of the term "slave" or "slavery" into the constitution; for he said that he did not wish to see it recognized by the constitution of the United States of America, that there could be property in men. Now, sir, all this took place at the convention in 1787; but connected with this — concurrent and contemporaneous — is another important transaction not sufficiently attended to. The convention for framing this constitution assembled in Philadelphia in May, and sat until September, 1787. During all that time the Congress of the United States was in session at New York. It was a matter of design, as we know, that the convention should not assemble in the same city where Congress was holding its sessions. Almost all the public men of the country, therefore, of distinction and eminence, were in one or the other of these two assemblies; and I think it happened in some instances that the same gentlemen were members of both. If I mistake not, such was the case of Mr. Rufus King, then a

member of Congress from Massachusetts, and at the same time a member of the convention to frame the constitution from that state. Now, it was in the summer of 1787, the very time when the convention in Philadelphia was framing this constitution, that the Congress in New York was framing the ordinance of 1787. They passed that ordinance on the 13th of July, 1787, at New York, the very month, perhaps the very day, on which these questions about the importation of slaves and the character of slavery were debated in the convention at Philadelphia. And, so far as we can now learn, there was a perfect concurrence of opinion between these respective bodies; and it resulted in this ordinance of 1787, excluding slavery as applied to all the territory over which the Congress of the United States had jurisdiction, and that was all the territory north-west of the Ohio. Three years before, Virginia and other states had made a cession of that great territory to the United States. And a most magnificent act it was. I never reflect upon it without a disposition to do honor and justice — and justice would be the highest honor — to Virginia for that act of cession of her north-western territory. I will say, sir, it is one of her fairest claims to the respect and gratitude of the United States, and that perhaps it is only second to that other claim which attaches to her — that, from her counsels, and from the intelligence and patriotism of her leading statesmen, proceeded the first idea put into practice for the formation of a general constitution of the United States. Now, sir, the ordinance of 1787 applied thus to the whole territory over which the Congress of the United States had jurisdiction. It was adopted nearly three years before the constitution of the United States went into operation, because the ordinance took effect immediately on its passage; while the constitution of the United States, having been framed, was to be sent to the states to be adopted by their conventions, and then a government had to be organized under it. This ordinance, then, was in operation and force when the constitution was adopted, and this government put in motion, in April, 1789.

Mr. President, three things are quite clear as historical truths. One is, that there was an expectation that on the ceasing of the importation of slaves from Africa, slavery would begin to run out. That was hoped and expected. Another is, that, as far as there was any power in Congress to prevent the spread of slavery in the United States, that power was executed in the most absolute manner, and to the fullest extent. An honorable member whose health does not allow him to be here to-day —

A Senator. He is here. (Referring to Mr. Calhoun.)

Mr. Webster. I am very happy to hear that he is; may he long be in health and the enjoyment of it to serve his country — said, the other day, that he considered this ordinance as the first in the series of measures calculated to enfeeble the south, and deprive them of their just participation in the benefits and privileges of this government. He says very properly that it was done under the old confederation, and before this constitution went into effect; but my present purpose is only to say, Mr. President, that it was done with the entire and unanimous concurrence of the whole south. Why, there it stands! The vote of every state in the Union was unanimous in favor of the ordinance, with the exception of a single individual vote, and that individual was a northern man. But, sir, the ordinance abolishing or rather prohibiting slavery north-west of the Ohio has the hand and seal of every southern member in Congress. The other and third clear historical truth is, that the

convention meant to leave slavery, in the states, as they found it, entirely under the control of the states.

This was the state of things, sir, and this the state of opinion, under which those very important matters were arranged, and those two important things done; that is, the establishment of the constitution, with a recognition of slavery as it existed in the states, and the establishment of the ordinance, prohibiting, to the full extent of all territory owned by the United States, the introduction of slavery into those territories, and the leaving to the states all power over slavery, in their own limits. And here, sir, we may pause. We may reflect for a moment upon the entire coincidence and concurrence of sentiment between the north and the south upon these questions at the period of the adoption of the constitution. But opinions, sir, have changed — greatly changed — changed north and changed south. Slavery is not regarded in the south now as it was then. I see an honorable member of this body paying me the honor of listening to my remarks; he brings to me, sir, freshly and vividly, the sentiments of his great ancestor, so much distinguished in his day and generation, so worthy to be succeeded by so worthy a grandson, with all the sentiments he expressed in the convention of Philadelphia.

Here we may pause. There was, if not an entire unanimity, a general concurrence of sentiment, running through the whole community, and especially entertained by the eminent men of all portions of the country. But soon a change began at the north and the south, and a severance of opinion showed itself — the north growing much more warm and strong against slavery, and the south growing much more warm and strong in its support. Sir, there is no generation of mankind whose opinions are not subject to be influenced by what appears to them to be their present, emergent, selfish, and exigent interest. I impute to the south no particularly selfish view in the change which has come over her. I impute to her certainly no dishonest view. All that has happened has been natural. It has followed those causes which always influence the human mind and operate upon it. What, then, have been the causes which have created so new a feeling in favor of slavery in the south — which have changed the whole nomenclature of the south on the subject — and from being thought of and described in the terms I have mentioned and will not repeat, it has now become an institution, a cherished institution, in that quarter; no evil, no scourge, but a great religious, social, and moral blessing, as I think I have heard it latterly described? I suppose this, sir, is owing to the sudden uprising and rapid growth of the cotton plantations of the south. So far as any motive of honor, justice, and general judgment could act, it was the cotton interest that gave a new desire to promote slavery, to spread it, and to use its labor. I again say that that was produced by the causes which we must always expect to produce like effects; their whole interest became connected with it. If we look back to the history of the commerce of this country, at the early years of this government, what were our exports? Cotton was hardly, or but to a very limited extent, known. The tables will show that the exports of cotton for the years 1790 and '91 were not more than forty or fifty thousand dollars a year. It has gone on increasing rapidly, until it may now, perhaps, in a season of great product and high prices, amount to a hundred millions of dollars. In the years I have mentioned there was more of wax, more of indigo, more of rice, more of almost every article of export from the south, than of cotton. I think I have heard it said, when

Mr. Jay negotiated the treaty of 1794 with England, he did not know that cotton was exported at all from the United States; and I have heard it said that, after the treaty which gave to the United States the right to carry their own commodities to England, in their own ships, the custom house in London refused to admit cotton, upon an allegation that it could not be an American production, there being, as they supposed, no cotton raised in America. They would hardly think so now!

Well, sir, we know what followed. The age of cotton became a golden age for our southern brethren. It gratified their desire for improvement and accumulation at the same time that it excited it. The desire grew by what it fed upon, and there soon came to be an eagerness for other territory, a new area, or new areas, for the cultivation of the cotton crop, and measures leading to this result were brought about, rapidly, one after another, under the lead of southern men at the head of the government, they having a majority in both branches to accomplish their ends. The honorable member from Carolina observed that there has been a majority all along in favor of the north. If that be true, sir, the north has acted either very liberally and kindly, or very weakly; for they never exercised that majority five times in the history of the government. Never. Whether they were outgeneralled, or whether it was owing to other causes, I shall not stop to consider; but no man acquainted with the history of the country can deny, that the general lead in the politics of the country for three fourths of the period that has elapsed since the adoption of the constitution has been a southern lead. In 1802, in pursuit of the idea of opening a new cotton region, the United States obtained a cession from Georgia of the whole of her western territory, now embracing the rich and growing state of Alabama. In 1803 Louisiana was purchased from France, out of which the states of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Missouri have been framed, as slaveholding states. In 1819 the cession of Florida was made, bringing another cession of slaveholding property and territory Sir, the honorable member from South Carolina thought he saw in certain operations of the government, such as the manner of collecting the revenue and the tendency of those measures to promote emigration into the country, what accounts for the more rapid growth of the north than the south. He thinks that more rapid growth, not the operation of time, but of the system of government established under this constitution. That is a matter of opinion. To a certain extent it may be so; but it does seem to me that if any operation of the government could be shown in any degree to have promoted the population, and growth, and wealth of the north, it is much more sure that there are sundry important and distinct operations of the government, about which no man can doubt, tending to promote, and which absolutely have promoted, the increase of the slave interest and the slave territory of the south. Allow me to say that it was not time that brought in Louisiana; it was the act of men. It was not time that brought in Florida; it was the act of men. And lastly, sir, to complete those acts of men, which have contributed so much to enlarge the area and the sphere of the institution of slavery, Texas, great, and vast, and illimitable Texas, was added to the Union, as a slave state, in 1845; and that, sir, pretty much closed the whole chapter, and settled the whole account. That closed the whole chapter — that settled the whole account, because the annexation of Texas, upon the conditions and under the guaranties upon which she was admitted, did not leave an acre of land, capable of being cultivated by slave labor, between this Capitol and

the Rio Grande or the Nueces, or whatever is the proper boundary of Texas — not an acre, not one. From that moment, the whole country, from this place to the western boundary of Texas, was fixed, pledged, fastened, decided, to be slave territory forever, by the solemn guaranties of law. And I now say, sir, as the proposition upon which I stand this day, and upon the truth and firmness of which I intend to act until it is overthrown, that there is not at this moment within the United States, or any territory of the United States, a single foot of land, the character of which, in regard to its being freesoil territory or slave territory, is not fixed by some law, and some irrepealable law, beyond the power of the action of this government. Now, is it not so with respect to Texas? Why, it is most manifestly so. The honorable member from South Carolina, at the time of the admission of Texas, held an important post in the executive department of the government; he was secretary of state. Another eminent person of great activity and adroitness in affairs, I mean the late secretary of the treasury, (Mr. Walker,) was a leading member of this body, and took the lead in the business of annexation; and I must say they did their business faithfully and thoroughly; there was no botch left in it. They rounded it off, and made as close joiner work as ever was put together. Resolutions of annexation were brought into Congress fitly joined together — compact, firm, efficient, conclusive upon the great object which they had in view; and those resolutions passed.

Allow me to read the resolution. It is the third clause of the second section of the resolution of the 1st of March, 1845, for the admission of Texas, which applies to this part of the case. That clause reads in these words: —

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

Now, what is here stipulated, enacted, secured? It is, that all Texas south of 36° 30′, which is nearly the whole of it, shall be admitted into the Union as a slave state. It was a slave state, and therefore came in as a slave state; and the guaranty is that new states shall be made out of it, and that such states as are formed out of that portion of Texas lying south of 36° 30′ may come in as slave states to the number of four, in addition to the state then in existence, and admitted at that time by these resolutions. I know no form of legislation which can strengthen that. I know no mode of recognition that can add a tittle of weight to it. I listened respectfully to the resolutions of my honorable friend from Tennessee, (Mr. Bell.) He proposed to recognize that stipulation with Texas. But any additional recognition would weaken the force of it, because it stands here on the ground of a contract, a thing done for a consideration. It is a law founded on a contract with Texas, and designed to carry that contract into effect. A recognition founded not on any consideration or any contract would not be so strong as it now stands on the face of the resolution. Now, I know no way, I candidly confess, in which

this government, acting in good faith, as I trust it always will, can relieve itself from that stipulation and pledge, by any honest course of legislation whatever. And, therefore, I say again that, so far as Texas is concerned — the whole of Texas south of 36° 30′, which I suppose embraces all the slave territory — there is no land, not an acre, the character of which is not established by law, a law which cannot be repealed without the violation of a contract, and plain disregard of the public faith.

I hope, sir, it is now apparent that my proposition, so far as Texas is concerned, has been maintained; and the provision in this article — and it has been well suggested by my friend from Rhode Island that that part of Texas which lies north of 34° of north latitude may be formed into free states — is dependent, in like manner, upon the consent of Texas, herself a slave state.

Well, now, sir, how came this? How came it that within these walls, where it is said by the honorable member from South Carolina, that the free states have a majority, this resolution of annexation, such as I have described it, found a majority in both houses of Congress? Why, sir, it found that majority by the great addition of northern votes added to the entire southern vote, or at least, nearly the whole of the southern votes. That majority was made up of northern as well as of southern votes. In the House of Representatives it stood, I think, about eighty southern votes for the admission of Texas, and about fifty northern votes for the admission of Texas. In the Senate the vote stood for the admission of Texas, twenty-seven, and twenty-five against it; and of those twenty-seven votes, constituting a majority for the admission of Texas in this body, no less than thirteen of them came from the free states — four of them were from New England. The whole of these thirteen senators from the free states — within a fraction, you see, of one half of all the votes in this body for the admission of Texas, with its immeasurable extent of slave territory — were sent here by the votes of free states.

Sir, there is not so remarkable a chapter in our history of political events, political parties, and political men, as is afforded by this measure for the admission of Texas, with this immense territory, that a bird cannot fly over in a week. [Laughter.] Sir, New England, with some of her votes, supported this measure. Three fourths of the votes of liberty-loving Connecticut went for it in the other house, and one half here. There was one vote for it in Maine, but I am happy to say, not the vote of the honorable member who addressed the Senate the day before yesterday, (Mr. Hamlin,) and who was then a representative from Maine in the other house; but there was a vote or two from Maine — ay, and there was one vote for it from Massachusetts, the gentleman then representing and now living in the district in which the prevalence of freesoil sentiment, for a couple of years or so, has defeated the choice of any member to represent it in Congress. Sir, that body of northern and eastern men who gave those votes at that time, are now seen taking upon themselves, in the nomenclature of politics, the appellation of the Northern Democracy. They undertook to wield the destinies of this empire — if I may call a republic an empire — and their policy was, and they persisted in it, to bring into this country all the territory they could. They did it under pledges, absolute pledges to the slave interest in the case of Texas, and afterwards they lent their aid in bringing in these new conquests. My honorable friend from Georgia, in March, 1847, moved the Senate to declare that the war ought not to be prosecuted for acquisition, for conquest, for the

dismemberment of Mexico. The same northern democracy entirely voted against it. He did not get a vote from them. It suited the views, the patriotism, the elevated sentiments of the northern democracy to bring in a world here, among the mountains and valleys of California and New Mexico, or any other part of Mexico, and then quarrel about it; to bring it in, and then endeavor to put upon it the saving grace of the Wilmot proviso. There were two eminent and highly-respectable gentlemen from the north and east, then leading gentlemen in this Senate: I refer — and I do so with entire respect, for I entertain for both of those gentlemen in general high regard — to Mr. Dix, of New York, and Mr. Niles, of Connecticut, who voted for the admission of Texas. They would not have that vote any other way than as it stood; and they would not have it as it did stand. I speak of the vote upon the annexation of Texas. Those two gentlemen would have the resolution of annexation just as it is, and they voted for it just as it is, and their eyes were all open to it. My honorable friend, the member who addressed us the other day from South Carolina, was then secretary of state. His correspondence with Mr. Murphy, the chargé d'affaires of the United States in Texas, had been published. That correspondence was all before those gentlemen, and the secretary had the boldness and candor to avow in that correspondence that the great object sought by the annexation of Texas was to strengthen the slave interest of the south. Why, sir, he said, in so many words ——

Mr. Calhoun. Will the honorable senator permit me to interrupt him for a moment?

Mr. Webster. Certainly.

Mr. Calhoun. I am very reluctant to interrupt the honorable gentleman; but, upon a point of so much importance, I deem it right to put myself *rectus in curia*. I did not put it upon the ground assumed by the senator. I put it upon this ground — that Great Britain had announced to this country, in so many words, that her object was to abolish slavery in Texas, and through Texas to accomplish the abolishment of slavery in the United States and the world. The ground I put it on was, that it would make an exposed frontier; and, if Great Britain succeeded in her object, it would be impossible that that frontier could be secured against the aggression of the abolitionists; and that this government was bound, under the guaranties of the constitution, to protect us against such a state of things.

Mr. Webster. That comes, I suppose, sir, to exactly the same thing. It was, that Texas must be obtained for the security of the slave interest of the south.

Mr. Calhoun. Another view is very distinctly given.

Mr. Webster. That was the object set forth in the correspondence of a worthy gentleman not now living, who preceded the honorable member from South Carolina in that office. There repose on the files of the department of state, as I have occasion to know, strong letters from Mr. Upshur to the United States minister in England, and I believe there are some to the same minister from the honorable senator himself, asserting to this effect the sentiments of this government, that Great Britain was expected not to interfere to take Texas out of the hands of its then existing government, and make it a free country. But my argument, my suggestion, is this — that those gentlemen who composed the northern democracy when Texas was brought into the Union, saw, with all their eyes, that it was brought in as slave country, and brought in for the purpose of being maintained as slave territory to the Greek kalends. I rather think

the honorable gentleman, who was then secretary of state, might, in some of his correspondence with Mr. Murphy, have suggested that it was not expedient to say too much about this object, that it might create some alarm. At any rate, Mr. Murphy wrote to him, that England was anxious to get rid of the constitution of Texas, because it was a constitution establishing slavery; and that what the United States had to do was, to aid the people of Texas in upholding their constitution; but that nothing should be said that should offend the fanatical men. But, sir, the honorable member did avow this object, himself, openly, boldly, and manfully; he did not disguise his conduct, or his motives.

Mr. CALHOUN. Never, never.

Mr. WEBSTER. What he means he is very apt to say.

Mr. CALHOUN. Always, always.

Mr. WEBSTER. And I honor him for it. This admission of Texas was in 1845. Then, in 1847, *flagrante bello* between the United States and Mexico, the proposition I have mentioned was brought forward by my friend from Georgia, and the northern democracy voted straight ahead against it. Their remedy was to apply to the acquisitions, after they should come in, the Wilmot proviso. What follows? These two gentlemen, worthy, and honorable, and influential men — and if they had not been they could not have carried the measure — these two gentlemen, members of this body, brought in Texas, and by their votes they also prevented the passage of the resolution of the honorable member from Georgia, and then they went home and took the lead in the freesoil party. And there they stand, sir! They leave us here, bound in honor and conscience by the resolutions of annexation — they leave us here to take the odium of fulfilling the obligations in favor of slavery which they voted us into, or else the greater odium of violating those obligations, while they are at home, making rousing and capital speeches for freesoil and no slavery. [Laughter.] And, therefore, I say, sir, that there is not a chapter in our history, respecting public measures and public men, more full of what should create surprise, more full of what does create, in my mind, extreme mortification, than that of the conduct of this northern democracy.

Mr. President, sometimes, when a man is found in a new relation to things around him and to other men, he says the world has changed, and that he has not changed. I believe, sir, that our self-respect leads us often to make this declaration in regard to ourselves, when it is not exactly true. An individual is more apt to change, perhaps, than all the world around him. But, under the present circumstances, and under the responsibility which I know I incur by what I am now stating here, I feel at liberty to recur to the various expressions and statements, made at various times, of my own opinions and resolutions respecting the admission of Texas, and all that has followed. Sir, as early as 1836, or in the earlier part of 1837, a matter of conversation and correspondence between myself and some private friends was this project of annexing Texas to the United States; and an honorable gentleman with whom I have had a long acquaintance, a friend of mine, now perhaps in this chamber — I mean General Hamilton, of South Carolina — was knowing to that correspondence. I had voted for the recognition of Texan independence, because I believed it was an existing fact, surprising and astonishing as it was, and I wished well to the new republic: but I manifested from the first utter opposition to bringing her, with her territory, into the Union. I had

occasion, sir, in 1837, to meet friends in New York, on some political occasion, and I then stated my sentiments upon the subject. It was the first time that I had occasion to advert to it; and I will ask a friend near me to do me the favor to read an extract from the speech, for the Senate may find it rather tedious to listen to the whole of it. It was delivered in Niblo's Garden in 1837.

Mr. GREENE then read the following extract from the speech of the honorable senator, to which he referred: —

"Gentlemen, we all see that, by whomsoever possessed, Texas is likely to be a slaveholding country; and I frankly avow my entire unwillingness to do any thing which shall extend the slavery of the African race on this continent, or add other slaveholding states to the Union.

"When I say that I regard slavery in itself as a great moral, social, and political evil, I only use language which has been adopted by distinguished men, themselves citizens of slaveholding states.

"I shall do nothing, therefore, to favor or encourage its further extension. We have slavery already among us. The constitution found it among us; it recognized it, and gave it solemn guaranties.

"To the full extent of these guaranties we are all bound in honor, in justice, and by the constitution. All the stipulations contained in the constitution in favor of the slaveholding states, which are already in the Union, ought to be fulfilled, and, so far as depends on me, shall be fulfilled in the fulness of their spirit and to the exactness of their letter. Slavery, as it exists in the states, is beyond the reach of Congress. It is a concern of the states themselves. They have never submitted it to Congress, and Congress has no rightful power over it.

"I shall concur, therefore, in no act, no measure, no menace, no indication of purpose which shall interfere or threaten to interfere with the exclusive authority of the several states over the subject of slavery, as it exists within their respective limits. All this appears to me to be matter of plain and imperative duty.

"But when we come to speak of admitting new states, the subject assumes an entirely different aspect. Our rights and our duties are then both different. . . . .

"I see, therefore, no political necessity for the annexation of Texas to the Union — no advantages to be derived from it; and objections to it of a strong, and, in my judgment, of a decisive character."

Mr. WEBSTER. I have nothing, sir, to add to, nor to take back from, those sentiments. That, the Senate will perceive, was in 1837. The purpose of immediately annexing Texas at that time was abandoned or postponed; and it was not revived with any vigor for some years. In the mean time it had so happened that I had become a member of the executive administration, and was for a short period in the department of state. The annexation of Texas was a subject of conversation — not confidential — with the president and heads of department, as well as with other public men. No serious attempt was then made, however, to bring it about. I left the department of state in May, 1843, and shortly after I learned, though no way connected with official information, that a design had been taken up of bringing in Texas, with her slave territory and population, into the United States. I was here in Washington at the time, and persons are now here who will remember that we had an arranged meeting for conversation upon it. I went home to Massachusetts, and proclaimed the existence of that purpose; but I could get no audience, and but little

attention. Some did not believe it, and some were too much engaged in their own pursuits to give it any heed. They had gone to their farms or to their merchandise, and it was impossible to arouse any sentiment in New England or in Massachusetts that should combine the two great political parties against this annexation; and, indeed, there was no hope of bringing the northern democracy into that view, for the leaning was all the other way. But, sir, even with whigs, and leading whigs, I am ashamed to say, there was a great indifference towards the admission of Texas with slave territory into this Union. It went on. I was then out of Congress. The annexation resolutions passed the 1st of March, 1845. The legislature of Texas complied with the conditions, and accepted the guaranties; for the phraseology of the language of the resolution is, that Texas is to come in "upon the conditions and under the guaranties herein prescribed." I happened to be returned to the Senate in March, 1845, and was here in December, 1845, when the acceptance by Texas of the conditions proposed by Congress was laid before us by the president, and an act for the consummation of the connection was laid before the two houses. The connection was not completed. A final law doing the deed of annexation ultimately and finally had not been passed; and when it was upon its final passage here, I expressed my opposition to it, and recorded my vote in the negative: and there the vote stands, with the observations that I made upon that occasion. It has happened that between 1837 and this time, on various occasions and opportunities, I have expressed my entire opposition to the admission of slave states, or the acquisition of new slave territories, to be added to the United States. I know, sir, no change in my own sentiments or my own purposes in that respect. I will now again ask my friend from Rhode Island to read another extract from a speech of mine, made at a whig convention in Springfield, Massachusetts, in the month of September, 1847.

Mr. GREENE here read the following extract: —

"We hear much just now of a *panacea* for the dangers and evils of slavery and slave annexation, which they call the '*Wilmot Proviso.*' That certainly is a just sentiment, but it is not a sentiment to found any new party upon. It is not a sentiment on which Massachusetts whigs differ. There is not a man in this hall who holds to it more firmly than I do, nor one who adheres to it more than another.

"I feel some little interest in this matter, sir. Did not I commit myself in 1838 to the whole doctrine, fully, entirely? And I must be permitted to say that I cannot quite consent that more recent discoveries should claim the merit and take out a patent.

"I deny the priority of their invention. Allow me to say, sir, it is not their thunder. . . . .

"We are to use the first and last, and every occasion which offers to oppose the extension of slave power.

"But I speak of it here, as in Congress, as a political question, a question for statesmen to act upon. We must so regard it. I certainly do not mean to say that it is less important in a moral point of view, that it is not more important in many other points of view; but, as a legislator, or in any official capacity, I must look at it, consider it, and decide it as a matter of political action."

Mr. WEBSTER. On other occasions, in debates here, I have expressed my determination to vote for no acquisition, or cession, or annexation, north or south, east or west. My opinion has been, that we have territory enough, and that we should follow the Spartan maxim, "Improve, adorn what you have, seek no farther." I think that it was in some observations that I made here on the three million loan bill, that I avowed that sentiment. In short, sir, the sentiment has been avowed quite as often, in as many places, and before as many assemblies, as any humble sentiments of mine ought to be avowed.

But now that, under certain conditions, Texas is in, with all her territories, as a slave state, with a solemn pledge that if she is divided into many states, those states may come in as slave states south of 36° 30′, how are we to deal with this subject? I know no way of honorable legislation, when the proper time comes for the enactment, but to carry into effect all that we have stipulated to do. I do not entirely agree with my honorable friend from Tennessee, (Mr. Bell,) that, as soon as the time comes when she is entitled to another representative, we should create a new state. The rule in regard to it I take to be this: that, when we have created new states out of territories, we have generally gone upon the idea that when there is population enough to form a state, sixty thousand, or some such thing, we would create a state; but it is quite a different thing when a state is divided, and two or more states made out of it. It does not follow, in such a case, that the same rule of apportionment should be applied. That, however, is a matter for the consideration of Congress, when the proper time arrives. I may not then be here. I may have no vote to give on the occasion; but I wish it to be distinctly understood today, that, according to my view of the matter, this government is solemnly pledged by law to create new states out of Texas, with her consent, when her population shall justify such a proceeding; and, so far as such states are formed out of Texan territory lying south of 36° 30′, to let them come in as slave states. That is the meaning of the resolution which our friends, the northern democracy, have left us to fulfil; and I, for one, mean to fulfil it, because I will not violate the faith of the government.

Now, as to California and New Mexico, I hold slavery to be excluded from those territories by a law even superior to that which admits and sanctions it in Texas. I mean the law of nature, — of physical geography, — the law of the formation of the earth. That law settles forever, with a strength beyond all terms of human enactment, that slavery cannot exist in California or New Mexico. Understand me, sir; I mean slavery as we regard it; slaves in gross, of the colored race, transferable by sale and delivery like other property. I shall not discuss this point, but I leave it to the learned gentlemen who have undertaken to discuss it; but I suppose there is no slave of that description in California now. I understand that *peonism*, a sort of penal servitude, exists there, or rather a sort of voluntary sale of a man and his offspring for debt, as it is arranged and exists in some parts of California and New Mexico. But what I mean to say is, that African slavery, as we see it among us, is as utterly impossible to find itself, or to be found, in Mexico, as any other natural impossibility. California and New Mexico are Asiatic in their formation and scenery. They are composed of vast ridges of mountains of enormous height, with broken ridges and deep valleys. The sides of these mountains are barren, entirely barren, their tops capped by perennial snow. There may be in California, now made free by its constitution, and no doubt there are, some tracts of valuable land. But it is not so in New Mexico. Pray, what is the evidence which every gentleman must have obtained on this subject, from information sought by himself or com-

municated by others? I have inquired and read all I could find in order to obtain information. What is there in New Mexico that could by any possibility induce any body to go there with slaves? There are some narrow strips of tillable land on the borders of the rivers; but the rivers themselves dry up before midsummer is gone. All that the people can do is to raise some little articles, some little wheat for their tortillas, and all that by irrigation. And who expects to see a hundred black men cultivating tobacco, corn, cotton, rice, or any thing else, on lands in New Mexico made fertile only by irrigation? I look upon it, therefore, as a fixed fact, — to use an expression current at this day, — that both California and New Mexico are destined to be free, so far as they are settled at all, which I believe, especially in regard to New Mexico, will be very little for a great length of time; free by the arrangement of things by the Power above us. I have, therefore, to say, in this respect also, that this country is fixed for freedom, to as many persons as shall ever live there, by as irrepealable and more irrepealable a law than the law that attaches to the right of holding slaves in Texas; and I will say further, that if a resolution or a law were now before us to provide a territorial government for New Mexico, I would not vote to put any prohibition into it whatever. The use of such a prohibition would be idle, as it respects any effect it would have upon the territory; and I would not take pains to reaffirm an ordinance of Nature, nor to reënact the will of God. And I would put in no Wilmot proviso for the purpose of a taunt or a reproach. I would put into it no evidence of the votes of superior power, to wound the pride, even whether a just pride, a rational pride, or an irrational pride — to wound the pride of the gentlemen who belong to the Southern States. I have no such object, no such purpose. They would think it a taunt, an indignity; they would think it to be an act taking away from them what they regard a proper equality of privilege; and whether they expect to realize any benefit from it or not, they would think it a theoretic wrong; that something more or less derogatory to their character and their rights had taken place. I propose to inflict no such wound upon any body, unless something essentially important to the country, and efficient to the preservation of liberty and freedom, is to be effected. Therefore, I repeat, sir, and I repeat it because I wish it to be understood, that I do not propose to address the Senate often on this subject. I desire to pour out all my heart in as plain a manner as possible; and I say, again, that if a proposition were now here for a government for New Mexico, and it was moved to insert a provision for a prohibition of slavery, I would not vote for it.

Now, Mr. President, I have established, so far as I proposed to go into any line of observation to establish, the proposition with which I set out, and upon which I propose to stand or fall; and that is, that the whole territory of the states in the United States, or in the newly-acquired territory of the United States, has a fixed and settled character, now fixed and settled by law, which cannot be repealed in the case of Texas without a violation of public faith, and cannot be repealed by any human power in regard to California or New Mexico; that, under one or other of these laws, every foot of territory in the states or in the territories has now received a fixed and decided character.

Sir, if we were now making a government for New Mexico, and any body should propose a Wilmot proviso, I should treat it exactly as Mr. Polk treated that provision for excluding slavery from Oregon. Mr. Polk was known to be in opinion decidedly averse to the Wilmot proviso; but he

felt the necessity of establishing a government for the territory of Oregon and though the proviso was there, he knew it would be entirely nugatory; and, since it must be entirely nugatory, since it took away no right, no describable, no estimable, no weighable or tangible right of the south, he said he would sign the bill for the sake of enacting a law to form a government in that territory, and let that entirely useless, and, in that connection, entirely senseless, proviso remain. For myself, I will say that we hear much of the annexation of Canada; and if there be any man, any of the northern democracy, or any one of the freesoil party, who supposes it necessary to insert a Wilmot proviso in a territorial government for New Mexico, that man will of course be of opinion that it is necessary to protect the everlasting snows of Canada from the foot of slavery by the same overpowering wing of an act of Congress. Sir, wherever there is a particular good to be done, wherever there is a foot of land to be stayed back from becoming slave territory, I am ready to assert the principle of the exclusion of slavery. I am pledged to it from the year 1837; I have been pledged to it again and again; and I will perform those pledges; but I will not do a thing unnecessary, that wounds the feelings of others, or that does disgrace to my own understanding.

Mr. President, in the excited times in which we live, there is found to exist a state of crimination and recrimination between the north and south. There are lists of grievances produced by each; and those grievances, real or supposed, alienate the minds of one portion of the country from the other, exasperate the feelings, subdue the sense of fraternal connection, and patriotic love, and mutual regard. I shall bestow a little attention, sir, upon these various grievances produced on the one side and on the other. I begin with the complaints of the south. I will not answer, further than I have, the general statements of the honorable senator from South Carolina, that the north has grown upon the south in consequence of the manner of administering this government, in the collecting of its revenues, and so forth. These are disputed topics, and I have no inclination to enter into them. But I will state these complaints, especially one complaint of the south, which has, in my opinion, just foundation; and that is, that there has been found at the north, among individuals, and among the legislators of the north, a disinclination to perform, fully, their constitutional duties in regard to the return of persons bound to service, who have escaped into the free states. In that respect, it is my judgment that the south is right, and the north is wrong. Every member of every northern legislature is bound, like every other officer in the country, by oath, to support the constitution of the United States; and this article of the constitution, which says to these states, they shall deliver up fugitives from service, is as binding in honor and conscience as any other article. No man fulfils his duty in any legislature who sets himself to find excuses, evasions, escapes from this constitutional obligation. I have always thought that the constitution addressed itself to the legislatures of the states or to the states themselves. It says that those persons escaping to other states shall be delivered up, and I confess I have always been of the opinion that it was an injunction upon the states themselves. When it is said that a person escaping into another state, and becoming therefore within the jurisdiction of that state, shall be delivered up, it seems to me the import of the passage is, that the state itself, in obedience to the constitution, shall cause him to be delivered up. That is my judgment. I have always entertained that opinion, and I

entertain it now. But when the subject, some years ago, was before the Supreme Court of the United States, the majority of the judges held that the power to cause fugitives from service to be delivered up was a power to be exercised under the authority of this government. I do not know, on the whole, that it may not have been a fortunate decision. My habit is to respect the result of judicial deliberations, and the solemnity of judicial decisions. But as it now stands, the business of seeing that these fugitives are delivered up resides in the power of Congress and the national judicature, and my friend at the head of the judiciary committee has a bill on the subject now before the Senate, with some amendments to it, which I propose to support, with all its provisions, to the fullest extent. And I desire to call the attention of all sober-minded men, of all conscientious men, in the north, of all men who are not carried away by any fanatical idea, or by any false idea whatever, to their constitutional obligations. I put it to all the sober and sound minds at the north, as a question of morals and a question of conscience, What right have they, in their legislative capacity, or any other, to endeavor to get round this constitution, to embarrass the free exercise of the rights secured by the constitution to the persons whose slaves escape from them? None at all; none at all. Neither in the forum of conscience, nor before the face of the constitution, are they justified, in my opinion. Of course it is a matter for their consideration. They probably, in the turmoil of the times, have not stopped to consider of this; they have followed what seems to be the current of thought and of motives, as the occasion arose, and neglected to investigate fully the real question, and to consider their constitutional obligations; as I am sure, if they did consider, they would fulfil them with alacrity. Therefore I repeat, sir, that there is a ground of complaint against the north, well founded, which ought to be removed, which it is now in the power of the different departments of this government to remove, which calls for the enactment of proper laws authorizing the judicature of this government, in the several states, to do all that is necessary for the recapture of fugitive slaves, and for the restoration of them to those who claim them. Wherever I go, and wherever I speak on this subject, — and when I speak here I desire to speak to the whole north, — I say that the south has been injured in this respect, and has a right to complain; and the north has been too careless of what I think the constitution peremptorily and emphatically enjoins upon it as a duty.

Complaint has been made against certain resolutions that emanate from legislatures at the north, and are sent here to us, not only on the subject of slavery in this District, but sometimes recommending Congress to consider the means of abolishing slavery in the states. I should be very sorry to be called upon to present any resolutions here which could not be referable to any committee or any power in Congress; and therefore I should be very unwilling to receive from Massachusetts instructions to present resolutions expressing any opinion whatever upon slavery as it exists at the present moment in the states, for two reasons: because, first, I do not consider that the legislature of Massachusetts has any thing to do with it; and next, I do not consider that I, as her representative here, have any thing to do with it. Sir, it has become, in my opinion, quite too common; and if the legislatures of the states do not like that opinion, they have a great deal more power to put it down than I have to uphold it. It has become, in my opinion, quite too common a practice for the state legislatures to present resolutions here on all subjects, and to instruct us

here on all subjects. There is no public man that requires instruction more than I do, or who requires information more than I do, or desires it more heartily; but I do not like to have it come in too imperative a shape. I took notice, with pleasure, of some remarks upon this subject, made the other day in the Senate of Massachusetts, by a young man of talent and character, from whom the best hopes may be entertained. I mean Mr. Hillard. He told the Senate of Massachusetts that he would vote for no instructions whatever to be forwarded to members of Congress, nor for any resolutions to be offered expressive of the sense of Massachusetts as to what their members of Congress ought to do. He said that he saw no propriety in one set of public servants giving instructions and reading lectures to another set of public servants. To their own master all of them must stand or fall, and that master is their constituents. I wish these sentiments could become more common, a great deal more common. I have never entered into the question, and never shall, about the binding force of instructions. I will, however, simply say this: if there be any matter of interest pending in this body, while I am a member of it, in which Massachusetts has an interest of her own not adverse to the general interest of the country, I shall pursue her instructions with gladness of heart, and with all the efficiency which I can bring it. But if the question be one which affects her interest, and at the same time affects the interests of all other states, I shall no more regard her political wishes or instructions than I would regard the wishes of a man who might appoint me an arbiter or referee to decide some question of important private right, and who might instruct me to decide in his favor. If ever there was a government upon earth, it is this government; if ever there was a body upon earth, it is this body, which should consider itself as composed by agreement of all, appointed by some, but organized by the general consent of all, sitting here under the solemn obligations of oath and conscience to do that which they think is best for the good of the whole.

Then, sir, there are these abolition societies, of which I am unwilling to speak, but in regard to which I have very clear notions and opinions. I do not think them useful. I think their operations for the last twenty years have produced nothing good or valuable. At the same time, I know thousands of them are honest and good men; perfectly well-meaning men. They have excited feelings — they think they must do something for the cause of liberty, and in their sphere of action they do not see what else they can do, than to contribute to an abolition press or an abolition society, or to pay an abolition lecturer. I do not mean to impute gross motives even to the leaders of these societies, but I am not blind to the consequences. I cannot but see what mischiefs their interference with the south has produced. And is it not plain to every man? Let any gentleman who doubts of that, recur to the debates in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1832, and he will see with what freedom a proposition made by Mr. Randolph for the gradual abolition of slavery was discussed in that body. Every one spoke of slavery as he thought; very ignominious and disparaging names and epithets were applied to it. The debates in the House of Delegates on that occasion, I believe, were all published. They were read by every colored man who could read, and if there were any who could not read, those debates were read to them by others. At that time Virginia was not unwilling nor afraid to discuss this question, and to let that part of her population know as much of it as

they could learn. That was in 1832. As has been said by the honorable member from Carolina, these abolition societies commenced their course of action in 1835. It is said — I do not know how true it may be — that they sent incendiary publications into the slave states; at any event, they attempted to arouse, and did arouse, a very strong feeling; in other words, they created great agitation in the north against southern slavery. Well, what was the result? The bonds of the slaves were bound more firmly than before; their rivets were more strongly fastened. Public opinion, which in Virginia had begun to be exhibited against slavery, and was opening out for the discussion of the question, drew back and shut itself up in its castle. I wish to know whether any body in Virginia can, now, talk as Mr. Randolph, Governor McDowell, and others talked there, openly, and sent their remarks to the press, in 1832. We all know the fact, and we all know the cause; and every thing that this agitating people have done has been, not to enlarge, but to restrain; not to set free, but to bind faster the slave population of the south. That is my judgment. Sir, as I have said, I know many abolitionists in my own neighborhood, very honest, good people, misled, as I think, by strange enthusiasm; but they wish to do something, and they are called on to contribute, and they do contribute; and it is my firm opinion this day, that within the last twenty years, as much money has been collected and paid to the abolition societies, abolition presses, and abolition lecturers, as would purchase the freedom of every slave man, woman, and child in the state of Maryland, and send them all to Liberia. I have no doubt of it. But I have yet to learn that the benevolence of these abolition societies has at any time taken that particular turn. [Laughter.]

Again, sir, the violence of the press is complained of. The press violent! Why, sir, the press is violent every where. There are outrageous reproaches in the north against the south, and there are reproaches in not much better taste in the south against the north. Sir, the extremists in both parts of this country are violent; they mistake loud and violent talk for eloquence and for reason. They think that he who talks loudest reasons the best. And this we must expect, when the press is free — as it is here, and I trust always will be — for, with all its licentiousness, and all its evil, the entire and absolute freedom of the press is essential to the preservation of government on the basis of a free constitution. Wherever it exists, there will be foolish paragraphs and violent paragraphs in the press, as there are, I am sorry to say, foolish speeches and violent speeches in both houses of Congress. In truth, sir, I must say that, in my opinion, the vernacular tongue of the country has become greatly vitiated, depraved, and corrupted by the style of our congressional debates. [Laughter.] And if it were possible for our debates in Congress to vitiate the principles of the people as much as they have depraved their taste, I should cry out, "God save the Republic!"

Well, in all this I see no solid grievance; no grievance presented by the south, within the redress of the government, but the single one to which I have referred; and that is, the want of a proper regard to the injunction of the constitution for the delivery of fugitive slaves.

There are also complaints of the north against the south. I need not go over them particularly. The first and gravest is, that the north adopted the constitution, recognizing the existence of slavery in the states, and recognizing the right, to a certain extent, of representation of the slaves in Congress, under a state of sentiment and expectation which do

not now exist; and that, by events, by circumstances, by the eagerness of the south to acquire territory and extend their slave population, the north finds itself — in regard to the influence of the south and the north, of the free states and the slave states — where it never did expect to find itself when they entered the compact of the constitution. They complain, therefore, that, instead of slavery being regarded as an evil, as it was then — an evil which all hoped would be extinguished gradually — it is now regarded by the south as an institution to be cherished, and preserved, and extended; an institution which the south has already extended to the utmost of her power by the acquisition of new territory. Well, then, passing from that, every body in the north reads; and every body reads whatsoever the newspapers contain; and the newspapers — some of them, especially those presses to which I have alluded — are careful to spread about among the people every reproachful sentiment uttered by any southern man bearing at all against the north; every thing that is calculated to exasperate, to alienate; and there are many such things, as every body will admit, from the south or some portion of it, which are spread abroad among the reading people; and they do exasperate, and alienate, and produce a most mischievous effect upon the public mind at the north. Sir, I would not notice things of this sort, appearing in obscure quarters; but one thing has occurred in this debate which struck me very forcibly. An honorable member from Louisiana addressed us the other day on this subject. I suppose there is not a more amiable and worthy gentleman in this chamber — nor a gentleman who would be more slow to give offence to any body, and he did not mean in his remarks to give offence. But what did he say? Why, sir, he took pains to run a contrast between the slaves of the south and the laboring people of the north, giving the preference in all points of condition, and comfort, and happiness, to the slaves of the south. The honorable member, doubtless, did not suppose that he gave any offence, or did any injustice. He was merely expressing his opinion. But does he know how remarks of that sort will be received by the laboring people of the north? Why, who are the laboring people of the north? They are the north. They are the people who cultivate their own farms with their own hands; freeholders, educated men, independent men. Let me say, sir, that five sixths of the whole property of the north is in the hands of the laborers of the north; they cultivate their farms, they educate their children, they provide the means of independence; if they are not freeholders, they earn wages; these wages accumulate, are turned into capital, into new freeholds, and small capitalists are created. That is the case, and such the course of things with us, among the industrious and frugal. And what can these people think, when so respectable and worthy a gentleman as the member from Louisiana undertakes to prove that the absolute ignorance and the abject slavery of the south is more in conformity with the high purposes and destiny of immortal, rational, human beings, than the educated, the independent free laborers of the north? There is a more tangible and irritating cause of grievance at the north. Free blacks are constantly employed in the vessels of the north, generally as cooks or stewards. When the vessel arrives, these free colored men are taken on shore by the police or municipal authority, imprisoned, and kept in prison, till the vessel is again ready to sail. This is not only irritating, but exceedingly inconvenient in practice, and seems altogether impracticable and oppressive. Mr. Hoar's mission, some time ago, to South Carolina,

was a well-intended effort to remove this cause of complaint. The north thinks such imprisonments illegal and unconstitutional. As the cases occur constantly and frequently, they think it a great grievance.

Now, sir, so far as any of these grievances have their foundation in matters of law, they can be redressed, and ought to be redressed; and so far as they have their foundation in matters of opinion, in sentiment, in mutual crimination and recrimination, all that we can do is, to endeavor to allay the agitation, and cultivate a better feeling and more fraternal sentiments between the south and the north.

Mr. President, I should much prefer to have heard from every member on this floor declarations of opinion, that this Union should never be dissolved, than the declarations of opinion, that, in any case, under the pressure of any circumstances, such a dissolution was possible. I hear with pain, and anguish, and distress, the word *secession*, especially when it falls from the lips of those who are eminently patriotic, and known to the country, and known all over the world, for their political services. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. The dismemberment of this vast country without convulsion! The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep without ruffling the surface! Who is so foolish — I beg every body's pardon — as to expect to see any such thing? Sir, he who sees these states now revolving in harmony around a common centre, expecting to see them quit their places, and fly off, without convulsion, may look, the next hour, to see the heavenly bodies rush from their spheres, and jostle against each other in the realms of space, without producing the crash of the universe. There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an utter impossibility. Is the great constitution under which we live here, covering this whole country — is it to be thawed and melted away by secession, as the snows on the mountain melt under the influence of a vernal sun — disappear almost unobserved, and die off? No, sir! No, sir! I will not state what might produce the disruption of the states; but, sir, I see it as plainly as I see the sun in heaven — I see that disruption must produce such a war as I will not describe *in its twofold character!*

Peaceable secession! peaceable secession! The concurrent agreement of all the members of this great republic to separate! A voluntary separation, with alimony on one side and on the other! Why, what would be the result? Where is the line to be drawn? What states are to secede? What is to remain American? What am I to be? An American no longer? Where is the flag of the republic to remain? Where is the eagle still to tower? or is he to cower, and shriek, and fall to the ground? Why, sir, our ancestors — our fathers and our grandfathers, those of them that are yet living amongst us with prolonged lives — would rebuke and reproach us; and our children and our grandchildren would cry out shame upon us, if we of this generation should dishonor these ensigns of the power of the government and the harmony of the Union which is every day felt among us with so much joy and gratitude. What is to become of the army? What is to become of the navy? What is to become of the public lands? How is each of the thirty states to defend itself? I know, although the idea has not been stated distinctly. There is to be a Southern Confederacy. I do not mean, when I allude to this statement, that any one seriously contemplates such a state of things. I do not mean to say that it is true, but I

have heard it suggested elsewhere, that that idea has originated in a design to separate. I am sorry, sir, that it has ever been thought of, talked of, or dreamed of, in the wildest flights of human imagination. But the idea must be of a separation including the slave states upon one side, and the free states on the other. Sir, there is not — I may express myself too strongly, perhaps, but some things, some moral things, are almost as impossible as other natural or physical things; and I hold the idea of a separation of these states, those that are free to form one government, and those that are slaveholding to form another, as a moral impossibility. We could not separate the states by any such line, if we were to draw it. We could not sit down here to-day, and draw a line of separation that would satisfy any five men in the country. There are natural causes that would keep and tie us together; and there are social and domestic relations which we could not break if we would, and which we should not if we could. Sir, nobody can look over the face of this country at the present moment — nobody can see where its population is the most dense and growing — without being ready to admit, and compelled to admit, that ere long America will be in the valley of the Mississippi.

Well, now, sir, I beg to inquire what the wildest enthusiast has to say on the possibility of cutting off that river, and leaving free states at its source and its branches, and slave states down near its mouth. Pray, sir, pray, sir, let me say to the people of this country, that these things are worthy of their pondering and of their consideration. Here, sir, are five millions of freemen in the free states north of the River Ohio; can any body suppose that this population can be severed by a line that divides them from the territory of a foreign and an alien government, down somewhere, the Lord knows where, upon the lower banks of the Mississippi? What would become of Missouri? Will she join the arrondissement of the slave states? Shall the man from the Yellow Stone and the Platte River be connected, in the new republic, with the man who lives on the southern extremity of the Cape of Florida? Sir, I am ashamed to pursue this line of remark. I dislike it; I have an utter disgust for it. I would rather hear of natural blasts and mildews, war, pestilence, and famine, than to hear gentlemen talk of secession. To break up — to break up this great government — to dismember this great country — to astonish Europe with an act of folly such as Europe for two centuries has never beheld in any government! No, sir; no, sir! There will be no secession. Gentlemen are not serious when they talk of secession!

Sir, I hear there is to be a convention held at Nashville. I am bound to believe, that, if worthy gentlemen meet at Nashville in convention, their object will be to adopt counsels conciliatory — to advise the south to forbearance and moderation, and to advise the north to forbearance and moderation, and to inculcate principles of brotherly love and affection, and attachment to the constitution of the country as it now is. I believe, if the convention meet at all, it will be for this purpose; for certainly, if they meet for any purpose hostile to the Union, they have been singularly inappropriate in their selection of a place. I remember, sir, that when England at the peace of the treaty was concluded between France and Amiens, a stern old Englishman, and an orator, who disliked the terms of the peace as ignominious to England, said in the House of Commons, that, if King William could know the terms of that treaty, he would turn in his coffin. Let me commend the saying of Mr. Windham, in all its

emphasis and in all its force, to any persons who shall meet at Nashville for the purpose of concerting measures for the overthrow of the Union of this country over the bones of Andrew Jackson.

Sir, I wish to make two remarks, and hasten to a conclusion. I wish to say, in regard to Texas, that if it should be hereafter at any time the pleasure of the government of Texas to cede to the United States a portion, larger or smaller, of her territory which lies adjacent to New Mexico, and north of 34° of north latitude, to be formed into free states, for a fair equivalent in money, or in the payment of her debt, I think it an object well worthy the consideration of Congress, and I shall be happy to concur in it myself, if I should be in the public councils of the country at the time.

I have one other remark to make. In my observations upon slavery, as it has existed in the country, and as it now exists, I have expressed no opinion of the mode of its extinguishment or amelioration. I will say, however, though I have nothing to propose on that subject, because I do not deem myself competent as other gentlemen to consider it, that if any gentleman from the south shall propose a scheme of colonization, to be carried on by this government, upon a large scale, for the transportation of free colored people to any colony, or any place in the world, I should be quite disposed to incur almost any degree of expense to accomplish that object. Nay, sir, following an example set here more than twenty years ago, by a great man, then a senator from New York, I would return to Virginia — and through her, for the benefit of the whole south — the money received from the lands and territories ceded by her to this government, for any such purpose as to relieve, in whole or in part, or in any way to diminish or deal beneficially with the free colored population of the Southern States. I have said that I honor Virginia for her cession of this territory. There have been received into the treasury of the United States eighty millions of dollars, the proceeds of the sales of public lands ceded by Virginia. If the residue should be sold at the same rate, the whole aggregate will exceed two hundred millions of dollars. If Virginia and the south see fit to adopt any proposition to relieve themselves from the free people of color among them, they have my free consent that the government shall pay them any sum of money out of its proceeds which may be adequate to the purpose.

And now, Mr. President, I draw these observations to a close. I have spoken freely, and I meant to do so. I have sought to make no display; I have sought to enliven the occasion by no animated discussion; nor have I attempted any train of elaborate argument. I have sought only to speak my sentiments, fully and at large, being desirous, once and for all, to let the Senate know, and to let the country know, the opinions and sentiments which I entertain on all these subjects. These opinions are not likely to be suddenly changed. If there be any future service that I can render to the country, consistently with these sentiments and opinions, I shall cheerfully render it. If there be not, I shall still be glad to have had an opportunity to disburden my conscience from the bottom of my heart, and to make known every political sentiment that therein exists.

And now, Mr. President, instead of speaking of the possibility or utility of secession, instead of dwelling in these caverns of darkness, instead of groping with those ideas so full of all that is horrid and horrible, let us come out into the light of day; let us enjoy the fresh airs of Liberty and Union; let us cherish those hopes which belong to us; let us devote ourselves to those great objects that are fit for our consideration and our action; let us raise our conceptions to the magnitude and the importance of the duties that devolve upon us; let our comprehension be as broad as the country for which we act, our aspirations as high as its certain destiny; let us not be pygmies in a case that calls for men. Never did there devolve on any generation of men higher trusts than now devolve upon us for the preservation of this constitution, and the harmony and peace of all who are destined to live under it. Let us make our generation one of the strongest and the brightest links in that golden chain which is destined, I fondly believe, to grapple the people of all the states to this constitution, for ages to come. It is a great popular constitutional government, guarded by legislation, by law, by judicature, and defended by the whole affections of the people. No monarchical throne presses these states together; no iron chain of despotic power encircles them; they live and stand upon a government popular in its form, representative in its character, founded upon principles of equality, and calculated, we hope, to last forever. In all its history it has been beneficent; it has trodden down no man's liberty; it has crushed no state. Its daily respiration is liberty and patriotism, its yet youthful veins all full of enterprise, courage, and honorable love of glory and renown. Large before, the country has now, by recent events, become vastly larger. This republic now extends, with a vast breadth, across the whole continent. The two great seas of the world wash the one and the other shore. We realize, on a mighty scale, the beautiful description of the ornamental edging of the buckler of Achilles: —

> "Now the broad shield complete the artist crowned
> With his last hand, and poured the ocean round;
> In living silver seemed the waves to roll,
> And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole."

Mr. Calhoun. I rise to correct what I conceive to be an error of the distinguished senator from Massachusetts, as to the motives which induced the acquisition of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. He attributed it to the great growth of cotton, and the desire of the southern people to get an extension of territory, with the view of cultivating it with more profit than they could in a compact and crowded settlement. Now, Mr. President, the history of these acquisitions, I think, was not correctly given. It is well known that the acquisition of Florida was the result of an Indian war. The Seminole Indians residing along the line attacked one of our fortresses; troops were ordered out; they were driven back; and, under the command of General Jackson, Pensacola and St. Marks were seized. It was these acts, and not the desire for the extended cultivation of cotton, which led to the acquisition of Florida. I admit that there had been for a long time a desire on the part of the south, and of the administration, I believe, to acquire Florida; but it was very different from the reason assigned by the honorable senator. There were collected together four tribes of Indians — the Creeks, the Choctaws, the Chickasaws, and the Cherokees, about thirty thousand warriors — who held connection, almost the whole of them, with the Spanish authorities in Florida, and carried on a trade perpetually with them. It was well known that a most pernicious influence was thus exercised over them; and it was the desire of preventing conflict between the Indians and ourselves in the south, as I believe, which induced the acquisition of Florida. I come

now to Louisiana. We well know that the immediate cause for the acquisition of Louisiana was the suspension of our right of deposit at New Orleans. Under a treaty with Spain we had a right to the navigation of the river as far as New Orleans, and a right to make deposits in the port of New Orleans. The Spanish authorities interrupted that right, and that interruption produced a great agitation at the west, and I may say, throughout the whole United States. The gentlemen then in opposition, a highly respectable party — the old federal party, which I have never said a word of disrespect in regard to — if I mistake not, took the lead in a desire to resort to arms to acquire that territory. Mr. Jefferson, more prudent, desired to procure it by purchase. A purchase was made, in order to remove the difficulty, and to give an outlet to the west to the ocean. That was the immediate cause of the acquisition of Louisiana. Now, sir, we come to Texas. Perhaps no gentleman had more to do with the acquisition of Texas than myself; and I aver, Mr. President, that I would have been among the very last individuals in the United States to have made any movement at that time for the acquisition of Texas; and I go further: if I know myself, I was incapable of acquiring any territory simply on the ground that it was to be an enlargement of slave territory. I would just as freely have acquired it if it had been on the northern as on the southern side. No, sir; very different motives actuated me. I knew at a very early period — I will not go into the history of it — the British government had given encouragement to the abolitionists of the United States, who were represented at the World's Convention. The question of the abolition of slavery was agitated in that convention. One gentleman stated that Mr. Adams informed him that if the British government wished to abolish slavery in the United States, they must begin with Texas. A commission was sent from this World's Convention to the British secretary of state, Lord Aberdeen; and it so happened that a gentleman was present when the interview took place between Lord Aberdeen and the committee, who gave me a full account of it shortly after it occurred. Lord Aberdeen fell into the project, and gave full encouragement to the abolitionists. Well, sir, it is well known that Lord Aberdeen was a very direct, and in my opinion, a very honest and worthy man; and when Mr. Pakenham was sent to negotiate with regard to Oregon, and incidentally with respect to Texas, he was ordered to read a declaration to this government, stating that the British government was anxious to put an end to slavery all over the world, commencing at Texas. It is well known, further, that at that very time a negotiation was going on between France and England to accomplish that object, and our government was thrown by stratagem out of the negotiation; and that object was, first, to induce Mexico to acknowledge the independence of Texas upon the ground that she would abolish it. All these are matters of history; and where is the man so blind — I am sure the senator from Massachusetts is not so blind — as not to see that if the project of Great Britain had been successful, the whole frontier of the states of Louisiana and Arkansas, and the adjacent states, would have been exposed to the inroads of British emissaries. Sir, so far as I was concerned, I put it exclusively upon that ground. I never would run into the folly of reannexation, which I always held to be absurd. Nor, sir, would I put it upon the ground — which I might well have put it — of commercial and manufacturing considerations; because those were not my motive principles, and I chose to assign what were. So far as commerce and manufactures were concerned, I would not have moved in the matter at that early period.

The senator objects that many northern gentlemen voted for annexation. Why, sir, it was natural that they should be desirous of fulfilling the obligations of the constitution; and besides, what man at that time doubted that the Missouri compromise line would be adopted, and that the territory would fall entirely to the south? All that northern men asked for at that time was the extension of that line. Their course, in my opinion, was eminently correct and patriotic.

Now, Mr. President, having made these corrections, I must go back a little farther, and correct a statement which I think the senator has left very defective, relative to the ordinance of 1787. He states, very correctly, that it commenced under the old confederation; that it was afterwards confirmed by Congress; that Congress was sitting in New York at the time, while the convention sat in Philadelphia; and that there was concert of action. I have not looked into the ordinance very recently, but my memory will serve me thus far, that Mr. Jefferson introduced his first proposition to exclude slavery in 1784. There was a vote taken upon it, and I think on that vote every southern senator voted against it; but I am not certain of it. One thing I am certain of, that it was three years before the ordinance could pass. It was sturdily resisted down to 1787; and when it was passed, as I have good reason to believe, it was upon a principle of compromise: first, that the ordinance should contain a provision similar to the one put in the constitution with respect to fugitive slaves; and next, that it should be inserted in the constitution; and this was the compromise upon which the prohibition was inserted in the ordinance of 1787. We thought we had an indemnity in that, but we made a great mistake. Of what possible advantage has it been to us? Violated faith has met us on every side, and the advantage has been altogether in their favor. On the other side, it has been thrown open to a northern population, to the entire exclusion of the southern. This was the leading measure which destroyed the compromise of the constitution, and then followed the Missouri compromise, which was carried mainly by northern votes, although now disavowed and not respected by them. That was the next step, and between these two causes the equilibrium has been broken.

Having made these remarks, let me say that I took great pleasure in listening to the declarations of the honorable senator from Massachusetts upon several points. He puts himself upon the fulfilment of the contract of Congress in the resolutions of Texas annexation, for the admission of the four new states provided for by those resolutions to be formed out of the territory of Texas. All that was manly, statesmanlike, and calculated to do good, because just. He went further; he condemned, and rightfully condemned, and in that he has shown great firmness, the course of the north relative to the stipulations of the constitution for the restoration of fugitive slaves; but permit me to say, for I desire to be candid upon all subjects, that if the senator, together with many friends on this side of the chamber, puts his confidence in the bill which has been reported here, further to extend the laws of Congress upon this subject, it will prove fallacious. It is impossible to execute any law of Congress until the people of the states shall coöperate.

I heard the gentleman with great pleasure say that he would not vote for the Wilmot proviso, for he regarded such an act unnecessary,

considering that nature had already excluded slavery. As far as the new acquisitions are concerned, I am disposed to leave them to be disposed of as the hand of nature shall determine. It is what I always have insisted upon. Leave that portion of the country more natural to a non-slaveholding population to be filled by that description of population; and leave that portion into which slavery would naturally go, to be filled by a slaveholding population — destroying artificial lines; though perhaps they may be better than none. Mr. Jefferson spoke like a prophet of the effect of the Missouri compromise line. I am willing to leave it for nature to settle; and to organize governments for the territories, giving all free scope to enter and prepare themselves to participate in their privileges. We want, sir, nothing but justice. When the gentleman says that he is willing to leave it to nature, I understand he is willing to remove all impediments, whether real or imaginary. It is consummate folly to assert that the Mexican law prohibiting slavery in California and New Mexico is in force; and I have always regarded it so.

No man would feel more happy than myself to believe that this Union formed by our ancestors should live forever. Looking back to the long course of forty years' service here, I have the consolation to believe that I have never done one act which would weaken it; that I have done full justice to all sections. And if I have ever been exposed to the imputation of a contrary motive, it is because I have been willing to defend my section from unconstitutional encroachments. But I cannot agree with the senator from Massachusetts that this Union cannot be dissolved. Am I to understand him that no degree of oppression, no outrage, no broken faith, can produce the destruction of this Union? Why, sir, if that becomes a fixed fact, it will itself become the great instrument of producing oppression, outrage, and broken faith. No, sir, the Union can be broken. Great moral causes will break it if they go on, and it can only be preserved by justice, good faith, and a rigid adherence to the constitution.

Mr. Webster. Mr. President, a single word in reply to the honorable member from South Carolina. My distance from the honorable member, and the crowded state of the room, prevented me from hearing the whole of his remarks. I have only one or two observations to make; and, to begin, I first notice the honorable member's last remark. He asks me if I hold the breaking up of the Union by any such thing as the voluntary secession of states as an impossibility. I know, sir, this Union can be broken up; every government can be; and I admit that there may be such a degree of oppression as will warrant resistance and a forcible severance. That is revolution! Of that ultimate right of revolution I have not been speaking. I know that that law of necessity does exist. I forbear from going further, because I do not wish to run into a discussion of the nature of this government. The honorable member and myself have broken lances sufficiently often before on that subject.

Mr. Calhoun. I have no desire to do it now.

Mr. Webster. I presume the gentleman has not, and I have quite as little. The gentleman refers to the occasions on which these great acquisitions were made to territory on the southern side. Why, undoubtedly, wise and skilful public men, having an object to accomplish, may take advantage of occasions. Indian wars are an occasion; a fear of the occupation of Texas by the British was an occasion; but when the occasion came, under the pressure of which, or under the justification of which the thing could be done, it was done, and done skilfully. Let me say one

thing further; and that is, that if slavery were abolished, as it was supposed to have been, throughout all Mexico, before the revolution and the establishment of the Texan government, then, if it were desirable to have possession of Texas by purchase, as a means of preventing its becoming a British possession, I suppose that object could have been secured by making it a free territory of the United States, as well as a slave territory.

Sir, in my great desire not to prolong this debate, I have omitted what I intended to say on a particular question under the motion of the honorable senator from Missouri, proposing an amendment to the resolution of the honorable member from Illinois; and that is, upon the propriety and expediency of admitting California, under all circumstances, just as she is. The more general subjects involved in this question are now before the Senate under the resolutions of the honorable member from Kentucky. I will say that I feel under great obligations to that honorable member for introducing the subject, and for the very lucid speech which he made, and which has been so much read throughout the whole country. I am also under great obligations to the honorable member from Tennessee, for the light which he has shed upon this subject; and, in some respects, it will be seen that I differ very little from the leading subjects submitted by either of those honorable gentlemen.

Now, sir, when the direct question of the admission of California shall be before the Senate, I propose — but not before every other gentleman who has a wish to address the Senate shall have gratified that desire — to say something upon the boundaries of California, upon the constitution of California, and upon the expediency, under all the circumstances, of admitting her with that constitution.

Mr. Calhoun. One word, and I have done; and that word is, that, notwithstanding the acquisition of the vast territory of Texas represented by the senator from Massachusetts, it is the fact that all that addition to our territory made it by no means equal to what the Northern States had excluded us from before that acquisition. The territory lying west between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains is three fourths of the whole of Louisiana; and that which lies between the Mississippi and the Ohio, added to that, makes a much greater extent of territory than Florida, and Texas, and that portion of Louisiana that has fallen to our share.

Mr. Walker moved the postponement of the further consideration of the resolutions until to-morrow, which was agreed to.