

EDGEFIELD ADVERTISER.

A Democratic Journal, Devoted to Southern Rights, News, Politics, General Intelligence, Literature, Morality, Temperance, Agriculture, &c.

"We will cling to the Pillars of the Temple of our Liberties, and if it must fall, we will Perish amidst the Ruins."

EDGEFIELD, S. C., MARCH 29, 1854.

VOL. XIX.—NO. 11.

W. F. DURISOE, Proprietor.

THE EDGEFIELD ADVERTISER
IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY
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SPEECH OF HON. P. S. BROOKS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

In the House of Representatives, U. S. States March 15, 1854, on the bill providing Territorial Governments for Nebraska and Kansas.

Mr. Brooks said: Mr. Chairman, I desire to express my views upon the bill which is engrossing the thoughts of every member on this floor, and I wish to do so before the ground is altogether covered by the army of speakers who are holding themselves in reserve. Should ought of intemperance in language escape me in the remarks I am about to make, I trust that it may be regarded as directed towards principles and positions, and not to the persons from whom they proceed.

I have lived long enough to learn, that to do justice to the opinions and even prejudices of others, is the surest way to secure a just consideration of my own.

Nor, sir, does it jump with my honor or my appreciation of honor to assail those who, in obedience to a local custom in a warmer latitude, do not deem it expedient to wear the same. It is a cheap display of civility to insult when no risk is incurred; and, for my own part, I would prefer the condition of him who bears the wound than of him by whom it is inflicted.

I am frank to avow my belief that it would have been wiser and in better keeping with the general interests of the country, had the bill providing Territorial Governments for Nebraska and Kansas been delayed until the pressing wants of the people of those Territories had caused them to apply to Congress for relief.

The friends of the bill maintain that the so-called Missouri compromise line has been superseded by subsequent acts of legislation which are inconsistent with it, and that it is therefore virtually annulled. I would have preferred to continue in this attitude. It would have given us the advantages of a defensive position.

But, sir, the bill is before us, and it becomes us of the South to avail ourselves of the opportunity to bring back congressional legislation within constitutional restraint to reassert the great constitutional principle, that as the people are the source of all political power, they have in the capacity of sovereign States, the inherent right of self-government, and to regain our constitutional right to go with our property, of every description, upon any part of the public domain.

We rejoice to unite with our brethren of the West in so patriotic an enterprise, and we rejoice that the stars of the Constitution and of empire, are mingling their rays together in the West. We rejoice upon this coincidence of opinion between the people of two great sections, which are destined to grow together in prosperity and wealth, and which God has united in a common interest, by that great highway of commerce which binds the treasures of the West into the lap of the South. Was the Wilmot proviso incorporated into the bill, I apprehend that no obstacle would be opposed to its passage by those who oppose it. But, sir, a certain fraternal, which with humble pretensions, has assumed to be the only reliable expounders of the Constitution—the discoverers of a higher law than the law of God, in obedience to the peculiar tenets of which they are required to love their brethren in black more than those of the same color as themselves—tell us in sacrosanct tones of sonorous dignity to "maintain pledged faith." They object to the bill—

1st. Because of the assumption that it was the original policy of the country to exclude slavery from the Territories held in common by the States.

2d. Because of an act of legislation in 1820, the consideration of which has been enjoyed by the slave States, and the benefits of which have not yet accrued to the free States.

3d. Because of the assumed antagonism of the free and slave labor, and that the admission of slaves into these Territories will result in the exclusion of foreign emigrants.

4th. Because of the immorality and the inexpediency of slavery.

I propose to reply to the objections in the order in which they are stated, and I invite you to attend, first, to that which is based upon what is assumed to have been the original policy of the country. It is not surprising that among a people who have just emerged from a warring and protracted war, waged in the defence of their own liberty, that in the first enjoyment of that liberty, many should have been precipitated into extravagance of opinion and of act. There was an exultant feeling of triumph, natural yet dangerous, which pervaded every rank

of society, and the prosperity of the American States was never more critically perilled than at that period of time which intervenes between the termination of the war of Independence and the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

While the States were employed in a common resistance to a common enemy, they were secure against rivalries and jealousies amongst themselves. But with the relaxations of peace came the intoxications of the science of constitutions and confederacies; and never was our victory complete until the liberty we had achieved had been regulated by law, and the rights of the States in relations to each other and to the General Government, then about to be established, had been defined and guaranteed by a written Constitution.

That the light of liberty during this interval should have been reflected from the white to the black man is but natural; and that men high in fame for wisdom and patriotism, had uttered sentiments adverse to the extension of slavery, it would be unfair and untrue to deny.

Mr. Mason, of Virginia, in the Federal Convention, avowed the opinion that slaves "bring the judgment of heaven on a country." As nations cannot be rewarded or punished in the next world, they must be in this. By an inevitable chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins by national calamities. He lamented, however, that some of our Eastern brethren had, from a lust of gain, embarked in this nefarious traffic.

Mr. Ellsworth, of Connecticut, said: "Let us not intermeddle. As population increases, poor laborers will be so plenty as to render slaves useless. Slavery, in time, will not be a speck in the country."

Authority may be adduced in support of a thousand exploded theories. Authority, and high authority, may be brought for converting this Government into a consolidated despotism, authority for giving the President a life tenor of office; and authority for conferring upon him the appointment of members to the other branch of this Congress. And to what does this authority amount? You may as well give the authority of Quakers against war, and the authority of Shays's rebellion against the blessings of the very liberty we had achieved by revolution.

Of what weight is the authority of Mr. Mason in Virginia now, that the judgment of Heaven is visited upon the owners of slaves? And of what weight in Connecticut is the wholesome remonstrance of Mr. Ellsworth, let us not intermeddle!

Sir, the judgment of Heaven has fallen upon our land, and in such plenteous showers of prosperity and of greatness, that the nations of the Old World turn their eyes upon us in admiration and amazement. Our staple productions—the productions of our slaves—fill every market in both hemispheres.—They have so interwoven themselves with the occupations, the habits, and the necessities of man, that a failure of the slave crops of America would threaten revolution in Europe, and bring ruin upon thousands of our own countrymen, who, in their blind fanaticism, would now spoil the sower which has fed and fattened them.

The policy of a Government is not to be learned from isolated opinions, irresponsibly given in loose debate, but by its solemn enactments, executed in proper form, and by competent authority.

But, sir, since this point has been made, we may learn more of the policy of the country by examining the opinions of other gentlemen of the Federal Convention.

Mr. Sherman, of Connecticut, observed that "the abolition of slavery seemed to be going on in the United States, and that the good sense of the several States would, probably, in degrees complete it."

Mr. Dickinson, of Delaware, "considered it inadvisable, on every principle of honor and safety, that the importation of slaves should be authorized to the States by the Constitution."

Mr. Luther Martin, of Maryland, was for prohibiting the importation of slaves. "It was inconsistent with the principles of the Revolution, and dishonorable to the American character, to have such a feature in the Constitution."

Mr. Gerry, of Massachusetts, thought we "had nothing to do with the conduct of the States as to slaves, but ought to be careful not to give any sanction to it."

Mr. Langdon, of New Hampshire, was strenuous for giving this power (prohibiting the importation of slaves) to the General Government. "He could not with a good conscience leave it with the States, who would then go on with the traffic, without being restrained by the opinions here given—that they will themselves cease to import slaves."

The opinion of Mr. Mason has already been given.

All this is plain enough, and puts the general disposition of the convention, to prevent the importation of slaves, beyond question.

But where were the Carolinas and Georgia? Mr. Rutledge said: "The question at present, is, whether the Southern States shall or shall not be parties to the Union? If the Northern States consult their interests they will not oppose the increase of slaves, which will increase the commodities of which they will become the carriers."

Mr. Pinckney said: "South Carolina never can receive the plan (the Constitution) if it prohibits the slave trade. In every proposed extension of the powers of Congress, that State had expressly and watchfully excepted that of meddling with the transportation of negroes."

General Pinckney "declared it to be his firm opinion that, if himself and all his colleagues were to sign the Constitution, and use their personal influence, it would be of no avail towards obtaining the assent of their constituents. South Carolina and Georgia could not do without slaves."

Mr. Williamson, of North Carolina, "thought that the Southern States could not be members of the Union, if the clause (on

restricting importations) should be rejected." Mr. Baldwin, of Georgia, "had conceived national objects alone to be before the convention; not such as like the present, which were of a local nature. Georgia was decided on this point."

Well, sir, with these points of difference so fully expressed, so strongly urged on the one side, and sternly resisted on the other, what was the result?

A few other extracts expressive of the policy of the country, will explain: Mr. Sherman said "it is better to let the Southern States import slaves than to part with them, if they made that a *stip quo non*."

Mr. Gouverneur Morris said, "these things form a bargain among the northern and southern States."

Mr. Ellsworth said: "If we do not agree on this middle and moderate ground, we were afraid we should lose two States, with such others as may be disposed to stand aloof; should fly into a variety of shapes and directions, and most probably, confederations, had uttered sentiments adverse to the extension of slavery, it would be unfair and untrue to deny."

Now, sir, we begin to see somewhat more of the "policy of the country," and the explanation of the whole matter is simply this: The northern States having found slaves unprofitable to them, judged they would be so with us at the South. Under this mistake they yielded to the obstinacy (if you please) of the Carolinas and Georgia, and the importation of slaves was authorized by law until 1808, a period of twenty years.

Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, were then indifferent on the subject; for they, too, had found them unprofitable, and knew that they could sell off to the States further south, upon better terms, if the importation from Africa was prohibited.

About this time Mr. Jefferson said to the Senate: "It is a culture productive of infinite wretchedness; those employed in it are in a wretched state of exhaustion, beyond the powers of nature to support. Little food of any kind is raised by them, (tobacco growers) that men and animals on these farms are badly fed, and the earth is rapidly impoverished."

Nor was the right to import slaves all that the pro-slavery States retained and secured by the compact; for, though they were in a minority in the convention, yet so confident were the North of the entire worthlessness of slaves, and so pertinacious the pro-slavery States in their refusal to enter the Union upon any other terms than those which now appear in the compact, that they guaranteed to all the States equal rights in the public domain; and by the second section of the fourth article of the Constitution, contracted to deliver up our runaways and, if necessary, to protect us and all the States against any kind of "dome tic violence."

Yet we are now told that it was the policy of the country to exclude slavery from all national territory. Sir, there is a suspicious sound in that word national, which jars upon Southern ears, and when coupled with the doctrines it inculcates, comes athwart the gale like the low whistle of the bandit, and admonishes honest men to look well to the security of their estates.

It is worse than absurd to quote the individual opinions of any man against the institution of slavery which were expressed before those great staples which are now grown so abundantly in the South and Southwest, entered as controlling elements into the commerce of the world. In every aspect which you may view it, the appearance is different. The destruction by the war of the little commerce we possessed, together with the absence of that great staple which has since given employment to millions, had well nigh rendered property in slaves not only valueless, but an absolute incumbrance. The times were propitious both to schemes of emancipation, and to the entertainment of sentiments of pseudo-philanthropy. Lands were abundant, labor cheap, the cotton gin unknown, sugar unintroduced by us, the tobacco market overstocked, and the profitable culture of rice thought to be confined to tide water swamps; and, as a corollary to these postulates, the negro almost too expensive an article for a poor man to keep. The moral and intellectual character of the negro, his peculiar adaptation to the culture of our principal staples, the staples of ourselves in a measure, and the great and varied uses to which they have since been applied, were then wholly unknown.

The territorial expansion of our country—its numerical strength, and our magnificent commerce, had never been foreshadowed by the most fervid imagination. In 1741, but eight bales of Cotton were exported from America. In 1791, (an interval of fifty years) but forty-seven bales. The invention of Whitney came into use in 1793, and our present production is upwards of three millions of bales, worth over a hundred millions of dollars, and which the ingenuity of man has applied to almost every conceivable purpose.—The acquisition of land from France and Spain, has added other staples to our exports; and time has revealed the fact, that the elevation and Christianization of the negro is only to be effected by his servitude to a superior race, and the ameliorating influence of an intelligence borrowed from the white man.

But, sir, we repudiate all authority but the Constitution. It by that instrument it can be shown that we of the South have been committed to an odious inequality of right in the public domain, then we will submit; but so long as we are able to hold with one hand this charter of our equal rights before the eyes of our children, and to defend it with the other, you will find any and every authority other than the Constitution insufficient to restrain us.

I will next proceed to the second objection to the bill, which is because of an act of legislation, passed in 1820, the consideration of which has been enjoyed by the South, and the benefits of which have not yet accrued to the free States. We are asked to reverse the provisions of the act of March 6, 1820, so sacredly binding upon honor, and told that a refusal involves the tar-pit of fraud.

Since the first assemblage of Delegates from American States, to confer upon mat-

ters affecting the general welfare, questions connected with the institution of slavery have been the never failing source of sectional disagreement and legislative contention. The foundations of this Government have been threatened by its throes, and as often has repose been re-established by the magic of compromise. It was compromised in the Congress of the Confederation, and opened again in the Federal Convention. After eliciting much of eloquence, and much of patriotism, it was seemingly settled by the adoption of the Constitution, but again disturbed by the acquisition of territory from France. Here again the fires of discord were smothered over only to break out with fiercer violence upon the organization of territory acquired of Mexico.

Again the virtues of compromise were invoked, and with a triumphant success, which was heralded forth to the world as a specific against the ills of State. But three short years have passed, and again the subject is before us, with its extremes as thoroughly charged with opposite qualities as before the equilibrium had been created by the aid of compromise. This rehearsal of the general history of the several compromises is made to show that there is no manner of affinity between slavery and compromise. We are warned by the past of the entire insufficiency of compromise to secure a finality of the subject, and I submit that it is more manly, wiser, and more honest, far henceforth to eschew the word.

The question of slavery was legally settled when the States, which were then parties to the compact, ratified the Constitution. It thereby became a part and parcel of the supreme law of the land, and no graver legislative mistake, none so dangerous to the South, or so embarrassing to the Constitution-loving portion of the North, was ever committed, as when the stern letter of the constitution was forgotten in the delusive attractions of a hollow compromise.

But, sir, we were, for the sake of argument to admit the constitutionality of the act, known as the Missouri compromise, it would not, in justice, strengthen the positions of the opponents of this bill. In fact, it weakens them, and exposes their entire insincerity; because it is in proof of record that the very men who are crying out the *bond!* the *bond!* have, on every occasion and opportunity, violated its spirit and meaning, and in their interference with the slave-trade in the District of Columbia, and in the matter of California, the very bond itself. I know it will be replied, that the people of California excluded slavery by their own constitution; but the Journal of this House will show, by the voting, which is therein recorded, that the price of her admissions was the exclusion of slavery. Were we to grant that the "Missouri bond" (as it is somewhat called) was constitutional and fair, the opponents of this bill are stopped from pleading it in the present issue, but they themselves have uniformly disregarded its provisions. It is, I believe, a universally admitted principle of justice and of law, that in every dependent covenant a failure of performance by one of the parties to it releases the other from all obligations to its terms.

For upwards of thirty years has the South acquiesced in this Missouri line—which was at first forced upon her by a northern majority—and not in a single instance have we attempted to overleap it. Believing that we would be excluded by natural laws, which, north of 36° 30', are adverse to the profitableness of slave labor, we became reconciled to a law which we knew to be unconstitutional. Continually harassed almost beyond endurance, we were willing, for the sake of quiet, to adopt this line as a final settlement of the question. Actuated by these considerations, we have made repeated offers to extend the line to the Pacific ocean—offers which vindicate our fidelity to the contract, and which, had they been accepted in the good faith in which they were tendered, might have given stability to the adjustment.

On the 10th August, 1848, an amendment to the Oregon bill, then before the Senate, was offered, providing for the extension of the compromise line to the Pacific; and passed that body, by a vote of 33 yeas and 21 nays. The nays were: Messrs. Allen, Atherton, Baldwin, Bradbury, Breese, Clarke, Corwin, Davis, Massachusetts, Dayton, Dix, Dodge, Felch, Greene, Hale, Hamilton, Miller, Niles, Phelps, Upham, Walker, and Webster.—21.

The bill thus amended was sent to this House, and rejected by the Free-Soil vote, which was unanimous against it.

My immediate predecessor moved to amend a bill, originating in this House, which provided a territorial government for Oregon, and in which the Wilmot proviso was incorporated, by declaring the effect that, inasmuch as slavery was excluded from Oregon by operation of the law known as the Missouri Compromise, we were content to abide by its terms; and it was promptly rejected, as insufficient for the purposes and designs of Free-Soilers.

In 1850, when the bill for the admission of California was before the Senate, Mr. Davis, of Mississippi, moved to amend, by making 36° 30' the southern boundary of the State; and it was lost—23 yeas, 33 nays.

Amendments to the same effect were subsequently twice offered; first by Mr. Foote, of Mississippi, and again by Mr. Turney, of Tennessee, and both rejected. But why multiply instances? I have referred to but one which occurred in this House, because we all know that for years the only hope of the South has been in the conservatism of the Senate. For upwards of thirty years has the South, in observance of an acquiescence unwisely yielded, submitted to the insult of an exclusion, and by a geographical line, from a common territory, secured by common treasure; while the Free-soilers of the North, in obedience to the dying injunction of their great captain, to "persevere," have persevered in their encroachments to the south of the line.

Our section of the country has been, throughout this entire period, flooded with

abolition prints and publications of the most inflammatory character. The peace of our society, and the security of our lives and property endangered by fanatical emissaries; our deluded slaves enticed away under the cover of night, and their owners murdered in the broad light of day, in endeavoring to secure them; our people insulted, through their Representatives on this floor, by petulant rammers with falsehood and slander, and the *bond* itself cancelled by an attempt to fix the Wilmot proviso upon Arkansas and Texas.

But, sir worse than all, as if to mortify sensibilities made acute by grief, to grind insults into hearts made tender by sorrow and to rob the widowed southern mother of her only consolation—the consolation that her husband or child had died in the cause of his whole country; while the gore of the heroes of Tennessee, of Mississippi, and Carolina was wet upon the plains of Mexico—a bill was introduced, in the hot haste of avareicious cupidity, and passed this House, which excluded their kindred of the South from the very territory which had been purchased with their blood.

Nor, sir, is this all; for, in violation of the spirit and letter of the compromise which authorized the admission of Missouri as a State, within one year from its date this House refused her admission, because her people had, by their State constitution, excluded free negroes from her borders. The Free-Soilers have pressed to legislate upon slavery within this District; have endeavored to fix their doctrines upon forts and public grounds in every quarter of the country, and have dared to let the pollution of their thoughts rest upon the grave of Washington, shielded though it be by the sovereignty of Virginia.

I submit, sir, that I have shown an entire failure of consideration. All this, and much more besides, which will be made appear from the record of the country by others who will follow me, and the *bond* unimpeded by the South.

But, sir, we are told that this is no violation of the contract; for although the act of 1820 prohibits slavery north of the line, yet it leaves the question open south of the line. Sir, I will not argue a proposition so perfidiously monstrous. It is enough, if any thing be wanting, to satisfy any honest man of the utter folly of compromise; and admonishes us to blot out that which is a falsehood upon our statutes.

The authority of Mr. Monroe, and the southern members of his Cabinet, (Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Wirt, and Mr. Crawford,) is given for the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise. Mr. Calhoun always denied that the compromise had the authority of his sanction. In his speech in the Senate of 27th June, 1848, he said expressly that it was "carried by northern votes, and opposed almost unanimously by the South, but yet acquiesced in by us from love for the Union." It may be that the President, as well as Mr. Wirt and Mr. Crawford, acquiesced from the same motive.

But again we are told that the South had the full enjoyment of the benefits of the compromise, for that under it four States have been admitted into the Union, while the free States have but Iowa. To this it is sufficient to reply, that out of the Northwest Territory (once the property of a slave State) four free States had been previously carved out; and their admission into the Union secured a preponderance of political power to the non-slaveholding States in this House. Wisconsin has since been added; and, in violation of the ordinance of 1787, which restricted the number of States to five, an 11 more, a part of this territory has been torn from Iowa, which will result in securing to the free States the political power of six States; one more than was stipulated in the ordinance.

Mr. Chairman, at the end of the whole matter is the question admits of no compromise. The men of the North regard slavery as a moral, a social, and a political evil. We regard it a moral, social, and political good. If both are sincere, (and I believe that thousands are, who ignorant of the character of the negro and the workings of the system, judge of the institution by false standards and prejudiced sympathies,) then no compromise should be tolerated.

There is no middle ground between right and wrong; and those of us who desire to perpetuate this Government, whether from the North or South, have no alternative but to take this question of slavery back to where it was left by the Constitution.

Here we will find authority to sustain us against assaults from every quarter. Here we find authority for the equal rights to the States, and here authority for the citizen of any State removing with his property any description into the territory of the United States.

We are not asked to legislate slavery into Nebraska and Kansas, but to carry out a good old republican principle, that the people shall decide for themselves the character of their municipal Government, and be left in a free condition to elect for themselves, when they multiply into States, slavery or no slavery.

The bill is in entire consonance with our republican theory, and a recurrence to the true doctrines of the Constitution. It pursues the same line of policy which obtained in regard to Utah, which lies north of 36° 30', and in reference to New Mexico, nearly all of which lies south of that line, and in reference to both of which the question at issue was left exclusively to the judgment of their own people.

It is a policy utterly irreconcilable with the provisions of the Missouri compromise, inconsistent with its spirit and letter, and in its effect, nullifies and obliterates it.

I next approached the argument urged in opposition to the bill—that the admission of slaves will operate to the exclusion of foreign immigrants; and I quote as my text the following paragraph of a remarkable manifesto, which invokes the *outward pressure* of hired letter-writers, and the "conductors of newspapers in the German and other foreign languages," upon the action of Congress:

"From the rich lands of this large Territory, patriotic statesmen have anticipated that a free, industrious, and enlightened population will extract abundant treasures of individual and public wealth. There it has been expected freedom-loving emigrants from Europe, and energetic and intelligent laborers from our own land, will find homes of comfort and fields of useful enterprise. If this bill shall become a law, all such expectations will turn to grievous disappointment.—The blight of slavery will cover the land. The honested law, should Congress enact one, will be worthless there. *Freemen, unless pressed by a hard and cruel necessity, will not and should not work beside slaves.*"

I do not say that such would be the effect, but if any earthly consideration could induce me to cast my vote in favor of inflicting the Wilmot proviso upon a territorial bill, it would be the consideration that unnaturalized foreigners should be excluded as well as slaves I revere, with a patriotic gratitude, the memories of those illustrious characters who never became American citizens, but whose names are a part of the history of American liberty. I appreciate the worth of hundreds of meritorious citizens who first saw the light of day in foreign climes, and cherish for them all those elevated sentiments which are awakened by the word *countryman*. I rejoice in the equality of their social and legal rights, and am not jealous of their political advancement.

And yet, sir, so firm is my conviction that the liberties and institutions of our country are in greater danger from the influx of a foreign population than from every other cause united, that I avow in my place an entire readiness to amend the naturalization laws, and extend the period of political pupillage, as will secure a better knowledge of our theory of government, and give some promise that the privileges of citizenship will be rightly appreciated, and not abused.

I would not deny to any man who, upon faith in our laws, has settled among us, with a bona fide intention of permanent residence, the legal or political rights of a naturalized citizen. But, sir, emigration is increasing into an evil; and it is time to prepare against it.

"Jam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes, et lingua, et mores, et cum thibicine chardas obliquus."

Things are not as they were. In the earlier days of this Republic we needed an increase of population for the security of our own people, and the development of the resources of the country. We were then in a condition to Americanize by example and absorption. We were at a wholesome distance from European associations and policy. Our own people were less pragmatical and foreigners less impudent.

But, sir, our danger now is not from weakness, but from unwieldy and ungoverned strength. "The question with the statesman is not whence to draw a population, but how to regulate and discipline that which we have; how to preserve to the people the fullest enjoyment of property, of life, and of liberty, and yet to restrain them within the wholesome limits of constitutional law.

They who guide the ship of State will find their powers of government sounded to the highest key in controlling the elements of fanaticism and propagandism which are home production, without the inflammatory influence of irresponsible conductors of newspapers or mobs—who mistake rant for reason, and license for liberty.

Such is the infatuation of a portion of those who oppose this bill, that, with the history of the foreign population in America fresh in their memories—a history which, at the North, is but a succession of riots and of mobs, in which private houses have been invaded, public edifices demolished, railroads subverted, churches burned, and our citizens murdered—that they condescend to appeal even to those outcasts from the parliaments of the cities of the Old World, to bring their influence to bear upon this Federal Legislature.

In pursuance of their madness they have contributed to swell this tide of corruption, which threatens their present peace and society, and which threatens us all in prospective, by gratuitous donations of public land, to any and every foreigner, upon the sole condition of actual settlement.

Will it be said by Free-Soilers, in support of their philanthropy, that they desired thus to provide homes for the negro as well as for the whites? Then the proposition amounts to this, that we of the South, after being robbed of our slaves, are asked by the Abolitionists and Free-Soilers to relieve them of a population which they have corrupted into nuisance, by setting apart a portion of territory, of which we are joint owners, for the benefit of these very runaways and free negroes, while our slaves and ourselves are to be deliberately excluded.

Sir, the Free-Soilers but reveal the political use of slavery when they make their appeals to foreigners for its restriction; and they but expose their counterfeited philanthropy when they say "freemen, unless pressed by a hard and cruel necessity, will not, and should not, work beside slaves."

Where, sir, is their regard for their brethren of the same color as themselves at the South, if they will fix upon us what they hold to be a "hard and cruel necessity?" This sentiment bears the ear-marks of northern philanthropy, and is a pregnant commentary upon the immaculate doctrines they profess "to behold in every man a brother."

I know sir, that the equality-loving Free-Soilers of the North, "unless pressed by a hard and cruel necessity," refuse to work beside slaves. And I know that, after seducing them from their homes of cheerfulness and comfort at the South, they are left to starve in the streets, while the freedom-loving emigrant from Europe monopolize every avenue of thrift and of employment; and I also know, that hundreds who are now dragging out a miserable existence, in want and in crime, would joyfully return to their former owners could they be honest labor but secure the necessary means. Let Free-Soilers come to the South, sir, and we will show them the white and the black man in a relation of friendship never dreamed of in their philosophy. We will show them slaves, devoted

to the family interests, family name, and family honor of their masters. And we will show them, in every gentleman, a man who will pour out his money, and peril his life, if needs be, to protect his bondsman from cruelty and injustice. A majority of our best men, and many of our ablest men, have labored side by side with their slaves, through years of enjoyment, of usefulness, and respectability.

But, sir, the humanity of Free-soilers, would exclude the poor negro, who owes his condition to the cupidity of their ancestors, from "the rich lands of this large Territory," and surrender it, without fear or reward, to the descendants of, possibly the very Hessians—the minions of King George, who warred against our liberties, when the negro, by his labor, fed the Continental army of America.

Sir, the jealousy of the political power of slavery is not to be covered by so flimsy a veil; and let me tell those who are sincere in a morbid sympathy for imaginary sufferings of slavery, and who, with incorrect motives, indulge in schemes of restricting it, that a better knowledge of the workings of the institution would tell them that genuine philanthropy demands its extension.

The operations of a great system are to be learned by an observation of the operation of smaller systems. In every section where is a scarcity of land its value is increased. The poor, who might desire to enter it, are unable to buy; and those who are there generally tempted, by an extravagance of price, to seek their fortunes elsewhere. The men of wealth absorb the small farms into large estates, from which they are frequently absent, and the management of which usually intrusted to agents, who have no interest in them beyond their annual wages and a regard for their professional reputation. The character of this reputation is too often determined by no other consideration than the amount of the crops which are annually raised. Large gangs of negroes pre-congregated upon large estates, with no social intercourse but with each other.

They are thus denied the watchful providence of their master, and the elevating influences of his association with them. Loyal to their owner, and proud of their relation to him, they are jealous of a substitute. Wanting in mental resources, imitative by nature, and conscious of a natural inferiority and dependence upon a superior race, when left to themselves, they become the prey of the vilest superstitions, and removed from the example of their superiors, they descend in the scale of creation.

But on the other hand, where lands are abundant, they are also cheap. The poor man, when provided with a home, next looks around for something upon which he shall expend his successive annual gains, and which will bring the greatest amount of comfort and convenience to his family and himself. Should his money be invested in a negro, he introduces it into his family circle. The same hand that prepares daily food of the master, prepares that also of the slave. They labor in the same field, drink from the same spring of water, and worship at the same altar. The negro is enlightened and enabled by the association, and an experienced Southern eye can tell at a glance, by the shining face, the more athletic form, and jaunty air, that his home is upon a small farm, and that the white man is the companion of his daily toil.

Were Free-Soilers permitted to carry out their plans of restricting slavery to its present limits, the first effect in the South would be to expel our poor white population, who could not resist temptation of high prices for their lands; and the second would be still lower to degrade the negro, and more thoroughly to enslave him.

I will now proceed to the argument urged in opposition to this bill, which is drawn from the assumed immorality, tyranny and expediency of slavery. It may be convenient to attack a constitutional right by appeals to the passions, but so long as we are sustained at all points by the authority of law, we are not in very much danger from sentiment. It may be that slavery was originally morally wrong; but we know that it existed before the Christian era—that it was sanctioned by our Saviour, who enjoined upon servants obedience to their masters; that it was to be found in Greece and in Rome—that it has obtained in France, England, Spain, Holland, and Brazil, and other modern States, and that the responsibility of its introduction in these States is upon those who have gone before us. It may be that the sovereignty of these States should have been surrendered to the General Government, yet it was not done.

It may be that property in slaves should have been prohibited by the Constitution; yet the importation of slaves was authorized by it until the year 1808, an import duty of \$10 per head was imposed, as on other species of imported property; and constitutional provision made whereby this property might be recovered, notwithstanding "any law or regulation" to the contrary existing in the State where it may be found. It may be that the equality of rights of the States to the common territory of all should have been constitutional, yet it is not. Yet it is constitutional law. It is too late to inquire what ought to have been done at the time this Government was established—our sole business is to know what was done.

If the appointed dispensers of ordinary statute law were permitted to question its policy and expediency we would soon be without law; and if the dispensers of constitutional law are permitted to go behind the Constitution we will soon be plunged into anarchy and dissension.

Mr. Chairman, this cant about the immorality and horrible tyranny of slavery may answer its