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REMARKS OF

on. W. W. Ketcham,

OF LUZERNE COUNTY,

ivered in the Senate, on Thursday eve- ing, March 13, 1862, on Senate bill o. 323, entitled "Joint Resolutions elative to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the subject f slavery in the States."

The Speaker stated the question be- e the Senate to be upon the final ssage of the resolutions.

Mr. Ketcham. Mr. Speaker, the res- olutions under consideration have al- ready been ably and patriotically dis- cussed, but embodying as they do the inciples which my own convictions e since led me to adopt as our only pe of ultimate national harmony and fety, I cannot forego this opportuni- of contributing my share towards king them the basis of a grand and nificent national policy. They enun- te no novel doctrine. They propose startling innovation, the results of ich are mere conjecture. They do sk us to sail out upon an unknown of speculation, freighted with our ngry's destiny, ignorant of our rse or of the shore upon which we y be cast. The doctrines of the slation have been sanctioned and ofully and prayerfully cherished by ery great and patriotic mind, by ev- intelligent lover of free govern- nt from the foundation of the Con- n to this day. Thomas Jeffer- n to them the sanction of his e, and the noblest tribute he n to his country is his living, ne in their favor. And the ne luminaric genius of Clay nev- ew with so genial a lustre upon ge national heart as when in n his life he declared against of slavery and entered noble struggle to inaugurate eration of the princi- these resolutions in the gradu- emption of slavery. They early that there could be no peace while slavery existed, and that the only con- ivable security was in its gradual ation. How prophetic was the they gave us, and how fear- ly has this nation atone for ing their teachings.

high and solemn purpose of esolutions is the harmony and urity of the country and the r of the government. And for they appeal to every heart by all is sacred in patriotism—by all e in our country's glorious by all our sympathies for her in her grand, yet fearful struggle national existence, and by all our s of her triumphant and glorious

government, more than any ernment that ever existed, is the ure and the servant of the peo- Its very life is in the virtuous intelligent devotion of the people principles, and sustained, inspir- administered virtuously and in- ately, must continue, as it has n times gone by, the grandest ntality in the hands of Prov- for the civilization, the devel- and the elevation of mankind. above all the governments of the it has stood in its proud emi- e of freedom! How its benign ence has encircled the earth and ed into generous hopefulness the s of every despot.

ow above all the nations of the have we been blessed in this sa- ngdom, while the spirit of those gave it has followed it along its great mission, and inspir- ation and bound fast the and fidelity of the beneficence. But s sapped its foundations, and infidelity and how helpless, how free, and of power, and trembled for its life! It was rule its subjects with the hand of power; it was not made ression, for the dominance of er the many; it was created the wishes, the will, the vir- the patriotism of those who receive and to be the objects ign influence. Entering upon destiny with a government so benign and so elevated in ts and purposes, what became ty of the people over whom, in ness of Providence, this gov- was ordained? It had in its stitution, in its very inspira- every act of its creation, an sable and irrevocable claim to virtue and intelligence and could contribute to its per- and the full, free, unob- achievement of its high pur- What has slavery done to and perpetuate the govern- Has slavery built up the cause ? Has the study and labor stitution been the dissemina- ular intelligence? Has the slavery been to purify, refine vate the human heart? Has it ssion to make her domain with knowledge, wisdom, vir- and patriotism? Look n dark Southern map, and me, if you can, the evidence high purposes. Show me, if any such result, or the history such mission in the domain of wild revelry of rebellion and son! Have they given us wisdom, purity or patriotism? Have not rather given us brutality and gradation, darkness and sorrow? have given us fifteen States of man bondage, of traffic in human h. They have given us fifteen groaning with oppression, and weeping over the severance and scattering of domestic affections and domestic felicity. They have given us fifteen States of slave trading and slave breeding. They have given us fifteen States of sterility and barrenness, and of the blighting of God's virgin soil of all its richness, glory and promise. The have done this, not only with four millions of human beings, of whom they became possessed either by theft or by base money-making traffic; they have not stopped with four millions of Africans. But, in their economy, in their distribution of the magnificent empire of a million square miles into plantations, they have excluded from manhood and happiness more than five millions of white men. The inhumanity, the brutality, the degradation of the slave is not the only consequence of slavery. But as a necessary result of the selfishness and the monopoly and absorbing spirit of the institution, it has doomed to poverty, dependence, ignorance, and bebasement, worse, if possible, than that of the slaves, at least five millions of white men, women and children, compared with whose associations, present conditions and future prospects, the serfdom of Russia would be a desirable refuge.

Why are not the "poor white trash," the sand hillers and crackers of South Carolina and Georgia, in the enjoyment of the same moral, intellectual and economic advantages with the yeomanry of Pennsylvania? Because hereditary feudalism, the villainage of the fifteenth century with all its enormities forbids it. Because it is inconsistent with the spirit of mastery and exclusive control that has come down with those who hold rule in the Southern States from generation to generation. While under the liberal progress of the age the very institutions from which they have drawn this dominant spirit, have faded from the countries in which they had their origin, still the original barbarism that gave them birth, has continued in the realm of slavery with unchanging rigor. In politics the same love of exclusive power and impatience of community of privilege has wielded the powers of this government from its foundation to the present day, almost exclusively for the benefit of the slave States.—Whenever an issue has occurred in the administration of the government between the Northern and Southern States, the northern majority has always surrendered to the southern minority. In all the departments of government, southern influence has had the preponderance, and we have sadly learned, this nation has bitterly learned, at the cost of untold millions of the fruits of northern industry, and the blood of legions of her noblest sons; that the southern minority have had a fearful power in the army and navy of the country.

And what has the South given in return?—what has slaveay contributed to the honor, safety and perpetuity of this government, for our generosity, our liberality, our forbearance? It has contributed to our position and character among the nations of the earth, to our physical resources and domestic economy, and to the perpetuation of the government fifteen slave driving, slave trading, and slave breeding States, and an army of four hundred thousand traitors shedding their blood and the blood of patriots to destroy this government! Here is the result of slavery. Can we, will we, from the force of habit growing upon us for the last sixty years, still close our eyes, and deny to our senses the great truths that are shocking all christendom? Can we deny that we are fighting battles against slavery for the existence of this government?—Can we deny that slavery has forced us to send into the field six hundred thousand of our sons, to waste and die, that the government may live? Can we deny that our own dear land is lighted up with the flames of civil war, and her soil saturated with the best blood of the nation by slavery? This is what slavery has done for the safety, perpetuity, and the honor of this government. It is the inevitable, legitimate, full growth of the spirit of the institution. Its very life is a war upon all free government. It lives and flourishes and triumphs in the decay and death of liberal principles, and it decays and dies with freedom in the ascendant. This is a necessity of its very nature. Why, sir, found a State, divide up its soil and parcel it out into principalities of from three to thirty thousand acres, cover it all over with petty princes, each owning as absolutely as his cattle, the whole community around him, and what have you made? You have established a net-work of monarchies. Begin at Jamestown in 1607, and continue on until you have spread over fifteen States this system of petty tyrannies, teaching day after day for two hundred and fifty years, that man's rank and dignity, and consideration is measured by the number of bondsmen who render to him the tribute of their life-long toil—and it is necessary for me then to argue that you have established in this land a dangerous conflict with all free government? We have it to-day ripened and matured. Here, in this land of ours, the world beholds the conflict between the great principles of civil and religious liberty on one hand, and of studied, progressive, systematic, fully developed tyranny on the other. It is idle to talk about the dissolution of the Union and this war growing out of the conflict between political parties. Long before any political organization had its existence on this continent, the spring was opened from which was to flow this deadly stream; long ago the germ was planted which has grown, flourished, and spread out its poisonous branches until treason drops from its limbs all over the south. Who were that colony that landed at Jamestown? were they devotees of liberty? They were men who had been reared in the mother country under the smile of royalty, men who had revelled in their baronial halls upon the fruits of their broad leagues, and the hard earnings of their slaves—yea, *white* slaves! They were men who boasted that neither they nor their ancestors had stained their hands with toil, and their high prerogative had been to blaze in courtly array in the palace, or in radiant pride to form the knightly circle around the sacred presence of their king in defence of the realm—the chivalry of the land. They did not wait until that Dutch ship furnished them with African commodities of traffic, but they opened a market for white flesh and blood. In their lordliness and contempt for obscurity and poverty, they dealt and bartered in the blue eye and white face as freely and as cheerfully as they ever have in the sable African. And judging from the general exhibition of the old feudal spirit they brought with them—in their distaste for the arts, their disgust for industry, their contempt for poverty, their austere dominance over their dependants, and the cheapness in which they held untitled human life, it may be a serious question whether, by the landing of the first Africans among them this continent was not saved from the spectacle of a more degrading white slavery than ever moved the mercy of the courts of England to alleviate the aching heart of her realm-wide villainage, or attracted the sympathies of mankind to the plains of Russia to lift the yoke of serfdom. In 1607 they boasted that were born to rule; after our disaster at Bull Run in 1861, in the rebel ovation at Richmond, Jeff. Davis boasted "that they were born to rule," and along with that boast went the sneer for universal suffrage and equal participation in the administration of government, and the assumption that wealth and blood carried with it wisdom, and furnished the title to distinction and the exclusive right of government. It was not necessary for us to wait until 1860 for an answer to the question, "what do they rule?"—That it has been hastened by political influences there is no doubt. Had freedom been allowed the advantages of her own grand progress, the evil day might have been put far off, and and when it did come, through its own inherent element of decay and the limitation of its verge by the peaceful conquests of the world's progress slavery might have been found an antagonist far less formidable than has reared its bloody head in the rebellion of 1861. For hastening this rebellion by half a century, and giving it half its power, the Democratic party is responsible. For sixty years, nearly all the life of the government, it has been the predominant and governing political organizations of the country—the party that carried with the masses, and had command of the popular heart. It has administered the government and moulded our national destiny; it has been the greatest political power on earth. Yet through its servility and cowardice, through its lust for power and place, when it should have been master, it became the servant; when it should have vindicated the broad basis of liberty and equality upon which it had its origin, it became the fearful instrument of aristocracy and despotism. When the world looked to it to save the goverment of the country in its purity, and protect it from all evil to conciliate the very power that despised it for its liberal doctrines, the Democratic party delivered itself and the country over to the service of its enemies, whose only desire or its possession was for its destruction. If the nullification of 1832 had received the retribution its enormity demanded, the spirit of treason would have been broken, its leaders would have become a bye-word and a reproach, and their followers would have remember their evil works only to shudder at the impending vengeance that ever awaited disloyalty. But the Demoratic party, then in power, stayed the honest vengeance of Gen. Jackson and forced him to argue with the "rights of our southern brethern" and hold a parley with traitors. As now, the leaders of treason were Democratic leaders. The party had the power, and it was its solemn duty to itself and the country whose destiny it controled to have stamped upon their brows the brand of eternal infamy and banished them forever from their councils, and thenceforth all forever to have protected the government and its great interest from the grasp of its enemies. But, the very audacity of the treason, instead of dooming the chief of traitors to eternal infamy, made him a Democratic hero; and Jno. C. Calhoun instead of a vagaband and outcast from the party, became its master, and the author of the Southern Confederacy with the club of treason brandished above its devoted head, gave it the humiliating alternative, a transfer of the government to southern control and unquestioned obedience to the slave power, or the destruction of the Democratic party and the dissolution of the Union—The fears of the party accepted the boon of existence with southern masters, and in their excess of devotion forever after, the chief of traitors was the prospective candidate of a large segment of the party for the highest honors of the Republic. Oh, how faithfully did it perform its stipulated service. At the command of its master in defiance and contempt of the choice of its honest masses; it meanly cheated Martin Van Buren out of the nomination for the presidency, and in his stead forced upon the country a man it did not want and did not know; and with him under the sacriligious pretence of extending the area of freedom, they expended two hundred millions of the public treasury and the blood of thirty thousand citizens in Mexican conquest, and the anexation of Texas to widen the verge and exalt the power of slavery, and give an empire to treason. Then to quiet the indignation of the people, and to justify the frightful advances of the slave power, the party turned slavery propagandists, and the whole land echoed with the defence of southern rights. The people were arraigned for their suspicions of their southern brethern, and intimidated by the cry of abolitionism, the nation put its gratitude under its feet and cast off Winfield Scott for Franklin Pierce.—And again, and finally to complete the service to startle the world with the culmination of a nation's folly, in the wildest revelry of party madness, by browbeating, by intimidation, by abuse of the public credulity, by corrupting the public integrity, by defiance of law and trampling under foot the sanctity of the elective franchise, and terrifying the masses with the traitor's cry of disunion, they elected James Buchanan president and delivered him over to slavery bound hand and foot. Then came the days of tribulation to this people—then came four years of paralysis to the nation's faculties; then came four years of dying to the nation's hopes; then came the gag on the expression of the popular will; then came the reign of tyranny and violence, and the Lecompton Constitution in Kansas; then the decree of universal slavery went forth in the Dred Scott decision, declaring that wherever the flag waved on our soil or the Constitution asserted its majestic power there slavery was sacred—that slavery was the rule, and freedom the exception.

Did not the South then realize that they were "born to rule?" Did she not rule? With a southern President in his imbecility, madly devoted to their interest, and madly poisoned by the enemies of the councils and interests of his own people—with the army in their hands—with the navy in their hands—with Congress in their hands—with the Supreme Court of the United States in their hands, their favorite ideas of government and their supremacy in the land recognized and sanctioned by the Constitution of the country, nay, the very Constitution surrendered to their interpretation, did they not then rule? Yet still the great body of the Democratic party vindicated the administration and defended and justified it.—But the indignation of the people was aroused to save the country, and when the South saw the great political revolution that was to hurl them from power, and reverse their decree of supremacy, they robbed the public treasury, destroyed the public credit, corrupted the agents of the government, corrupted the officers of the army and navy, stole the public arms, and with the Government helpless and prostrate at the feet of treason, they raised the unholy flag of rebellion.—Still Democrats excused and justified them. And now that we are in the midst of this most terrible war, when every breeze comes from the South laden with the blood of patriots, poured out like water in defence of the government against the war that the slave holders have made to destroy it, the Democracy are here devoting heart and soul to the vindication of the very ground upon which the rebels of the South justify the rebellion; and still under the menace of the Southern club, still under the influence of the old chronic fear, they warn us against the risk of Southern displeasure, even if it be to promote the safety and honor of the government.

John C. Calhoun had his followers in the Democratic party after his treason, and so John C. Breckinridge has, in the same party, still thousands of devoted advocates and defenders—and even on this floor, devoted advocates and defenders of the very institution for whose triumph he has become a chief in the ranks of the rebels.

With what a fearful power the spell of slavery has perverted the minds of men! With what infatuation it still holds them bound to its dictation! With what jealously they guard its integrity, and with what dread apprehensions they see the approaching dawn of the deliverance of the nation from its power. Would to God, for their own sake and the sake of the country, the Democracy could arise to a just appreciation of their duty to their country, and of her demands upon them. Would to God they could arise to that courage which sees no danger so great to the country as the lack of courage to promote its welfare and safety.

As a constitutional obligation, we have kept and are willing to keep the bond that protects slavery wherever the Constitution sanctions it, so long as those for whom its sacred shield performs the doubtful office of sanctioning and protecting it continue to respect and keep the Constitution.—In the name of good faith we will hold the compact of our fathers sacred with those who do not forfeit its protection by violating its conditions. On the conditions of the Constitution, and on those only, will we tolerate slavery. We will respect our constitutional provisions that protect it; but do not ask us to love slavery, or tolerate it beyond the requirements of the Constitution, and let it disappear wherever and whenever it can be constitutionally removed. This, and this only, is the proposition before us; this, and this only, is the purpose of the resolutions under consideration; and for the benefit of the Senators who oppose them so furiously, and whose course of argument has been so strangely foreign to the real question before us, that I am almost led to think, in their excitement, they have forgotten the pending question, and to bring them back to a contemplation of the true issue, before they cast their final vote, I will read the resolution:

"Whereas, The Constitution of the United States was ordained and adopted to establish justice and secure the blessings of liberty to the people;

And whereas, It is provided in the eight section of the Constitution that Congress shall have power to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over the District of Columbia;

And whereas, A bill is now pending in Congress providing for the abolition of slavery in said District; therefore,

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, That it is the unquestionable right and manifest duty of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.

That our Senators in Congress be and they are hereby instructed, and our Representatives requested, to vote for the total and immediate abolition of slavery in said District, on such terms as may be deemed just and equitable to loyal slave owners therein; and to introduce into their respective Houses of Congress, as recommended by the President in his late message, and support the same when so introduced, a resolution which shall be substantially as follows:

Resolved, That the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt a gradual abolishment of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State in its discretion to compensate for the inconveniences, both public and private, produced by such change of system.

Is it not astonishing that such a proposition, has led to such an opposition? Surely no question ever received so strange, so extraordinary, a discussion, as has this question at the hands the opponents of these resolutions. The Senator from Clarion, (Mr. Lamberton,) has issued a *scire facias* to revive a judgment whose lien has long since expired, and which the country set aside for a fraud, which has since culminated in treason. He has attempted to meet the question by one of the Breckinridge campaign speeches of 1860, the doctrines of which their distinguished author is now contending for in the ranks of the rebels, and have no more relation to the question before us than they have to the christain religion.

The Senator from Berks, (Mr. Clymer,) did set out with some promise of treating the subject fairly, and give the Senate some hope that he would argue the question upon its merits. But he did not proceed far before he got off the track and opened his magazine in defence of the Constitution. Whether he intended anything more, he knows best himself, but that he succeeded in a wonderful display of all sorts of artillery, we all agree. His constitutional bombshells were hurled upon the Senate in almost as brilliant and overwhelming a storm as that which covered with eternal renown the Union fleet at Port Royal. But in looking around for the carnage, I find it is all in the Senators own ranks, and we may rejoice in our own safety, with only one regret, that from the Senators constitutional defence, the Constitution has been roughly handled, and got the worst of it, and has good reason to pray for deliverance from its Democratic friends. How many purposes has that blessed old instrument been made to subserve! How many heresies have invoked its shelter; and how many bad causes have invoked its sanction; and how many good ones have suffered from unfair and disingenuous interpretation of its doctrines! The great body of his arguments has been directed against interference with slavery in the States, certainly an imaginary question—the creature of his own brain—for there is no such question under consideration in this Senate. With great gusto he quotes our Republican President as authority against us. I am obliged to him for this compliment to the representative, the embodiment of our principles. But unfortunately for the Senator, Mr. Lincoln is against him from beginning to end, and it turns out that these very resolutions, whose passage he so furiously opposes, embody the life long sentiments of the President, and are really an adoption, and in pursuance of his recent official recommendation to Congress.

He cites Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, as against us. But he knows himself that Andrew Johnson is against him, and as the Senator from Huntingdon, (Mr. Wharton,) has shown among many other good things he has said and done in the course of this discussion, Andrew Johnson has from the beginning of this rebellion been one of the most open and unqualified denunciators of slavery as the source of all our troubles. I have with my own ears time and again heard him denounce slavery, and denounce this rebellion as the slaveholders' rebellion.

Again, he appeals to the high authority of Mr. Clay against the power and right of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.—Here he was peculiarly unfortunate for no perversion or distortion of the language of Mr. Clay can wring from him even a concession that it would be unconstitutional to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. Mr. Clay never pretented that Congress had not a constitutional right to abolish it. He quotes Mr. Clay's speech of 1850 on the great compromise, and what, pray, does he get from it, on the power of Congress over this question? Discussing that clause of the Constitution which says Congress shall have power "to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over such District, (not exceeding ten miles square,) as may by cession of particular States and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of government of the United States," he says: "the object of the grant to Congress was to make the District of Columbia the seat of government of the United States. That was the great paramount, substantial object of the grant; and in exercising all the powers with which we are invested, complete and full as they may be, for the great purpose of the cession having been to create a suitable seat of government, that ought to be the leading and controlling idea with Congress in the exercise of this power, and, inasmuch as it not necessary, in order to render it a proper and suitable seat of government that slavery should be abolish within the limits of the ten miles square," and (not to take more time, reading from the speech,) after referring to the faith of Maryland and Virginia at the time of the cession, that slavery would not be abolished in the District, and concluding Congress could not in good faith to these States abolish it, he declares himself opposed to it. No where does he intimate a doubt of the constitutional power of Congress to abolish it, but really concedes it and admits it as beyond question. He says, "exercising all the powers with which we are invested, *complete and full as they may be*." What fuller and more conclusive language could he have used to admit that the power of Congress was beyond a doubt? He never had a doubt of it; and if the English language means anything the clause of the Constitution giving exclusive legislative power over the District, gives this power. Mr. Clay's whole action on the subject was controlled by consideration of expediency. The constitutional question was settled with him; the only question was a question of expediency and of necessity at the time. He says, "inasmuch as it is *unnecessary and not in good faith with Maryland and Virginia*;" therefore, he is opposed to it. That was in 1850, when it might not have been necessary, and when it would not have been in good faith with these States. Again, at that very time he was urged and finally succeeded in passing thro' Congress as part of his own great compromise, the abolishment of the slave trade in the District, and also by that very compromise he ceded back the Virginia portion of the District to the State of Virginia. He had already taken a bold step and nearly shorn slavery in that District of its power. So much was he opposed to its presence there that he had not only removed its traffic from the presence of the capitol, but gave away half of the District to get clear of slavery in it; and only retained slavery in the balance as a peace offering to the "institution" in the States, whose jealousy and indignation at the banishment of the slave trade at Washington had in some way to be appeased, and would not bear the total rooting of it out at once. This was twelve years ago; and so we see how far Mr. Clay went then, and how he felt towards slavery at that time. It was the boldest leap in the abolition of slavery that has been taken in this country during the present century. He thought it unnecessary then to go any further. It was enough for the time. If he lived in this day of rebellion and treason, when slavery is every where arrayed against the country, and breathes only treason, there is no reason to doubt that his voice and all his grand power and influence would be exerted to finish the work he had so boldly began twelve years ago. His life-long opposition to slavery, and his life of glorious and inspiring patriotism all warrant us in the assumption.

I am obliged to the Senator for quoting Mr. Clay. I am glad to see that the Senator retains so much of his old admiration for this great man. We were both once disciples of that illustrious teacher. My highest political pride is that my first vote given for the presidency of this great country was for Henry Clay when the party

[Continued on Fourth Page.]