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Speech of Hon. Jas. Thompson, OF PENNSYLVANIA.

In the House of Representatives, May 1, 1850, on the Census Bill.

Mr. Thompson, of Pennsylvania, said: It has not been my intention to detain this committee with any extended remarks the speech which has just been made by the gentleman from Georgia.

This census would be of little use, Mr. Chairman, if every gentleman on this floor had an opportunity to declare the statistics of the different States, and have them collected and published, through the medium of speeches or otherwise, as the gentleman from Georgia has done.

What is the constitutional question, that we hear so much about? I beg the committee will give me their attention upon this point for a moment.

Mr. Thompson will say, so that it may appear in the report of my speech, that I have the privilege of making the last speech, and that the gentleman from South Carolina will not have the privilege of replying.

Did that bill pass? Yes, sir, it passed. Now let me ask, where was the argument of the gentleman from Georgia, when the Constitution was about to be violated by the passage of that bill?

I believe this is the gentleman from South Carolina. Mr. Woodward. I thought the gentleman referred to the bill for taking the last census.

Mr. Thompson. No, sir, the bill that was passed in March last, for making arrangements for the taking of the seventh census, together with all those statistics.

In the first place, I must be permitted to say, that I have never in my life heard so much argument, so earnestly urged, upon such slender grounds.

Mr. Woodward. Was it not in the Senate bill? Mr. Thompson. I was under the impression that the gentleman was talking upon the bill now before the House.

some gentlemen—an unwillingness to be questioned as to go. I have learned a curious fact in regard to this thing of disclosing the age of individuals, in the English statistics.

Well, the gentleman says he has read the bill, and he prefers the substitute offered by the gentleman from Ohio.

But there is one thing more which I must put upon my mind of which it is on my mind. That settling of accounts is always unpleasant, but it is sometimes quite necessary.

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when that act was passed; because on the same day I find the name (Mr. Stephens) recorded. Well, the same may be said of the gentleman from Ohio and the gentleman from South Carolina.

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the law. In the act to amend the act for taking the third census, we find the second section of the act of 1st of May, 1810, as follows:

That it shall be the duty of the several marshals, secretaries, and their assistants aforesaid, at the time for taking the census or enumeration aforesaid, to take, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, and according to such instructions as he shall give, an account of the several manufacturing establishments and manufactures within their several districts, territories, and divisions.

Now I want to know if that is not the law, and if the gentleman does not believe the statute books, I invite him to go with me to the State Department, and he will find published and bound volumes of the compendium of statistics of the census of 1810.

Mr. Stephens. I am perfectly aware, as I said when I was up before, that a supplemental act was passed in 1810 which did provide for taking certain manufacturing statistics; but they are not embraced in the schedules of the census bill; whereas, the schedules of statistics here are parts and parcels of the law.

Mr. Thompson. The fact is not as the gentleman states. The statistics are part and parcel of the census law of 1810, and schedules were prepared and sent out at the same time as were those for the enumeration of the inhabitants.

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Here Mr. T. was interrupted by Mr. Jones, who said I am not a lawyer, and I object to it.

Mr. T. It is said, Mr. Chairman, that an exception honor the rule; and without the least disrespect to the honorable gentleman, [Mr. Jones,] I have considered him generally an exception to all rules.

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