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## THE ADMISSION OF KANSAS. STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

### Speech of Wm. H. Seward,

In the U. S. Senate, February 29, 1850.

Mr. President, the admission of Kansas into the Union, without further delay, seems to me equally necessary, just, and wise. In recent debates, I have already anticipated the arguments for this conclusion.

In coming forward among the political astrologers, it shall be an error of judgment, and not of disposition, if my interpretation of the feverish dreams which are disturbing the country shall tend to foment, rather than to allay, the national excitement. I shall say nothing unnecessarily of persons, because, in our system, the public welfare and happiness depend chiefly on institutions, and very little on men. I shall allude but briefly to incidental topics, because they are ephemeral, and because, even in the midst of appeals to passion and to prejudice, it is always safe to submit solid truth to the deliberate consideration of an honest and enlightened people.

It will be an overflowing source of shame, as well as of sorrow, if we, thirty millions—Europeans by extraction, Americans by birth and discipline, and Christians in faith, and meaning to be such in practice—can not so combine our powers with humanity, in our conduct concerning the one disturbing subject of slavery, as not only to preserve our unquarrelled institutions of freedom, but also to enjoy their benefits with contentment and harmony.

Wherever a guiltless slave exists, be he Caucasian, American, Malay, or African, he is the subject of two distinct and opposite ideas—one that he is wrongfully, the other that he is rightly, a slave. The balance of numbers on either side, however great, never completely extinguishes this difference of opinion, for there are always some defenders of slavery outside, even if there are none inside, of a free State, while also there are always outside, if there are not inside, of every slave State, many who assert, with Milton, that "no man who knows nature can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were born free, being the image and resemblance of God himself, and were by privilege above all the creatures, born to command and not to obey." It often, perhaps generally, happens, however, that, in considering the subject of slavery, society seems to overlook the natural right of personal interest of the slave himself, and to act exclusively for the welfare of the citizen. But this fact does not materially affect ultimate results, for the elementary question of the rightfulness or wrongfulness of slavery inheres in every form that discussion concerning it assumes. What is just to one class of men, can never be injurious to any other; and what is unjust to any condition of persons in a State, is necessarily injurious in some degree to the whole community.

An economical question early arises out of the subject of slavery—labor, either of freemen or of slaves, is the cardinal necessity of society. Some States choose the one kind, some the other. Hence two municipal systems, widely different, arise. The slave State strikes down and affects to extinguish the personality of the laborer, not only as a member of the political body, but also as a parent, husband, child, neighbor, or friend. He thus becomes, in a political view, merely property, without moral capacity, and without domestic, moral, and social relations, duties, rights, and remedies—a chattel, an object of bargain, sale, gift, inheritance, or theft. His earnings are compensated, and his wrongs atoned, not to himself, but to his owner. The State protects not the slave as a man, but the capital of another man, which he represents. On the other hand, the State which rejects slavery encourages and animates and invigorates the laborer by maintaining and developing his natural personality in all the rights and faculties of manhood, and generally with the privilege of citizenship. In the one case, capital invested in slaves becomes a great political force; while in the other, labor, thus elevated and enfranchised, becomes the dominating political power. It thus happens that we may, for convenience's sake, and not inaccurately, call slave States, capital States; and free States, labor States.

So soon as a State feels the impulses of commerce, or enterprise, or ambition, its citizens begin to study the effects of these systems of capital and labor respectively on its intelligence, its virtue, its tranquillity, its integrity or unity, its defence, its prosperity, its liberty, its happiness, its aggrandizement, and its fame. In other words, the great question arises, whether slavery is a moral, social, and political good, or a moral, social, and political evil? This is the slavery question at home. But there is a mutual bond of amity and brotherhood between man and man throughout the world. Nations examine freely the political system of each other, and of all preceding times, and, accordingly as they approve or disapprove of the two systems of capital and labor respectively, they sanction and prosecute, or condemn and prohibit, commerce with men. Thus, in one way or in another, the slavery question, which so many among us, who are more willing to rule than patient in studying the conditions of society, think is a merely accidental or unnecessary question, that might and ought to be settled and dismissed at once, is, on the contrary, a world-wide and enduring subject of political consideration and civil administration. Men, and nations, entertain it, not voluntarily, but because the progress of society continually brings it into their way. They divide upon it, not perversely, but because, owing to differences of constitution, condition, or circumstance, they can not agree.

The fathers of the Republic encountered here, given us much less than our present despised, had not circumstances afterwards occurred which they, wise as they were,

had not clearly foreseen. Although they had inherited, yet they generally condemned, the practice of slavery, and hoped for its discontinuance. They expressed this when they asserted, in the Declaration of Independence, as a fundamental principle of American society, that all men are created equal, and have inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Each State, however, reserved to itself exclusive political power over the subject of slavery within its own borders. Nevertheless, it unavoidably presented itself in their consultations on a bond of Federal Union. The new Government was to be a representative one. Slaves were capital in some States, in others capital had no investments in labor. Should those slaves be represented as capital or as persons, or should they not be represented or taxed at all? The fathers disagreed, debated long, and compromised at last. Each State, they determined, shall have two Senators in Congress. Three-fifths of the slaves shall be elsewhere represented and be taxed as persons. What should be done if the slave should escape into a labor State? Should that State confess him to be a chattel, and restore him as such, or might it regard him as a person, and harbor and protect him as a man? They compromised again, and decided that no person held to labor or service in one State by the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, by any law or regulation of that State, be discharged from such labor or service, but shall be delivered up on claim to the person to whom such labor or service shall be due.

Free laborers would immigrate, and slaves might be imported into the States. The fathers agreed that Congress may establish uniform laws of naturalization, and it might prohibit the importation of persons after 1808. Communities in the Southwest, detached from the Southern States, were growing up in the practice of slavery, to be capital States. New States would soon grow up in the Northwest, while as yet capital stood aloof, and labor had not lifted the axe to begin their endless but beneficent task. The fathers authorized Congress to make all needful rules and regulations concerning the management and disposition of the public lands, and to admit new States, under the Constitution, while it does not disturb or affect the system of capital in slaves, existing in any State under its own laws, does, at the same time, recognize every human being, when within any exclusive sphere of Federal jurisdiction, not as capital, but as a person.

What was the action of the fathers in Congress? They admitted the new States of the Southwest as capital States, because it was practically impossible to do otherwise, and by the ordinance of 1787, confirmed in 1793, they provided for the organization and admission of only labor States in the Northwest. They directed fugitives from service to be restored, not as chattels, but as persons. They awarded naturalization to immigrant free laborers, and they prohibited the trade in African labor. This disposition of the whole subject was in harmony with the condition of society, and in the main with the spirit of the age. The seven Northern States contentedly became labor States by their own acts. The six Southern States, with equal tranquility and by their own determination, remained capital States.

The circumstances which the fathers did not clearly foresee were two, namely: the reinvigoration of slavery consequent on the increased consumption of cotton, and the extension of the national domain across the Mississippi; and these occurred before 1820. The State of Louisiana, formed on a slaveholding French settlement, within the newly-acquired Louisiana Territory, had then already been admitted into the Union. There yet remained, however, a vast region which included Arkansas and Missouri, together with the then unoccupied and even unnamed Kansas and Nebraska. Arkansas, a slaveholding community, was nearly ready to apply, and Missouri, another such Territory, was actually applying for admission into the Federal Union. The existing capital States second these applications, and claimed that the whole Louisiana Territory was rightfully open to slave States, and to the organization of future slave States. The labor States maintained that Congress had supreme legislative power within the domain, and could and ought to exclude slavery there. The question thus opened was one which related not at all to slavery in the existing capital States. It was purely and simply a national question, whether the common interest of the whole Republic required that Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, should become capital States, with all the evils and dangers of slavery, or be labor States, with all the security, benefits, and blessings of freedom. On the decision was suspended the question, as we thought, whether ultimately the interior of this new continent should be an asylum for the oppressed and the exile, coming year after year and age after age, voluntarily from every other civilized land, as well as for the children of misfortune in our own, or whether, through the renewal of the African slave trade, those magnificent and luxuriant regions should be surrendered to the control of capital, wringing out the fruits of the earth through the impoverishing toil of negro slaves.

The question of 1820 was essentially the question of 1850, so far as principle, and even the field of its application, was concerned. Every element of the controversy now present, entered it then—the rightfulness or the wrongfulness of slavery; its effects, present and future; the constitutional authority of Congress; the claims of the States, and of their citizens; the nature of the Federal Union, whether it is a compact between the States, or an independent Government; the springs of its powers, and the ligatures upon their exercise. All these were discussed with zeal and ability which have never been surpassed. History tells us, I know not how truly, that the Union reeled under the violence of that great debate. Patriotism

took counsel from prudence, and enforced a settlement which has proved to be not a final one; and which, as is now seen, practically left open all the great political issues which were involved. Missouri and Arkansas were admitted as capital States, while labor obtained, as a reservation, the abridged but yet comprehensive field of Kansas and Nebraska.

Now, when the present conditions of the various parts of the Louisiana Territory are observed, and we see that capital retains undisputed possession of what it then obtained, while labor is convulsing the country with so hard and so prolonged a struggle to regain the lost equivalent which was then guaranteed to it under circumstances of so great solemnity, we may well desire not to be undecid if the Missouri compromise was indeed unnecessarily accepted by the free States, influenced by exaggerations of the dangers of disunion. The Missouri debate disclosed truths of great moment for ulterior use:

First. That it is easy to combine the capital States in defence of even external interests, while it is hard to unite the labor States in a common policy.

Second. That the labor States have a natural loyalty to the Union, while the capital States have a natural facility for alarming that loyalty by threatening disunion.

Third. That the capital States do not practically distinguish between legitimate and constitutional resistance to the extension of slavery in the common Territories of the Union, and unconstitutional aggression against slavery established by local laws in the capital States.

The early political parties were organized without reference to slavery. But since 1820, European questions have left us practically unconcerned. There has been a great increase of invention, mining, manufacture, and cultivation. Steam, on land and on water, has quickened commerce. The press and the telegraph have obtained prodigious activity, and the social intercourse between the States and their citizens has been immeasurably increased; and consequently, their mutual relations affecting slavery have been, for many years, subjects of earnest and often excited discussions. It is in my way only to show how such disputes have operated on the course of political events—not to reopen them for argument here. There was a slave insurrection in Virginia. Virginia and Kentucky debated, and to the great sorrow of the free States rejected, the system of voluntary labor. The Colonization Society was established with much favor in the capital States. Emancipation societies arose in the free States. South Carolina instituted proceedings to nullify obnoxious Federal revenue laws. The capital States complained of courts and legislatures in the labor States for interpreting the constitutional provision for the surrender of fugitives from service so as to treat them as persons, and not property, and they discriminated against colored persons of the labor States, when they came to the capital States. They denied, in Congress, the right of petition, and embarrassed or denied freedom of debate on the subject of slavery. Presses, which undertook the defence of the labor system in the capital States, were suppressed by violence; and even in the labor States, public assemblies, convened to consider slavery questions, were dispersed by mobs sympathizing with the capital States.

The Whig party, being generally an opposition party, practiced some forbearance toward the interest of labor. The Democratic party, not without demonstrations of dissent, was generally found sustaining the policy of capital. A disposition towards the removal of slavery from the presence of the national Capital, appeared in the District of Columbia. Mr. Van Buren, a Democratic President, launched a prospective veto against the anticipated measure. A Democratic Congress brought Texas into the Union, stipulating practically for its future re-organization in four slave States. Mexico was incensed. War ensued. The labor States asked that the Mexican law of liberty, which covered the Territories brought in by the treaty of peace, might remain and be confirmed. The Democratic party refused. The Missouri debate of 1820 recurred now, under circumstances of heat and excitement, in relation to these questions. The defenders of labor took alarm lest the number of new capital States might become so great as to enable that class of States to dictate the whole policy of the Government, and, in case of constitutional resistance, then to form a new slaveholding confederacy around the Gulf of Mexico. By this time, the capital States seemed to have become fixed in a determination that the Federal Government, and even the labor States, should recognize their slaves, though outside of the slave States, and within the Territories of the United States, as property of which the master could not be in any way or by any authority divested; and the labor States, having become now more essentially Democratic than ever before, by reason of the great development of free labor, more firmly than ever insisted on the constitutional doctrine that slaves, voluntarily carried by their masters into the common Territories, or into labor States, are persons—men.

Under the auspicious influences of a Whig success, California and New Mexico appeared before Congress as labor States. The capital States refused to consent to their admission into the Union; and again threats of disunion carried terror and consternation throughout the land. Another compromise was made. Specific enactments admitted California as a labor State, and remanded New Mexico and Utah to remain Territories, with the right to choose freedom or slavery when ripened into States, while they gave new remedies for the reception of fugitives from service, and abolished the open slave-market in the District of Columbia. These new enactments, collated with the existing statutes, namely, the ordinance of 1787, the Missouri prohibitory law of 1820, and the articles of Texas annexation, disposed by law of the subject of slavery in all the Territories of the United States. And so the

compromise of 1850 was pronounced a full, final, absolute, and comprehensive settlement of all existing and all possible disputes concerning slavery under the Federal authority. The two great parties, fearful for the Union, strook hands in making and in presenting this as an adjustment, never afterwards to be opened, disturbed, or even questioned, and the people accepted it by majorities unknown before. The new President, chosen over an illustrious rival, unequivocally on the ground of greater ability, even if not more reliable purpose, to maintain the new treaty inviolate, made haste to justify this expectation when Congress assembled. He said:

"When the grave shall have closed over all who are now endeavoring to meet the obligations of duty, the year 1850 will be recalled to as a period filled with anxiety and apprehension. A successful war has just terminated; peace brought with it a great augmentation of territory. Disturbing questions arose, bearing upon the domestic institutions of a portion of the Confederacy, and involving the constitutional rights of the States. But, notwithstanding differences of opinion and sentiment, in relation to details and specific provisions, the acquiescence of distinguished citizens, whose devotion to the Union can never be doubted, has given renewed vigor to our institutions, and restored a sense of security and repose to the public mind throughout the Confederacy. That this repose is so safe, no shock during my official term, if I have the power to avert it, those who placed me here may be assured."

Hardly, however, had these inspiring sounds died away, throughout a reassured and delighted land, before the national repose was shocked again; shocked, indeed, as it had never before been, and smitten this time by a blow from the very hand that had just released the chords of the national harp from their utterance of that exalted symphony of peace.

Kansas and Nebraska, the long-devoted reservation of labor and freedom, saved in the agony of national fear in 1820, and saved again in the panic of 1850, were now to be opened by Congress, that the never-ending course of seed time and harvest might begin. The slave expatriated of Missouri, from their own well-secured homes on the eastern banks of their noble river, looked down upon and coveted the fertile prairies of Kansas; while a sudden terror ran through all the capital States, when they saw a seeming certainty that at last a new labor State would be built on their western border, inevitably fraught, as they said, with a near or remote abolition of slavery. What could be done? Congress could hardly be expected to intervene directly for their safety so soon after the compromise of 1850. The labor love of the free States was distant, the way new, unknown, and not without peril. Missouri was near and watchful, and held the keys of the gates of Kansas. She might seize the new and smiling Territory by surprise, if only Congress would remove the barrier established in 1820. The conjuncture was favorable. Clay and Webster, the distinguished citizens whose unquestionable devotion to the Union was manifested by their acquiescence in the compromise of 1850, had gone down already into their honored graves. The labor States had dismissed many of their representatives here for too great fidelity to freedom, and too great distrust of the efficacy of that new bond of peace, and had replaced them with partisans who were only timid, but not unwilling. The Democratic President and Congress hesitated, but not long. They revised the last great compromise, and found, with delighted surprise, that it was so far from confirming the law of freedom of 1820, that, on the other hand, it exactly provided for the abrogation of that venerable statute; nay, that the compromise itself actually killed the spirit of the Missouri law, and devolved on Congress the duty of removing the lifeless letter from the national code. The deed was done. The new enactment not only repealed the Missouri prohibition of slavery, but it pronounced the people of Kansas and Nebraska perfectly free to establish freedom or slavery, and pledged Congress to admit them in due time as States, either of capital or of labor, into the Union. The Whig representatives of the capital States, in an hour of strange bewilderment, concurred; and the Whig party instantly went down, never to rise again. Democrats seceded, and stood aloof; the country was confounded; and, amid the perplexities of the hour, a Republican party was seen gathering itself together with much earnestness, but with little show of organization, to rescue, if it were not now too late, the cause of freedom and labor, so unexpectedly and grievously imperilled in the Territories of the United States.

I will not linger over the sequel. The popular sovereignty of Kansas proved to be the State sovereignty of Missouri, not only in the persons of the rulers, but even in the letter of an arbitrary and cruel code. The perfect freedom proved to be a hateful and intolerable bondage. From 1855 to 1860, Kansas, sustained and encouraged by the Republican party, has been engaged in successive and ever-varying struggles, which have taxed all her virtue, wisdom, moderation, energies and resources, and often even her physical strength and martial courage, to save herself from being betrayed into the Union as a slave State. Nebraska, though choosing freedom, is, through the direct exercise of the Executive power, overriding her own will, held as a slave Territory; and new Mexico has relaxed voluntarily into the practice of slavery, from which she had redeemed herself while she yet remained a part of the Mexican Republic. Meantime, the Democratic party, advancing from the ground of popular sovereignty as far as that ground is from the ordinance of 1787, now stands on the position that both Territorial Governments and Congress are incompetent to legislate against slavery in the Territories, while they are not only competent, but are obliged, when it is necessary, to legislate for its protection there.

In this new and extreme position, the Democratic party marks itself behind the

battery of the Supreme Court, as if it were possibly a true construction of the Constitution, that the power of deciding practically for ever between freedom and slavery in a portion of the continent far exceeding all that is yet organized, should be renounced by Congress, which alone possesses any legislative authority, and should be assumed and exercised by a court which can only take cognizance of the great question collaterally, in a private action between individuals, and which action the Constitution will not suffer the court to entertain, if it involves twenty dollars of money, without the overruling intervention of a jury of twelve good and lawful men of the neighborhood where the litigation arises! The independent, ever-renewed, and ever-recurring representative Parliament, Diet, Congress, or Legislature, is the one chief, paramount, essential, indispensable institution in a Republic. Even liberty, guaranteed by organic law, yet if it be held by other tenure than the guardian care of such a representative popular assembly, is but precariously maintained, while slavery, enforced by an irresponsible judicial tribunal, is the complete and possible development of despotism.

Mr. President, did ever the annals of any Government show a more rapid or more complete departure from the wisdom and virtue of its founders? Did ever the Government of a great empire, founded on the rights of human labor, slide away so fast and so far, and moor itself so tenaciously on the basis of capital, and that capital invested in laboring men? Did ever a free representative Legislature, invested with powers so great, and with the guardianship of rights so important, of trusts so sacred, of interests so precious, and of hopes at once so noble and so comprehensive, surrender and renounce them all so unnecessarily, so unwisely, so fatally, and so ingloriously? If it be true, as every instinct of our nature and every precept of political experience teaches us, that

then where—in Ireland, in Italy, in Poland, or in Hungary—has any ruler prepared for a generous and confiding people disappointments, disasters, and calamities, equal to those which the government of the United States holds now suspended over so large a portion of this continent of North America?

Citizens of the United States, in the spirit of this policy, subverted the free Republic of Nicaragua, and opened it to slavery and the African slave trade, and held it in that condition, waiting annexation to the United States, until its sovereignty was restored by a combination of sister Republics exposed to the same danger, and apprehensive of similar subversion. Other citizens re-opened the foreign slave trade in violation of our laws and treaties; and, after a suspension of that shameful traffic for fifty years, savage Africans have been once more landed on our shores, and distributed, unreclaimed and with impunity, among our plantations.

For this policy, so far as the Government has sanctioned it, the Democratic party avows itself responsible. Everywhere, complaint against it is denounced, and its opponents proscribed. When Kansas was writhing under the wounds of its incipient, servile war, because of her resistance, the Democratic press derisively said, "let her bleed." Official integrity has been care for rebuke and punishment, when it resisted frauds designed to promote the extension of slavery. Throughout the whole Republic, there is not one known dissenter from that policy remaining in place, if within reach of the Executive arm. Nor, over the face of the whole world, is there to be found one representative of our country who is not an apologist of the extension of slavery.

It is in America that these things have happened—in the nineteenth century, the era of the world's greatest progress, and while all nations but ourselves have been either abridging or altogether suppressing commerce in men; at the very moment when the Russian serf is emancipated, and the Georgian, the Nabian prisoner, and the Abyssinian savage, are lifted up to freedom by the successor of Mohammed. The world, prepossessed in our behalf by our early devotion to the rights of human nature, as no nation ever before engaged its respect and sympathies, asks, in wonder and amazement, what all this demoralization means? It has an excuse better than the world can imagine, better than we are generally conscious of ourselves, a virtuous excuse. We have loved not freedom so much less, but the Union of our country so much more. We have been made to believe, from time to time, that, in a crisis, both of these precious institutions could not be saved together, and therefore we have, from time to time, surrendered safeguards of freedom to propitiate the loyalty of capital, and stay its hands from doing violence to the Union. The true state of the case, however, ought not to be a mystery to ourselves. Presidencies, indeed, is not given to statesmen; but we are without excuse when we fail to apprehend the logic of current events. Let parties, or the Government, choose or do what they may, the people of the United States do not prefer the wealth of the few to the liberty of the many, capital to labor, African slaves to white freemen, in the national Territories and in future States. That question has never been distinctly recognized or acted on by them. The Republican party embodies the popular protest and reaction against a policy which has been fastened upon the nation by surprise, and which its reason and conscience, concurring with the reason and conscience of mankind, condemn.

The choice of the nation is now between the Democratic party and the Republican party. Its principles and its policy are, therefore, justly and even necessarily exacting negro equality among you? We know, and we will show you, if you will only give heed, that what our system of labor works out, wherever it works out anything, is the equality of white men

very and polygamy. Who, that considers where this nation exists, of what races it is composed, in what age of the world it acts its part on the public stage, and what are its predominant institutions, customs, habits, and sentiments, doubts that the Republican party can and will, if unwaveringly faithful to that policy, and just and loyal in all beside, carry it into triumphant success? To doubt is to be uncertain whether civilization can improve, or Christianity save, mankind.

I may perhaps infer, from the necessity of the case, that it will, in all courts and places, stand by the freedom of speech and of the press, and the constitutional rights of freemen everywhere; that it will favor the speedy improvement of the public domain by homestead laws, and will encourage mining, manufacture, and internal commerce, with useful connections between the Atlantic and Pacific States—for all these are important interests of freedom. For all the rest, the national emergency, not individual influences, must determine, as society goes on, the policy and character of the Republican party. Already bearing its part in legislation and in treaties, it feels the necessity of being practical in its care of the national health and life, while it leaves metaphysical speculation to those whose duty it is to cultivate the ennobling science of political philosophy.

But in the midst of these subjects, or rather, before fully reaching them, the Republican party encounters, unexpectedly, a new and potential issue—others, one of national life and death. Just as if so much had not been already conceded, to the interest of capital invested in men, we hear menaces of disunion, louder, more distinct, more emphatic than ever, with the condition annexed, that they shall be executed the moment that a Republican Administration, though constitutionally elected, shall assume the Government.

I do not certainly know that the people are prepared to call such an Administration to power. I know only, that through a succession of floods which never greatly excite, and ebbs which never entirely disengage me, the volume of Republicanism rises continually higher and higher. They are probably wise, whose apprehensions admonish them that it is already strong enough for effect.

Hitherto, the Republican party has been content with one self-interrogatory—how many votes can it cast? These threats enforce another—has it determination enough to cast them? This latter question touches its spirit and pride. I am quite sure, however, that, as it has hitherto practised self-denial in so many other forms, it will in this emergency lay aside all impatience of temper, together with all ambition, and will consider these extraordinary declamations seriously and with a just moderation. It would be a waste of words to demonstrate that they are unconstitutional, and equally idle to show that the responsibility for disunion, attempted or effected, must rest not with those who in the exercise of constitutional authority maintain the Government, but with those who unconstitutionally engage in the mad work of subverting it.

What are the excuses for these menaces? They resolve themselves into this, that the Republican party in the North is hostile to the South. But it already is proved to be a majority in the North; it is therefore practically the people of the North. Will it not still be the same North that has borne with you so long, and conceded to you so much? Can you justly assume that affection, which has been so complying, can all at once charge to hatred, intense and inexorable? You say that the Republican party is a sectional one. Is the Democratic party less sectional? Is it easier for us to bear our sectional sway than for you to bear ours? Is it unreasonable that for once we should alternate? But is the Republican party sectional? Not unless the Democratic party is. The Republican party prevails in the House of Representatives sometimes, the Democratic party in the Senate always. Which of the two is the more proscriptive? Come, come, come, if you will, into the free States, into the State of New York, anywhere from Lake Erie to Sag Harbor, anywhere from the Onondaga valley, hold your conventions, nominate your candidates, address the people, submit to them, earnestly, eloquently, all your complaints and grievances of Northern disloyalty, oppression, perfidy; keep nothing back, speak just as freely and as loudly there as you do here; you will have hospitable welcomes, and appreciate audiences, with ballot-boxes open for all the votes you can win. Are you less sectional than this? Extend to us the same privileges, and I will engage that you will very soon have in the South as many Republicans as we have Democrats in the North. There is, however, a better test of nationality than the accidental location of parties. Our policy of labor in the Territories was not sectional in the first forty years of the Republic. Its nature inheres. It will be national again, during the third forty years, and for ever afterwards. It is not wise and beneficent for us alone, or injurious to you alone. Its effects are equal, and the same for us all.

You accuse the Republican party of ulterior and secret designs. How can a party that counts its votes in this land of free speech and free press by the hundreds of thousands, have any secret designs? Who is the conjurer, and where are the hidden springs by which he can control its uncongregated and widely dispersed masses, and direct them to objects unseen and purposes unavowed? But what are these hidden purposes? You name only one. That one is to introduce negro equality among you. Suppose we had the power to change your social system: what warrant have you for supposing that we should carry negro equality among you? We know, and we will show you, if you will only give heed, that what our system of labor works out, wherever it works out anything, is the equality of white men

The laborer in the free States, no matter how humble his occupation, is a white man, and he is politically the equal of his employer. Eighteen of our thirty-three States are free labor States. They are: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, California, and Oregon. I do not array them in contrast with the capital States. I am no assailant of States. All of the States are parcels of my own country—the best of them not so wise and great as I am sure it will hereafter be; the State least developed and perfected among them all, is wiser and better than any foreign State I know. Is it, then, in any, and in which, of the States I have named, that negro equality offends the white man's pride? Throughout the wide world, where is the State where class and caste are so utterly extinguished as they are in each and every one of them? Let the European immigrant, who avoids the African as if his skin exhaled contagion, answer. You find him always in the State where labor is free. Did Washington, Jefferson, and Henry, when they implored you to relinquish your system, and to carry the one we have adopted, propose to sink you down to the level of the African, or was it their desire to exalt all white men to a common political elevation?

But we do not seek to force or even to intrude, our system on you. We are excluded wisely, justly, and contentedly, from all political power and responsibility in your capital States. You are sovereign on the subject of slavery within your own borders, as we are on the same subject within our borders. It is well and wisely so arranged. Use your authority to maintain what system you please. We are not distrustful of the result. We have wisely, as we think, exercised ours to protect and perfect the manhood of the members of the State. The whole sovereignty upon domestic concerns within the Union is divided between us by unmistakable boundaries. You have your fifteen distinct parts; we, eighteen parts, equally distinct. Each must be maintained in order that the whole may be preserved. If ours shall be assailed, within or without, by any enemy, or for any cause, and we shall have need, we shall expect you to defend it. If yours shall be so assailed, in the emergency, no matter what the cause or the pretext, or who the foe, we shall defend your sovereignty as the equivalent of our own. We can not, indeed, accept your system of capital, or its ethics. That would be to surrender and subvert our own, which we esteem to be better. Besides, if we could, what need for any division into States at all? You are equally at liberty to reject our system and its ethics, and to maintain the superiority of your own by all the forces of persuasion and argument. We must, indeed, mutually discuss both systems. All the world discusses all systems. Especially must we discuss them, since we have to decide as a nation which of the two we ought to engraft on the new and future States growing up in the great public domain. Discussion, then, being unavoidable, what could be more wise than to conduct it with mutual toleration and in a fraternal spirit?

You complain that Republicans discourse too boldly and directly, when they express with confidence their belief that their system of labor will, in the end, be universally accepted by the capital States, acting for themselves and in conformity with their own Constitutions, while they sanction too unreservedly books designed to advocate emancipation. But surely you can hardly expect the Federal Government or the political parties of the nation to maintain a censorship of the press or of debate. The theory of our system, that error of opinion may in all cases safely be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it. Will it be claimed that more of moderation and tenderness in debate are exhibited on your side of the great argument, than on our own? We all learned our polemics, as well as our principles, from a common master. We are sure that we do not, on our side, exceed his lessons and example. Thomas Jefferson addressed Dr. Price, an Englishman, concerning his treatise on emancipation in America, in this fashion:

"Southward of the Chesapeake, your book will find but few readers concerning with it in sentiment on the subject of slavery. From the mouth to the head of the Chesapeake, the bulk of the people will approve it in theory, and it will find a respectable minority ready to adopt it in practice—a minority which, for weight and worth of character, preponderates against the greater number who have not the courage to divest their families of a property which, however, keeps their consciences unquiet. Northward of the Chesapeake, you may find here and there an opponent to your doctrine, as you may find here and there a robber and a murderer; but in no greater number." "This (Virginia) is the next State to which we may turn our eyes for the interesting spectacle of justice in conflict with avarice and oppression—a conflict where the sacred side is gaining daily new recruits from the influx into office of young men, grown and growing up."

Be not, then, discouraged. What you have written will do a great deal of good; and could you still trouble yourself about our welfare, no man is more able to help the laboring side."

You see, sir, that whether we go for or against slavery anywhere, we must follow Southern guides. You may change your pilots with the winds or the currents; but we, whose nativity, reckoned under the North Star, has rendered us somewhat superstitious, must be excused for constancy in following the guidance of those who framed the national ship and gave us the chart for its noble voyage.

A profound respect and friendly regard for the Vice-President of the United States has induced me to weigh carefully the testimony he has given on the subject of the hostility against the South imputed to the Republican party, as derived from the relations of the repugnances of the two parties at this capital. He says that he has seen here in the representatives of

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