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1903.

SPEECH
OF
MR. J. BARBOUR,
OF VIRGINIA,
ON THE
RESTRICTION OF SLAVERY
IN MISSOURI.

Delivered in the Senate of the United States, Jan. 31, 1820.

Mr. J. BARBOUR, of Virginia, delivered his sentiments, in nearly the following terms :

Mr. President : The Senate will do justice to my sincerity when I declare, that it is with unfeigned reluctance I rise to address them at this stage of the discussion ; that, had I yielded to my feelings, instead of obeying a sense of duty, I should have remained silent. Whatever the human mind could well conceive, has been either spoken or written on this subject ; and no superiority of intellect could add an additional ray of light. So vain a hope, therefore, with my humble pretensions, would be the height of folly.

The question, however, involves such important consequences, whether we view it in its constitutional light, or as it regards the honor of the nation, plighted by treaty, or consider it as to its expediency, as involving the duration of the Union, or in any event its tranquility, it seems to justify, if not to require, any man to disclose the reasons of his vote. But, personal considerations apart, the feeling which this policy, as insulting as it is unjust, has so justly excited in the South and West, in which my constituents so naturally participate, seems to require that their representative on this floor should raise his

voice, however feeble, in solemn protest against its adoption.

In the contemplation of this subject and the sentiments avowed in its discussion, I had expected to have felt nothing but unmixed regret ; I had expected to have travelled an unpleasant path, filled only with thorns. To my relief I have found here and there a solitary spot of verdure, on which my eye delighted to dwell. I have seen the most prodigious display of the powers of the human mind ; I have seen its empire enlarged far beyond my most sanguine hopes. I do not mean to confine my remarks to one or two, but to extend them to most of those who have engaged in the debate. They have surrounded this body with deserved renown ; to which, although I feel a consciousness I cannot add, yet I must be permitted, as a member of the body, to claim some participation. But I have seen more ; I have seen a degree of firmness and magnanimity most ennobling to human nature. Senators rising superior to clamor and popular excitement, and filling the measure assigned them by the constitution—at the expence of office, with the sacrifice of popularity, firmly discharging their duty. Such men, compared with the supple politician, who bends like a reed to the blast ; who, to promote his own aggrandizement, practises upon the prejudices of mankind, will, by an impartial posterity, when the false fire of the moment shall have subsided, be placed in the zenith, while the latter will be consigned to the nadir, of the moral world. Go on, illustrious Senators ! in the career of glory you have commenced ! Abide whatever sacrifice the faithful discharge of your duty may produce, with fortitude ! and reap your reward, in the consolation of reflecting that you have saved your country from ruin, and in the justice of all trying time. With these exceptions, all that I have heard has filled me with solicitude and pain. I have heard sentiments uttered that go to shake the foundations of the Union, and to produce a revolution in the government ; principles avowed directly hostile to the compact on which reposes our Union, and the doctrine avowed, that all power not prohibited belongs to the general government. To combat these, to deprive them of all authority, by showing their fallacy, will be the object of my endeavors. Before, however, I proceed to this, let me notice an attempt which has been made to give a character to this question which it does not deserve. It has been said that this is a question between slavery and freedom. A more indefensible perversion was never attempted to be practised on the human mind. Such a statement of the question is a libel on the South. I appeal, without the fear of contradiction, to every member of the Senate, from every quarter of the Union, when I ask if the South-

ern members have not invariably supported, with unanimity, every proposition which had for its object the suppression of the slave trade; and whether, during the last session, we did not indulge them in the project, as wild as it was well-designed, of expending thousands for the accommodation of the unfortunate victims of that abominable trade, by authorizing the government to provide them an asylum in Africa, to be maintained at the public expence. Can, then, any man believe we wish to multiply the number? The question we are called to discuss, is not whether slaves shall be multiplied. If it was, there would be but one sentiment here. What is the real question? Shall we violate the constitution, by imposing restrictions on the people of Missouri? While exercising the great privilege of forming their government, shall we disregard the solemn obligations imposed by treaty? And shall we finally do an unmeasurable act of injustice, in excluding the people of one half the republic from participating in that country bought by a common treasure and their exclusive counsels? And for what? Not to diminish slavery, but to confine it within its present limits—destructive to the slaves themselves, and fatal eventually to the whole population—instead of diffusing them over a wide-spread country, where their comforts would be increased, and by their disproportionate numbers they might be within the reach of the suggestions of policy and of humanity. Not to diminish slavery, I repeat again; but to seduce the white population from this portion of country thus interdicted, and to increase the disproportion of the blacks to such an extent as forever to shut the door of hope upon them; or to drive us from the country, and surrender it exclusively to them.

This is the real state of the question, which I will now proceed to discuss; and, for the sake of perspicuity, I propose to do so under the following heads: 1st. You have no constitutional right to impose the restriction involved in the amendment. 2d. That the treaty by which we acquired the country forbids it. And, 3d. That it is inexpedient and unjust to do so.

1st. Your constitutional right. It may not be unimportant, in discussing this branch of the subject, to ascend to the origin of the government. To ascertain its humility, its progress in acquiring power, and its now alarming pretensions. A discussion of this character will not be entirely without its use in reference to the general course of our legislation. Some gentlemen may thereby acquire the information they seem to lack, that all power not prohibited is not granted necessarily to the government, as has been contended for by at least one of the speakers who have gone before me. The present constitution is nothing more than an expansion of the confederacy.

Its object is the same; the means of attaining that object have only been enlarged. And what was that? To operate on our external concerns, and to regulate such subjects internally as could not, from their character and extent, be properly administered by any of the states; and there only to the extent specifically enumerated in the constitution. It will be recollected, that this mass of power, awarded to the confederation, was surrendered by sovereign states, whose jealousy of the general government was such, that, as experience evinced in the practical results, they were entirely incompetent to the object. It is worthy of remark, how cautiously they guarded against the abuse of this very limited authority, by the 2d article of that instrument, which is to the effect following:

“Art. 2. Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled.”

I invite the attention of the Senate particularly to the phraseology of this article, as disclosing the real design of the contracting parties as to the extent of the power of the individual states, and of the general government. And, sustaining the position I have before taken as to the objects whose administration was intended to be confided to the general government, I have been thus full on this branch of the subject, because, although a similar clause was not introduced in the constitution of the United States, yet it was distinctly understood the same principle attached to the constitution, as well from the specific enumeration of the powers, as the cotemporary expositions by the most approved writers; but, above all, by the 10th amendment of the constitution, to the effect following: “The powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.” And it may be stated, that, if there was any one point on which the people of America universally agreed, it was that necessity of restraining the general government within the prescribed limits, to guard against encroachments on the authority of the states, and thereby prevent a consolidation which has been universally considered as a synonyme with monarchy.

These are truths generally admitted, and always have been, in the abstract; but, in their application, we are mortified to perceive an endless variety of opinions, some contending for a latitude so wide in their interpretation of the powers of the government as to defy limitation; while others insist, and justly insist, that they view the powers of the federal government, as resulting from the compact to which the states are parties, as limited by the

plain sense and intention of the instrument constituting that compact. This is the language of the celebrated resolutions of the Virginia Assembly. Not merely because they were adopted by that body, but because it was a part of the republican creed, to which a vast majority of the American people gave their hearty approbation, and by which the line was completely drawn between the different political parties of that day. It is a sound principle, which I wish to see revived, (for it seems to have been forgotten,) and resorted to in all doubtful cases, as an infallible standard. And here, I protest against a species of special pleading which, rejecting the principle just alluded to, hunts for powers in words or sentences, taken here and there from the instrument and patched together, forming something like a pretext for the exercise of powers palpably interdicted by the plain sense and intention of the instrument. These preliminaries being disposed of, we are brought to the conclusion that those who contend for the power in question must show it. This has been attempted, and no two agree as to the portion of the constitution from which they derive the power. This circumstance of itself is entitled to great consideration. If the subject had been of a character whose administration could not be effected by the states, in their individual character, one might be disposed to give a latitude of construction to the clause of the constitution, if any existed, that related to this subject; but, when it is known that the subject of slavery had been exclusively under the control of the states, to the entire exclusion of the general government, except in a case of a peculiar character, (the slave trade,) before we assume upon ourselves the exercise of such an authority, we should be satisfied that the power has been plainly given. In lieu of which, one gentleman pretends to find it in a clause whose only object was a restraint upon Congress; while another acknowledges that he considers this clause as giving no such authority, and refers us to another; while other gentlemen select new clauses imparting this authority.

Let us examine them respectively. 1st. let us consider the 1st clause of the 9th section, 1st article. Gentlemen contend that the word 'migration,' is the magical word in which is contained the power about to be exercised. The plain answer to this is, that it produces a confusion of ideas, to assert that a clause, whose palpable design was to restrain Congress from exercising an authority, imparts a substantive grant of power; but, it is reasoned, why restrain Congress, till the year 1808, from exercising an authority which they did not possess? Do gentlemen mean to say that all power interdicted by the 9th section would belong to Congress, had not such re-

striction been inserted? The gentleman from New-Hampshire contends for this monstrous doctrine, and asks, had it not been for the clause interdicting titles of nobility, would not Congress have had the power to have created a nobility? The gentleman seems not to understand the first principles of the government—for, if his doctrine be acted upon, it is equal to a revolution, and a government of limited powers would instantly be converted into one of absolute authority. I should have paid less attention to this doctrine by supposing that the gentleman had not reflected upon it, had he not uttered the same thing during the last session. It seems, therefore, that this is one of his fixed principles. A more heretical or a more dangerous one, cannot well be conceived. But, sir, were I for a moment to yield a point so palpable as this, still, I might contend that the gentlemen would be without the power contended for. What is the argument on their part? That 'migration' and 'importation' equally relate to slaves—That 'importation' relates to foreign slaves, while 'migration' refers to domestic slaves passing from one state to another, and that Congress, therefore, has a right to prevent their passage to the Missouri. Now, I contend that 'migration' was intended to refer to free foreigners, coming to this country, while 'importation' was intended to apply to slaves from abroad. This conclusion is warranted, as well by the phraseology of the section, as by the circumstances of the country. What is its language? That the migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808: but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation not exceeding ten dollars for each person. If this interpretation be received, the meaning of the clause is intelligible and rational. By dropping 'migration' when speaking of a tax or duty, it may be fairly inferred that the migration spoken of was, that of free men, to tax whom would be absurd. But the circumstances of the country at that time are entitled to great weight in forming our opinion. A large portion of the middle, southern, and western states, were sparsely inhabited. It was among the grievances enumerated, as leading to the revolution, that the crown of Great Britain had indicated a hostility to the migration of foreigners. Hence, lest the more populous portions of the United States should indulge in a similar abuse of power, Congress was expressly interdicted from taking any step in relation thereto, prior to the year 1808.

That this was the true import of this clause, is not only sustained by the considerations to which I have just referred, but is supported by an exposition given us at a period near the adoption of the constitution. Those who

opposed the alien law in Congress insisted upon this interpretation, and none with more force than my predecessor, Judge Tazewell, one of the most distinguished men of whom Virginia can boast. In his speech, which I have now before me, on the alien law, he holds the language I now do, and contended that Congress was virtually violating this clause. The Senate will recollect this discussion was in 1798; and it is worthy of remark, that the application of this word to slaves was first made by the friends of the alien law, to elude the force of this argument. The committee of the House of Representatives, in an elaborate report, drawn with a view to defend this law, assert that 'migration' related to slaves; but even the authors of that report contend only that it relates to the importation of slaves from abroad. But, we are told, Congress has fixed the meaning of this clause by the law of 1804, interdicting the bringing of slaves into Louisiana from any place in the United States, except by removal with their owners. But nothing is to be gained by this precedent. 1st. Louisiana was a territory, and not a state. 2d. It was the result of an excitement produced by peculiar causes, which have been amply detailed by the gentleman from South Carolina, and passed probably without discussion. 3d. It was repealed at the next session, by the law relative to the territory of Mississippi, in which Louisiana was placed on the same footing with that territory. So that, if it weigh any thing, it is against the interpretation contended for, as Congress retraced its steps within one year after the passage of the law of 1804. But the admission for argument sake was a mere gratuity, that a negative clause might be interpreted into a grant of power. I contend, this clause gives no power. How should it be understood, according to the plain intent of the constitution? To Congress had been given the power to regulate foreign commerce, and to establish an uniform rule of naturalization. But, lest this power should be exercised against the wishes of a particular portion of the Union, for the reasons stated above, this clause was introduced. I do not mean to be understood as saying any thing about the right of Congress to interfere in the case of the migration of foreigners; whether they have or not is not now involved; and its restriction till 1808 by no means implies necessarily such a power. For it is palpable that this section was drawn, out of abundant caution, &, as is evinced by the 4th clause of that section, Congress is interdicted from exercising an authority in any other way than had been previously prescribed. Its language is—no capitation or other direct tax shall be laid unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken. Hence, it follows that, as I said be-

fore, a restraint on Congress does not imply the existence of the power restrained; for I presume the gentleman from New Hampshire would hardly contend that Congress, even without this clause, would have had the power to vary the standard of the apportionment of direct taxation. But, it is said, that, as Congress has the power to prevent the importation of slaves under the clause of regulating foreign commerce, they have the power to prevent the passage of slaves from one state to another under the clause of regulating the commerce between the states. Now, sir, what is commerce, according to the common understanding of mankind, or in its strictest sense, as furnished by the most approved lexicographers? It is traffic. And can any one soberly contend that a removal of the head of a family, like the patriarch of times gone by, carrying with him his household, is engaged in that kind of commerce whose regulation has been given to Congress. His slaves are a part of his family; they have descended from generation to generation; are the depository of the history of his family; have rocked the cradle of his infancy, or have been companions of his youth; for them he has an affectionate regard; to preserve whom, if adversity come upon him, he will sell his home, and seek a more propitious fortune in the wilderness. Will any man call such a removal carrying on commerce? But, again, what was the end in view in giving this power to Congress? To ascertain this, let us recur to the state of this country prior to the adoption of the constitution. The states, having absolute authority over this subject, had adopted various and vexatious regulations upon the commerce between each other: they were as foreigners, each availing itself of its peculiar situation, at the expense of the other states. Those lying on the Atlantic made the interior tributary to them; and, as in all unwisely-organized confederacies, this policy was generating heart-burnings, so unfavorable to union. To prevent this, to the parent government was given the power of regulating this commerce—the whole amount and object of which was, to guarantee an unrestrained intercourse between the states; not to shackle or embarrass it; still less to apply it to the ordinary intercourse between coterminous states in the endless transactions occurring between their citizens. To relieve myself from a further comment on this part of the discussion, permit me to refer the Senate to the 11th No. of the Federalist. I will subjoin one other remark: if Congress were justifiable in attempting to legislate on this subject—I mean the commerce between the states—it can be done only by a general law; for the 5th clause of the 9th section of the 1st article expressly inhibits Congress from a partial legislation; and, by a re-

currence to this clause, which should be united with that giving the power to Congress to regulate the commerce between the states, it will be seen to what object this power was intended to relate: by it, the plain intent of the parties is so manifestly proclaimed, that I cannot see how it can be misunderstood by one honestly enquiring after its just meaning.

But, it is contended by some, that this power is to be found in the 3d section of the 2d clause of the 4th article. The answer to this is, that this clause relates to territories, and not to states. As there is a bill depending before us directly involving your power to legislate on the territories, it is unnecessary to discuss this question now. It is sufficient to say that it is doubtful whether you have the power, even in reference to territories; but it is palpable you can have none, under this clause, as it regards states.

We now come to consider the last clause in the constitution in which it is contended that this power has been granted, viz. the 1st clause of the 3d section of the 4th article. This is the only clause which, in my estimation, has any thing to do with the subject. New states may be admitted, &c. This is a mere extension of the 11th article of the confederation, which was limited to the admission of Canada, and other colonies; meaning, no doubt, other British colonies. To Canada the most perfect equality was guaranteed, by this clause, with the original members of the confederacy. The words "new states" must have been intended to convey a specific idea. The words are used by persons who distinctly understood their import; for they were the direct representatives of states whose attributes of sovereignty had been secured, in the 2d article of the confederation, by an express declaration, that all power was retained which had not been expressly given to the general government. And, in addition, the practice of twelve years had left no doubt as to the power which had been retained and exercised by the states. When, then, they gave to Congress the power of admitting new states into this Union, it must be understood that, with the exception of the power then transferred to the general government, or expressly withheld by the constitution, all other power belonged to the states, and, the moment that a new state is admitted into the Union, it is placed upon the most perfect equality with the other states, as well to its rights as its obligations. But it is, that "new states may be admitted into this Union." My friend from Maryland has, in a masterly argument, shewn that it is this Union into which they are to be admitted, and no other; which would not ensue if to one state rights were given which were withheld from another: for the terms of the

Union, in that case, being different, the Union could not be the same; and, therefore, they would not be admitted into this Union. It would be worse than useless for me to add any thing to what he has said. What, then, is your power? Simply whether you will admit or refuse. This is the limit of your power. And even this power is subject to control. Whenever a territory is sufficiently large, and its population sufficiently numerous, your discretion ceases, and the obligation becomes imperious, that you forthwith admit. For I hold that, according to the spirit of the constitution, the people thus circumstanced are entitled to the privilege of self-government.

Have we not a right to contend, that, if the Convention had intended to give to Congress the power of admitting on conditions, it would have said so? The constitution has not authorized the exercise of such a power directly, and there is nothing to justify the exercise of such a power by implication, if implication were allowable.

If, then, it be true, that your discretion, even as to admission, is limited, as I have endeavored to show, and in the present case all the constituent qualifications exist on the part of the people of Missouri for self-government, you are bound to say that she shall be admitted as a state into this Union. If she be admitted as a state, all the attributes of the old states instantly devolve on her, and the most prominent of those attributes is the right to fashion her government according to the will and pleasure of the good people of that state: whereas your restriction deprives her of that privilege forever; and your restriction applies to a species of property that most peculiarly belongs to the jurisdiction of the state government. For, can it be believed, that the states holding slaves could ever have intended to impart to non-slave-holding states an authority over a property in which they had no common interest; a property, in relation to which, so far from the necessity of surrendering the power to control it to the general government, self-preservation required that it should be left exclusively to the state-governments.

To all this it is replied, that the uniform course of the government, since the ordinance of '87, amounts to a precedent not now to be canvassed.

In cases of doubt it is readily admitted that decisions, after mature deliberation, upon full discussion of distinguished men, are entitled to great weight in analogous cases. Now, sir, how far will the proceedings of Congress under the ordinance operate as a precedent? The ordinance itself was founded in usurpation. No such power had been granted Congress by the confederation. Let me I should be charged with an assumption myself, I will call to my aid the work so frequently referred to—the *Federalist*. In page 235, this is expressly admitted. 12

is there stated that it was an assumption on the part of Congress. I have seen it stated, indeed, in a pamphlet or speech, (for I know not what to call it,) that Congress had the power, as incident to their character. Mark the facility with which every usurpation of power is justified! What is not expressly given, may be implied; or, if there be nothing to justify implication, it may be incidental; and, if it be neither the one nor the other, the next step is, that it ought to have been given; and thus, by some means, every power which it is desirable to exercise, will be, or may be, claimed. But, rejecting these claims as entirely untenable, I assert, the ordinance itself was an assumption of power. It is admitted that it has been acquiesced in, and all its provisions have been carried into effect. It is not now to be disturbed. But it still is nothing as a precedent; because it attached to a wilderness, and not to men. Those who subsequently settled this country adopted it from choice. Their sentiments and habits were fashioned by the principles of the ordinance, and, when admitted into the Union, instead of the right of Congress to impose a restriction on them being denied, and discussed and seriously decided, I am warranted in saying that the question was never stirred. Why enquire into a condition that was perfectly useless, the people themselves not wishing to hold slaves? But this I assert, that the people of the states embraced by this ordinance, when in Convention, considered themselves unrestrained, and considered the question with an exclusive eye to its expediency.

The course therefore pursued by the government, under this ordinance, is not entitled to the least weight as a precedent; but, if it were, I beg leave to present various precedents of a directly different character. The states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, have all been admitted without restriction. To what then does the history of our proceedings amount? That, in every instance, other than those connected with the ordinance, Congress has admitted without restriction. Congress has never before dared to apply it to a portion of country where slaves were; in effect, where it was to amount to a restriction. It is, however, urged, that conditions were imposed on Louisiana. The principal part of these were merely in conformity to the great principles of freedom; were incorporated in the law in reference to the peculiar people whom we were about to introduce into the Union—people who had before lived under a different form of government, and who were supposed not sufficiently versed in the principles of our government; and were justifiable only, if at all, under the power of Congress to guarantee to each member of the confederacy a republican form of government. I doubt,

however, the power of Congress to impose them at all; but sure I am, that they had no power to restrict them as to the language which they should employ in promulgating their laws. The best criterion to test the right of Congress to impose this restriction, is to enquire by what means will they enforce obedience, were Louisiana to refuse a compliance. For, to every legitimate power you have the corresponding one of enforcement. Where the latter is wanting, the former does not exist. This I think may be assumed as an axiom in our government. The exercise therefore of this power was without right, and serves no other purpose than to show the facility with which all governments advance in the acquisition of power. They well may be likened to a screw: they never retrograde; every acquisition becomes a temptation to new aggressions, and not unfrequently the means by which they are realized. There is one idea so repeatedly urged, that those who entertain it must have credit for their sincerity, and that is, that we have greater power with the states to be formed out of acquired territory than in that originally a part of the United States.

By what course of argument this conclusion is arrived at, I am at a loss to discover. There is but one distinction acknowledged in the constitution between the then existing states & those thereafter to be admitted, and that is confined to the importation of slaves. This shows that in all other respects they were to be on an equal footing with the old states; for, had such not been the design of the convention, as they discriminated in the one case, they would have done so in every particular where it was intended. In addition, it may be remarked, that, in the 3d clause of the 2d section of the 1st article, the same principle of representation, as it regards slaves, was to be extended to such states as may be admitted; pointing directly to the clause, of course, that new states might be admitted into the Union.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Mellen) says that we impose no condition; but that the people of Missouri, if they accept it, impose it on themselves. And he illustrates his idea by a comparison of this case with that of the Bank of the United States. I regret to find that gentleman placing the great privilege of a people to govern themselves, upon so humble a footing as an equality with a bank corporation. Where is the resemblance? Congress has the right to refuse to incorporate a bank; if, however, it dispenses this privilege, it may impose what terms it pleases. If they be acceptable or otherwise, none can complain. But Congress is bound by the constitution, in this case, to admit Missouri into the Union; if it refuse, it will do an immeasurable injury to the people of Missouri, because it deprives them of the

great privilege of self government. If you impose conditions as a *sine qua non* to her admission, however severe these conditions may be, she may, possibly, to obtain possession of the inestimable blessing of self government, accede to them; but her consent is obtained by a species of force. Justice claims of power its rights—power grants a part only, and requires, before that part be given, a relinquishment of the remainder. Is this no condition, although justice, despairing of the whole, should acquiesce in the terms presented by power? It is unnecessary to add any thing to a proposition so palpable. The gentleman from Pennsylvania says this is no restriction, but a blessing. Let the people of Missouri decide for themselves. We do not ask that Missouri shall admit slavery. All that we require is, that she may decide for herself. If it be, as gentlemen assert, a blessing, what have you to fear from the good sense of the people of Missouri? You have pronounced them capable of self government in all the important concerns of life, except in this particular. Why not trust to her discretion in this? Send out your go-carts of pamphlets, the substances of speeches made in the Senate; pronounce before them your long Jeremiads against slavery, long as a Scotch coronation prayer, and can you doubt the success of your endeavors to prevent the introduction of slavery among them? Why leap the boundaries of the constitution to force upon them that which you say is a blessing?

But, the gentleman from Pennsylvania asks, shall we suffer Missouri to come into the Union with this savage mark on her countenance? I appeal to that gentleman, to know whether this be language to address to an American Senate, composed equally of members from states precisely in the condition that Missouri would be in, were she to tolerate slavery. Are these sentiments calculated to cherish that harmony and affection so essential to any beneficial results from our Union? But, sir, I will not imitate this course, and I will strive to repress the feeling which such remarks are calculated to awaken. Permit me here to notice an observation made by the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Otis.) who, in this instance, departed from his usual urbanity. Were he to visit Europe, he fears that, on his landing, his country being known, he might be upbraided by some Spaniard, for example, who might tell him he was from the land of hypocrites—with freedom on their lips, and the bloody scourge brandishing in their hands. Would the gentleman be without an answer? Might he not say, how dare you thus defame, you slave? Do you not bow the knee before the bloody sceptre of cruelty and superstition? Is not the emblem of your power the wheel of the iniqui-

sition? Are you not the first people to have commenced the barbarous traffic in slaves? Are you not the last to surrender it? Have you not received a price to abandon it, and do you not at this time add perfidy to cruelty, by pursuing it to the utmost extent of which you are capable? Should the gentleman extend his tour to England, and there meet with the same accusation—feeling as he ought, and speaking as he felt, would he not indignantly denounce the insolence of the slanderer, by telling him, to take the beam from his own eye before he attempted to remove the mote from his neighbor's? Might he not ask, to whom are we indebted for slavery at all; is it not to England? Have you not been engaged for centuries in this horrible traffic, and against the remonstrance of the people whom you now abuse? Did not Virginia, of all the civilized world, first lift up her voice against this trade? But she lifted it in vain. Gain was your object; you weighed that against the peace and happiness of both hemispheres, and accepted it as an equivalent. Nor was it yielding to a momentary impulse of cupidity, or ignorance of its moral consequences. But you pursued it for centuries: and, although you were warned, by the glowing eloquence of your Wilberforce and your Clarkson, who thundered in your ears the sighs and lamentations of the suffering victims of your wickedness, and spoke, like angels trumpet-tongued, the deep damnation of your crimes, you turned a deaf ear, deaf as an adder, and found your indemnity for all this in dollars and cents. 'Tis but yesterday you ceased; and to-day you assume the moral chair, and pronounce homilies against the unavoidable effects of your crimes. For, what have the American people not done? Have they not, whenever any regard to their own peace would permit, emancipated the slave? And where that was impracticable, have not the masters, by their kindness and affection, deprived slavery itself of its horrors? Cease, then, your defamation. Turn your eye to every region of the earth, where you bear sway, and, when you shall have relieved the wretched and oppressed, then, and not till then, presume to preach reformation to others. With such materials as these, delineated by his masterly hand, the blush he dreaded on his own account might be transferred to his accuser.

But both the gentlemen from Pennsylvania and New Hampshire have called to their aid the Declaration of Independence, and the sacred principles it consecrates. What has that to do with this question? Who were the parties—the slaves? No. Did slavery not exist in every state of the Union at the moment of its promulgation? Did it enter into any human mind that it had the

least reference to this species of population? Is there not at the present moment slaves in the very states from which we hear these novel doctrines?

How has it happened, that these doctrines have slept till this moment? Where were they at the adoption of the constitution, in which slavery is recognized, & the property guaranteed by an express clause? And shall we, the mere creatures of that instrument, presume to question its authority? To every other sanction imposed by our situation, is the solemn oath that we will support it. Where are the consciences of gentlemen who hold this language? But, they assure us, that they do not mean to touch this property in the old states. What, this eternal, and, as they say, immutable principle, consecrated by this famous instrument, and in support of which we have appealed to God, is to have no obligatory force on the very parties who made it; but attaches instantly you cross the Mississippi! What kind of ethics is this, that is bounded by latitude and longitude—which is inoperative on the left, but is omnipotent on the right bank of a river? Such doctrines are well calculated to excite our solicitude: for, although the gentlemen, who now hold it, are sincere in their declarations, and mean to content themselves with a triumph in this controversy, what security have we, that others will not apply it to the south generally? This, sir, is no longer matter of speculation; you have heard the doctrine contended for already, not at cross roads, or in the city taverns, but in the legislative hall of a state. When it shall be resorted to by faction, who can pretend to prescribe its limits! Every page of history is full of melancholy proofs of the feebleness of that security, which reposes upon the moderation of the ambitious and designing. The means are always made to yield to the end. I, therefore, heard the doctrine with unmixed regret. I fear it is the beginning of new counsels, whose disastrous effects no one can foresee.

Sir, there is one view of this subject, which I wish to present to the Senate; if you have the pretended power, why not exercise it in the ordinary and only legitimate mode, by making it the subject of legislative enactment? Why seek, by compact with Missouri, to bolster your authority? If you have the power, is her consent necessary? If you have it not, can that consent give it you? What should we think of any man, when the bankrupt law was under consideration, if he were to propose, before he acted, to obtain the consent of one or more of the states? And yet it would be as rational as in the present case, supposing you have the authority, to require the consent of Missouri to give it effect.

But the principal feature in a legislative act is, that it

is in the power of our successors to change it ; here, on the contrary, you seek to make the regulation immortal. The constitution itself contains a principle of alteration, so as to adapt itself to the progress of human affairs, and yet you place a legislative act beyond all human power of change or modification. I will forbear any further remarks on this branch of the subject, and proceed in the order I proposed. I will now enquire, whether, by treaty, we are not restrained from restricting Missouri ? By the third clause of the treaty, by which we acquired this country, the inhabitants are to be incorporated, &c.

I consider it not of moment to enquire, whether their admission, according to the principles of the federal constitution, relates to the time or the terms of such admission, because they are, when admitted, to enjoy all the rights, privileges, and immunities, of American citizens. An attempt has been made to discriminate between federal and state rights, in a celebrated tract denominated, "the substance of two speeches," &c. For my part, I have been utterly unable to comprehend the meaning of the author. Does he mean to assert that there may be one or more citizens entitled to federal privileges, and not to state privileges ? On the converse, to me it has always appeared as not admitting of a question, that these were indissolubly united in an American citizen. A citizen of the United States must be a citizen of some one of the states, and, as such, entitled to every right or privilege secured by the federal or state government. If there be any right pertaining to citizens of the United States, it is that of fashioning their government according to their own will and pleasure. This right was, therefore, secured by compact to the inhabitants of the territory in question, and any attempt to impair or abridge it, is in violation of that treaty. In the same tract it is said, slaves are not property ; the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Otis) frankly admits, that this is an unwarrantable assertion, and such must be the award of all mankind. Did not both the contracting parties recognize slaves as property ? Were they not known to abound in the territory ceded, and constituting the largest proportion of the property of the people ? Is it consistent with reason to suppose that, when such care was taken to secure the people of the territory in the undisturbed enjoyment of their property, the principal part was intended to be excluded ? It is mortifying to have to contend with such a shadow. The whole territory ceded was to be admitted into the union. The letter of the treaty required, that it should have been admitted as a whole. You thought proper to divide it ; but you suffered the Louisiana part to come in without res-

triction, in this regard. Upon what principle can you reconcile with good faith the distinction you now set up between Missouri and Louisiana ?

The gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Otis,) advances the proposition, that, were this a conquered country, Congress might impose what terms they pleased—one, instead of two Senators ; and, in short, whatever modification it pleased. As this is a question which for the present may be said, in law language, to be *coram non judice*, and as we have our hands full without it, I shall not discuss it. I shall dismiss it by denying its truth, and declaring that it is essential, in all cases, no matter by what method the territory may be acquired, whenever it becomes incorporated into the Union, it must be, in the language of all our precedents, on an equal footing with the original states, in all respects whatsoever. It is asked, who are the parties to the treaty, and who is there to punish its infraction ? Why propound this question ? The honor of the American people is the guaranty of its faithful execution. Our own brethren have become interested in its execution ; for they have mingled with the original inhabitants : they are entitled to the most liberal interpretation of the treaty, as well on the score of national law as the principles of justice and a liberal and enlightened policy. The gentleman from Massachusetts, in illustrating his views of the powers of Congress on this subject, has enquired, whether Congress could not exclude a religious sect from inhabiting the intended state, the principles of whose faith were unfriendly to population ; an example of which he furnished in the shaking quakers ? Whatever else may be said of this view, it will at least be entitled to the credit of candor. It, without disguise, displays the undefinable and unconstitutional power now asserted ; it assumes that Congress has a right to regulate their whole internal polity—for, if their religion and their connexion by matrimony are just subjects of Congressional authority, what subject of social regulation would lie beyond the reach of their control ?

Lest I weary you, sir, I will now proceed to the last branch of this interesting subject, which I proposed to discuss : Is it expedient or just ?

The first objection that presents itself is its immeasurable injustice. By whom was the country acquired ? By the common treasure of every part of the Union, and by the exclusive counsels of that portion which you seek to interdict by your measure. Yes, sir, I say the exclusive counsels. The opposition which was made to the treaty by which we acquired it, is too recent and too notorious to require proof. Nay, sir, so inveterate is the

opposition, that we have a portion of its leaven mingled with the present discussion. The gentleman from Rhode Island has told us that we acquired it by treaty with a man who has become a private gentleman, and who had no title himself. A country thus acquired, of boundless extent, is to be shut against us. Were our opponents not under the influence of an insatiable ambition, they would content themselves with the enjoyment of a large and disproportionate share of this country, to which they would exclusively succeed, independently of any legal regulation on this subject. This is too obvious to be denied, when we take as our guide the history of our own country, which furnishes indubitable proof that slaves, to any considerable number, are never seen beyond a given parallel of latitude. When you cast your eye on the map of the country in question, it is palpable that much the largest portion would never be occupied by a slave. Why are they not content with this great natural advantage? Can you bring your minds to believe that we shall sit quietly under this act of iniquity, as insulting as it is injurious? Sir, no portion of the United States has been more loyal than the South. Amid all the vicissitudes of party and the violence of faction—in peace and in war—in good and in evil report, we have respected the laws, and rallied around the constitution and the Union. To the Union we have looked, as the ark of our salvation and the resting place of our hopes. Is this your reward for our loyalty? Sir, there is a point where submission becomes a crime, and resistance a virtue. In despotic countries even the despot is obliged to keep some terms with his subjects: in free states you more readily arrive at the point to which I allude. Beware how you touch it, in regard to the South! Our people are as brave as they are loyal. They can endure any thing but insult. The moment you pass the Rubicon, they will redeem their much abused character; they will throw back upon you your insolence and your aggression. But, let us suppose they will quietly submit to the wrongs you inflict, what must be their feelings friendly to Union—to that harmony so essential to our common prosperity? What is the foundation of our connection? The Federal compact. He must, indeed, be profoundly ignorant of human nature, if he suppose the Union reposes on such a foundation. No, sir, it is a common interest, and those kind and affectionate sentiments which the preservation by a parental government of that interest generates, that form its prop and security. Withdraw these, you may preserve the form, but the vital part is gone. To what end do you encounter this great risk? To exclude slavery from Missouri? That cannot be your object. You have

slaves there already. These, you say, you do not mean to touch. The principle, then, is given up : the stock they have already there will multiply and fill the land.

But we are gravely told, and upon it all the changes have been rung to excite the prejudices of the non-slave holding states, that the political influence resulting from the slaves which will be carried to this country is the principal ground of objection to Missouri's coming in without restriction. You reduce, say they, the white man to an equality with the slave. What sophistry is this ! Will not the slave have the same influence in Georgia or Virginia as in Missouri ? His removal to the latter state is in no way to increase it. But they will, we are told, multiply faster in Missouri than in the old states. Mark the dilemma in which gentlemen are placed : at one time they weep over the condition of the slave ; their tender souls are overflowing with kindness and compassion to their sufferings. To ameliorate their condition is their professed object. What course do they pursue to accomplish it ? To pen them up, as my honorable friend from North Carolina has justly remarked, and cut them off from those benefits which await them in a new and fertile country ; the enjoyment of which produces that increase they so much affect to dread. Let us hear no more of humanity ; it is profaning the term. Their object is power. They assume the mask of humanity for the purpose of seducing tender consciences, and they, as far as their policy can effect it, devote the very beings whose welfare they pretend to urge as a reason for the measure of which we so justly complain. Yes ; humanity is their motto. The interest, the peace, the happiness of the whites, form with them the dust of the balance ; their affections are alive only to the condition of the slave. They speak of their measures with great deliberation, and invite us to be calm. They are afar off while this new drama is performing. Turn out comedy or tragedy, they are equally unaffected. On the contrary, we are to be involved in the catastrophe. It is not left to us to stand aloof as mere spectators. We shall have to act a part. We may lose, but cannot gain. We furnish the stakes ; and they are nothing less than the vital interests of our country. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Otis) has been edifying in his suggestions as to what we are to fear from St. Domingo, unless we adopt his counsels. The mention of St. Domingo calls up a train of unpleasant recollections. Its history is replete with instructive lessons upon this subject. Let us alone, and we have nothing to fear. It is your pretended solicitude for our welfare that constitutes our danger. It is the doctor, and not the disease, we

dread. Yes, sir, the pseudo friends of humanity, in France, far beyond the reach of the effects of their own policy, in the spirit of fanaticism issued the celebrated decree that involved the fate of that devoted island. Its caption was "liberty and equality." It no sooner reached its object than the bands of society were dissolved. Monsters stalked over the face of this wretched country, and their footsteps were every where traced by conflagration, and rapine, and murder, and lust, and all the unutterable horrors which the most ferocious passions, coupled with unbridled power, could inflict. The few wretched survivors, who fled before the fury of the storm, carried to every part of Christendom their tale of suffering and of woe, which, by its irresistible pathos, drew tears of pity from every eye. But, where or when has it been known that fanaticism has paused to reflect on consequences? Experience, the lessons of prudence and of caution, are presented to it in vain. But, sir, let us analyze this argument of the gentleman from Massachusetts, if, indeed, argument it may be called. If, says he, you extend slavery to Missouri, the emissaries of St. Domingo will penetrate this interior region, and preach the doctrines of insurrection. Indeed! If, then, according to the logic of this gentleman, the slaves be retained in the Atlantic states, to which the access is the most easy, and swell to a disproportionate number, we have nothing to apprehend; but, if removed to the interior, and so diffused as to be entirely out-numbered by the white population, then, and not till then, are we in danger. Can any thing be necessary to refute a proposition, when to state it is to destroy it?

But, gentlemen defend the course they pursue, on the ground of charity and benevolence to this unfortunate species of population. Charity, sir, in its just sense, is one of the first of virtues; it bears upon its face the impress of its celestial birth; it prompts the man, at the expense of his own comforts, to give food to the hungry and clothing to the naked. If his scanty means deny him this privilege, he acts the good Samaritan—hours balm in the wound, and binds up the broken heart. His reward is ample here and hereafter. Here, in the uplifted and thankful eye of wretchedness relieved; there, it is a ministering angel at the throne of eternal justice. But that charity which seeks to gratify itself at the expense of another; which subjects the actor to no sacrifice, to no danger, is mere hypocrisy—'tis the reluctant homage which vice pays to virtue. In which predicament my opponents stand! It is my property they seek to take; it is my peace, my safety, my happiness, that are put to hazard. I exempt the gentleman from Massachusetts

(Mr. Otis) from any part of these allusions: he has frankly told us that he is actuated by no benevolent consideration; he justifies his course on the score of policy.

We are continually reproached with having on our side every advantage from the union; that we have contrived to gain an unjust portion of power through our slaves, and have given in return no equivalent. Let us analyze this charge, and test its justness. According to the principles of those who hold all men equal, it is we who have made the sacrifice, rather than gained an advantage, in the ratio of representation, as it regards our slaves. In submitting to the deduction of two-fifths of this species of population, we have surrendered precisely that proportion of our just claims. Independent sovereignties, entering into federal association, agree that their voice in the union shall depend on their relative numbers. What right has one of the parties to enquire into the condition of any portion of the inhabitants of another? That is an affair exclusively belonging to the contracting sovereign. In the spirit of compromise, however, the sacrifice was submitted to. Gentlemen say they do not mean to disturb it. Why harp continually upon it? Is it to instil incurable hostilities into the body politic; to array one portion of the United States against another? The parties heretofore existing in the United States, formidable as they were, especially at one time, lost all capacity for mischief by being broken up in fragments. Each state, each neighborhood, was more or less divided; and thereby the force and effect of their violence was rendered comparatively harmless. Such will not be the case when you divide by latitudes. In their collisions, the Union will shake to its foundations. The gentleman from New Jersey, on another subject, expressed a partiality for parties; their existence he supposes essential to the health of the political body. Being myself fond of calm, I am willing to dispense with them altogether. His views might possibly be correct, could you regulate its extent as does the doctor his means by drachms and scruples. But I fear, sir, if I am not greatly deceived by the signs of the times, that this gentleman will have to acknowledge, by melancholy experience, that his remedy has of itself become a dreadful disease. But, sir, I have wandered from the point, which is—that we have an advantage for which we have given no equivalent. No. Take it for granted, however, that it is a favor, (our ratio of representation,) and not a sacrifice. Do we not pay in solid bullion for it? Is not taxation directly in proportion to our representation? But is this all? What have we not done for the navigating interest, and for the manufactures of our eastern

brethren? Three years past, at the suggestion of the latter, did we not unanimously pass a law, in conformity to their wishes, which interdicted the intercourse between this country and the British West India Islands in British ships, with a view to the encouragement of the shipping interest of the East? Have we not also passed a navigation act, at their instance; and, in short, have we not done whatever we have been requested to do which could lead to their advantage in this regard? Had the South been influenced only by the sordid consideration of their own interest, they would have been content to employ the cheapest carriers, whether alien or domestic. They were influenced by a more magnanimous policy. We held our brothers of the East as ourselves, and, in promoting their particular interest, at our immediate sacrifice, we looked at the subject in a national point of view only. And, although a continual clamor has been kept up against us upon the subject of manufactures, yet the laws which have been passed for their encouragement indicate the very liberal feelings of the South upon this subject, not to say an extravagant partiality. In the opposition which has taken place to the unreasonable demands (or, at least, so esteemed by many) made by the manufacturing interest, no hostility to the North or East mingles therewith; it results from a conviction that a system, which can be sustained only by taxing extravagantly the productive labor of the country, cannot be founded in a proper regard to the suggestions of true political economy.

We are asked, why has Virginia changed her policy relative to slavery? That the sentiments of our most distinguished men thirty years past entirely corresponded with the course which the friends of restriction now advocate; that Mr. Jefferson has delineated a gloomy picture of the baneful effects of slavery;* and that the Virginia delegation, one of whom was the late President of the United States, voted for the restriction on the north-western territory. When it is recollected that the Notes of Mr. Jefferson were written during the progress of the Revolution, the mind operated upon by its incidents, as novel as stupendous, it is no matter of surprise that the writer, who was performing so distinguished a part, should have imbibed a large portion of that enthusiasm which such an occasion was so well calculated to produce.

With the eye of benevolence, surveying the condition of mankind, and a holy zeal for the amelioration of their condition, he gave vent to his feelings in the effusion to

* Mr. King, in a speech subsequently delivered, stated that Mr. Jefferson first suggested the restriction.

which our attention has been called. It is palpable these are the illusions of fancy. Sad reality has since taught him, as his example shows, that the evil, over which he wept, is incurable by human means. By which will you be influenced, the undisciplined effusions of a benevolent heart, or the sober suggestions of cool deliberations, and ripened judgment? As to the consent of the Virginia delegation to the restriction in question—whether the result of a disposition to restrain the slave trade indirectly, or the influence of that enthusiasm to which I have just alluded; or, as is said by some, a political measure to counteract certain schemes then going on, whose object was, according to the rumor of the day, a severance of the Union, it is now not important to decide. We have witnessed its effects. What might have been speculation before, is now matter of experience. The liberality of Virginia, or, as the result may prove, her folly, which submitted to, or, if you will, proposed this measure, has eventuated in effects which speak a monitory lesson. How is the representation from this quarter, on the present question? Virginia is constrained to cry out, And you, too, my children! I appeal to the Senators from that quarter—to their filial affection, and conjure them, by the kindness we have shown them, to arrest the unfeeling injustice meditated against us. Did we not give you the land which now constitutes your home, and which you liken, in your own language, to a Paradise? Did we not protect you in your infancy? Did we not arrest the policy of the east, which sought to fetter your mighty river, for no matter what purpose, whether disunion or to repress your growth. Did we not place you by our side in this and the other hall, and impart to you the high privileges of self government? You have now become powerful: will you, in the first moment we have ever solicited your aid, abandon us and go over to the enemy? Will you surrender yourselves to the seductive influence of an envious step-mother, who sought to strangle you in your infancy? Dare you lift your parricidal hand against your natural parent? In the face of the most unpromising symptoms, I will continue to hope better things.

We have heard much of the moral and political effects of slavery. Instead of the picture furnished by the orists and enthusiasts on this subject, let us consult the testimony of history from the first to the present age. In the master states of antiquity, Greece and Rome, it existed in its worst form. And, yet, such was the march of the human mind, in these distinguished republics, in all that was ennobling in morals and science, that, it continued to shine through the long eclipse of interposing darkness. And, in the modern world, the lamps of science

and of liberty were lighted up from its yet unexpired embers. I will not pretend to retouch the picture delineated by the masterly hand of my distinguished friend from Maryland. His glowing and sublime eloquence, the exclusive companion of superior genius, lifted the curtain which separates us from past ages, and caused to pass in review the heroes of Marathon, Salamis and Thermopylæ—splendid achievements, that lose nothing in comparison with all that has since intervened. If you descend to modern times, the result of experience in our own country is no less opposed to the suggestions of theory. I will not enter into the invidious task of contrasting the south with the north. How disastrous must be that question, whose discussion permits a member of this body, in recounting the splendid monuments of American skill and bravery, to content himself with naming Bunker's Hill, Bennington and Saratoga ! Could not the gentleman from New-Hampshire permit his national feeling to survive so long, as to have recounted the Cowpens—King's Mountain, Guilford, Eutaw, York, and finally the victory of New-Orleans, whose memory will live co-extensively with the flood on whose margin it was achieved ? Why this invidious distinction ? Does the honorable gentleman imagine, I take a less interest in indulging my pleasing recollection of the prowess of my country in the first, than in the last ? No, they were my countrymen—the fame they acquired was a common stock ; my portion of the inheritance I will not surrender.

Let it not however be supposed, that in the abstract I am advocating slavery ? Like all other human things, it is mixed with good and evil—the latter, no doubt, preponderating.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Mellen) tells us, he is legislating for after ages. His view disdains the limited horizon of the present. Poor arrogant man, not content to act well his part in the little span assigned him by his creator, he builds his mole-hill, and challenges immortality for his labors ! A few revolving years, they are erased with the same facility, as are the characters by the flood, on whose sandy margin they have been inscribed. Tell me at what pure fountain of knowledge, have you drank in the holy inspiration, which enables you to penetrate the dark cloud which hangs on the future, and to adapt your counsels to the endless vicissitudes of human affairs ? Satisfy me on this, before I surrender present happiness. I fear you have commenced this distant voyage under the most unhallowed auspices. You violate the constitution ; you trample under feet the plighted faith of the nation ; you do an immeasurable act of injustice to one half the nation ; you lay the founda-

tion of incurable hatred ; and all this, for consequences which none can see, but that Providence in whose hands is the destiny of nations. Sir, reflections of this kind call up a fearful subject of contemplation. Your government, upon its present scale, is, as yet, but an experiment. While the people are virtuous, it may equal all our fond hopes and anticipations : but, when it shall reach from ocean to ocean, become populated to excess, and poverty and vice shall have shed their baneful influence ; when materials of this kind shall be subjected to the intrigues of the wicked and ambitious ; who, judging even from the present time, is sanguine enough to hope that we alone are to be exempt from the calamities, to which man has been born heir. Who can pretend to predict, that the present order of things will be able to ride out the storm ? And if, conforming to all human things, we too, shall experience adversity : if this last hope of afflicted humanity shall, as the precursor of its final doom, be rent in twain ; what then will be the fruits of your policy ? On this side the Mississippi, a black population : on the other, a white. The latter, you tell us, is feeble, inadequate to its own defence, we present only a temptation to conquest. Instead of presenting a rampart, you have surrendered us, by your policy, an unresisting prey to our now hostile neighbors. It may perhaps be consistent with retributive justice, that, our country overrun, you in turn may severely feel the terrible effects of your present injustice. Let me conjure the gentleman to return from his distant voyage, and unite with us in consulting the happiness of the present generation. Whether slavery was ordained by God himself, in a particular revelation to his chosen people, or whether it be merely permitted as a part of that moral evil, which seems to be the inevitable portion of man, are questions I will not approach : I leave them to the casuists and the divines. It is sufficient for us, as statesmen, to know that it has existed from the earliest ages of the world, and, that to us has been assigned such a portion, as, in reference to their number and the various considerations resulting from a change of their condition, no remedy, even plausible, has been suggested ; though wisdom and benevolence united have unceasingly brooded over the subject.

However dark and inscrutable may be the ways of Heaven, who is he that arrogantly presumes to arraign them ? The same mighty power that planted the greater and the lesser luminary in the Heavens, permits on earth the bondsman and the free. To that Providence, as men and christians, let us bow. If it be consistent with His will, in the fullness of time, to break the fetter of the slave, he will raise up some Moses to be their deliverer. To him

commission will be given to lead them up out of the land of bondage. At his approach, seas will subside, and mountains disappear. When this revelation shall be made, & the jubilee of emancipation be proclaimed, philanthropy will lift its voice to swell the joyful note, which, sweeping the continent and the isles of the new world, and resounding through the old, shall cause the oppressor to let go his prey, the dungeon to surrender its victim, and give emancipation to the slave. Till then, let us draw consolation from the reflection that, however incomprehensible this dispensation may be to us, it is a link in that great concatenation which is permitted by Omnipotent power and goodness, and must issue in universal good.

I will not weary the patience of the Senate by detaining them any longer on this subject. It is the speaker, and not the theme, that is exhausted. However threatening the political horizon may now appear, I will not suffer myself easily to be cast down. No, sir, when I reflect upon our ancestors, who, flying oppression, braved a waste of waters, bringing with them nothing but their household gods and an unextinguishable thirst for freedom, taking root on a barbarous shore, growing up with a rapidity unexampled in the annals of mankind—uniting against the attempts of tyranny, and consummating the glorious Revolution: when I reflect on the spirit of concession and brotherly love in the formation of the constitution; and when I finally contemplate the glory and happiness it has produced, I will not now distrust that Providence which has been pleased to dispense to us so many & such distinguished blessings. I will not permit myself to believe that this mighty scheme of political salvation, in which all nations are interested, will pass away like the grass of the field. I will rather continue to indulge the hope, that we shall remain united and free; that we shall advance to that height of prosperity when all nations shall resort to us, whence to draw the oracles of political wisdom and the sublime truths of civil and religious liberty. That such may be our fate is the prayer I will unceasingly address to the Great Disposer of all human events.