

NEGRO EQUALITY—THE RIGHT OF ONE MAN TO HOLD PROPERTY
IN ANOTHER—THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY A DISUNION PARTY—
THE SUCCESS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY THE ONLY SALVATION
FOR THE COUNTRY.

SPEECH

OF

HON. BENJAMIN STANTON, OF OHIO.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, May 3, 1860.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have no prepared speech for this occasion, and it is the first time I have attempted to address the House or the Committee for four years, except upon some question immediately pending for action. Four years ago I discussed the question of the power of Congress over slavery in the Territories; and with the argument I made on that subject I am still satisfied. I have not seen any satisfactory answer to it, and I do not propose to reargue the question.

Let me say one word or two, preliminary, in regard to the tone and temper of the discussions which have prevailed in this Hall during the present session. It seems to me that they have indicated a great lack of statesmanship and dignity, and of that parliamentary courtesy indispensable to the careful consideration of grave national questions.

Gentlemen seem to forget that we are a people covering twenty-five parallels of latitude and forty degrees of longitude, embracing every variety of soil and climate, and every variety of production, of character, and of social institutions. It seems to be imagined that we must all think alike, reason alike, come to the same conclusions; or that our differences of opinion shall be causes of bitterness and discord and strife. I apprehend, if I had been born and educated at Norfolk, I should probably have entertained opinions very similar to those entertained by my friend from Virginia, [MR. MILLSON;] and if he had been born and educated upon the banks of the Ohio, he would probably have entertained opinions very similar to mine. If I had been born and educated in Turkey, I would probably have been a Mussulman; but, sir, born and educated in a Christian country, I entertain the tenets of the Christian faith. What allowances are or have been made for the difference of soil and climate, education and habits? It seems to me that there ought to be a little charity extended for different opinions, different feelings, and different prejudices. Entering upon this discussion

with that feeling, if I should say anything that grates harshly upon any gentlemen's prejudices, it will be unintentional, and not designed.

Mr. Chairman, before proceeding to the discussion of the main question I desire to consider, I wish to address a remark or two to the speech of the gentleman from Indiana, [MR. ENGLISH.] Yesterday that gentleman spent a solid hour in attempting to demonstrate that the Republican party was in favor of negro equality; in attempting to show that the Republican party was in favor of social and political equality between the negro and white man—yes, sir, a solid hour. In the State of Ohio, and in all of the Northwest, if the gentleman will poll the Republican party, he will not find one in every thousand who is in favor of extending equal social and political privileges to the negroes. In the Constitutional Convention of his own State, and in the Constitutional Convention of my State, the question of extending equal political privileges to the blacks was presented, discussed, and decided, and in neither of them did it find advocates worthy of the name, and was rejected by almost a unanimous vote. It is true, that the Democracy of the Northwest are very hard pressed. The gentleman from Indiana will not undertake to argue in favor of the principles of the Democratic party, and say that the Constitution carries slavery into all of the Territories. He will argue in favor of no such thing, here or anywhere else, when he can possibly avoid it.

What, then, is to be done? Capital must be got up for the campaign in Indiana and the Northwest, and the only capital upon which they can go to the people, and hope for success, is by appealing to the popular prejudice against negroes. That is the whole story, all there is of it, or about it. There is no man, to my knowledge, in the Republican party, in either State, who is in favor of the extension of equal political and social privileges to negroes. The gentleman seems, however, to insist upon it, that because

the Constitution of the State of Indiana has not only disfranchised negroes, but excludes them from the State, and deprived them of the means of subsistence, that every man who stops short of that limit is in favor of negro equality. Now, while I do not approve of the doctrine of negro equality, I am not one who believes that negroes are beasts, or men who ought to be considered as outlaws in every country. I believe a negro is entitled to live upon the soil where he was born. I believe he has a right to the proceeds of his labor, to his earnings, and to his liberty. That is my opinion; but I do not choose to make him my equal socially and politically because I do so believe. And I cannot very well comprehend the feelings which prompt men to wage a war upon a poor, down-trodden, helpless portion of the community.

There seems to be some terrible apprehension, that if mere political rights, or any rights whatever, are extended to negroes, they may come into competition with the whites. Is the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. ENGLISH] distressed with the apprehension that some negro may be a candidate for Congress in the New Albany district, and run in opposition to him? I ask the gentleman why this incessant warfare is waged upon negroes; why they are treated as outlaws, unless it is that some portion of the population is jealous that negroes may wage successful competition with them; may usurp their places, and occupy positions which they like to enjoy themselves? Now, as I do not believe there is the least danger of any black or mulatto superseding me in my position here, or of obtaining any office in the district I represent; as I have no apprehension whatever of anything of that kind, I entertain no jealousy of them, and no hatred towards them. All this talk is an appeal to that low, vulgar, popular prejudice which wages war against the negroes, because the lowest man in society is himself always anxious to find some one lower than himself, upon whom he can look down and domineer over and treat as an inferior. That is the prejudice appealed to, and it constitutes the stock in trade of the Democrats of the Northwest.

But let that pass. Mr. Chairman, I rose mainly for the purpose of replying to an argument delivered early in the session by the gentleman from Alabama, [Mr. CURRY,] who, I am sorry to see, is not present. He presented the question before the people in a statesmanlike manner; and the argument, therefore, demands a careful and courteous reply. The gentleman from Alabama sets out with the allegation that the great question which underlies the party politics of the present day is the question of the right of man to hold property in man, he affirming that proposition. I understood him to state it as a general proposition, in philosophy and in morals, not connected with existing institutions, but as a thing which exists in the nature of things, apart from the existence of slavery in any State, or of any provision of the Federal Constitution. I understand him to hold that it is legitimate, that it is sound philosophy, for one man to hold property in another; not a question of color or

condition, not a question whether a white man may hold property in a negro; but a question whether, in the nature of things, and consistently with the rights of man, one man can make a chattel of another. He held the affirmative of that proposition, while I hold the negative; and that is the proposition I propose to discuss.

Now, let it be remembered that this is entirely outside of, and independent of, any question arising out of the existing institution of slavery in the States. That is a question I do not propose to interfere with, and with the origin of which I have no concern. I do not propose to disturb it, and therefore it is not my purpose to inquire whether its origin is right or not. I am to consider what is the proper relation between man and man, as an original question in the original institution and construction of society—whether Robinson Croscoe might lawfully make a chattel of his man Friday. Now, the first difficulty you encounter in the advocacy of such a principle as that, is as to who shall be the master and who shall be the slave. If Robinson may lawfully enslave his man Friday, may not Friday lawfully enslave Robinson? I can see no difference. And so it must of necessity resolve itself into a question of physical power. If one man has the right to enslave another, it is because he is wiser or stronger, and by the aid of his intellectual or physical power, in some form or another, to subjugate another man to his will. That is the only philosophy there is in it. The strong man may enslave the weak. If that be so, if Napoleon or Nicholas may, through the instrumentality of superior wisdom, or by combination of numbers, constitute themselves despots over millions, the existence of the power establishes the right. It is precisely the same question, whether applicable to one man ruling the million, or whether it is applicable to one man ruling his fellow. If might gives the right, if strength is a warrant which will authorize one man to subjugate another man to his will, then it is just as applicable to despots subjugating millions, as it is to the individual.

You are therefore cut loose from all moral obligations or moral restraint, and you resolve the whole government of mankind into the sheer question of brute force. It is said the white man may enslave the negro because he is his superior, physically and intellectually. But it will be remembered, if mere superiority gives the title, then it is not simply that a white man may enslave the negro because he is inferior, but that he may enslave another white man who is his inferior. It is the inferiority of the slave and the superiority of the master upon which the right rests. It is not, therefore, a question of race or complexion. Now, that is not the Republican doctrine; it is not the Republican philosophy.

I do not hold that superior strength or superior intellectual power gives to one man any right to enslave, or subjugate, or control another. I hold, and I believe the Republican party of the country holds, to the doctrine of the natural equality of man—that is, an equality of rights. I do not mean to be misunderstood, when I speak

of the equality of men, that they are equal in strength, intelligence, social position, or political rights. I mean that every man has certain natural, inherent, and inalienable rights. All have them equally alike, and to the protection of those rights they are all entitled. The right to live, the right to the enjoyment of a man's own earnings, the right of locomotion, to go from place to place, are rights which all men have, without regard to their intellect, whether it be inferior or superior.

Mr. Chairman, this thing is obscured, and a mist is thrown over it, by bringing the two races in juxtaposition, and claiming that the black race may legally be subjected to the white race. But, sir, it is not a question of race; it is a question of the essential manhood of the party sought to be subjugated. What is the negro? I make no question about his equality. What is he? Where does he belong in the scale of creation? Is he a rational, accountable being, the proper subject of civil and moral government, or is he a beast? That is all the question. How do your laws treat him in Virginia? If a slave knock out his master's brains, you arraign him in your courts, you indict him and try him and hang him for murder. If a horse kicks out his owner's brains, you do not indict the horse for murder, do you? Why not? Why do you make the distinction? Because the one is a rational and accountable being, the proper subject of civil and moral government, and the other is not. There is, then, a difference between a man and a horse—a difference as the subject of property and as the subject of government. Now, that being so, the accountability and rationality of the negro being recognised, it carries with it certain other consequences. According to my understanding of moral philosophy, there is no other mode recognised among men whereby the human race may be perpetuated, except through the instrumentality of the family relations—husband and wife, parent and child. Whatever institution, therefore, utterly destroys and prostrates these relations, brutalizes the man, and is at war with the essential attributes of humanity. The chattelizing of men, of necessity, cuts up all these domestic relations. There can be no such thing as a marriage between slaves, because that is a permanent, life-long union between the sexes. The relation of parent and child is also one which is guaranteed by the laws of nature; and that system of social organization which utterly disregards it and tramples it under foot, is a system which cannot be reconciled with the rights of man.

Now, sir, these remarks bring me to the conclusion that one man may not legally hold property in another, as an original abstract question. I say he may not, because you cannot distinguish who shall be the master and who the slave, except by giving the mastery to the strongest. I say he may not, because it is utterly inconsistent with the essential attributes of humanity, and with the fundamental laws that have been established by the Almighty for the government of the world in all nations and in all ages. There is no country, there never was any country known in any age,

where the family relation was not recognised. You cannot abolish it, you cannot destroy it, without brutalizing that community. I hold, therefore, that that system which is said to be right, which the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. CURRY] maintains is the highest type of civilization, is essentially at war with the very first principles on which social organization can be sustained.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from Alabama is right in another thing. He says that that is the proposition which underlies all this controversy; and it is, for this plain reason: if this institution of slavery be the preferable form of civilization, if one man may legally chattelize another, and make him his property, then it is proper that you should propagate that relation and that institution in all the unsettled Territories. That is the form of civilization which you should adopt and establish in all your unsettled domain. If it be not, then I hold you ought not to propagate it, and ought not to establish it. It is therefore for that reason and in that connection that it becomes the duty of Congress to inquire into the inherent character of the institution itself—whether it be right, or whether it be wrong; whether it be the proper form of civilization or not.

But, Mr. Chairman, I am going into this discussion without any arrangement of thought, and perhaps I may be a little desultory. I wish to call the attention of the Committee to another proposition. We are now, probably for the first time in our history, entering a new aspect of national politics. The safety of our institutions has heretofore rested in the unquestionable loyalty of the whole people, from one end of the Confederacy to the other; in their unquestioned submission to the great verdict of the people, pronounced at the ballot-box in a constitutional manner. You have now, sir, for the first time in the history of the country, a political party organized on the express doctrine, and with the avowed purpose, of overthrowing the Government, in the event of their being unable to control it through the ballot-box. It is asserted here by gentlemen on the other side—by one portion of them—that if a Republican President shall be elected, they will resist his inauguration forcibly. That is one proposition made on the other side of the House by the Democratic party.

I take it for granted there can be no controversy about what that resistance amounts to. It can only be done by levying war against the United States. The thing threatened is treason against the United States. There can be no controversy about that.

Another portion say that, if a Republican President is elected, they will secede from the Confederacy, and organize a separate and independent confederacy of their own. Whether that constitutes treason or not, is a matter of opinion, and may be a matter of controversy; but it is, nevertheless, equally fatal to the perpetuity of the existing Government and the existing institutions of the country.

Mr. Chairman, let us look this proposition straight in the face. Here is a political party for

eight years in possession of the Government, wielding its patronage, amounting to some eighty million dollars a year. The expiration of their lease of power approaches; and the question is made, as to whether they shall be continued longer in power. They say to the people, "Gentlemen, we are willing to take charge of this Government for four years longer, pretty much on the same terms. We would like to do it, for it is rather agreeable than otherwise. If you do not choose to trust us with this power, then we will resist any other man who may be placed in the Presidential chair. We will rule this country, or we will ruin it. We will overturn this Government if we are not allowed to administer it ourselves." That is the naked, undisguised proposition of the Democratic party in the year of grace 1860. I say it here in the hearing of gentlemen who have advocated these doctrines; and I do not know that any gentleman upon that side of the House has disclaimed that as being the settled purpose of the party.

Mr. NIBLACK. As the gentleman from Ohio seems to take it for granted as a fair thing, when a statement is made, and nobody gets up to contradict it, that all the members of the House are to be held bound by it, I would ask him why he and others did not get up and disclaim the doctrines enunciated by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LOVEJOY] and others, with which I am sure he does not coincide? Is he to be considered as endorsing those doctrines, because he did not get up and disclaim them?

Mr. STANTON. Gentlemen of the other side of the House, of all shades of opinions and from all sections of the Confederacy, have exercised the liberty of speech here pretty extensively. There has been no gag upon them; and, sir, I do not now remember a single gentleman of them all, who, in discussing this subject of the Presidential election, has disclaimed it to be the purpose of his party to revolutionize and overthrow this Government, in the event of a defeat at the ballot-box.

Mr. NIBLACK. This thing, then, Mr. Chairman, amounts to this: If we do not, when these charges are made against us, get up and make a speech defining our positions, we are to be held as endorsing those who do speak. It is a conclusion I repudiate. As the gentleman from Ohio has made certain charges against this side of the House, and as I am one of the members included, I beg to say to him that I disclaim being bound by anything that has been said by any member of this or the other side. When the proper time arrives to give the House my opinions on these subjects, I will do so; but at this time I deny the authority of any man upon this side of the House by his speech to bind me to any position which my judgment disapproves of. I believe that to be the position of the majority of the members on this side of the House.

Mr. STANTON. I think that the majority have made speeches the other way.

Mr. NIBLACK. The majority of this side of the House have not yet spoken, and they will not probably for some time to come.

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Chairman, I know no other

mode of ascertaining the opinions and purposes of a party, except by taking the publicly-expressed opinions of the great mass of its leading men, its representative men, its men who are intrusted with power, and who enjoy the confidence of the people they represent; and when they come here, without contradiction, by an unbroken current of speeches and declarations upon that side of the House, and announce that it is their purpose to overturn this Government or to rule it, I think surely there can be no further doubt on that head.

Mr. NIBLACK. I wish to say a word here for the benefit of the gentleman from Ohio, and for the benefit of other gentlemen who may deem that he is correct in the position he assumes. Any gentleman, of any party, who will take the position in my district, or in any other district of the Northwest—it is certainly so in Indiana—that he will revolutionize this Government in the event of any result of any election, would not get five hundred votes, whatever might be his personal popularity. There is no difference of opinion in the Northwest on the question at all, if there be in reality in any section of the Union. While that is our position, I do not deem that it is necessary always to get up and disclaim the charge when the contrary is alleged. The position I have stated is, so far as I know, that of all those around me who come from the same section of the country that I do.

Mr. STANTON. I know that it is not necessary for a gentleman to get up and disclaim every expression of sentiment which may be made by others, and in which he cannot agree; but it would seem, Mr. Chairman, that this is a matter of such great magnitude as to call for an expression of opinion all around. If the representative men of the party—not one, not two, but more than twenty—have declared, in our hearing, that it is their purpose, and the purpose of the party to which they belong, to revolutionize this Government, it is about time that some of those who assume the contrary position began to speak.

Mr. NIBLACK. It was manifest that the gentlemen who spoke in the manner referred to by the gentleman only spoke for the section which they represented. If they had attempted to have spoken for my section, then would have been the time for us to have made the disclaimer; but they have not done so; they spoke for themselves, and themselves alone.

Mr. STANTON. I am sorry, but it is the fact, that there are not many members of the Democratic party outside of that section. [Laughter.]

Mr. Chairman, there is another thing. It is not merely confined to declarations in this House. Who has forgotten that, during the present session, on the nomination of a minister to France, when a proposition was made in the Senate to inquire whether he entertained those opinions, it was answered by gentlemen of the other side, that no inquiry need be made on the subject, because there was no doubt he entertained those opinions, and that they concurred with him?

The proposition, I submit to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the American people, is, that a party

that in advance avows a treasonable purpose, and has declared its disloyalty to the Constitution and the Union, is not entitled to the public confidence, and ought not to be intrusted with the Government. When I talk about a treasonable purpose, I do not mean there is necessarily anything disreputable in it. I remember that Washington was a traitor to the British Government. It may be that the oppression may be unendurable, and that they may have arrived at a point which changes the quality of treason; but, nevertheless, that is the constitutional definition of the offence.

Mr. ENGLISH. Will the gentleman allow me to say a word?

Mr. STANTON. Certainly.

Mr. ENGLISH. I claim only to be an humble member of the Democratic party; but I think that it will be remembered that I announced distinctly, upon this floor, in a speech which I had the honor to make at an early period of the session, that I did not believe a corporal's guard of the Democratic party of the North would be willing to go out of the Union, or make any effort in that direction, because of the mere election of an objectionable man to the Presidency.

Mr. STANTON. They recognise political fellowship with a party, all of whom upon this floor, from the other section of the Union, so far as I know, do avow this doctrine. They are maintaining and strengthening that political sentiment and that political party which avows this treasonable purpose. There is no controversy about that. They are endeavoring to build up a sympathizing party in the free States, and to give them their aid in obtaining the control of the Government.

I hold, sir, as an intelligent American citizen, looking to the perpetuity of our institutions and to their welfare, that it is my first duty to see to it that no enemy of our Government, no enemy to the institutions of our country, shall be intrusted with the power and patronage of that Government. I will not inquire what his opinions may be on the subject of slavery; whether he is for its extension into the Territories or otherwise. If he has avowed that he cares more for his party than he does for his country, if he has avowed that his party purpose and his revolutionary purpose are stronger than his patriotism, is not that a sufficient reason why I should exclude him from any place of honor or trust?

Mr. MILLSON. I cannot say that I regard the course of the gentleman from Ohio as fair. There are at this time not half a dozen members of the Democratic party present; and yet the gentleman is speaking in the hope that he shall be able to take advantage of the silence of members as evidence of assent.

Now, sir, I say, for one, that I have not, in any remarks I have ever submitted to the House, addressed myself at any time to the question the gentleman is now considering, and I do not mean to be drawn into any untimely or unnecessary expression of my own position; but I take leave to suggest to the gentleman, that he is altogether in error in supposing that a solitary member of the Democratic party, North or South, has ever

declared that it was the purpose of that party to destroy the Union in the event of the election of an Opposition candidate for the Presidency.

Mr. STANTON. My sense of hearing has deceived me terribly if that be not so. If the gentleman will have the goodness to go over the speech made by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. McPHERSON,] and look at the extracts therein contained from the speeches made upon the other side of the House, he will find that there were more than twenty speeches made upon this floor, in which it was distinctly avowed that the election of a Republican President—Governor SEWARD was frequently named—or any other man representing his views upon what they denominated a sectional platform, would, of itself, be a sufficient cause for a dissolution of the Union. Does the gentleman from Virginia question that?

Mr. MILLSON. No, sir, I do not question it. That is what I affirm; but the gentleman stated that it had been said repeatedly upon this floor that it was the purpose of the Democratic party—that members had declared that it was the purpose of the Democratic party—to dissolve the Union; whereas, all that was said at any time, by any gentleman, was, that in the opinion of that gentleman, or in the opinion of that gentleman's constituents, the election of such an individual would furnish a just occasion for a dissolution of the Union.

Mr. STANTON. It may be true I have not put it technically in the form I should have placed it. I did not mean to be understood as saying that they had avowed it as the purpose of the Democratic party, as a party organization; but what I did mean to be understood as saying was, that the leading influential representative men of the party here, who are the authorized exponents of the opinions, principles, and purposes, of the party, had each severally for themselves expressed that purpose. And I take the uniform expression of opinion of men occupying that representative position, uncontradicted, as the expression of the opinions and purposes of the party. That is all. I do not think they will put it in the platform at Charleston, nor, perhaps, will they at Baltimore.

But this is the purpose avowed by men who lead and control that party, and it will not be disclaimed now. The gentleman from Virginia, while disclaiming it as having been avowed as a party purpose, does not disclaim that it is his opinion that it ought not to be done. The gentleman does not disclaim that in his own judgment and in his opinion it would be a sufficient cause for the dissolution of the Union.

Mr. MILLSON. It is evident that the gentleman desires an expression of my personal opinion. I do not concede the right of the gentleman to require it. I have the right to express or withhold my opinions until my own selected time, and I did not mean that the gentleman should infer that I occupied one position or the other upon that subject; least of all did I design that the gentleman should draw the inference he seems desirous to draw.

Sir, the gentleman calls upon me for an expression of my own opinion, and I will give it to him. What is disunion? What does disunion mean? It means battle and murder; it means widows and orphans; it means tears and lamenta-

tiens and anguish; and if any contingency should ever arise which, in my opinion, invoked the decision of so awful, so momentous a question, sir, I should seek some place of retirement, and there pray that Almighty wisdom would enable me to dispose of that issue, too great for the feebleness of man.

Mr. STANTON. There is no gentleman upon that side of the House who occupies, and who deservedly occupies, a more prominent, distinguished, and leading position, than the gentleman from Virginia. His integrity and his sincerity are unquestioned upon either side of the House; and yet the gentleman from Virginia does not feel prepared to say now that he is not in favor of a secession, or dissolution, in the event of the election of a Republican President. But let that pass.

Mr. Chairman, my own settled conviction is, that the only mode by which this Union can be perpetuated, and our institutions maintained, is by the election of a Republican President. I have no belief that if a Republican President be constitutionally elected, there will be any difficulty about his administering the Government.

Mr. HUGHES. I desire to ask the gentleman, when the leading member of the Republican party announces the proposition that slavery must be abolished, and that you and I must do it, must he not mean the abolition of slavery in the States? And I wish to know from him whether the election of a President announcing such a sentiment as that, elected by a sectional vote, elected by a large popular majority at the North, would not be an aggressive act, through the ballot-box, upon the South, and whether he supposes the South would submit to such an act of aggression?

Mr. STANTON. I regret that my friend from Maryland had not read the speech from which he quotes, instead of contenting himself with extracts. If he had read the speech, he would have found that the expression in reference to abolishing slavery, and that "you and I must do it," was explained by the further declaration, that it must not be done by any physical force—must not be done by any interference with the affairs of the slaveholding States—but by the moral force and power of truth, disseminated among the slaveholding as well as the free States, which would ultimately bring about the abolition of slavery.

Mr. HUGHES. But the phrase was, "You and I must do it."

Mr. STANTON. Yes; accompanied with that explanation as to the mode of doing it.

Mr. HUGHES. By getting hold of the power of the Government.

Mr. STANTON. Not at all; but the mode of doing it was by enlightening the minds of men living south of Mason and Dixon's line.

Mr. HUGHES. Perhaps by changing the character of the Supreme Court.

Mr. STANTON. I am decidedly of the opinion that the character of that court might be very essentially improved by a change.

Mr. HUGHES. Do you advocate a reorganization of that court?

Mr. STANTON. I am in favor of a reorganization of that court.

I said, Mr. Chairman, that I believed that was the only way to perpetuate this Union. I believe it will be found, before the Republican party has been in power six months, that its purposes are purely national; that it has no aggressive purpose; that it will protect all sections of the Confederacy in the enjoyment of their equal, constitutional rights; and the country will then become satisfied that all this cry of "mad dog," raised against the Republican party, is a delusion.

Now, sir, for eight long weeks, gentlemen here made speeches, and incorporated into them the ravings of Wendell Phillips and Lloyd Garrison, and every extravagant fanatic in the whole free States of the Confederacy, and disseminated them broadcast, by tens of thousands, through the slaveholding States, as the opinions and principles of the Republican party.

Mr. BARR. I ask the gentleman if your party has not done the same thing with the speeches made on our side?

Mr. STANTON. We have not circulated anything except the speeches made by gentlemen on this floor. I have circulated the speech of the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, [Mr. CRAWFORD,] and various speeches of that sort. Gentlemen have a right to circulate speeches made on this floor; but speeches made by Phillips, lectures delivered by Garrison, and extracts from the *Liberator*, have been incorporated by gentlemen on the other side in their speeches, and have been disseminated through the South as the opinions of the Republican party; and the great mass of the people of the South entertain the opinion that these are correct expositions of the purposes of the Republican party. You may madden

them and infuriate them, by the dissemination of that idea, but when a Republican President has been six months in power, then it will be demonstrated that that was a delusion, and that the Republican party is seeking for nothing that has not been recognised in the first sixty years of the administration of the Government as purely and strictly national. I undertake to say to you, sir, that the Republican party to-day holds no principle, advocates no policy, that has not been recognised by every political party, in its turn, from the organization of the Government to the present day. Not one. You cannot name to me a principle recognised by the Republican party, incorporated into its platform, avowed by any authorized exponent of its opinions, that I cannot show you in the principles and platforms of every political party, and in the speeches of every public man who has been on the stage of action during the last sixty years, since the organization of the Government, until the last ten or fifteen years.

Gentlemen do not really controvert that fact. They say: "It is very true, there was a strange set of men on the stage of action at the time of the Revolution. They did not comprehend the slavery question very well. They did entertain some anti-slavery notions, which we do not approve. They did not comprehend it. They did not investigate it. We, on the contrary, have gone over this whole question. We have examined it thoroughly, and have made up our minds that they were in error."

Suppose, for the purpose of argument, that that be so. With the opinions which the founders of the Government entertained, they framed a Constitution; they put a practical construction on it, as Presidents, Senators, Representatives in Congress, and Judges of the courts. What I claim is, that, whether their opinions are sound or unsound, they are the opinions incorporated in the Constitution. If they were in error in that particular, if these gentlemen have discovered new light, if they find that a different set of political principles are the true political philosophy of the times, that does not change the Constitution. The men who made the Constitution differed with you. You propose a thorough and complete revolution of the whole Government. You propose to reverse the principles of the founders of the Constitution, on the theory that you have investigated the subject more carefully. That may be a good reason for amending the Constitution. Call a Convention, gentlemen; try it in your several States; modify the Constitution; but, in God's name, do not attempt to amend by construction. Do not undertake, because you have got wiser than your fathers, to undo their work, and put a construction on it which they never contemplated.

All I ask is, that you shall take that Constitution, with the construction put upon it by the men who framed it, and carry out the principles which they incorporated into it, and which they adopted in the practical administration of the Government. That is precisely what a Republican Administration will do. I do not care who may be elected the Republican President; six months of his administration will satisfy anybody that you are all perfectly safe in his hands. There will be a Republican organization in every slaveholding State in less than six months; and I do not believe but that the custom-houses at Charleston and New Orleans will be able to find officers without going very far from the place of the receipt of customs.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if this Democratic party is to succeed, and if they are to establish, by another Presidential election, by another popular verdict, that slavery is a national institution, and is carried into all the Territories of the Confederacy by force of the Federal Constitution, why, then, a collision is to continue between the two sections of the Confederacy; for I tell you, that whatever the Supreme Court may decide, whatever a Democratic Convention may proclaim, and whatever the people may ratify at the ballot-box, the sentiment that slavery is local, and freedom national, will be insisted upon as determined as it now is, and the people will be constantly appealed to to maintain that doctrine at the ballot-box.

Mr. SINGLETON. I desire to ask the gentleman a question; and I know, from his characteristic candor, that he will answer me fairly. You say it is not the purpose of the Republican party to interfere with slavery where it now exists. What, then, is your object in preventing the South from going into the Territories, if it be not to destroy the institution by restricting it to its present limits? I beg to know, in all seriousness, whether the great leading object and purpose of the Republican party in circumscribing us, and preventing us going into the Territories, is not the consciousness that, if slavery be kept within its present area, it must perish, in half a century, from plethora? Is not that your purpose?

Mr. STANTON. I will answer that very fully, and I trust satisfactorily, if my time will permit me.

Mr. SINGLETON. I want to know, from the gentleman from Ohio, whether he does not think it will have that effect, and if that is not the belief of his party?

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Chairman, the Republican party is opposed to the extension of slavery into free Territories mainly—I think I might say solely—because free and slave labor cannot go there together. The admission of slave labor is the exclusion of free labor. It is because we will not permit free labor and the dignity of free men to be degraded, from being brought into contact and competition with slave labor, that we do not want slavery to go into the Territories. That is the essential reason.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have no desire, nor is it my purpose, to embarrass the slaveholding States by confining slavery within its present limits, if there is any mode of escaping from it. If, as the gentleman from Mississippi seems to suppose, the confining of slavery to its present limits necessarily brings about its extinction, I pray you, sir, what sort of confession is that of the character of the institution?

Mr. SINGLETON. There is a very simple reason to be stated in proof of my remark. The slave population at the South is increasing very rapidly, much more so, indeed, than the white population; and it does not require the gift of prophecy to foresee the result, unless we are allowed to expand in some direction. Expansion we must have, or slavery dies, and with it the safety and prosperity of the South.

And the gentleman talks about free and slave labor not being compatible in the same community, and the former being degraded by the latter. The impression is attempted to be made, by the gentleman's speech, that there is no free labor in the South. Let me say, that there are free white laborers in the State of Mississippi, and throughout the South, who work side by side with the slave laborers upon the cotton plantations, and who do not feel themselves thereby at all degraded.

Mr. STANTON. I understand that there are free laborers in the South; but I also understand that a man who is dependent in the South upon his daily toil for his daily bread—not the owner of a cotton plantation, but a man who is dependent upon his toil, compelled to support his family by his labor—must, by contact and association with slave labor, be a degraded man in a slaveholding community.

Mr. SINGLETON. The gentleman is utterly mistaken. There are hundreds and thousands of free white laborers in the South, who cultivate the soil with their slaves, who would *sorely* to associate with those who make the charge of degradation against them.

Mr. STANTON. It is not worth while for us to get in a passion about it. We may as well keep cool. I know that I have seen enough of the institution of slavery, with the little intercourse I have had with it, to know that amongst the slaves themselves they regard a poor laboring white man as their equal or inferior. A slave will tell you, when he looks at a poor white laboring man, that he is white trash—a sand-hiller.

Mr. SINGLETON. You get your cue from the negroes, then?

Mr. STANTON. The gentleman from Mississippi had better keep his temper, for he will not make anything by scolding; he cannot get me in a passion.

Mr. SINGLETON. Then treat the people of my section respectfully.

Mr. STANTON. I have endeavored to treat gentlemen respectfully. If I have violated the rules of Parliamentary order or gentlemanly decorum, I would beg the gentleman to state it.

Mr. SINGLETON. You have aspersed the laboring men of my section. You have said that the white laborer of the South was degraded. I regard the white laborers of my State as gentlemen. I have associated with them all my life. I do not know one man who is in the habit of working side by side on a cotton plantation with his slaves, who feels that in this there is any degradation. They are gentlemen, sir, and are not in any way demoralized by this association.

Mr. STANTON. I should be glad to know how the position I take can be conveniently refuted. Take a mechanic from a free State, and put him into a slaveholding State; let him be brought into competition with slave labor; let the value of his labor be dependent upon that competition; and what will be the effect upon him? I submit the proposition. I go, if you please, to Kansas or Nebraska, and settle down at Leavenworth or Omaha City. There goes also a carpenter from a free State, and settles in the same place, and pursues his trade. I want a house built, and I ask him for how much he will do the job. He ciphers the matter out, and he will tell me, perhaps, that the cost will be \$2,500. "Why, bless you, my good fellow," I may reply, "I can go to Westport and buy a carpenter for \$1,500, and I cannot afford to pay any such price as \$2,500." Your white laborer is exposed to that sort of competition. So it is, whatever

employment he may follow. Working together in the same field, a white laborer and a slave laborer, there comes along a sheriff, and he levies upon the slave, takes him off, and sells him at auction, as you would a horse. It is this contact and association that it seems to me cannot fail to have a degrading influence upon the social position of the white man who is engaged in the same kind of toil that the slave is.

Mr. SINGLETON. Why, sir, one-half of our cotton planters go upon their plantations and labor side by side with their slaves. They have no further association with them than is necessary to keep them at their work, and in their proper place. Does the gentleman suppose that I, who, may be a cotton planter, would degrade myself by handling my plow in the field where my slaves are at work? Does he charge that?

Mr. STANTON. The gentleman from Mississippi must have strangely misunderstood me. I said that the man who is dependent upon his daily toil for his daily bread, and not the man who owns a cotton plantation.

Mr. SINGLETON. How can you suppose it will affect the man who does not own a plantation, any more than it does the man who does own one?

Mr. STANTON. The man who owns the plantation and the slaves on it, does not work upon the plantation as the equal, but as the master, of the slaves. He is no more upon an equality with them, than he is with his horse.

Mr. SINGLETON. No more are the white laboring men of the South. They do not associate with the slaves, or treat them as equals. They have nothing whatever to do with them, except that they may work in the same field together.

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Chairman, there are some strange practical results growing out of this institution. If it be not as I state, will the gentleman tell us how it is, and why it is, that there can be no manufacturers, artisans, and independent yeomanry, in a slaveholding State? Why is that? Do not gentlemen know? Does the gentleman from South Carolina sleep upon a bed made in his own state?

Mr. ASHMORE. Yes, sir.

Mr. STANTON. Does he wear a fabric of any description manufactured in his own state?

Mr. ASHMORE. At home I often do, but not here.

Mr. STANTON. Why is it? Because there is no encouragement to enterprise, none to invention. You must stimulate the mechanical arts, by establishing a system of labor which confers its benefits upon the inventor, the manufacturer himself. What does the slave care for manufacturing fine fabrics? He does not gain anything by it. What does he care about inventing labor-saving machinery? It saves him nothing. Hence you find that all the patents come from Connecticut and the Yankee States, and the other free States. You find labor-saving machinery and mechanical operations are confined principally and substantially to the free States. They are not in the South, because free labor there has no encouragement; and, more than that, free labor must be intelligent.

You cannot have a free laboring population in a community where you have no schools. I do not know of a common school between the Potomac and the Rio Grande. There are a few colleges. Of necessity, it must be so as a general rule. In a free State, where every man is the master of his own earnings, the head of his own family, he requires but a small space to occupy and cultivate for their support. But go into a slaveholding State, and the planter, who has twenty or thirty slaves, and who has half a dozen families, must have a section or two of land to support them. The consequence is, that the white population must be sparse. You cannot have them compact; you cannot have school-houses and churches in every neighborhood, because the population cannot sustain them.

But that is not all. The tendency of this dissemination of education among the laboring population is to extend it to the slaves; but you cannot educate the slaves, because that is the seed of insurrection.

Mr. SINGLETON. I can inform the gentleman why it is that the South has not been more extensively engaged in manufactures and the mechanic arts. It is because it is more to our interest to engage in the culture of cotton, to supply the markets of the world with that material. But I will tell the gentleman that, if the course which has been pursued by the North is persevered in a little while longer, and we are compelled to a separate organization, we will soon improve in our knowledge of arts and manufactures; and we shall very soon develop a sufficient skill in those departments among us, to manufacture everything in the South which is needed by them. We think now it is for our interest to buy manufactured articles from the North and to devote our energies to the cultivation of cotton, corn, rice, &c.

Mr. STANTON. If there were anything that would induce

me to desire to perpetuate the present state of things, it would be that the South should introduce manufactures among themselves, and thereby bring about an interchange of commodities.

Before I sit down, I have one word in reply to a remark of the gentleman from Mississippi a little while ago. It is claimed that the slaveholding population cannot be confined to their present geographical limits. If so, it results from one of two causes: either that the continuance of that policy upon the same soil must destroy its productive qualities, or because the increase of the slave population is such as to put the safety of the community in peril. Hence gentlemen say that some years hence, slavery must have more room. Now, I wish to call the attention of gentlemen of the South to this single proposition: if you must have expansion now, will you tell me where is to be the ultimate limit of your expansion? You want five more States this year, or fifty years hence; then a hundred years hence you will want twenty more. The time must come when the thing will be broken down and destroyed by its own weight, and it is only a question of time. There is a limit to all expansion. There is a limit to the continent—to its productive capacity and area; and when that limit is reached, then that calamity which the gentleman dreads must come, and no expansion can save it. It is only a question of time; and it is a question, whether we should take hold of the thing to-day, and remedy the evil where it exists at present, or whether we will permit it to go on and accumulate, until it will be more difficult to eradicate.

Mr. SMITH, of Virginia. The gentleman from Ohio will readily see that the argument he addresses to the slave population will apply equally to the white. When population becomes so dense, whether free or slave, the checks upon population will begin their work. Everybody understands that. The very argument of the gentleman, which goes to show that, as population increases among the slaves, the difficulty of keeping them in that position increases, also shows that that difficulty arises, not from apprehension of revolution, but from non-employment. But the same argument applies, and perhaps in a higher degree, to the white population. But that is a day which we claim there is no obligation upon us to anticipate. We Representatives of the slave States have the right to share in the common Territories of the Union. We cannot admit a policy to be wise and just and humane, which gives all to one section of the Union, against the common right of the other.

Mr. STANTON. It is rather late in the day for the gentleman from Virginia to complain that the North is seeking to monopolize the Territories. There was a line of partition within which slavery might go, and beyond which it might not go; but, by the vote of the gentleman, it was taken down and disregarded.

Mr. SMITH, of Virginia. But the gentleman will remember, and I beg he will, that in that respect, the rule was not even. You professed to prohibit slavery north of 36° 30', and then gave us permission to have slavery south of that line, should certain circumstances require it. It was imperative upon the one side, but not upon the other.

Mr. STANTON. Nobody proposed to force slavery into a Territory against the will of the slaveholders. But protection was afforded to it; and the South was guaranteed the right to go into the territory south of 36° 30' with their slaves. But you were not content with that; you wanted all; you inaugurated a struggle, and put on foot a controversy for the possession of all the Territories; and if you get the worse of it, it is no work of ours.

The gentleman from Virginia says the same cause will operate to demand the extension of territory for the free population. There is no trouble, so far as free-labor civilization is concerned, about its being able to maintain itself upon any reasonable limit. Free-labor civilization is not that helpless being that is compelled to change its location on account of the exhaustion of the soil, or because there is not enough land for the whole population to cultivate. Free-labor civilization establishes a diversity of pursuits; it builds up manufacturing towns and villages; it inaugurates and establishes new and important improvements in agriculture; it preserves the fertility of the soil; and it has the capacity to sustain a large population upon a small surface.

Mr. SMITH, of Virginia. The gentleman has not stated my proposition correctly. I stated that, in the progress of population, as it went on increasing, the checks to increase of population would begin to apply, and would apply to the white population as well as to the slave.

Mr. STANTON. I understand the gentleman. It may be true that, when the whole of this continent is as densely populated as Belgium, we will need expansion. I have no doubt of it. But I apprehend that that is a day which it is not the business of this generation to look forward to, or to seek to provide against. Providence, in His wisdom, has heretofore in the history of the world provided some new and improved means of obtaining subsistence for the human family, or there have been discovered, from time to time, new continents for the increased population, so that His creatures have been provided for; and I entertain no apprehension but that it will be so in the future. If man does his own duty, if he develops the resources of the country—its minerals, its water power, its timber—if everything that is profitable and available be turned to account, and made a source of subsistence for the human family, there is little danger of the people of this continent, a thousand years hence, starving for want of bread. In a slaveholding community, it is a very different thing. You cultivate the soil till its productive quality is destroyed. You multiply your slave population, till it becomes a dangerous element in society. You increase slave labor till its value is diminished; and, in every mode, you are constantly depreciating the productive capacity of the country where slavery exists. You are therefore under the necessity of still cursing new fields with the institution which, in my judgment, has cursed those where it already exists.

Mr. HUGHES. I wish to reply to one observation of the gentleman from Ohio, in regard to the exhaustion of the soil. I venture to assert, in the presence of the Representatives of the people of the United States, that there has been more improvement made in agriculture within the last ten years in the slave States, than in any other portion of the United States; and there are now in the South more improved modes of agriculture, and improvements of soil, than in any section of the United States. The gentleman will scarcely deny that there has been more improvement in agriculture in Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia, than in any other section of the Union.

Mr. NIBLACK. Before the gentleman from Ohio takes his seat, I desire to propound to him one question, if I can get his attention. In the course of the gentleman's remarks, he made use of an expression which was rather a remarkable one for him, or any other gentleman on that side of the House; that is, that free labor is not a lingering, helpless thing, but is able to take care of itself. That I concede; but if that be the case, what necessity is there for seizing upon all the powers of the Government for the purpose of protecting that kind of labor, to the exclusion of other labor? Why not leave the Territories free and open to competition between free and slave labor, and let that which is most advantageous, most powerful, and strongest, prevail?

Mr. STANTON. One word, Mr. Chairman, in reply to the gentleman from Indiana. If I understand the doctrine of the Democratic party, it protects slavery in the Territory until a State Government is organized. That is not all. When this incipient State Government is organized as a free State, and there are a thousand slaves there, you cannot emancipate them; you are compelled to buy them out, and they cost \$1,000,000. Now, sir, a free State, with free labor, does not want to be borne down and crippled, and compelled, on the organization of its State Government, to buy out the laboring population that belongs to the slaveholders there; and they ought not to be.

Further than that: free labor is able to take care of itself; but if the Territory is under the government of slavery rule, then the laboring population must, of necessity, be excluded from all the advantages that result from free-labor civilization, such as the institution of schools, the establishment of a free press, free speech, and all the privileges that are enjoyed in a free State, but which cannot be enjoyed in a slaveholding State, because they are inconsistent with the institution of slavery. That is why. I may not express my opinion on the subject of slavery in a slaveholding State, because the safety of the institution would be thereby endangered. I may not publish my opinion on the subject of slavery in a newspaper, and disseminate it in a slaveholding State. Why not? Because it would have a tendency to stir up insurrection, and is inconsistent with the nature of the institution. Hence, I say, free labor does not wish to be tied down and clogged and crippled by these things, which of necessity exist in every slaveholding State.