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SPEECHES OF  
EX-GOV. HORATIO SEYMOUR & HON. SAMUEL J. TILDEN,

BEFORE THE

DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION

AT ALBANY, MARCH 11, 1868.

Speech of Ex-Governor Horatio Seymour  
before the New York State Democratic  
Convention, at Albany, March 11.

*Gentlemen of the Convention:*

We have seen that under the policy of our fathers, which was adhered to for seventy years, we became a great and prosperous people, with light burdens of taxation, which were fairly and equally imposed, with freedom from official meddling, that made us the envy and admiration of the world. It is now our duty to see what have been the results, in seven years, of the "policy of hate." The condition and laws of the land call upon us to sit in judgment upon rulers. Sad and painful as the duty may be, we must boldly probe to the bottom every ulcer and every wound upon the body politic. The war is ended, but peace has not returned. We have won the victory, but our Union is not restored. Our land is filled with mourning and distress, but anger, malice, and revenge are not softened. The noble strife of arms has ceased, but the ignoble struggle for power, plunder, and place goes on. Congress has done more to destroy the Union, to break down the fabric of our Government, and to efface the maxims and principles of our people, than was ever aimed at by rebellion. Its system of tyranny and corruption has not even the merit of being well defined, intelligent, nor consistent. It has been bewildered for want of intelligence; inconsistent and inconstant for want of principles; cruel from cowardice, and brutal from its instincts. These are not charges made only by political opponents—they are admitted by its supporters; many of whom implore it to stop in its mad career. The records of this body, and its own statute laws, show its inconsistent and imbecile policy. There are laws which tell you that when there was an armed, open, and at the time successful rebellion, these men held that the Southern States were not and could not be out of the Union. They formally called upon them for their quota to put down their own resistance to law. When the Southern States had laid down their arms they were told that they were not States in the Union. So the congressional theory is that they did not lose their State rights by rebellion, but by submission. But these States were told if they would abolish slavery they would have their place again. Slavery was abolished by their action, and they made it unconstitutional in any part of the Union. They were then told they were no States at all, but unlawful combinations. So it followed that by abolishing slavery they half abolished themselves.

THE NEGRO.

Then it was held that their society was reduced to a chaotic state, and Congress would at once send down a military force to organize free, popular, and representative governments at the point of the bayonet. It would seem that ingenuity could go no further, but it did. It is a very notorious fact that nearly one-half of the people of the excluded States are negroes; that they are in form, color, and character unlike the whites, and that they are, in their present condition, an ignorant and degraded race. It is the clear duty of all men to lift them up as high as we can in intelligence, virtue and religion. It is no time to stop and dispute about ethnological questions. We must do the best we can with them and for them; and I have no doubt such will be the course of the Southern States. Their safety, happiness, and prosperity demand it. When they were about to enter upon their duty, Congress again steps forward, moved by a profound wisdom, and tells the South there must be no more black or white men, no more differences of color, and that they must solemnly declare in their new State governments that it shall be unlawful and a high crime to see or know the fact that any man is of African descent. But the people of the South replied, how can we do justice to these people if we do not respect the truths of their condition. Congress answers in the spirit of the witty Frenchman, "if facts stand in the way, so much the worse for facts." You must pass laws in your Conventions abolishing these vile truths. You must not know that there are such wicked things as differences of race, color, and condition, except you may, if you please, know that a man is an Indian. Having abolished the black man and made him a white man, by act of legislation, Congress hoped for rest in their efforts to weave a rope of sand which was to bind the men together, but the constitution of Alabama was rejected—the people would not vote for it; whereupon Senator Sherman, in full view of the fact that the President was menaced with impeachment if he violated the Reconstruction act, moved that Congress itself violate this same measure by admitting Alabama under a constitution of its own rejection. The policy of Congress is more cruel toward the blacks than the whites. These poor people who are now on trial to test their capacity to take care of themselves, are thrust into positions demanding wisdom, learning and experience. The want of

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these in their Conventions and official life has exposed them to the ridicule of the world, and is a serious hindrance to their progress; it has filled their minds with false views and hopes; it has turned them away from the duties of life; it has misled them as to the need of virtue, intelligence, and industry; it is pushing them back into barbarism by making them feel they can hold power before they have learned the demands of social life and liberty. So much for this miserable muddle of reconstruction. How can a Congress satisfy the people which cannot satisfy itself; that has never been able to keep upon one course for six months; that condemns and shames itself by constant change, repeal, and amendments?

#### TARIFFS AND TAXES.

Their action upon tariffs and business interests has been equally blundering, inconsistent, and imbecile. It keeps our merchants and manufacturers in a condition of uncertainty, and all agree that a perpetual Congress is a perpetual curse. Within the past few years it has made nearly monthly changes in the tariffs. It hinders labor and enterprise by heavy burdens, and hunts down our merchants and manufacturers with an army of official spies and informers; and it gives these the power to ruin men of limited means by false charges. It puts our Government not only in a light that is hateful, but what is more dangerous, it makes it pitiable. If our young men wish to engage in business or to seek homes in the West, and they ask from those who have money to lend the aid which has heretofore been given for those purposes, they are told that the Government, which ought to be paternal, will pay a higher interest than the law will let the citizens give or than they can afford to give, and, also, beyond this, will exempt them from taxation. Congress paralyzes, in this way, the industry of the land. Whichever way you look you see that the party in power is a blight upon the honor, happiness, and industrial pursuits of our people. Our carrying trade upon the ocean is destroyed, our shipyards are idle, our merchants are distressed, our manufacturers complain that taxation outweighs the protection of tariff, and our farmers are indignant with unequal and insulting exemption from the cost of local, State, and national Governments. Upon one point only has it been firm and unyielding. In order to help a foul speculation it put a tax of 500 per cent. upon alcohol, which, the experience of the world and our own experience show, cannot be collected. It retains it with a perfect knowledge that it merely ministers to public and official corruption. The officers of the law and the violators have, under its provisions, taken more from the people than the interest of the public debt up to this time. In this strength they control the action of the Government, and this great stream of corruption is now the life-blood of a party held together by the cohesive power of public plunder.

#### CONGRESS AND MORALS.

Congress is not only keeping the Government disorganized and the business of the country unhinged and perplexed, but it is also unsettling the morals of the country. It proclaims to the world the sanctity of bonds, obligations, and contracts, and at the same time, under the influence and by the action of its party friends, many of the States which make up the Union have de-

franded the public creditors by forcing them to take depreciated paper in return for the coin or its equivalent, which was given for their bonds. Going still deeper in dishonor by its laws, the debtor who may have received coin or other consideration equally valuable, and who has in solemn covenant agreed to pay in coin, is allowed and encouraged to violate his faith and to compel his creditor to take debased paper. Is it strange that in the face of these things our credit is tainted in the markets of the world, and that our bonds sell for less than those of the Turks? If the morality of the citizens of the country is undermined, if the faith of the States making up the Union is dishonored, where is the security of the national credit? The late Republican State Convention expressed its horror of repudiation. Will its members explain the villainy which forced the creditors of this great commercial State to take paper at one time worth but fifty cents on the dollar? This was done in the face of entreaties from a Democratic Governor not to dishonor New York, and in opposition to the votes of every Democratic Senator. Will these men explain the indecency of an official in another State who insulted a foreign creditor for asking money as good as that he had loaned to the second State of the Union? Yet its Republican legislature refused to rebuke the indecent action of this indecent official.

#### FINANCES.

Questions of finance, of debt and taxation, have harassed all nations and perplexed statesmen in all periods. We have got to meet them surrounded with new difficulties and dangers. We do not yet know the full sum of the liquidated and unliquidated claims. The monthly statements show that it is a swelling flood, whose volume is not yet measured and whose depth is unplumbed. Our people are unused to a government which pries into every private transaction to extort tribute. They are bewildered with the train of spies, informers, and officials, always brought into use where taxes are taken from one class and paid to another. The irritation is increased when the creditor enjoys, beyond an ample and usurious interest, special privileges and exemptions. There is a greater peril. We were once divided into free and slave States. The antagonism in the end filled our land with bloodshed and mourning. As the public bonds are mainly held in one corner of our country, we are now divided into debtor and creditor States. What will be the end of this? At an early stage of the war, we warned the party in power against this fearful result of their policy. We warned them in vain. Nay, more, as if bent upon making ruin certain, they built up a banking system which was to have a monopoly of putting out currency, and was to get double usury—interest from Government upon its bonds, and interest from the people upon the currency issued upon those bonds. To render its monopoly complete, all other banks were taxed out of existence. But madness and folly did not stop here. These banks were not allotted to the different States, so there should be even geographical fairness; but the States which held the bonds, which had the most wealth and made the most money out of the war, were allowed to absorb nearly the whole of the \$300,000,000 to which they were limited, while the States which most needed currency in their

transactions were cut off. Let me give one instance to show upon what rule the spoils of victory and the burdens of war were distributed. The State of Massachusetts has of the banking privilege \$56,000,000; Illinois \$9,000,000. Yet Illinois is the more populous State, and to send its produce to market needs more currency than any State in the Union. But when men must be had to fill the ranks of our armies, then each State must give its quota. Now, we have ever had a plain rule to get at the just share of taxes and burdens. Taxation and representation must go together. But a new system was gotten up for the quota. They were based upon the enrollment of able-bodied men. Under this rule there were endless questions as to liability to be enrolled and constructions of law. Orders and counter orders and explanatory orders were put forth by the Provost-Marshal General until every one was bewildered. But under all this there were quiet manipulations which made the following result: In Democratic districts in this State the men were held to be vigorous and robust and fit to bear arms. In Republican districts they were loyal but weakly. In Massachusetts the men as a class were so feeble that a congressional district could only send 2,167. In Illinois, districts had to send 4,004. So much for the burdens. How was the spoil divided? We find that bank stock was given to Massachusetts at the rate of \$52 to each inhabitant, and to Illinois at the rate of \$6 to each! The record will show how earnestly in this place and elsewhere we protested against this madness and folly. Alarmed at this new source of danger to our country, as it was a period of great distress at the West, in my message of 1864, I urged the legislature to reduce the tolls on Western produce or to carry it toll free, in order to check the hostile feelings growing up in that section of the country against the Atlantic States. But I urged in vain. Our canals were in the hands of thieves and robbers, who would not let these tolls be diverted from their own pockets. The shadow of this sectional question now falls upon us. It has made confusion in the Republican ranks in Congress. The resolution to pay Government bonds in gold, which was confidently brought forward at the beginning of the session, sleeps in committee-rooms and will never see the light again. Men of both parties at the West will struggle to be foremost in measures which will meet the feelings of that section.

#### THE GREENBACK QUESTION.

It has been proposed to pay most of these bonds in the paper money called greenbacks, and it is claimed that this will save the people \$400,000,000, without doing injustice to their holders, as it is alleged it was the contract they should thus be paid. This is denied by others, and it is clear that the proposal has excited alarm, not only as to the mode of payment, but as to a growing feeling in favor of repudiating the whole debt. This springs out of the stupid folly which exempted the bondholders from taxation, which lowered the price of the bond, as it made from the beginning a distrust that a measure so odious would endanger their payment. The next cause of this feeling is the fact that the party in power, to shield themselves from the odium of crushing taxation, give out that this is necessary to pay our debts, when, in fact, two-thirds of the money wrung from the people is

wasted in corruption, or lavished upon officials, or spent in upholding the enormous cost of our Government under its policy of keeping one-third of the States out of the Union by military force. The whole odium of this taxation they throw upon the debt and the bondholders. The last and perhaps the greatest peril to the public credit and honor, is the fact which meets us at every turn, and annoys wherever met, that the bondholder is paid in coin, while honest labor gets a debased paper money. This state of affairs alarms every thoughtful man. How are these perils to be averted? We boldly and honestly met these questions at the last election in this State, and we won a triumph that astonished the country and terrified our opponents. We will meet them in the same spirit in our national councils, and we will sweep corruption and usurpation out of the National Capitol. We will show that a return to economy, honesty, and constitutional order is demanded alike by the interests of the taxpayer and the public creditors, by the bondholder and the laborer. This sectional division of our country into debtor and creditor States has caused much anxiety in the minds of thoughtful men, lest it should distract the counsels of our party. While on the one hand the oppressive legislation which burdens the West with high tariffs, together with the fact that the revenues drawn from all sections are mainly paid out to one, excites deep feeling; on the other hand, the bonds so unwisely and wastefully issued, have gone into the hands of innocent holders, who to a vast amount are compulsory owners. It is a mistake to suppose that they are mostly held by capitalists. Large sums belonging to children and widows, under the order of courts or the action of trustees, have been invested in Government bonds. The vast amounts held by life and fire insurance companies and savings banks, are, in fact, held in trust for and are the reliance of the great body of active business and laboring men or women, or of widows and orphans. The savings banks of this State, which are the depositories of the poor or of persons of limited means, hold about \$60,000,000 of Government bonds. The whole amount held in the State of New York, in the various forms of trust, will not fall below \$200,000,000. If we look into other States, we shall see that only a small share of these bonds are held by men known as capitalists, but they belong, in fact if not in form, to the business, the active and the laboring members of society. The destruction of these securities would make a widespread ruin and distress, which would reach into every workshop and every home, however humble.

#### THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THE NATIONAL DEBT.

There is a perfect accord in the Democratic ranks as to the policy and the need of honesty and economy, but there is some difference of opinion as to the construction of the contract with the public creditor. Some hold that it is right, and that it is due to the taxpayers, that we should save what we can by paying principal of debt in currency, but they underrate the force of their own arguments. It is a mistake to suppose that the interests of the bondholder and the taxpayers are antagonistic. The fact is overlooked, that in order to make any saving by giving the bondholder a debased or worthless paper, we must bring upon ourselves disaster and dishonor, which will cost a hundred-fold what we

can save. It means that we are to give to the laborer for his toil a base currency; it means that the honor of our country shall be stained; it means that our business shall be kept in uncertainty and confusion; it means that the laboring man shall suffer by the increased cost of the comforts of life; it means that the taxpayer shall be burdened by a Government proved to be corrupt and imbecile by this very depreciation of its money. We cannot afford to speculate upon the nation's honor at so fearful a cost. When a dishonored merchant or a corrupt government wishes to make large profit in speculating in their own paper, they must dishonor themselves as much as they can. There is a great gain in this plan, as upheld by Messrs. Butler and Stevens; they not only propose to pay in depreciated paper, but they are doing what they can to dishonor the character and credit of the country. If they carry out their corrupt revolutionary schemes, they will pay off the debt with paper which is not worth ten cents on the dollar. There is no Democrat living who thinks this can be done with safety, or that it is for the interest of the taxpayer at the East or West. Every Democrat demands a policy of peace, order, and economy, and just so far as he gains that he lifts up the national credit; he helps the taxpayer and does justice to the bondholder; he makes our currency as good as sterling coin; for that will rise with the public credit. The error is in supposing that under a Democratic administration the currency would still stand fixed at a discount of one-quarter. To say that, is to say that we are to fail as our opponents have failed. The nation's credit cannot be bought at a profit unless the nation's character is dishonored. If we come into power there will be no discredit on our currency, no speculation in paying our bonds in paper. I thank God that the faith which we all hold as one man, seeks to level up, not to level down. It means that sterling coin shall ring again on the counter of the tradesman and glitter in the palm of labor, and gladden the heart of the wounded soldier. Our friends forget the force of their own argument. When they show how the debt will be paid and taxation lightened by economy and honesty, they also show our paper money will be made as good as gold. The downward course of the men in power admits of trafficking in the honor of the country. They can sink it to that point that the payments of the debt will be an easy matter, but it will be at the cost of the honor, the peace and welfare of our land. While, therefore, we may differ as to the construction of the contract with the public creditor, we must not confound the positions of those who think it right to pay in paper, but who battle to make that paper as good as gold, with the position of those who mean not only to pay in paper, but who are also destroying the value of that paper. That is *repudiation*. We are not trying to give paper to the bondholders, but gold and silver to the people. There is nothing to fear from those who think by the contract you should take paper, if they take a course which will make that paper as good as gold. There is everything to fear from those who are driving on to bankruptcy, and it matters not what their professions may be.

#### AN APPEAL TO THE COUNTRY.

We appeal to the bondholder to join with the

taxpayers at the East and West in saving our country. We hold no bonds, but in common with you, we want the money wrung from us, not squandered in corrupt, treasable and revolutionary schemes, but used to pay our debts. Then you will get your dues, and we shall be lightened of our loads. Help us to put men out of power who try to put all the odium of taxation upon you, while they grasp the proceeds; who endanger your claims by putting you in the light of a favored class, not because they give you a better, but the people a worse currency. Help us to wipe out as soon as we can this debt with its unpopular exemptions, lest the men who justify repudiation by States separately shall also declare for it by their joint action in Congress. If it is possible, you, more than we, are interested in putting an end to the mad career of Congress. We appeal to those who guard by policies of insurance against the dangers of fire, which may sweep away their property; to those who try by life insurance to make provision for their families when death takes them away; to those who have put their slender earnings into savings banks so that they may have some support in sickness or misfortune—to see if they have not a deep interest in stopping our Government in its career of bankruptcy and dishonor. We implore them to bear in mind that the only security they have for the sacred purposes of their policies and deposits are the bonds of the Government, and those will be worthless if there is not an administration put in power which will seek to bring back peace, order and economy, and honesty, to our country. We appeal to the bondholders to help rescue our country from the hands of corrupt and wasteful men. By so doing they will not only best secure their own interests, but will gain the good-will and gratitude of the oppressed laborers and tax-payers.

#### A WORD TO CAPITALISTS.

We are not influenced in our views either by hostility to or regard for the wealthy, but with a sole purpose to do right. For that class of men called capitalists I have no peculiar respect, for they have shown but little respect for themselves. They have never risen up to a sense of the truth that wealth and power carry with them duties and responsibilities. While a British Peer of the Realm goes to the hustings through scenes of rudeness and violence unknown at our elections, our men of wealth in the city of New York feel they have not enough of character to carry out the duties of citizenship. They labor under a sense of uncertainty of position which must be bolstered up by a careful avoidance of the rougher duties of life. I do not complain that they are not with us, but that they are nowhere when political duty is to be done. Absorbed in their greed for gain they have, without one manly protest, seen the shipping of their city, which was the pride and glory of our nation, swept from the seas by selfish and sectional legislation. One hour of the honest pride of the grand old commercial cities of Europe would have saved us from this humiliation. I can never forget when a cruel and wicked wrong was done to the poor and laboring classes of their fellow-citizens; to those who swelled their incomes by their toil, these men looked on with cold indifference. When, as Chief Magistrate of this State, I struggled to right the wrong, amidst a storm of abuse and calumny, not one of them even looked to see if there was justice in my charges; nay, most of them, with selfish coward-

ice, swelled the chorus of defamation. So gross was the outrages of which I complained, that even their authors were forced, by the proof, to let go their hold upon the throats of their victims. In this struggle of poverty against power—for it was against the districts where the poorer classes lived that this cruelty was levelled—there was no word of sympathy or inquiry from the capitalists, who should have shielded the laborers. It gives me great pleasure at this point to do justice to my political opponents. At a time when party passions were envenomed and personal prejudice against myself were at their height, a Republican Assembly of this State gave me an unanimous vote of thanks for my efforts to correct these errors when they saw I was in the right and that they had been in the wrong. It was a noble act of courtesy and justice.

#### THE NATIONAL DEBT.

I deem it my duty to speak frankly on the subject of the debt. We owe it to our friends in other States to let them know our position, so that we may not fall into the fatal error of making sectional questions a part of our national platform. They would with justice reproach us if we suffered them to hinder us in our battle in this great State, which must be won or our country is lost. We have issues enough with the parties in power upon which we think as one man, to overwhelm it with disgrace and defeat. We must not distract our counsels with questions, however important they may be, upon which there is so much of doubt, and which cannot be settled in many years to come. We must not thus turn away the public mind from the dangers which threaten the immediate destruction of the fabric of our Government and the liberties of our people. Even now the hand of usurpation is stretched out to rob us of all our rights, and it must be struck down first of all. Whatever our views may be, the payment of this debt will fall upon the future. Do what we may, a generation that will come after us will decide its modes without regard to anything that we may say. The depressed industry of our land, its suffering labor, demands that the load of taxation shall be lightened. Our debt is not due until fifteen years from this time. How few of those who now discuss this question will be living then! If in the meanwhile our country is well governed, if there is economy in the conduct of its affairs and the rights and liberties of our people shall be unimpaired, our population will be increased from thirty-five to fifty millions, our wealth will be more than doubled. Then this debt will rest more lightly upon greater numbers and greater wealth, than it presses to-day upon the depressed industry and disheartened spirit of the people. At our last election in this State, we won a victory which gave new hope to the friends of constitutional order throughout the land. It gave joy to the hearts of those who seek an honest, honorable administration of public affairs. We won that victory because we lifted our standard high. There came up to uphold our banner the laborer, the taxpayer, and the bondholder, for they saw that we were battling for economy, for honesty and honor in the conduct of public affairs. They felt that these were demanded by our common interests; that the weight of government did not grow out of the cost of upholding the honor of the country, but the cost of supporting a dishonest and dishonorable party in

power. We deeply regret that our position should be censured in any quarter. But we cannot lower our standard. We will not betray those who came up to its support. It is enough that honor forbids this. Even if we could stoop to aught that is less than honorable, even policy would dictate that this great State should be held firm and steadfast in its position, if we hope to save our country from the dangers that menace it. While it is due to our party and the public to speak plainly upon the financial question which will, for many years to come, perplex and harass the creditor and the tax payer, I turn from the discussion about the mode of payment at this moment with a degree of impatience. I feel as I should if one with whom I had a long and vexatious litigation upon the terms of an agreement should, in the dead of night, break into my house, rob my treasures, and attempt to fire my home. If when seized in the act of crime, loaded with plunder, with the tinder and match upon his person which were to kindle the flame, he should coolly propose to stop and discuss the questions under the contract, the indignant answer would be, you are stealing four-fold the amount in controversy; you are trying to destroy a hundred-fold its sum in value by incendiary fire. I will not put myself upon your level in the civil courts; I go against you for burglary and arson; I seize and denounce you as a criminal, and you shall suffer the penalty of violated law.

#### WHY OPPOSED TO CONGRESS.

I go against this Congress for its crimes, and above all for those which it is now perpetrating against the liberties of the people and the sanctity of the Judiciary. While we sit here they drag the Chief Magistrate of our country, who has been stripped of rightful power and shackled with humiliating restraints, before a tribunal which decreed his sentence before the charges against him were framed. And what are these charges? He dared, against brutal and indecent statutory insults, to appeal to judicial tribunal. He dared to do his duty and warn the people against the follies and crimes of their legislators. This Congress has declared that to test its acts in the courts established for that purpose is a crime, and that freedom of speech is a high misdemeanor! When the President entered upon his duties, he took a solemn oath that "to the best of his ability he would preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States." For trying to do this according to his conscience he is impeached. If this high officer may not appeal to the courts, if he may not at all times, by speech or writing, warn the people of the dangers which menace their rights and liberties, what protection is there for the humble citizen? We are not left to inference. Men have been arrested without warrant, have languished or died in prisons, without trial, and in many instances have never known what offences were imputed to them. The bill is already framed to take away from citizens the appeal to the courts in cases touching their dearest rights. In ten States, military power tramples the judicial under foot. These men mistake the spirit of the people. We defied them when they were backed by a million of armed men. We despise them now as they tremble on the brink of disgrace and defeat. During the past two years they have been active in degrading the Executive and disgracing themselves. They may arraign

Mr. Johnson for bringing them into dishonor and public contempt, but their own conduct, not his speeches, brought this shame upon them.

#### ANDREW JOHNSON.

I have no political prejudices in favor of Mr. Johnson. I have never seen him. He is not one I helped to place in office, nor have I ever advised him or been consulted by him as to his policy. I know he has been cheated and betrayed by those about him, who plotted his destruction from the outset. But while he has been most unhappy in his friends, no man has been so fortunate in his enemies. They have given him a high place in history as one who suffered for the rights of the American people. And when he shall go to his final account and his friends seek in clear, terse, and lasting terms to tell that he was a man who loved his country and was hated by the corrupt and treasonable, they have to chisel upon his tombstone that he was impeached by this House of Representatives and condemned by this Senate.

#### IMPEACHMENT.

But Congress seems to have aimed at a dramatic effect, and seeks to excite an interest in this "taking off" like that which attaches to the assassination of crowned heads in darker ages. A stranger entering the halls of the Capitol, and who learned there that one was to be deposed because he stood in the way of unlawful ambition or corrupt schemes, as he looked over the assemblage and listened to the debates, would readily pick out those who were to do the dark deed. The face of one would tell his character; muttering about judicial murder would suggest another. A third would be an old man tottering upon the crumbling edge of the grave, whose counsels should be those of peace and charity, but who shocks the world by that saddest of all sights—withered age given over to evil passions, and in its last days muttering profane curses and showing imbecile malice as it sinks into the grave. In view of the foul ends aimed at by the body that one day is agitated by discordant passions, by mutual reproaches and taunts of crime, and the next is whipped into accord by guilty fears—these are fit instruments. Who more eager than they to gain a decree that it is a crime to appeal to the judiciary they hate and fear? Who so deeply concerned for a decision that freedom of speech is a high misdemeanor as they who are daily galled and stung and tortured by the uttered scorn of a people? We agree with them that open discussion tends to bring this Congress into public contempt. When the sentence is prejudged the trial will be speedy. No one thinks the solemn mockery means a fair and honest trial. There was a shudder when certain Senators solemnly swore to judge impartially. These very forms of procedure, which were meant to secure a fair trial, are hideous when used as marks to hide the malice and hate that is impotent to speak the verdict which must not in form go before the trial. They shock us as do palls and shrouds and grave-clothes, which wrap up the body of dead and decaying justice, while the grave-diggers of the House wait to do their office of putting away the murdered victim. This Congress has by its action opened wide the door for the entrance of many disorganizing schemes; it has given to the future many dangerous precedents,

but none so dangerous as this, none so deadly in its tendencies.

#### ANOTHER IMPEACHMENT.

But there is another impeachment to be tried before a more august tribunal than the Senate. We arraign this Congress before the people of these United States for its crimes against liberty; against the Union; against the rights of our citizens. We impeach them in words of our Fathers against the British Crown in the declaration of independence—because it "has rendered the military independent of and superior to the civil power"—because it "has erected a multitude of new offices and sent swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance." We impeach it "for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury," "for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the powers of our Government;" "for suspending legislatures and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate in all cases whatsoever." Beyond the crimes charged by our Fathers against the British crown, we also impeach Congress for its gross and continued violation of the solemn declaration made to the American people and to the world, that they waged war upon the South for the sole purpose of restoring our Union, which Union they now keep sundered for selfish, party, and corrupt purposes. We also impeach them as enemies to the liberties of the American people, when they seek to take away the protection of the judiciary and rob us of the freedom of speech. There can be no freedom in that country where courts of law are closed against the citizen who seeks protection from unconstitutional statutes. There is no help against tyranny, outrage, or corruption, if there is no appeal to the independent judiciary. "There is no liberty in a land if the power of the judiciary be not separated from the legislative and executive departments." What, then, is the condition of our country when in one-third of our States the judiciary is under the feet of the military—that military which our fathers told us must ever be kept in subordination to civil authority. In the grand old republic of Rome, the general who commanded armies was not admitted within the walls of the capitol. A Roman Senate would not let the shadow of military power fall upon the pavements of their city, but an American Senate with guilty cowardice clings to the skirts of a victorious general. We warn those who have gained the gratitude of the American people upon the battle-field against soiling their fame by becoming the tools of bad and artful men. There was no braver spirit in the struggle of the revolution than that of him who won victories by his courage, whose blood sprinkled the field of battle, and who at one time was the idol of a people who now hold his memory in scorn, for he proved a traitor to liberty.

#### WHAT MUST BE DONE.

But we must not be content with merely winning a political victory. We must do more. We must fire the hearts of our people with that love of liberty and fill their mind with a reverence for the judiciary which animated our Fathers, when they engraved upon the corner-stones of State and National Governments, that the military should ever be kept in subordination to civil authority. It may be asked what motives have this



Congress to resort to acts of violence unknown heretofore? The vast increase of patronage has much to do with it, but neither love of power nor greed for gain would make them adopt desperate measures to hold place against the will of the people; the motive for this conduct is fear—the terror of the exposures which must be made when the books are overlooked and the records laid bare. Nothing is so rash as fear. This is the secret of their forcible, desperate hold upon the War Department. There was terror in many bosoms until the Secretary had fortified himself with armed men at his doors. What but fear held in one leash him from Ohio with him of Massachusetts, while they hunted down the President? no man who looks upon them as accusers thinks of aught else than the foul reproaches they have howled against each other of crimes base and horrible, before which all that is charged against him they persecute is light and trivial. Was it decent to couple them together? No one can have failed to notice that whenever any unusual act of desperation was to be done in Congress, those members resting under imputations of outrage or corruptions were active upon the floor. At once were heard the voice of generals stupid on the battlefield and brutal in civil stations, men haunted with guilty fears which could not be quieted down. The struggle is to hold power until time shall wipe out the records of their guilt, or sweep away the witnesses of their crimes. What should be the attitude and action of the Democratic party at this time? No ground must be taken without consultation nor without perfect accord. We are not battling to promote personal views, but to uphold the wisdom of our fathers and to bring back the rule of the Constitution. Our march must be like that of the Macedonian Phalanx with locked shields and measured tread. No man must break from the ranks to push forward from vanity or to drop behind from fear.

When we have gained our victory by boldness and courage, we must use it with patient forbearance, avoiding as far as we can violent changes, and seeking to give the people rest from the uncertainties and imbecility which have harassed them during the past five years. We must

lighten taxation by restoring our Union, thus at once cutting down our expenses and putting the South into a condition to aid in bearing our burdens. It is one of the perplexities of bad laws that under them many innocent interests grow up which embarrass the legislator in his efforts to undo the work of unwise men. In such cases, there must be patient forbearance until wrongs can be righted and can be cured without doing injustice to any. Our Saviour teaches us that when evil spirits sow tares among the wheat, for a time the evil and the good must grow together. "Constitutional liberty," in the glowing words of Justice Story, "must perish, if there be not that vital spirit in the people which alone can nourish, sustain, and direct all its movements. It is in vain that statesmen shall form plans of government, in which the beauty and harmony of a republic shall be built upon solid substructure and adorned by every useful ornament, if the inhabitants suffer the silent power of time to dilapidate its walls or crumble its many supporters into dust. If the assaults from without are never resisted, and the rottenness and mining from within are never guarded against, who can preserve the rights and liberties of the people when they shall be abandoned by themselves? Who shall keep watch in the temple, when the watchmen sleep at their posts? Who should call upon the people to redeem their possessions and revive the republic, when their own hands have deliberately and corruptly surrendered them to the oppressor, and have built the prisons or dug the graves of their own friends?" Let us, then, appeal to the virtue of our people. I believe that now they ponder by their firesides upon that time when under Democratic rule we had honest officials, economy in affairs, and a currency of sterling coin. I believe their hearts are stirred with indignation at the outrages now perpetrated at Washington. Let us, then, write in letters of gold the words honor, honesty, and economy upon one side of the folds of our flags, and upon the other freedom of speech and an independent judiciary. Then lift our standard high and march on. The path of honor is the path to victory.

## SPEECH

OF THE

HON. SAMUEL J. TILDEN,

AT THE

DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION OF NEW YORK,

HELD AT ALBANY, MARCH 11, 1868.

*Gentlemen of the Convention:* On the formation of the Government of the United States, the question still remained to be solved what practical character should be impressed upon it in its actual administration. Gouverneur Morris, who had favored a centralized system tending to aristocracy and monarchy, when asked his opinion of the Constitution, answered, "That depends on how it is construed."

ERA OF ORGANIC DISCUSSIONS.

During the controversies of its earlier years, men's minds were constantly turned towards or-

ganic questions. Every measure was tested by its relations to such questions. Parties imputed to each other designs to change the character of the Government. Jefferson in the nation and George Clinton in this state led the democratic masses against a centralism which they feared would in practice assimilate our new institutions to the British system, from which the revolution had emancipated us; and it is now historically certain that a powerful element in the Federal party of that day did in fact desire such a result. Hamilton believed Burr, even while the latter

stood high in public esteem, to be capable of a Roman or French ambition; and did not deem his success in establishing a dictatorship or an empire impossible, if he could gain the presidency and wield its powers for that object. Other eminent public men entertained the same fears of Hamilton, in the event of a civil convulsion, which Hamilton expected. With such ideas in men's minds, the political contest of 1800 was fought, and decided in the City of New York for the State and for the Union.

#### ERA OF ADMINISTRATIVE DISCUSSIONS.

The result closed the first era of our governmental history. The liberal and beneficent political philosophy of Jefferson became ascendant everywhere in the public councils and in the popular opinion. The essential character of the Government became fixed; and men's ideas in respect to it settled. Organic questions—debates as to the structure of the Government ceased to occupy public attention. For sixty years, our controversies turned on questions of administrative policy. Eddies in the current of our progress, there were. The war of 1812, even under Madison, caused a centralization in administrative measures and policies which cost us a quarter of a century of peace to remove. But, on the whole, the master wisdom of governing little, and leaving as much as possible to localities and to individuals prevailed; and we progressively limited the sphere of governmental action, and enlarged the domain of individual conscience and judgment. These sixty years were a period of transcendent national growth and prosperity, and of universal happiness among the people.

#### CIVIL WAR.

How and why we passed from that fortunate condition into a gigantic civil war; the moral and social causes which gradually prepared such a result; the events of that conflict, I cannot pause to discuss. When at last we brought the contest to a successful issue, and especially when the voluntary extinction of slavery declared,—what moral and material causes had already made certain,—that our northern systems of society and industry are to prevail in every part of this continent which shall be occupied by us, I hoped that we might speedily restore the people of the revolted States to their true relations to the Union; and then that we might at once begin to deal with the administrative questions which the war had cast upon us.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM REQUIRED.

Questions of this sort there were enough for a generation of the most earnest political activity. The reaction against the heresy of secession—the public necessities during a great war—the lead throughout all that struggle of a party always imbued with false ideas of government, and with obsolete notions of political economy, and always dominated over by class interests,—had created for the time an overwhelming tendency to centralism. All our administrative systems had become buried under a fungus-growth which was smothering all trade and sucking out the vitality of all the industries of the country.

#### PACIFICATION NECESSARY FIRST.

I looked to the Democratic party as the only agency through which the government could be brought back to the liberal ideas and beneficent policies which had prevailed under Jefferson and Jackson; but before we could enter on the work

of administrative and economical reform, pacification was necessary.

#### RESTORATION BY THE REPUBLICAN PARTY WAS EASY.

A complete and harmonious restoration of the revolted States would have been effected if the Republican party had not proved to be totally incapable of acting in the case with any large, wise, or firm statesmanship.

A magnanimous policy would not only have completed the pacification of the country, but would have effected a reconciliation between the Republican party and the white race in the South. Every circumstance favored such a result. The Republican party possessed all the powers of the government, and held sway over every motive of gratitude, fear or interest. The Southern people had become thoroughly weary of the contest; more than half of them had been originally opposed to entering into it, and had done so only when nothing was left to them but to choose on which side they would fight. Few would ever have favored the measures which led to the conflict of arms, if they had anticipated such a conflict; many had all the while felt a lingering regret in ceasing to belong to a great country which they had been accustomed to regard with proud ambition; and all remembered that they had been prosperous, contented and happy as American citizens. The mass yearned to come back to what was left of their birthright. On the surrender of General Lee, every hostile sword fell, and the abolition of slavery was yielded as a peace offering with universal alacrity.

All that was necessary to heal the bleeding wounds of the country, and to allow its languishing industries to revive, was that the Republican party,—which boasts its great moral ideas, and its philanthropy,—should rise to the moral elevation of an ordinary pugilist, and cease to strike its adversary after he was down.

#### THE REPUBLICAN PARTY ON TRIAL.

This crisis was the trial of the Republican party. The question was, whether it could become a permanent party in the country, continuing to govern for the present, capable of being, from time to time, called to govern; or whether it must confess itself to be but a revolutionary faction, accepted by the people during war—accepted for the venom if not the vigor with which it could strike.—acting often “outside the Constitution”—often converting the regular and lawful organs of the government into a French committee of public safety or a Jacobin club—and now, incapable of adapting itself to the work of pacification, when that has become the commanding public necessity; and, therefore, its mission being fulfilled, having nothing left to it but to die and be forever dismissed from our national history.

#### FAILURE OF REPUBLICAN PARTY.

In this trial the Republican party completely failed. It could do nothing but strike, when to strike was no longer necessary, or wise, or humane, or Christian; and when to continue to strike was ruin to all the reviving commerce and reviving industries of the victorious North, and inflicted anew upon an exhausted people the burdens of war, after war was ended.

It could have won into alliance with it the majority of the white race of the South; and thus have acquired the means of carrying on government there, on the principle and through the

methods of our American system of government. It is the peculiar and crowning glory of that system, that it is so full of mutual dependencies, between the State and Federal machineries and the different parts of each, and involves so much of the voluntary action of the people in every locality, that two-thirds of the States cannot govern one-third, without a large co-operation from the people of that third. The necessity of this co-operation limits the oppression which can be exercised against a local minority. The seeking of that co-operation informs the majority, and brings it into relations with the minority. In trying to acquire the means to govern, the majority become qualified to govern. Our American system of government was not invented. It grew. It is wiser and better than anything which was ever invented. It grew up among a people whose government was everywhere carried on by the consent of the governed; and voluntary aid and general co-operation were assumed in all its growth, and became necessary conditions to its action. It is not a convenient instrument for tyranny.

#### THROUGH SELFISHNESS AND INCAPACITY.

The Republican party, finding no difficulty outside of itself, found a difficulty in itself which was unsurmountable. It could not change its own nature. If it could have generated one leader capable of the generous ambition of pacificating the country and founding a permanent ascendancy on the ultimate public opinion of the whole country, it might have lived. Even a large demagogue might have been a national benefaction. But two hundred small demagogues—not one of them able to extend his vision beyond the horizon of one congressional district—nor having much moral sway over the opinion of his constituency—found it easier and safer to stimulate the hatreds left by the war and the provincial passions which led to the war, than to act with the wise moderation of a comprehensive statesman or even the prudent liberality of a conqueror.

#### IT RESOLVES TO ESTABLISH NEGRO SUPREMACY.

The Republican party recoiled for awhile on the fatal brink of the policy on which it at last embarked. It had not the courage to conciliate by magnanimity, and to found its alliances and its hopes of success upon the better qualities of human nature. It totally abandoned all relations to the white race of the ten States. It resolved to make the black race the governing power in those States; and by means of them to bring into Congress twenty senators and fifty representatives—practically appointed by itself in Washington.

It is evident that the internal government of those States was not the main object of this desperate expedient. The State organizations had been comparatively neglected. It was only through new State organizations, and new electoral bodies, that the twenty senators and fifty representatives could be secured to the Republican party, after it refused to trust to pacification.

#### THE OBJECT TO RULE THE NORTH.

The effect of a gain to the Republican party of twenty senators and fifty representatives is to strengthen its hold on the federal government against the people of the North. Nor is there the slightest doubt that the paramount object and motive of the Republican party is

by these means to secure itself against a reaction of opinion adverse to it in our great populous northern commonwealths. The effect of its system and its own real purpose is to establish a domination over us of the northern States.

#### RECONSTRUCTION BY THE SWORD.

When the Republican party resolved to establish negro supremacy in the ten States in order to gain to itself the representation of those States in Congress, it had to begin by governing the people of those States by the sword. The four millions and a half of whites composed the electoral bodies. If they were to be put under the supremacy of the three millions of negroes, and twenty senators and fifty representatives were to be obtained through these three millions of negroes, it was necessary to obliterate every vestige of local authority, whether it had existed before the rebellion or been instituted since by Mr. Lincoln or by the people. A bayonet had to be set to supervise and control every local organization. The military dictatorship had to be extended to the remotest ramifications of human society. That was the first necessity.

#### NEGRO SUPREMACY.

The next was the creation of new electoral bodies for those ten States; in which, by exclusions, by disfranchisements and proscriptions, by control over registration, by applying test oaths operating retrospectively and prospectively, by intimidation, and by every form of influence, three millions of negroes are made to predominate over four and a half millions of whites. These three millions of negroes—three-fourths of the adult male portion of whom are field hands, who have been worked in gangs on the plantations, and are immeasurably inferior to the free blacks whom we know in the North—who have never had even the education which might be acquired in the support of themselves or in the conduct of any business, and who, of all their race, have made the least advance from the original barbarism of their ancestors—have been organized in compact masses to form the ruling power in these ten States. They have been disassociated from their natural relations to the intelligence, humanity, virtue, and piety of the white race; set up in complete antagonism to the whole white race, for the purpose of being put over the white race; and for the purpose of being fitted to act with unity and become completely impervious to the influence of superior intellect and superior moral and social power in the communities of which they form a part.

Of course, such a process has repelled, with inconsiderable exceptions, the entire white race in the ten States. It has repelled the moderate portion who had reluctantly yielded to secession. It has repelled those who had remained unionists. The first fruit of the Republican policy is the complete separation of the two races, and to some extent their antagonism.

#### THE MEANS.

How, my fellow-citizens, has this work been accomplished, and at whose cost?

The main instruments have been the Freedman's Bureau and the Army of the United States. The Freedman's Bureau is partly an eleemosynary establishment, which dispenses alms to the liberated slaves and assumes to be their friend and protector. It is, to a large extent, a job, for its dependents and their speculative associates. But, in its principal character, it is

a political machine to organize and manage the three millions of negroes.

Its cost, as reported by itself, to the public treasury, for the last two years, is about ten millions of dollars.

The army is used to overawe the white race, and sometimes to work and sometimes to shelter the working of the political system which goes on under the military governments of the ten States.

#### THE COST.

You have seen telegrams announcing the reduction of the army expenses. When I was in Washington week before last, I took some pains to ascertain the truth. I am able to inform you, from authentic data, that the monthly payments at the treasury, for army expenses, up to the beginning of the present month, exceed twelve millions. I assert that they are now,—to-day,—running at the rate of one hundred and fifty millions per annum. They have not been less, but probably more, for the two years past. This does not include pensions, which are thirty-six millions more.

Remember that it is excessive taxation which crushes the industrious masses in European monarchies and despotisms; and that this taxation is mainly caused by their military establishments, kept up by the ambitions of their rulers, by their mutual jealousies, and by the fears which tyrants entertain of their own peoples.

Remember that our wise ancestors warned us against standing armies and all those false systems of government which require standing armies. They formed the Union of the States that we might be free from the jealousies of co-terminous countries, which have been the usual pretext of tyrants for maintaining costly military establishments. They founded that union on the principle of local self-government,—to be everywhere carried on by the voluntary co-operation of the governed. They did not intend that one part of our country should govern another part, as European tyrants govern their subjects. Rebellion, which for a time disturbed this beneficent system, is conquered. But we do not return to government on the principles of our fathers. The southern people are willing and anxious to do so. We refuse. See how the refusal brings upon us the calamities foretold by the prophetic statesmen and patriots of 1776 and 1787. Compare the army expenses of free America with those of the military powers of Europe.

Great Britain, which encircles the globe with her military posts, and rules in dependent provinces one hundred and fifty millions of subjects, expended for her armies, including pensions, in 1866-7, about 14,340,000 pounds, and in 1867-8, about 14,752,000 pounds, or about seventy-two millions of dollars a year.

France, which stands at the head of the military powers of Europe, expended for her army, as the average of seven years officially reported, about eighty-six millions of dollars.

Prussia, which has just consolidated under her dominion the new Germanic empire, expended on her army, in 1867, about twenty-nine millions of dollars. And we, free America, who have offered up the lives of two-thirds of a million of our youth, and more than three thousand millions of dollars to restore the Union and escape the necessity and the pretexts for such military establishments,—after our object ought to be completely accomplished, find ourselves subjected to more

than fifteen millions a month,—more than half a million a day,—about one hundred and eighty-six millions a year for army expenses and pensions, as two items of the cost of our government.

Now, I assert two facts:

First. The main employment of the army is in occupying the Southern States.

Secondly. If the Union were fully restored, the army expenses can be, and ought to be reduced 100 or 125 millions a year. The average for the ten years prior to the rebellion, was about 15 millions; and our experience in raising volunteers shows that a large standing army is unnecessary.

You may safely count that reconstruction carried on by these military governments costs you at least one hundred millions a year in army expenses, unnecessary for any other purpose. To carry on the experiment of negro supremacy in the ten States for two years; to bring in twenty senators and fifty representatives,—deputies of the three millions of liberated slaves, allies and instruments of the party objects of the Republicans, will cost you two hundred millions of dollars in direct army expenses. How much more in other expenses, created or permitted to continue—how much in future years, I can only conjecture. I venture to predict that five hundred millions will not consummate the system.

These immense sums have to be wrung from the people in taxes which cost those who pay them much more than the amount thus expended; at a time when the illusions of paper money are passing away, and the country discovers itself exhausted and impoverished by war; when no commerce is profitable, and nearly all manufactures are carried on at a loss; when labor is scantily employed, and the cost of living is high; when taxation closely approaches to the whole net income of all capital and all labor in the country; and, when this condition is daily growing worse, and can only be alleviated by reducing expenses, remitting taxes, liberating trade and industry, and restoring them to their natural courses.

#### SENATORIAL REPRESENTATION.

If those three millions of negroes elect twenty senators and fifty representatives, they will have ten times as much power in the Senate of the United States as the four millions of whites in the State of New York. On every question which concerns the commercial metropolis—every question of trade, of finance, of currency, of revenue, and of taxation, these three millions of liberated African slaves will count ten times as much in the Senate as four millions of New Yorkers. One freedman will counterbalance thirteen white citizens of the Empire State. These three millions of blacks will count ten times as much as three millions of white people in Pennsylvania; ten times as much as two and a half millions in Ohio; ten times as much as two and a quarter or two and a half millions in Illinois; ten times as much as one million and a half in Indiana. These three millions of blacks will have twice the representation in the Senate, which will be possessed by the five great commonwealths—New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois—embracing thirteen and a half millions of our people.

#### USURPATIONS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

Let me not be told that this enormous wrong is nothing more than an original defect of the Constitution. I answer that it derives most of

its evil and its danger from the usurpations of the Republican party.

#### WORK A PRACTICAL REVOLUTION.

We have now reached a period when everything valuable in the Constitution and in the government as formed by our fathers is brought into peril. Men's minds are unsettled by the civil strifes through which we have passed. The body of traditional ideas which limited the struggles of parties within narrow and fixed boundaries is broken up. A temporary party majority, having complete sway over the legislative bodies, discards all standards,—whether embodied in laws, constitutions, or in elementary and organic principles of free government; acts its own pleasure as absolutely as if it were a revolutionary convention; and deems every thing legitimate, which can serve its party aims.

Changes are dared and attempted by it, with a success which, I trust, is but temporary—changes which revolutionize the whole nature of our government:

#### IN SUFFRAGE.

*First.* If there be anything fundamental in government or in human society, it is the question, what elements shall compose the electoral bodies from which emanate all the governing powers. The Constitution left the States with exclusive power over the suffrage; and the States have always defined and protected the suffrage from change by their fundamental laws. Congress now usurps control over the whole subject in the ten States; and creates negro constituencies, and vests them with nearly a third of the whole representation in the Senate, and nearly a quarter of the whole representation in the House. The leaders of the Republican party also claim the power by congressional act to regulate the suffrage in the loyal States; and, without the consent of the people of those States, to alter their constitutions, and involve them in a political partnership with inferior races.

#### IN THE REPRESENTATION.

*Secondly.* Congress, by the methods and means I have traced, usurps control over the representation in the two branches of the national legislature, and packs those bodies with delegates, admitting or rejecting for party ends, and at length attempting to create a permanent majority by deputies from negro constituencies formed for that purpose.

#### IN ABSORBING THE STATES.

*Thirdly.* Congress has not only fettered the trade and industries of the country for the benefit of special interests and classes, but it has absorbed many powers and functions of the State governments which are, in the words of Mr. Jefferson's celebrated inaugural, "*the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, the surest bulwark against anti-republican tendencies;*" and it is rapidly centralizing all our political institutions.

#### IN CRUSHING THE CO-ORDINATE DEPARTMENTS.

*Fourthly.* Congress is systematically breaking down all the divisions of power between the co-ordinate departments of the Federal Government, which the Constitution established, and which have always been considered as essential to the very existence of constitutional representative government.

The universal conviction of all our revered statesmen and patriots, is, in the language of

Mr. JEFFERSON, that "the concentration of legislative, executive and judicial powers in the same hands is precisely the definition of despotic government." "AN ELECTIVE DESPOTISM," said he, "was not the government we fought for, but one which should not only be founded on free principles, but in which the powers of government should be so divided among several bodies of magistracy, as that no one could transcend their legal limits without being effectually checked and restrained by the others."

#### THE EXECUTIVE.

In violation of these principles, Congress has stripped the President of his constitutional powers over his subordinates in the executive function,—and even over his own confidential advisers; and vested these powers in the Senate. It is now exercising the power of removing from office the President elected by the people, and appointing another in his place; under the form of a trial, but without the pretence of actual crime, or anything more than a mere difference of opinion.

#### THE JUDICIARY.

It has menaced the Judiciary; at one time proposing to create by law an incapacity in the Supreme Court to act by a majority, in any case where it should disagree with Congress; at another time, proposing to divest that tribunal of jurisdiction exercised by it from the foundation of the government to decide between an ordinary law and the Constitution, which is the fundamental and supreme law. There is reason to believe also that a plan has been matured to overthrow the Court by the creation of new judges to make a majority more subservient to Congress, than the judges appointed by Mr. Lincoln are found to be.

#### ELECTIVE DESPOTISM.

These changes are organic. They would revolutionize the very nature of the government. They would alter every important part of its structure on which its authors relied to secure good laws and good administration, and to preserve civil liberty. They would convert it into an ELECTIVE DESPOTISM. The change could not by possibility stop at that stage.

#### IMPERIALISM.

I avow the conviction, founded on all history and on the concurring judgment of all our great statesmen and patriots, that such a system, if continued, would pass into IMPERIALISM. I feel not less certain that the destruction of all local self-government in a country so extensive as ours, and embracing such elements of diversity in habits, manners, opinions and interests, and the exercise by a single, centralized authority of all the powers of society over so vast a region and over such populations, would entail upon us an indefinite series of civil commotions, and repeat here the worst crimes and worst calamities of history.

It is time for the people to stay these destructive tendencies, and to declare that the reaction from secession towards centralism shall not effect the ruin which secession could not directly accomplish.

#### SENATORIAL OLIGARCHY.

Coming back now to the subject of the senatorial representation, I ask you to consider how different it is, and how vastly more important when viewed in the light of such changes in the nature and structure of our Government.

The inequality of the representation of the peo-

ple in the Senate was conceded, as a compromise, on the surrender of State independence and for the protection of State rights. When State rights are obliterated from our system, all the original reasons for such inequality will have disappeared. When all local self-governments give way to centralism, that inequality will become intolerable. The Senate as a mere checking body on the House and on the Executive, in a federal government, itself exercising but limited powers, is one thing. The Senate absorbing—in common with the House—all the powers of the States, all the powers of the Judiciary, and many of the powers of the Executive, and grasping, for itself alone, control over all the officers who carry on the executive machinery, over the army, and over the agencies which collect and disburse five hundred millions a year—is a very different thing. The long tenure and indirect election of the senators, enables that body to hold power for a while against the people. If members are admitted or rejected to perpetuate a party majority—if new States are formed, with small populations, for that purpose—if twenty nominees of the three millions of emancipated slaves are brought in, the body will be for a period practically self-elective. If we are to be governed by a senatorial oligarchy, the people of the great populous States which occupy the vast region stretching from the Hudson to the Mississippi will ask—WHO ARE TO CHOOSE THE OLIGARCHS?

#### USURPATION OF CONTROL OVER SUFFRAGE IN THE STATES.

I recur for a moment to the claim made by the leaders of the Republican party that Congress has power to alter the suffrage within the Northern States as well as the Southern; in the loyal as well as the rebellious communities. Mr. THADDEUS STEVENS and Mr. CHARLES SUMNER have publicly claimed this power. The *Tribune* has claimed it. Mr. Speaker COLFAX has asserted it, and proposed to apply it to Kentucky, Maryland and Delaware.

#### ITS OBJECTS.

Their objects and motives are disclosed.

The *Tribune*, on the 16th of October last, exclaimed to its hesitating followers:

"FOR THE REPUBLICANS ARE BOUND TO GO UNDER (thank God) IF THEY DON'T ENFRANCHISE THE BLACKS."

Mr. Sumner, in a letter to the editor of the *Independent*, avowed the purpose and the motive:

"SENATE CHAMBER, 20th April, 1867.

"My Dear Sir:—You wish to have the North 'reconstructed,' so at least that it shall cease to deny the elective franchise on account of color. But you postpone the day by insisting on the preliminary of a constitutional amendment. I know your vows to the good cause; but ask you to make haste. We cannot wait. \* \* \*

This question must be settled without delay. In other words, it must be settled before the Presidential election, which is at hand. Our colored fellow-citizens at the South are already voters. They will vote at the Presidential election. But why should they vote at the South and not at the North? The rule of justice is the same for both. Their votes are needed at the North as well as the South. There are Northern States where their votes can make the good cause safe beyond question.

"There are other States where their votes will be like the last preponderant weight in the nicely-balanced scales. Let our colored fellow-

citizens vote in Maryland, and that State, now so severely tried will be fixed for human rights forever. Let them vote in Pennsylvania, and you will give more than 20,000 votes to the Republican cause. Let them vote in New York, and the scales which hang so doubtfully will incline to the Republican cause. It will be the same in Connecticut. \* \* \* Enfranchisement, which is the corollary and complement of emancipation, must be a national act also proceeding from the National Government and applicable to all the States."

#### ITS CONSEQUENCES.

Hitherto the great right of the citizen to a voice in choosing his rulers has been safely entrenched in the constitutions of the several States. No legislative power in the land, Federal or State, could touch it. No temporary political ascendancy, no fluctuation of parties, could endanger it. The State constitution could be changed only through slow processes, imposing delays, insuring deliberation, and generally requiring several submissions to a vote of the people. To effect a change throughout the Union would require that these processes be carried through in each State separately. But once abdicate this rightful authority of the people of the several States, acting in their organic capacity; once allow Congress to usurp jurisdiction over the suffrage of the people of the States; once admit that this fundamental right may be changed by a mere enactment of Congress, without submission to a vote of the people, and no man in any State can tell how soon his vote may be rendered worthless, or how soon it may be taken from him. Mr. SUMNER avows that his object is to control the next Presidential election. Adopt his theory; establish the precedent; accustom the people to acquiesce in the usurpation, and you will have a congressional majority changing the suffrage whenever it may be a convenient means of keeping themselves in power. An ambitious President, with a subservient majority in Congress; in possession of the machinery of the Federal Government; our political system centralized under the popular reaction against the heresy of secession, until the moral force of the States to restrain is gone; and a supreme control over the suffrage is all that is wanting to complete and consummate a practical revolution in our government. Your future masters may indulge you a while in the forms of election, if they be allowed to make over the constituent bodies as often and as much as they please, letting in and shutting out voters, to maintain their ascendancy. An addition of nine hundred and thirty-two thousand negroes, most of them emancipated slaves, without any of the training or traditions, or aspirations of freemen; who would as soon vote to make their favorite an emperor as to make him a president, will be a convenient accessory. And when their representatives get into power, who can doubt that they are capable of being made facile instruments of excluding opponents as well as of admitting allies. How do you think Senator Brownlow and his twenty associates would vote on a bill to regulate the suffrage by admitting negroes in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois? How would they vote on a bill to regulate the suffrage by excluding Irishmen or Germans? Do you think they would not assert the superior rights of the negroes born in this country or of foreigners?

Is it not at least prudent for all who possess the suffrage to keep the regulation of it where it now is—in the constitutions of the several States?

#### WITH WHOM SHALL WE SHARE SELF-GOVERNMENT?

One other topic, and I have done: Our civil and social polity, which is rapidly extending over the unoccupied portions of this continent, is peculiar. The ideal to which it is approximating is that of a system of commonwealths in which all are equals before the law, and all adult males exercise the suffrage. Our wise ancestors warned us that this grand experiment in self-government would turn on the intelligence and virtue of the people; and that our efforts to educate and elevate must be commensurate with our diffusion of political rights and political power. It is a great partnership in self-government. Every man yields a share in the government over himself to every other man, and acquires a share in the government over that other man. But like a partnership in business, or by marriage in the family, the important question is, with whom shall we enter into so intimate and complex a relation. The American people have always answered that question, by FOUNDED THE STATE UPON THE FAMILY.

Whatever element could be absorbed into the homogeneous mass, indistinguishable as a drop of water in the ocean; whatever element could be admitted into the family, which is the basis of society, has been admitted into the State. Whatever element could never enter the family, and could only exist in society as a caste, separate and incapable of amalgamation with the mass, has been refused admission into the State as a part of its electoral or governing body. That has been the principle. Instances of deviation have happened only where the element was so inconsiderable as to deprive the question of all importance.

We have everywhere hitherto refused to enter into a partnership in self-government with inferior or with mixed races.

#### WITH MEXICANS?

I remember that twenty-one years ago there seemed to be danger that the spirit of territorial extension would lead some of the Democratic party to favor the absorption of all of Mexico and the incorporation of the populated portions of that country into our system. For the purpose of checking that tendency, a declaration was prepared by a great statesman of that day, and was made public, to the effect that to hold Mexico as a province would be contrary to the principles of our institutions, and would tend to their subversion; and that the destinies of our great experiment in self-government could not be safely committed to the issue of a partnership in it with the six millions of the mixed races which formed three-quarters of the population of Mexico. I may add that, being consulted, I concurred in the measure.

#### WITH CHINESE?

Professor FAWCETT, in his recent work on political economy, predicts that immense swarms will yet come to our Pacific possessions from the countless millions of the Chinese. Could we accept into political partnership with us four and a half millions of them?

#### WITH INDIANS?

The Indians were here before us, and before the importations of the Africans. If four and a half millions of Indians still existed here, with

nine hundred and thirty-two thousand males over twenty-one years of age, would any man seriously propose to enter into a partnership in self-government with them?

#### WITH AFRICANS?

In 1860, the slaves amounted to nearly four millions, and the free colored to nearly half a million. The males over twenty-one years of age, of both classes, were about seven hundred and eight thousand in the ten States, and about two hundred and twenty-four thousand in the other States; making an aggregate of nine hundred and thirty-two thousand.

#### THE GREAT EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION.

The immigrants, who have contributed so much to swell the population of our northern States, spring from the same parent stocks with ourselves. They come to rejoin their kindred. Races have a growth and culture as well as individuals. What a race has been many centuries in accumulating, is often appropriated and developed in an individual life, in the ascent from the humblest origin to the highest attainments of the species. Our accessions are drawn from races which have lived under essentially the same climatic influences with ourselves—which have attained the highest civilization—and made the largest progress in the arts and industries of mankind. They are attracted here by their aspirations for civil liberty or for the improvement of their personal condition, and every aspiration ennobles. They are well represented in all our occupations which call for intellect and culture; and even the portion which come to fill the ranks of raw labor made vacant by the ascent to more skilled and more remunerative employments which our universal education opens to all, show a capacity to quickly follow in the noble competition for improvement. The theme is important and interesting, but I can not now touch so great a subject. I intended merely to call attention to the one primary fact.

These immigrants enter the American family, without the slightest repugnance on either side which can be ascribed to differences of race. All the various motives of choice, which operate between individuals of the same race exist. But there is no repulsion of races. They commingle in the family. I cannot discuss what the effect will be upon our future population. The opinion of physiologists seems to be that it ought to form a higher type of mankind. In Massachusetts it appears to be the stay of the population from a decline. In 1865, while the American population was 79 per cent, the children of American parents were but 45 per cent; and of mixed parentage 8 per cent. For every five marriages between Americans, there was one between an American and a foreign-born person; and of these mixed marriages nearly three-fifths were foreign males with American brides. The foreign-born residents of Massachusetts are chiefly Irish. The secretary of the Commonwealth, in his last statistical report, drily observes: "*The domestication of foreign agricultural laborers in the homes of American farmers may be the cause of this.*"

#### THE SOCIAL ORGANISM.

In our body politic, as in the human system, what can be digested and assimilated is nutrition; it is the source of health and life. What remains incapable of being digested and assimilated can

be only an element of disease and death. The question in respect to it is always this:—Whether the vital forces are strong enough to prevail over it, and excrete it from the system.

One might carry this analogy further. In 1790, the group of States north of Mason and Dixon's line, and the group of States south, had each a population rather less than 2,000,000. They differed a little more than 7,000.

#### IMMIGRATION OVERTHREW SLAVERY.

After careful examination, I am satisfied that all the superiority which the North gained in population in the seventy years between 1790 and 1860 may be traced to immigration.

I have ever felt the greatest interest in the form of society in which I was born, and been ready to defend and protect it. As soon as the great development of immigration, which began twenty-one years ago, was apparent as an enduring force, I felt that we of the North could safely trust to it all questions between the rival systems of industry and society which existed in our country, and that the highest statesmanship was to keep the peace between the sections until both should see that a power greater than either had determined the ultimate solution of every such controversy.

#### AND GAVE SUCCESS TO THE NORTH IN THE WAR.

The ascendancy of the North in the government, its triumph in the war, are both due to the same cause. Of the immigrants who have come here within forty years, from 1820 to 1860, 41.2 per cent. were males between the ages of 15 and 40, while but twenty-one and a half per cent. of our own white population in 1860 was of the same class. In 21 years, from Jan. 1, 1847, to Jan. 1, 1868, two millions and a third of males between 15 and 40 have been added to our strength, or about as much as are contained in eleven and a half millions of our population.

If the South had succeeded in establishing a separate government, it must still have confronted the same difficulty, and must, by exclusion, have dwarfed itself by our side into impotency, or within fifty years have reproduced the same conflict within its own boundaries.

Whether the renovation of the South must be looked for from the same source, in a constant enlargement of the proportion of the whites,—with a diminished rate of natural increase for the blacks, and a continued drift of them toward the tropics, is a speculation on which I will not now enter.

But of one thing we may be assured. The admission of the inferior races into our political system is simply a question of quantity. As a separate people, I have heard no man profess to believe that they could maintain such a government as ours. There is no experience to warrant such an expectation. The experiment is a failure in Mexico. It is a failure everywhere in South America. The question recurs,—how much of so evil a dilution we can afford?

The presence of the race here raises the question; it creates a difficult problem, which ought to be dealt with in a spirit of liberal humanity, and of wise statesmanship.

#### ALIENAGE NOT MAINLY A QUESTION OF BIRTH.

But there are other things besides the rights and interests of the blacks to be considered; other rights and interests to be consulted. There

is an alienage more incurable than the alienage of birth. Is the descendant who comes here now of a neighbor or a relative of my ancestor who came here almost two and a half centuries ago, less to me than the descendant of a barbarian from Africa who came to South Carolina by an act which we now stigmatize and punish as piracy?

Our laws require for the immigrant of our own blood, who comes from the most highly civilized nations of Europe, and of a race perfected by many centuries of culture,—however great may be his personal endowments,—a novitiate of five years. The Republicans require *none* for the emancipated slaves. The suffrage amendment adopted by the Republican majority of our Constitutional Convention, enables every one of the 920,000 now outside of this State to come here, and on a year's residence, exercise the suffrage and become eligible to all our official trusts. It invites them to come. The Republicans were not content to confine these privileges to such as are now residents here,—or to such as were born here, or such as have already acquired the suffrage. They extended the offer to the whole class; and they voted down a proposition, to impose upon such as might come into the State, a novitiate analogous to that which is imposed on immigrants. They did this while inventing and applying every ingenious obstruction to the exercise of the suffrage by the adopted citizen and by the white race generally.

Probably no large number will come; but that cannot be certainly foreseen. At any rate, it is not the best reason for making a rule, that it will probably be inoperative; but, if it were to be operative, could not be endured. As a judgment on the question of the relative fitness of the classes,—which it theoretically is,—it is absurd and unjust.

#### ALIENAGE A QUESTION OF CHARACTER—AFFINITY.

I deny that the mere place of birth is more important than the nature of the man himself. A man born in the land of our ancestors may become, in every essential characteristic, a native here almost immediately. A man descended from an African may be, after the lapse of centuries, still an alien.

#### THE QUESTION OF RIGHTS.

If a Mississippi plantation hand has a right to demand of every New Yorker that the two should divide equally the government of both, I should like to be instructed as to the origin and nature of that right. Is it a constitutional right? I answer that the Constitution leaves the whole matter to the States. Is it a natural right? I ask whether he has also a natural right to thirteen times as much voice in the Senate as a New Yorker.

Has he likewise a "natural right" that the State governments be stripped of their constitutional authorities—and the federal executive and the federal judiciary—and that all the powers of human society on this continent be concentrated in Congress, and a disproportionate share of them in the Senate? Has he a natural right that his representation in that body (thirteen times that of a New Yorker) should become a representation, so disproportioned, in all the governing powers of our country?

Might not the New Yorker ask that he wait a little, and have the readjustments on both sides take place at the same time—at least so far that the natural right of the Mississippi plantation-



hand should not swallow up all the natural rights of the New Yorker?

I demand to know a little further of the quality of this natural right. How did this Mississippi plantation-hand acquire, as against this New Yorker, a natural right to the suffrage denied to this New Yorker's wife or to his son, if under twenty-one?

I have said that the presence of the race here creates a problem which ought to be considered wisely and humanely. But does it create an absolute right to the suffrage and to eligibility to official trusts? The race is not here by our act. This New Yorker, whose rights and interests are so deeply concerned, did not bring the African here. Let us be just. Neither did the southern people. That presence here is the fatal fruit of the rapacity of the English government in a former age, against the persistent remonstrances of Virginia, which was then the South.

I deny that the mere fact of that presence here creates such absolute and unlimited rights as are claimed for it, to a partnership in self-government—against us who are in no manner responsible for that presence. I deny that it divests us of the right to exercise a reasonable precaution for our own safety. I especially deny that it gives them a right to rule us, lest perchance we may abuse our power over them.

I say there are other rights and interests to be consulted besides those of the emancipated slaves. The rights and interests of that class are entitled to thoughtful care; and no man would rejoice more than myself to see them advance in the scale of humanity. But I think the system adopted by the Republicans is a great mistake even for the welfare of that class. They live in the midst of the white race in their own localities. They must ultimately need good relations with the community of which they are a part. What can be done for them must at last be done through the white race in their localities, which can understand and manage the complicated relations of their condition better than anybody else. The North can not. The Federal Government can not. That the white race would not have fulfilled this trust, if allowed, with justice and humanity, in the main, there is no ground to dispute but prejudice and hatred. At any rate, no machinery can long be maintained by us to supervise such relations.

To put the freedmen in supremacy over the white race in ten States, in order to protect the interests of the freedman, is an absurdity inferior only to the next expedient, of giving them a practical domination in the Federal Government, over the whole North, in order to perfect and consummate that protection.

#### THE LATE "SLAVE POWER."

The Republicans have educated our people to overthrow what they called the "Slave Power." Analyze it. What was it? It was the influence which 350,000 heads of families, embracing 2,000,000 of the white race, owning slaves, and living intermingled with 6,000,000 of other whites not owning slaves, were capable of exercising, over public opinion, and thereby upon the government. It gave us Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Munroe, Jackson, Marshall, Clay, and hosts of other statesmen and patriots; and whatever influence could be exercised by it was only through the consent of millions of civilized people of our race.

The struggle to overthrow it has cost the whole country a million of lives, and four thousand millions of dollars.

And now what is it proposed to the people of the great populous commonwealths of the North to accept in exchange, and as the recompense for such immense sacrifices?

#### THE COMING NEGRO POWER.

The political power of the States where slavery once existed will remain, and after the next census will be enlarged by the representation of all, instead of three-fifths of the former slaves. That power in the ten States, if the system of the Republicans shall prevail and continue,—at any rate for the next few years, which involve peculiarly all the business interests of the country,—is to be wielded by a few hundred adventurers, through the three millions of emancipated slaves. And the centralization of our governmental authorities, will cause it to act vastly more upon all our interests. It will give us Hannicut for Washington, Underwood for Jefferson, and Brownlow for Jackson. Every element of this power would be inferior in morality and intelligence to the one which has been overthrown; and its influence upon our welfare would be immensely greater.

Will the people of our great Northern States accept a domination of such a "negro power," erected on the ruins of such a "slave power"?

#### CONCLUSION.

I do not ask what will be the consequences on the white race of ten States; whether the white race will be expelled; I do not ask what will be the effects upon our industrial or commercial interests, or on the civilization of a portion of our country three and half times as large as the French empire.

If the authors of this policy tell you that the white people of the South deserve this infliction, I ask you whether you also deserve it? If, taking counsel of hatred, you think you are making a government for your late enemies, I remind you you are also making a government for yourselves. Do the twenty-five millions of white people out of the ten States deserve such a government as you are imposing on them?

The masses of the Republicans do not understand the real nature of the system they are contributing to establish. They are misled by party association and party antagonism, by the animosities created by the war, and the unsettled ideas which grow out of the novelty of the situation. The leaders are full of party passion and party ambition, and will not easily surrender the power of a centralized government, or the patronage and profits which are incident to an official expenditure of five hundred millions a year. The grim Puritan of New England, whose only child, whose solitary daughter, is already listening to the soft music of a Celtic wooer,—stretches his hand down along the Atlantic coast to the receding and decaying African, and says: "Come, let us rule this continent together!" The twelve Senators from New England—with twenty from the ten States, would require only a few from Missouri, Tennessee, West Virginia, and from new States,—to make a majority.

I do not forbid the bans. I simply point to the region which stretches from the Hudson to the Missouri. It is there that the Democracy must display their standards, in another, and, I trust, a ~~new~~ battle for constitutional government

and civil liberty. I invited you to that theatre last year. I come now to bid you, God speed!

Every business, every industrial interest is paralyzed under excessive taxation—false systems of finance—extravagant cost of production—diminished ability to consume. You cannot obtain relief until you change your governmental policy. You cannot change that, until you change the

men who administer your government. The causes of the dangers in respect to our political institutions and civil liberty, and the causes of your suffering in business, are identical. For the safety of the one, and for the relief of the other, you must demand of the people a CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION AS NOW CARRIED ON BY CONGRESS.

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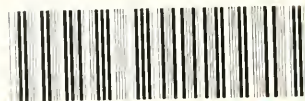
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