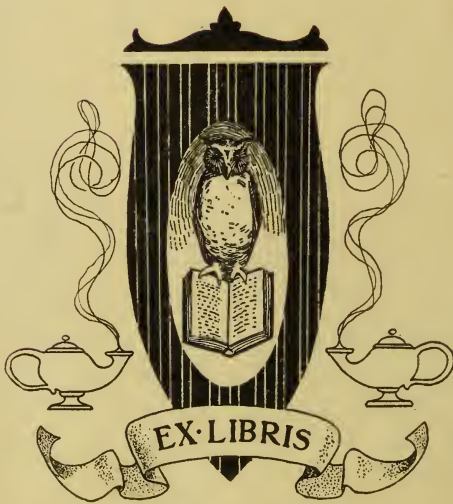




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SPEECH

OF

CHARLES NAYLOR,

OF

PENNSYLVANIA,

ON THE

BILL IMPOSING ADDITIONAL DUTIES

AS DEPOSITARIES,

IN CERTAIN CASES,

ON PUBLIC OFFICERS.

DELIVERED IN

THE U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

OCTOBER 13, 1837.

LANCASTER.



SPEECH.

The bill imposing additional duties on public officers being under consideration in the committee of the whole on the state of the Union,

Mr. NAYLOR, of Pennsylvania, said, it was with great reluctance that he rose, for the first time, in this hall. He felt himself *obliged* to rise. Yes, (said Mr. N.,) I am *impelled* to speak. I cannot remain silent. I voted for the introduction of this bill to our deliberations some days since, on purpose to afford the honorable gentleman from South Carolina, (Mr. Pickens,) an opportunity to express his views in relation to it.— I perceived his anxiety to speak and felt a friendly disposition to gratify him. If I were surprised when I heard him draw into the vortex of discussion the exciting topics of abolition, Texas, slavery and loco focoism, topics which have nothing to do with this subject; what must have been my feelings when I heard him denounce the institutions of the North as mercenary and slavish, and exalt those of the South as ancient, patriarchal, and almost perfect; boldly avow that the labourers of the North were the subjects of the Northern capitalists; put the Northern workmen on a footing with the Southern slaves, and threaten to preach insurrection to the labourers of the North. Yes, preach insurrection to the Northern laborers!

I am a Northern labourer. Aye, sir, it has been my lot to have inherited as my only patrimony at the early age of nine years nothing but naked orphanage and utter destitution; houseless and homeless, fatherless and penniless, I was obliged, from that day forward, to earn my daily bread by my daily labour. And now sir, now sir, when I take my seat in this hall as the free representative of a free people, am I to be *sneered* at a Northern labourer, and degraded into a comparison with the poor, oppressed and suffering negro slave? Is such the genius and spirit of our institutions? If it be, then did our fathers fight, and bleed, and struggle, and die in vain!

But, sir, the gentleman has misconceived the spirit and tendency of Northern institutions. He is ignorant of Northern character. He has forgotten the history of his country. Preach insurrection to Northern labourers! Preach insurrection to *me*! Who are the Northern labourers? The history of your country is *their* history. The renown of your country is *their* renown. The brightness of their doings is emblazoned on its every page. Blot from your annals the deeds and the doings of *Northern Laborers*, and the history of your country presents but a universal blank.

Sir, who was he that disarmed the thunder, wrested from his grasp the bolts of Jove, calmed the troubled ocean, became the central sun of the philosophical system of his age, shedding his brightness and effulgence on the whole civilized world—whom the great and mighty of the earth delighted to honor; who participated in the achievement of your independence; who prominently assisted in moulding your free institutions, and the beneficial effects of whose wisdom will be felt to the last moment of "recorded time." Who sir, I ask, was he? A Northern labourer—a yankee tallow chandler's son,—a printer's runaway boy!

And who, let me ask the honorable gentleman, who was he that in the days of our revolution led forth a Northern army, yes, an army of Northern labourers, and led

spoilers from their firesides, and redeemed her fair fields from foreign invaders;—who was he? A Northern labourer, a Rhode Island blacksmith—the gallant General Greene,—who left his hammer and his forge and went forth, conquering and to conquer, in the battles for our independence! And will you preach insurrection to men like these?

Sir, our country is full of the glorious achievements of Northern labourers! Where is Concord, and Lexington, and Princeton, and Trenton, and Saratoga, and Bunker Hill, but in the North? And what, sir, has shed an imperishable renown on the never-dying names of those hallowed spots but the blood and the struggles, the high daring and patriotism, and sublime courage of Northern laborers? The whole North is an everlasting monument of the freedom, virtue, intelligence and indomitable independence of Northern labourers! Go, sir, go preach insurrection to men like these!

The fortitude of the men of the North under intense suffering for liberty's sake, has been almost God-like! History has so recorded it. Who comprised that gallant army that without food, without pay, shelterless, shoeless, penniless, and almost naked, in that dreadful winter,—the midnight of our revolution, whose wanderings could be traced by their blood-tracks in the snow!—whom no arts could seduce, no appeal lead astray, no suffering disaffect, but who, true to their country and its holy cause, continued to fight the good fight of liberty, until it finally triumphed. Who, sir, were these men? Why, Northern labourers; yes sir, Northern labourers!

Who, sir, were Roger Sherman, and—but it is idle to enumerate. To name the northern labourers who have distinguished themselves and illustrated the history of their country, would require days of the time of this house. Nor is it necessary. Posterity will do them justice. Their deeds have been recorded in characters of fire!

And such are the working-men of the North at this time. They have not degenerated; they are in all respects worthy of their intelligent and sturdy sires. Whose blood was so profusely shed, during the last war, on the Canada lines—but that of the Northern labourers? Who achieved the glorious victories of Perry and McDonough on the Lakes—but the Northern laborers? Yes, they “met the enemy and made them *theirs!*” Who, sir, have made our ships the models for all Europe, and sent forth in the late war those gallant vessels that gave our little navy the first place in the marine annals of the world, and covered our arms on the ocean in a blaze of glory,—but the skill and intellect and patriotism of the Northern labourers? And who, sir, manned these vessels and went forth and for the first time humbled the British Lion on the ocean—but the northern labourers? And who sir, was he, that noble Tar, who wounded and bleeding and mangled and to all appearances lifeless on the deck of one of our ships, on hearing that the flag of the enemy had struck and that victory had perched on the proud banner of his country,—raised up his feeble, mangled form, opened his languid eyes once more to the light of heaven, waived his palsied hand round his head in token of his joy and fell back and died. Who sir, was he? why a Northern labourer, a Northern labourer! And yet these men are the slaves of the North, to whom the honorable gentleman is about to preach insurrection.

(Mr. Pickens explained and said, in substance, that he had spoken only of the *tendency* of Northern Institutions to make the workingmen of the North tributary to the capitalist, and to prevent them from rising from their laborious situation. That he had not degraded them into a comparison with the slaves, but had said that if the people of the north would continue to interfere with the slaves of the South, that *then* he (Mr. Pickens) would preach insurrection to the Northern labourer.)

Mr. Naylor resumed and said, I have not misunderstood the honorable gentleman.—That the Honorable gentleman does treat the Northern workmen as Southern slaves is evident from what he has just said. If he had not intended to place them in the same degraded situation of slaves, how could he threaten to preach *insurrection* among them? Sir, the honorable gentleman has mistaken the tendency of Northern institutions, as much as he has misconceived the worth and spirit of Northern character. Our institutions have no such tendency,—no, sir, but exactly the reverse. They raise up the labourer. They place every man upon an equality. They give to all equal rights, and equal chances, and hold out to all equal inducements to action. Northern institutions do not take down the Northern labourer! The whole history of the North from the

I appeal to the Representatives from Pennsylvania. I ask you, sirs, who is JOSEPH RITNER, that distinguished man who at this very moment fills the executive chair of your great State; a man, who, in all that constitutes high moral and intellectual worth has few superiors in this country,—one who has all the qualities of head and heart necessary to accomplish the great statesman, and who possesses, in the most enlarged degree, all the elements of human greatness,—Who, sirs, is he? A Northern labourer,—a Pennsylvania wagoner— who, for years, drove his team from Pittsburg to Philadelphia, “over the mountain, and over the moor,” not “whistling as he went,”—no sir, but preparing himself then, by deep cogitation and earnest application, for the high destiny which the future had in store for him. And who, let me ask the same gentlemen, who is JAMES TODD, the present Attorney general of Pennsylvania,—distinguished for the extent of his legal acquirements, for the comprehensive energy of his mind, for his strength of argument, and vigorous elocution; who, sir, is he? He too, is a Northern labourer, a Pennsylvania wood-chopper,—in early childhood a destitute, desolate orphan, bound out by the Overseers of the Poor as an apprentice to a labourer! These, sir, are some of the fruits of Northern institutions; some of the slaves to whom the honorable gentleman will have to preach insurrection!

But if the Northern institutions be hostile to equality, and have the effect that the honorable gentleman contends for, to keep down the workingmen, and make them tributary to the capitalists; how comes it, how comes it, that I am now, at an early age, a representative in this hall? Sir, the gentleman is utterly, utterly deceived as to the effect of our institutions, and the character of public sentiment in the North.

Fellow freemen of my own, my native district; bankers, capitalists, and merchants, (so much denounced,) manufacturers, mechanics, and labourers, I appeal to you all:—Did it ever occur to any one of you when I was a candidate for the high office to which your free suffrages have elevated me, did it, I say, ever occur to any one of you to object to me because poverty, orphanage, and destitution had once made me a labourer for my daily bread? No sirs, no, I will do you the justice to answer for you, no!—Your enquiry was not “is he rich or poor, a labourer, a capitalist, a banker or a merchant?”—but “is he a man,—has he ability enough moderately to sustain our interests in the great councils of the nation, and nerve and moral courage enough fearlessly to defy the assaults of power, and to vindicate the outraged principles of our Constitution?” And here, sir, I now am; and what is there to prevent me from taking my stand by the side of the proudest man in this hall?

Mr. Chairman, it is not the first time that I have heard a parallel run between the slaves of the South, and the working-men of the North. For a while, sir, that parallel was made as to the relative condition of the free negroes of the North, and the slaves of the South. Recently, however, some of those who advocate the surpassing excellence of the slave institutions of the South, have taken a bolder and more daring stand. Racking their brains for arguments and illustrations to justify slavery as it prevails among *them*, they have hazarded the bold proposition that slavery exists in every country; and that in the north, the operatives, though nominally free, are, in fact, the slaves of the capitalists. Such a proposition is monstrous. I tell you, sir, gentlemen deceive themselves. They slander the free institutions of their country. They wrong the most intelligent and enterprising class of men upon earth. I know them well; I have been long associated with them. I have seen them form themselves into libraries and other associations for intellectual improvement. I have seen them avail themselves of every leisure moment for mental culture. I have seen them learned in the languages, skilled in the sciences, and informed in all that is necessary to give elevation to the character of man, and to fit him for the high destinies for which he was designed.—Let the honorable gentleman go among them, and he will find them in all respects equal to those who make it their boast that they own all the labourers in the South.—Yes, sir, as well qualified to become honourable rulers of a free people,—having heads fitted for the highest councils, and fearless hearts and sinewy arms for the enemies of this great nation.

Mr. Chairman, I call upon gentlemen of the North to bear witness to the truth of what I have said; I call upon them to look back to the days of their childhood and say whom have they seen attain honor, distinction, wealth and affluence? Are they not the

working, the industrious parts of society? And do not the institutions of the North necessarily lead to such results? Sir, when I pause, for a moment, and behold what are now the little destitute playmates of my childhood, I am overwhelmed with astonishment. Some of them have gone forth from their homes, become drafters and signers of declarations of Independence, founders of new Empires, breakers of the chains of despotism, and the earth, even in their youth, has drunk up their blood, shed willingly in the cause of the rights of man. Some have ministered at the altar of their divine Master. Some have led the bar, adorned the Senate, illustrated the judiciary; and others have wandered in the flowery fields of literature, trod in the cool tranquilizing paths of philosophy, delved in the depths of science, and compassed the world with their enterprize. In a word, civilization has no pursuit that they have not already honoured and adorned. And yet these men are some of the fruits of those odious institutions, against which the eloquent gentleman has undertaken his crusade.

Sir, it is the glory of the Northern institutions that they give to every man, poor and rich, high and low, the same fair play. They place the honours, emoluments and distinctions of the country before him and say "go, run your race for the prize, the reward shall encircle the brow of the most worthy." Thus it is that every one feels and knows that he has a clear field before him, and that with industry, prudence and perseverance, he can command success in any honorable undertaking. He knows that his industry is his *own*; his efforts are his *own* and that every blow he strikes, whilst it redounds to his *own* immediate advantage, contributes also to the good of the community, and the glory and renown of his country. All honorable employments are open to him. The halls of legislation are open to him; the bar is open to him; the fields of science are before him; there is no barrier between him and the object of his ambition, but such as industry and perseverance may overcome.

Look at the workings of their institutions upon the appearance of the North. Look at her mighty cities, her forests of masts, her smiling villages, her fertile fields, her productive mines, her numerous charities, her ten thousand improvements. Behold my own, my native State. Pennsylvania is intellectualized under their auspices.— Her soil and hills and valleys and rocks and everlasting mountains live and breathe under the animating influence of her intelligent, and hard working population; every stream feeds its canal, every section of country has its rail-road, distance is annihilated, the flinty ribs of her rocky mountains are driven assunder, the bowels of the earth yield forth their treasures and the face of the earth blooms and blossoms and fructifies like a paradise. And all this, all this is the result of the intelligence, industry and enterprize of Northern laborers, fostered by the genial influence of their institutions.

Nor are their efforts confined to their own country alone. Their industry and enterprize compass the whole earth. There is not a wave under heaven that their keels have not parted; not a breeze ever stirred to which they have not unfurled the starry banner of their country. Go to the frozen ocean of the North and you will find them there; to the ocean in the extreme South and you will find them there. Nature has no difficulty that they have not overcome—the world no limit that they have not attained.

In every department of mind do the institutions of the North exert a wholesome, a developing influence. Sir, it was but a few days since that you saw the members of this house gathered round the electro-magnetic machine of Mr. Davenport. There they stood, mute and motionless; beholding, for the first time, the secret, sublime, and mysterious principles of nature applied to mechanics; and there was the machine, visible to all eyes, moving with the rapidity of lightning, without any apparent cause. But the genius that made the application of this sublime and mysterious influence, who is he but a laboring, hard-working blacksmith of the North?

Sir, where do learning, literature and science flourish—but in the North? Where does the press teem with the products of mind—but in the North? Where are the scientific institutions, the immense libraries, rivalling almost at this early day, Europe's vast accumulations, but in the North? And who, sir, gives form and grace and life and proportion to the shapeless, marble, but the sculptor of the North. Yes, sir, and there too does the genius of the pencil contribute her glowing creations to the stock of

Northern renown. To Northern handywork are you indebted for the magnificence of this mighty Capitol. And those noble historical pieces now filling the panels of the Rotunda, which display the beginning, progress, and consummation of your revolution, and give to all posterity the living forms and beaming countenances of the fathers of your republic; they, too, are the works of a Northern artist!

But before I conclude this branch of my subject, let me make one observation that I had almost forgotten. The gentleman seems to think that our workmen must of necessity be the passive instruments of our capitalists. His idea of the power and influence of wealth, controlling the very destinies of the man who labours, must be derived from the institutions of his own generous South; where he frankly avows that the capitalist *does* absolutely own the labourers. His views, are, however, utterly inapplicable to the North. Who are the Northern capitalists of to day, but the pennyless apprentices of yesterday? Sir, in the North there is scarcely a class of men existing exclusively as capitalists. The character of capitalist and labourer is there united in the same person. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, he who is a capitalist has become so by his own industry and perseverance. He begins as an humble "labourer"—his industry, virtue and integrity his only capital. He gradually accumulates. Every day of toil increases his means. His means are then united to his labour and he receives the just and honest profits of them both. Thus he goes on joining his accumulations with his labour, receiving the profits of his capital and his toil, scattering the fruits of his efforts abroad for the benefit of society, living in manly independence and laying up a stock of comfort and enjoyment for his declining years. Such was the rich Girard, the "merchant and mariner," as he styles himself in his last will. He began his career a destitute cabin-boy. And such are the capitalists all over the north. They were all laborers some few years since; and the humble operative of to day *must* and *will* be the wealthy capitalist in some few years to come; and so far are the institutions of the North from retarding his advance, that they encourage him, aid him, cheer, cherish and sustain him in his onward career.

But, sir, there is no limit to this subject. I will pursue it no farther. I might easily exhaust myself, but the subject is inexhaustible. What I have said has been said to vindicate the character of my constituents, from unjust attacks and to relieve the institutions of the North from the burden of denunciation which has been so profusely heaped upon them. I have uttered nothing in a spirit of disparagement to the South. No, Heaven forbid! I am incapable of it. The whole country is *my* country. To me there is neither North nor South, nor East nor West. I am a humble representative of it *all*. Our fathers fought and bled and died for it *all*. And how can we, their sons, if we respect their principles and cherish and venerate their memories, how can we quarrel about local difficulties and foster sectional jealousies? I stand here the representative of the *whole country*. Not an inch of any part of that country shall be disparaged with my consent. Whatever concerns its honor and renown deeply and dearly concerns me. I will scrupulously respect the rights and feelings of every section of the country, and do all in my power to advance, nothing to retard its peculiar interests except where they may come into conflict with some great fundamental principle which must not be sacrificed. I will exert my influence to heal sectional differences, extirpate petty jealousies, foster a becoming spirit of conciliation, promote universal harmony among the different portions of the Union, and make the Union itself as everlasting as the soil which it embraces. With these feelings and this determination I have come into this house. But, sir, I never *can* and never *will* remain silent when the rights, or interests, or characters, or institutions of my own immediate constituents are attacked. No, sir, let that attack come from what quarter it may, I will be ever prompt to offer my feeble resistance and interpose my voice in their just vindication!

I now beg leave, Mr. Chairman, to make a few remarks more immediately connected with the bill under consideration. By the madness and folly of her rulers, our country has been precipitated to a crisis. We have been convened here to meet that crisis. That is, the people and this house have been so informed. But *have* we met it? *Are* we meeting it? No, sir, we have been called here to do what this house has been doing for the last six years, to echo the will and further the wishes of the Executive; to carry out the recommendations of the President's Message; to *cease* to be

the free representatives of the people, and to become the pliant instruments of power. Nothing is to be introduced to our deliberations but what the President has recommended. Petitions are presented, and they are trampled under foot; plans of relief are suggested, and they are laid upon the table. The people demand from you, through their representatives, a fair and impartial hearing, and you meet them with that gag of despotism—the previous question. And when we ask why is all this—we are impudently told that we must attend to the relief of the Government; that we have nothing to do with the people; that the President has submitted *his* plans, and that right or wrong we must sustain them; that *he* has chalked out to us the line of our Legislative duties, and that we must follow that line, *toe the mark, yes, toe the mark*, is their phrase, and then go home and tell our constituents that we have slavishly done our master's bidding.

Sir, it is by conduct like this that our country has been precipitated from the height of prosperity into the very depths of distress. This House is responsible for much of the evil under which the people are now groaning. Their Representatives in Congress have been faithless to them. They have surrendered up their independence and become the mere echo of the President's will. Instead of freely deliberating and choosing what was best for the people and the country, they have been watching the ever-changing countenance of the Executive, and ascertaining what were his wishes, and determinations—and thus have they been slavishly echoing and re-echoing that will until the great fundamental interests of the country have been entirely sacrificed. The people have been lost sight of; those who were their servants have become their masters. I ask every candid man whether the legislation of Congress has not, for many years, conformed in every important particular to the commands of the Executive? Whether the reclamations of the administration have not been the law of the land? Let us revert to the history of the past and see what are the lessons that it teaches.

Large majorities of both houses of Congress passed an act for the re-charter of the Bank of the United States. The democratic Legislature of my own state, Pennsylvania, unanimously recommended it. It was vetoed by the President. And what did Congress do? Why, sir, changed their opinion—echoed that veto! Yes, we saw the very man who drafted and advocated the bill for re-chartering the Bank, (Mr. Dallas,) presiding at a Town Meeting a few weeks afterwards, and there opposing the very measure of which he was the author and father; aye, turning at the beck of the President, like Saturn of old, to destroy his own offspring. This, perhaps, may have been all very well—but is it not a remarkable proof that members of Congress found it inconvenient to have opinions which did not exactly conform to those of the Executive.

But again: Congress investigated the situation of the Bank of the United States, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it still continued to be a safe depository of the public moneys. They found its situation to be sound and wholesome, and declared, by a large majority, that the deposits should be continued in it, according to law. The President, however, a short time afterwards determined otherwise, ordered the Secretary of the Treasury to lay violent hands upon the treasures of the nation, to take them from the place where Congress and the law declared they should be, and scatter them abroad over the land, by depositing them with the pet Banks; there to be used for the purpose of swelling the deluge of paper money, and of feeding and pampering and bloating the demoralizing spirit of speculation.

In sixty days afterwards, Congress met. Well, and what did members of Congress do? Did they adhere to their former resolution? No, sir, they *again* surrendered up their independence; *again* changed their opinion, and *again* echoed the will of the Executive.

Then it was, that the President formed his league of pet Banks. He conceived, and planned and put in operation a project which, according to his promise, was to banish Bank rags from the community, give us the best of currencies, and fill up the channels of circulation with gold. This was the sole work of the Executive and his agents. Congress had nothing to do with it. He submitted his plan, however, to Congress, in the form of a law, for their approval. They hesitated for a while, and grumbled a little; but not daring to disobey, they at length *again* complied with his requisitions, went through all the unmeaning forms and idle ceremonies necessary to

give it a legal shape, forgot the people and the country, and *again* echoed the will of the Executive!

But, sir, it is in vain to give further examples of the entire dependence of this house on the Executive. *The President has been passing our laws!* Congress, in truth and in fact, has had nothing to do with them! His will has been supreme. This House, instead of being the free representative body of the people, has been the representative of the President!

But the bubble has at length burst. The gilded project of which so much was promised and so much expected by an injured and confiding people, is at an end. While the people stood anxiously awaiting the realization of its promised advantages, it suddenly exploded and involved them and their business, the country, its exchanges, currency and prosperity in a scene of confusion and distress unparelled in the annals of our civil history. The government, from a hollow and bloated appearance of sanity, became suddenly bankrupt. The people were overwhelmed with distress, and from every quarter of the country asked relief from the evils that had come upon them.

Meeting then under these circumstances, I ask had we not a right to expect that Congress once more would resume its independence, and attend faithfully and fearlessly to the business of their constituents, and that the administration would now abandon its projects and give over its attempts to sway and subjugate and enslave the representatives of the country? But have our expectations been realized? What have we been about? What have we done? Let us see whether we have not again been subserviently echoing the will of the Executive?

Our first act was to pass a bill for the postponement of the payment of the fourth instalment to the States, to withhold from them the sum of upwards of nine millions of dollars, which, by the act of 23d June, 1836, we had contracted to put in their possession. By that law it is provided "that all the money in the Treasury of the United States, on the first of January 1837, reserving the sum of five millions of dollars, should be deposited with the States in proportion to their respective representation in the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States." Under this law it became the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury on the first of January 1837, to reserve five millions out of it for the use of the Government, and appropriate the balance, whatever it might be, to the States as already mentioned. The Secretary of the Treasury performed this duty, and found that there were upwards of forty-two millions of dollars in the Treasury. He reserved the five millions and then announced to the different States of the Union, that there was in the Treasury specifically set apart for them the sum of thirty-seven millions of dollars, to be paid to them in four instalments. The States agreed to receive the money. Three instalments of the money they *did* receive. The fourth and last instalment of between nine and ten millions of dollars was to have been paid to them on the first of this month. This is a plain unvarnished statement of the case. Thus we see that on the first day of January last, there was in the Treasury thirty-seven millions of money specifically set apart for the law for the States. There it was. The Secretary of the Treasury counted it and declared it to be there. Now, why has not this money been all paid to the States? Was it because this house passed a bill for the postponement of the last payment? No, sir, but *because this administration had previously used this money for their own purposes.* They, Martin Van Buren and his administration, betrayed the trust reposed in them, squandered the money—and when the Representatives of the people assembled here in special session, we are informed by the President and his Secretary of the Treasury that the money that was in the Treasury for the States is gone, has evaporated, and that we will have to postpone the payment of one fourth of it. Thus we see that the money was used by the administration. The President and his policy have postponed the payment of the fourth instalment. Congress has had nothing to do with it. The money was there for the States on the first of January last. When we met here in eight months afterwards it was not there. Suppose the Bill for postponing its payment had not been passed, could the States have got the money? No. Why? Because the administration had previously used the money that was specifically set apart for them. Thus you perceive that the executive postponed the payment of it. And after doing this he very modestly calls upon Congress to pass a law *to do what he had*

previously done! Well, and what did Congress do? Why *again* they echo the will of the President, pass a law postponing what had already been postponed, and declaring a *solemn falsehood to the whole country*; that *we*, yes, that *we* had withheld from the people of the States *nine millions and a half of money*, when it had been done months before by the executive rulers of our country!

This is the first exhibition of the independence of this body! If we continue thus to comply with the behests of power and to delude and betray the people, I ask, in the name of Heaven, what is to become of our country and its free institutions?

[Here the House took its usual recess. After the recess Mr. Naylor resumed.]

Mr. Charmin, the embarrassment incident to my novel situation and the excitement which hurried me on to vindicate Northern people, sustain Northern institutions and to shew their effect upon the community, caused me to forget this morning some of the topics that I had intended to introduce and to enlarge on others, that I expected only to have glanced at. It is too late, however, to take them up now. I will go on, therefore, where I left off.

The second great measure which the administration commanded you to pass, and which you *did* pass, was the Bill for the manufacture of ten millions of Treasury notes. Yes, ten millions of paper money—ten millions not of Bank rags, but government rags—ten millions of old continental paper—ten millions of shin plasters! And is it possible that these are the fruits of those long years of exciting, convulsing, distracting experiments which our Rulers promised us should produce such a safe and convenient currency, and flood the whole land with gold? Aye, gold, gold, was the cry; and now we *have* gold with a vengeance! The banner of our Rulers has had for its motto, not our country, nor liberty, nor patriotism, nor union, nor any other ennobling or inspiring sentiment; no, sir, but that miserable and mercenary promise “for gold, gold, gold.” For years have our people been mocked and deluded with the empty promise of gold. And now, at the very moment when they reach forth their expecting hands to possess it, like the gold which is said to reward a bargain with the Prince of darkness, it turns in their grasp into dust and ashes! The Government has been raking it together from all quarters of the earth. They have wrung it with an iron and unrelenting grasp from the possession of the people. They have forced it out of circulation. It is money no longer. It is now merchandize. It is bought and sold, as you would buy your bread or any other necessary or convenience of life. The people are forced to buy it in order to pay their debts to the government. And what does the government do with it? pay it back to the people? No, sir, no, but magnanimously gives it to the office holders, who then *sell* it to the people at a profit of from seven to twelve per cent. The people *again* pay it to the government from which, as before, it immediately passes to the office holders, who *again* sell it to the people at a large profit. Thus it moves round and round in one continued and contracted circle, cursing the people, and taking at every turn from their hard earnings the amount of premium paid for it and enriching the pampered office holder, just in proportion as it robs them. In the meantime the office holders have got the government exclusively to themselves. They have all the gold to themselves. They tell us that the government and the people must be separate and distinct, that it was never intended that the government should sympathise with their sufferings, or extend relief to their distresses. And how, sir, does this golden government with its immense possessions pay its own debts? What do they give to the hard toiling mechanic,—the aged, feeble and tottering war worn soldier of the revolution? And what has the country for a currency? Why, rags, not “bank rags” alone no, (for they grow more scarce every day) but all kinds of rags—a complete piece of patch work, an undistinguished gathering together of rottenness and confusion. And to crown the whole, the President and his gilded partizans, have passed the bill for the manufacture of ten millions more of rags, with which still further to curse the country—the bill creating ten millions of paper money for the people!

In the name of Heaven, I ask, when will this evil end? When will members of Congress be members of Congress? break the shackles that bind them to the blind and dark and ferocious spirit of power and stand forth the free representatives of the country?

Mr. Chairman, what an awful reckoning must the people have with those in power? Sir, the account must be made up sooner or later, between them and those rulers who

have been promising only to deceive them, sporting with their hopes, trampling down their interests, marring their enterprises and bruising their tenderest sympathies. The day of reckoning *must* come, *will* come! As certainly as truth must prevail over error, as certainly as rights must be vindicated and injuries redressed, so certainly will the people have justice, aye, and vengeance too, for the many wrongs with which a long course of misrule has visited them. We have already heard the rumbling at a distance. The volcano will burst forth. I warn gentlemen,—I warn the administration to “flee from the wrath to come!”

But, sir, I have again been hurried beyond my subject. I intended to have alluded to the Treasury note bill only to show that this measure like all others had been passed in conformity with the President’s will.

The opposition in this house did all that reasonable men could do to prevent its passage. One submitted a plan for the collection of the debts, owing by the deposit Banks and showing conclusively that, by this means, the government could get their money from the Banks and be saved the mortifying expedient of issuing ten millions of rag money. But no, it would not do. His proposition was not listened to. Another gentleman submitted a plan for the sale of the bonds, which were given by the Bank of the United States, and not yet due to the government; proving satisfactorily that this would entirely disconnect the government from the Bank, and raise money amply sufficient to dispense with the issuing of the Treasury notes. No, *they would have Treasury notes*. The President had recommended them, and of course, his recommendation must become a law. So accustomed are the President and Heads of departments to consider their recommendations as having the force of law, and so certain was the Secretary of the Treasury that the Treasury notes would be issued, that a month before the bill was passed for that purpose, we find him writing circulars to many of the Banks, and a great number of the large capitalists in the country, huckstering these very notes about for sale! What a humiliating commentary upon the independence of the people’s representatives in Congress!

But, sir, the Secretary of the Treasury knew that this House would not disregard the will of the Executive. You *did* again echo that will. The law is passed. The administration designed to establish a great Treasury Bank. The design is as evident as the Sun in a cloudless heaven at noon day. They knew that they could deceive the people no longer with the golden humbug. They have now established their Bank. You have ordered the issue of ten millions of its notes to begin with. These are all, and the only gold which the suffering people of this country will ever get from this false and deceitful administration! These, sir, are solemn truths, and why should I fear to utter them!

What next? The next great measure that we have recommended to us is the last great experiment of those in power, the “Sub-Treasury System.” This project has not yet received the sanction of this House, and I pray Heaven that it never may. It is now before us for consideration. I purpose in conclusion, to make a few hasty remarks upon it. I am opposed to this measure. Although not yet approved by Congress, it is now in operation. We see its workings. We have eaten of its fruits, and, for myself, they are distasteful to me. I loathe them. I am for cutting down the tree that produced them.

Sir, this scheme proposes to place in the hands of individuals who are dependent alone on the will of the President for their continuance in office, *all*, yes *all* the *countless millions* of the money of this government for disbursement and safe-keeping. These men are to receive it, hold it, use it, when and as they please, with no earthly barrier between it and the temptation to appropriate it to their own uses, which the personal custody of such immense treasures must offer, than the feeble restraints of poor, weak, fallible human nature, and the fear of the consequences which might result from an ultimate detection.

How many receivers and holders of the public money or, in other words, how many “Sub-Treasurers” there will be scattered throughout the whole extent of this wide spread country, no man can at present determine. In France, where a similar system prevails, there are *one hundred thousand!* Here, I have no doubt, in a short time, the number would even exceed that. These men are to hold and absolutely

possess the whole treasures of the nation. Some of them, particularly in our large cities, will have millions of dollars in their hands at a time. One uninterrupted golden current will be continually pouring in upon them. What a temptation, (even aside from party political influences,) is thus offered to use a portion of this money occasionally or continually, as need or circumstances may require. Sir, the temptation will be irresistible. Surrounded by needy or pressing friends in distress, whose families and fortunes they may think will be comforted or repaired by a timely loan; in the very midst of the exciting whirl of speculation, with fortune's dazzling visions urging them on to use the treasures confided to their keeping, and embark in schemes promising to result in the enjoyment of immense possessions, and with the full certainty that a temporary use of even large amounts, cannot be discovered; taking into consideration with these circumstances the fact that there will be one hundred thousand of these men—I say they will, in some cases, inevitably misappropriate the money. Large amounts of it must be lost. The treasures of the country will be plundered. Under such a system, there is no safety for the public funds.

But, sir, this is not the only evil that I see in this measure. The loss of the public moneys will be nothing compared to the moral and political evils that must flow from it. "Lead us not into temptation," was the sublime prayer of our God. Our rulers disregarding this divine lesson, seem determined to surround their public officers with a consuming fire of temptation, from which there is to be no hope of escape. Their consciences are to be seared, and they are to go abroad corrupted and corrupting until the whole body politic becomes one offensive mass of putridity,—smelling to heaven and tainting the very atmosphere of freedom. This may be strong language! But I see the evil strongly. I feel it strongly.

I have heard of the danger of uniting the purse and the sword. All the unions of this kind heretofore deprecated as existing in this country, are as ropes of sand or bonds of gossamer compared to what will be the case if you pass this bill! You will not only unite *one* purse and *one* sword, no sir—you will unite one hundred thousand purses and one hundred thousand swords—all ready to yield up their treasures and leap from their scabbards at the nod or stamping of the foot of one man!

A "Sub-Treasury bill," it is gently termed in this house. Before the country, for the purpose of deluding the people and exciting popular feelings in its favour, you name it a "bill to divorce the government from the Banks." But what is it? Trampling the mere *name* under our feet, and looking at it as it is, stripped and naked in all its odious deformity,—I ask what is it? Why, sir, it is a bill for arresting the flow of our prosperity,—for subverting the fundamental principles of our Republic—a bill for laying the corner stone of despotism. How do those in power recommend it to us? What arguments do they urge in favour of its adoption? "O," they say "it is *no new* scheme. It exists in France; it flourishes in Prussia and Austria,—it has grown into full and vigorous perfection in Russia. It prevails in Turkey and in every despotism of the new and old world."

My heart shudders, my blood curdles at their recommendations. In every country under heaven where such a system prevails the people are trampled on and plundered of their rights; ground down to the very dust by the awful despotism of their rulers; bought and sold like cattle with the earth, persecuted by Power, plundered by these very *Sub-Treasurers*, "chained to the brutes and fettered to the soil." And yet, sir, this administration and its advocates urge the example of these odious Tyrannies, as almost the only argument in favour of the adoption of their hateful scheme. They tell us that their plan works very well in those countries. But they do not tell us that it is there the grand engine of despotism, without which the people could not be kept in slavery! Yes, the plan *does* work well in despotisms. It does the work effectually. It works admirably well. It answers the very purpose for which it was designed,—that of plundering and enslaving the people, whilst it deprives them of the power of resistance!

Where am I? Is it possible that here in this mighty Capital of the only free Republic on earth, with the deeds of our gallant fathers still green in our memories, with here and there one of their lingering associates now gazing upon our deliberations, and the thunders of York Town yet ringing in our ears,—is it possible I say, under

these circumstances, that we can calmly listen to a proposition to abandon the settled policy of our government from its beginning to this day, despise and denounce the wisdom of its immortal founders, reject a course which has secured an unexampled prosperity to our country and the utmost stretch of liberty to ourselves—and turn back and affectionately embrace,—hug to our bosoms, as jewels above all price, the barbarous institutions of the dark and benighted despotisms of the old world? Are we to turn a deaf ear to the counsels of our revolutionary sages and receive for our guide the arbitrary decrees of autocrats, and Tyrants? Sir, is the republican seed scattered far and wide by our immortal sires, to be eradicated with our own hands—and are we to transplant into our fertile soil the sickly shoots of despotism, and nurse and water and cherish them into health and vigor and fructification? Heaven forbid. Let every man who wishes well to our Republican institutions put the seal of his reprobation on this scheme.

I have said that this very “Sub-Treasury system” is one of the great means used by the autocrats of Europe for perpetuating their tyrannies. In the hands of a monarch it is an engine of tremendous power. He appoints every officer. They are all absolutely dependent upon him, and are appointed to do his bidding. They are responsible to him alone. They are scattered all over the empire. Every pey district has its officer to receive and hold the revenues of the Government. They have immediate communication with the people. Of course, as the interest of the officer binds him to serve his Sovereign and as there is no one to interfere between them, the money he receives can be used in influencing the people (or subjects as they are there called) in any way desirable. Thus thousands and tens of thousands of these little treasurers are using the money in their respective districts, so as to produce the desired influence on the people. And yet, in a moment, the whole treasure can be collected in one concentrated mass at the nod of the monarch. This is all done silently and secretly. The evil is felt and no one can tell whence it comes. Despotism is upon them and they have no means to break it.

This system of monarchy, this engine of despotism is the very one which the bill under consideration proposes to introduce into this country. It will make the power of the President as supreme as that of any autocrat of Europe. You will have a hundred thousand office holders appointed by the President, holding their office at his pleasure, dependant upon his will for the very bread they eat, and commissioned to do his bidding. Every neighborhood will have within its narrow confines one of these “Sub-Treasurers” “to harrass the people and eat out their substance.” The land will be filled with spies and informers. All the public money, millions on millions, will be in their hands? It will be scattered about among their partizans, become the source of countless demoralizing speculations upon the industry and property of the people, and must inevitably end in concentrating all power in the breast of the Executive. Adopt this scheme, carry out its provisions in all their ramifications and there will be no salvation for this Republic,—republican forms may exist but despotism will be its very life blood, its pervading spirit.

This scheme will not only increase the number of your officers four fold and thus quadruple the taxes of the people, but it will furnish Government with an irresistible means of controlling the popular will. These officers *must* use the money to promote the views of their masters. They are appointed for that purpose. He who would dare refuse to do their bidding would not only be instantly dismissed, but hunted beyond the pale of national consideration, yes, be denationalized and proscribed by the hireling backs of party power.

Will any gentleman dare to say that these evils are all imaginary? What takes place in one country will, under the same circumstances, take place in another! This system is the one by which despotism perpetuates itself all over the world. Why *can* it not—why *will* it not be used for the same purpose here? Is it for a want of a disposition in our Rulers? What takes place among us now? Do not these in power attempt to force the minds of the people to think with them? Do they follow the popular will, or do they make the popular will bend to their decrees? Sir, my honorable colleague (Mr. Sergeant) told a grave truth the other day when he said that

adopts its measures and then opens its campaign, and with its countless office holders, vast treasurers and immense power and patronage enters the field, marshals all the "faithful" to its standard, shoots as deserters all who fly and marches onward crushing those who dare oppose!

There was a time in the days of Jefferson,—in the good old days of real Democracy, when an officer of the Government interfering with the freedom of elections, or attempting to influence the popular will, was instantly dismissed from office. It was the cardinal maxim of the administration of this illustrious man "that an officer who would attempt to use his power and influence to control public opinion should at once lose his office." This was the fundamental law of Jeffersonian Democracy. Now, sir, those who claim to be the exclusive Democrats of the land have reversed this law. The maxim at present is "that the officer of the General Government who does *not* use all his power and influence to control the people shall be forthwith dismissed." Hence, sir, we find that it is the office holders all over the Union who fight the political battles for the administration. They *must* do it. They are *bound* to do it,—and they *do* do it!

In the election which resulted in sending me as a representative of the people into this hall, the office-holders of the general government of my own and the neighboring districts were the persons who bore all the heat and labour of the campaign, and did all the speech-making against me. Not only that, sir, but at least one person residing here, in the city of Washington,—in this grand seat of Executive power, holding a lucrative situation under the general government, having his sons employed here in government departments, left his family, travelled one hundred and fifty miles to get into my district, and there mounted the stump, became an open mouthed brawling advocate of party power, called upon the people to reject me, and come to the support of his master in Washington. Sir, if such scenes are familiar to us now, what will take place when you make four times the number of officers, and place millions and tens of millions of public money in their hands? My heart shudders at the contemplation!

Mr. Chairman, I have shown that this system is the engine of tyranny wherever it exists; and that the example of other nations urged upon us by its advocates, are all derived from despotism.

They urge another argument in favour of this measure, which consorts in all things with the one just mentioned. They say that the effects of this scheme will be to destroy the whole system of credit. It is true that wherever this "sub-treasury scheme" exists there is no credit except upon the most narrow and limited scale! Nor is this singular. Recollect, that this system prevails only in tyrannies. *The absence of credit is one of the grand characteristics of despotism all over the world.* Every body must know or can know, if they will, that a well regulated credit system and despotism never have, *do not* and *cannot* exist together. It matters not what the forms of a government may be, if a system of general credit prevails throughout its whole extent, the heart and spirit of despotism must be crushed and broken.

There is no credit system in Russia, Prussia, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Turkey, nor in any other country under heaven, where the people are in chains, and wretchedness, misery and degradation. Nor—is this all. The converse of the proposition is true. There is no country in which a well regulated credit system prevails where the people are in bondage. It is a fact which no man having any respect for truth can deny, that just in proportion as a sound credit prevails in any country, in the same proportion are the people in the enjoyment of happiness and civil and political liberty.

The reason for all this is very obvious. What is credit? It is trust, confidence, belief and faith in the honour and integrity of man. It was the first kind of money, upon which all other money is founded. It existed before paper or letters were dreamed of, and long before the metals, either precious or base, were extracted from the gloomy bowels of the earth.

In the early stages of society, men obtained from each other the product of their labours by barter or exchange. The artisan would exchange his wares for the grain of the husbandman. If he wanted bread and had nothing at the time to give in exchange

the farmer, giving *credit* to his integrity, would furnish him with bread stuff on his promise to give him his wares in return when convenient. This *credit* was, therefore, the only money then. It was nothing but confidence of one man in another! In order to get this confidence or *credit* it was necessary that a man should be honest. Thus it improved the morals of mankind. The more it was used the closer did it unite men in society; because it made men, in a degree, dependent upon one another and made each individual interested in the welfare of the whole. Thus it encouraged the kindlier sympathies and humanized the human family. When it passed from hand to hand, or in other words, when the farmer passed the promise of the artizan to his neighbour for something that he wanted of him, it became *circulating credit* or confidence; and as that became widely extended from man to man, it associated together into one family and in one interest the most distant inhabitants of an whole empire.

Thus, sir, it becomes the bond of society. It introduces man to his fellow, and gives mutual confidence. It promotes travel, improves the country, facilitates civilization, develops industry, quickens the mental faculties, expands moral and charitable feelings, unites men together by the gentlest, but strongest of all ties and teaches them their power. This is the reason why credit and despotism are never found together. It makes men too strong for Tyrants! Were it possible to diffuse, at once, throughout all Russia the credit that prevails in this country, the iron bonds of Russian despotism would be burst asunder as by magic, and the Russian serf, springing at once into the full dignity of freedom, would stand erect and unshackled!

It is the policy of Tyrants to keep their subjects apart. They are for weakening the ties that bind them together. They are for disconnecting every man from his neighbour—forcing him to stand isolated and alone; sowing the seeds of jealousy, distrust and individual disunion, destroying all combinations and making every one depend alone upon the Sovereign power.

This state of things cannot exist with a credit system. Credit gives men one interest, makes them depend upon one another, and combines them into one irresistible whole. Therefore it is that despots are at war with credit. They must keep men apart in savage, barbarous, desolate isolation. The moment a common interest, given by a common understanding and mutual confidence, combines them together, they become irresistible in power; and despotism flies before them. This, sir, is the reason why liberty and credit are found side by side together wherever either of them have an existence. They are never found apart.

Look at all the non-credit countries of Europe. They are all despotisms, every one of them! And what are they doing for man, for civilization, for the spread of free principles? Why nothing, absolutely nothing! There they are in chains and wretchedness, without liberty, without domestic comfort, enveloped in ignorance and barbarism, without even the hope of rational freedom to cheer and brighten up the future!

Now turn your eyes to old England,—the credit country of the world, our “father land,”—the land from which most of us derived our blood and our name! Look at her manufacturers, her arts, her literature, learning, science, and her civilization that carries a portion of comfort and liberty into every cottage throughout her island domain; with her fleets on every ocean, her commerce embracing the whole world, diffusing her language, institutions and free principles to the remotest corners of the earth; overrunning India, filling up New Holland, peopling all the South Sea Islands, and every where planting the standard of civilization, christianity and civil and political liberty! Whilst other European nations are stationary, England by her moral power, derived in a great degree from her credit system, is producing a moral and political revolution throughout the Globe.

Sir, let us recross the Atlantic and turn our attention to America and see what the people are doing there. Look to Mexico and the South American Governments. That part of the country was first discovered and first peopled. The inhabitants are in possession of inexhaustible mines of the precious metals; hard money is no scarcity there. But they have no credit system and, therefore, no confidence in one another. They have no liberty, not even proper *notions* of liberty. They have no commerce, no agriculture deserving of the name, no navy, no manufactures, no arts, no internal improvements, no literature, no science—but with an abundance of gold, they are benight-

ed, ignorant, miserable, wretched, enslaved and oppressed, but one degree removed from the brutes around them! Their whole history is but one unmitigated narrative of savage discord, murder, rapine and bloodshed; mad infuriate revolution, and sanguinary insurrection! These are the people, and these are the institutions that are held up to us for our example!

After this view of the degradation, wretchedness and slavery of the southern part of America, with what feelings of pride and patriotic exultation can we return to our own proud and happy United States. I will not pretend to speak of her glory, prosperity and advancement, nor portray the virtue, intelligence, genius, skill and hardy and adventurous enterprize of her people. Under the influence of her present institutions she has done, and is now doing more for her *own* people, more for the cause of human rights, more for civilization, more for the elevation of morals and of mind, and more for the whole human family than any other nation that *has*, or ever had existence.

Now, sir, I appeal to every patriot in this house—I care not by what party name he may be called, I solemnly appeal to every man in the country; I ask you all, are you prepared to abandon the means which have placed yourselves and your country on such high grounds, and adopt in their stead the miserable, unnatural and wretched policy of the foul, rank, brutal despotisms of the earth? Will you follow in the paths which your fathers have made holy, and which have led to glory, peace, liberty, prosperity and unbounded comfort—or will you obliterate every trace that they left behind them, shut your eyes against the brightness of the past, destroy every germ of hope as to the future, and follow that rugged and that crooked way which has always terminated in tyranny, degradation, wretchedness and wo? As for myself, my mind is made up; I am for abiding by what has been tried. I must vote against this bill.

One word more as to credit, and I am done. I know, sir, the evils of credit. I know how it may be, how it *is* abused. I have ever been a bold and open opponent of its abuses. I have, for years, taken an active stand against the inordinate increase of banks. I have spoken against it. I have petitioned and remonstrated against it. I have done all that a reasonable man could do to limit their number, and check their abuses. Yes, and I have seen the very men who now so bitterly oppose all credit, within six years, double the number of those banks, and more than double the banking capital of the country!

Credit *has* been abused. But it is no reason why it should be *destroyed*. The abuse of any thing is no argument against it. The *best* of institutions are always those that are abused *most*. In the name of our holy religion the earth has been deluged with blood, and counties millions have been consumed in the flames of martyrdom. But this is no argument against either the truth, necessity, or value of our religion. Let us, therefore, labour to purge our credit system of its abuses. To destroy it, would be to break down all confidence between man and man, and restore once more the savage, desolating reign of barbarism.

Mr. Chairman, let me beg gentlemen to pause—pause before they pass this bill. It is now nearly six weeks since the commencement of this session. During which time, we have been in this hall night and day. We come at early morning, the day passes away, and the darkness of midnight still finds us here. We have had no time for reading, for thought, reflection, research, or calm and dispassionate examination. Wearied and jaded and worn out with fatigue, the President and his partizans have been hurrying and lashing us into their measures. We have been *forced* to sit here night and day on purpose to prevent discussion, and to compel us, right or wrong, to sanction the plans of the Executive. We have been openly called upon by the leader of the administration party in the house, (Mr. Cambrelling,) not to deliberate, discuss and honestly make up our minds—No, sir, no; but to “*toe the mark!*” We have invoked gentlemen to rush to the rescue of liberty suffering, of our country bleeding, and our people overwhelmed with distress!—Our appeals have been met with but one answer—“*toe the mark!*” “*toe the mark!*”

But a few days since I picked up from the floor of this House a petition of nearly one thousand inhabitants of Mobile, setting forth in eloquent language the accumulated evils and distresses which had borne them down to the earth, and praying as a remedy the establishment of a national specie paying institution by Congress. There was the petition on the floor—trampled upon—spitten upon—blurred and blotted and stained! And at that very moment—yes, at that very moment, an honorable gentleman from North Carolina, (Mr. Bynum) was addressing the House and characterizing such petitioners as panic-makers, speculators, and rag-barons! Great Heaven! I exclaimed to myself, can such things be? The petitions of freemen trampled under foot, and the petitioners themselves denounced by their own representatives! I sprung to my feet at the first opportunity; but before my mouth was opened, the Honorable gentleman from New Hampshire, (Mr. Cushman) whose head is said to “blossom and bloom with the previous question” availed himself of his privilege. The previous question was moved—and there could be no reply.

Such, sir, is the mode in which measures have been forced through the House during this session. It is now time to pause. I solemnly believe that the prosperity of the country and the “Sub-Treasury System” cannot long exist together. It will check the tide of our advancement. It will endanger our liberties. I call upon gentlemen to pause ere the Rubicon be passed.

