SPEECH

OF

HON. W. H. KELSEY, OF NEW YORK,

ON

THE SLAVERY QUESTION;

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JULY 29, 1856.

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THE SLAVERY QUESTION.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union,

Mr. KELSEY said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are now in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and all matters that relate to the welfare of the Union are proper subjects for discussion. There are several topics upon which I desire to express my views, but the brief period allowed me to address the committee, combined with the state of my health this evening, admonishes me that I shall be unable to touch upon more than one or two of them.

Sir, I do not stand here for the purpose of questioning the claims of either the "Democratic" or the "American" parties to that kind of "nationality" which appears to obtain so much favor on the other side of the House. I have no doubt they are both "sound" on the subject of slavery, as that expression is understood at the South.

I listened to the arguments of the gentlemen from Kentucky, [Mr. COX and Mr. BURNETT,] who discussed this question—the one on Friday evening, and the other last evening—and I confess that each of them succeeded in satisfying me that he was right; at least so far as his own candidate for President is concerned. They each demonstrated, I think, that in case Mr. Fillmore or Mr. Buchanan shall be elected, the South will have reason to be perfectly satisfied. Mr. Frémont is the only candidate before the people, for the office of President, who, if elected, will oppose the further extension of slavery. Fully believing this, and that he comes up to the Jeffersonian standard of qualification for office—that he is honest, capable, and faithful to the Constitution—I support him.

But, sir, I did not rise for the purpose of making a presidential speech. I prefer to discuss principles, rather than parties or men; and as there is one great question before the American people that overshadows all others, I will direct my attention to that. All other questions are collateral or subordinate to it in the public mind at this time. That question is, Shall slavery be extended into the free Territories of the United States?

Gentlemen from the South tell us that they ask no legislation for the purpose of extending slavery, but at the same time they claim a construction of the Constitution, and of the laws already in existence, that would render any legislation in behalf of slavery extension entirely superfluous.

Almost every gentleman who has spoken on that side of the House has made this claim, by insisting that they have the right to go into t common Territories of the United States and take their "property" with them. One gentleman [Mr. WARNER] from Georgia, in the boldest, as well as the ablest speech that I have listened to on this subject, discarded the specious phrase used by most of his associates, and took his position in the following language. He says:

"I shall endeavor to maintain and to demonstrate that, in accordance with those fundamental principles, my constituents have both the legal and equitable right to take their slave property into the common territory of this Union, and to have it protected there; and that this Government has no power under the Constitution to deprive them of that right."

Now, sir, I take issue with the gentleman upon this proposition; and as it claims for slaveholders the right to spread slavery over all the Territories of the United States, by merely emigrating to those Territories with their slaves, it becomes necessary for us to inquire by what tenure that institution exists anywhere, and how it has acquired this right of unlimited expansion? It is manifest that the Constitution of the United States did not create slavery—for slavery existed before the Constitution was made. The Constitution does not uphold slavery, because each State has an undoubted right to abolish it within its own limits, and wherever its exclusive jurisdiction extends.

Sir, the institution of slavery was established and is upheld wholly by *force*—by the power of the stronger over the weaker. It never can exist unless one man, or one class or race of men have conquered and subdued another man, or class or

race of men, and compelled them to obey the laws prescribed by the conquerors. When the conqueror has deprived the conquered of the "inalienable right" to "liberty and the pursuit of happiness," the relation of master and slave exists, but not till then. This relation can only be upheld by actual force, or by legal enactment, or by long continued usage, recognized by the supreme power in the State, which has all the force and effect of positive law; and it can only exist where the master has absolute and exclusive jurisdiction.

If this institution exists by virtue of State laws, then it extends no further than the jurisdiction of the States by whose laws it is upheld extends. And in the States where it exists, I have no purpose to interfere with it. But I deny the right or the power of citizens of slave States to carry their slave laws into United States Territories by emigrating to those Territories with their slaves. They claim the right to go where the power that makes and upholds their slave laws has no jurisdiction, where there is no law sanctioning slavery, and there claim the right to hold their slaves. Let us illustrate this proposition. Suppose a citizen of Georgia should remove with his slaves into a Territory of the United States: he must continue to hold them in the Territory, because the laws of Georgia have conferred on him the power to do so. But suppose that Georgia, after his removal, should abolish slavery, (a very improbable thing, I admit:) could that act reach or in any way affect the owner of slaves who had emigrated from Georgia into a Territory of the United States? Most clearly it could not, because he would be beyond her jurisdiction, and no longer her citizen. We should then have this singular state of things—that the State of Georgia had conferred power, which she could not revoke, to be exercised within Territories over which she had *no* jurisdiction, by persons over whom she had ceased to have any control; and slavery would exist in the United States Territories under and by virtue of the laws of a State that had discarded the system for itself; and as the gentleman's doctrine denies that the General Government has any power under the Constitution to prevent the introduction of slavery into the Territories, or to abolish it when once there, it follows that citizens of the slaveholding States have the *exclusive* control of the question, whether slavery shall exist in the Territories or not.

Is this the "equality of the citizens of *all* the States," about which we have had so much eloquent declamation during the present session on this floor? Is there no *sectionalism* in claiming for citizens of the slaveholding States the *exclusive* power to determine whether slavery shall go into the Territories or not?

Sir, it has been repeatedly shown by gentlemen on this side of the House, that the framers of our Constitution regarded and treated slavery as an evil that would, in the course of time, cease to exist by the voluntary action of the States where it was tolerated, and not as an institution to be cherished and extended and perpetuated; and that least of all did they imagine that they had left this evil the power of indefinite expansion, with no power, anywhere, to check or control it. I shall therefore spend no time in endeavoring to demonstrate the truth of these propositions, but will proceed to examine some other positions assumed in his argument by the gentleman from Georgia. He says:

"It will be recollected that the Federal Constitution was not established to create *new* rights, but to secure and protect *existing rights*. Hence it is material to inquire, what were the rights of the people of the slaveholding States in regard to their slave property, before and at the time of the adoption of that Constitution? I shall maintain, and undertake to establish, that the title of my constituents to their slave property is not based upon any *positive* law of the State, but that it rests for its foundation upon the universal law of nations, which recognized slaves as *property*, before and at the time of the adoption of the Constitution. That before and at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, the citizens of the State of Georgia—the same being a sovereign, independent State—had the undoubted right, according to the well-established principles of international law—to take their slave property into any foreign territory: provided there was no law in that foreign territory *prohibiting* its introduction there, and to have it protected in such foreign territory—that the law of nations was adopted as a part of the common law in the original thirteen States, constituting a part of the law of the land before and at the time of the adoption of the Federal Constitution."

Sir, the Constitution was established not only to protect "existing rights," but to define, to some extent, what those rights were. The Constitution, and the whole theory of our Government, are based upon the great fundamental truth, that all men are created with an *equality of rights*. The battles of the Revolution were fought to establish this principle, and the Constitution was adopted to uphold and maintain it. The Constitution did not abolish slavery in the States, nor did it abolish any of the municipal laws of the States. But that instrument is, in itself, a stringent penal statute against any infringement of the right of personal freedom, within the Territories over which it has exclusive jurisdiction.

The gentleman says that the title of his constituents "to their slave property is not based upon any *positive* law of the State, but that it rests for its foundation upon the universal law of nations, which recognized slaves as *property*, before and at the time of the adoption of the Constitution;" and "that the law of nations was adopted as a part of the common law in the original thirteen States, constituting a part of the law of the land at the time of the adoption of the Federal Constitution."

Now, sir, I deny that we have incorporated into our system any principle, whether recognized by the law of nations or not, that is at war with the great principle of the equality of human rights. We have not adopted the principle that kings rule by divine right; we do not recognize the hereditary right of one class of men to make our laws. And yet the "universal law of nations" recognized both these principles "before and at the time of the adoption of the Constitution," just as fully as it recognized slavery. Sir, our Government was founded upon principles radically different from any nation on earth. Our doctrine is, that "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." In no other nation was this principle recognized and acted upon at the time our Government was formed. And how can it be said that we have, by implication, adopted principles and laws that are directly antagonistic to the fundamental principles of our Government. Sir, whatever there was in the law of nations antagonistic to our system, was abolished, so far as we are concerned, by our Constitution.

It has become quite fashionable for gentlemen on this floor to sneer at the great leading principles announced in the Declaration of Independence—at the "self-evident" truths upon which our political system is founded; because those truths stand like a wall of fire across their path, to arrest the further spread of human slavery. Let gentleman reflect that the Declaration of Independence did not create those principles—it only adopted and announced what was already true—as the foundation of our political system. If those principles are not sound, our revolutionary fathers were rebels against rightful authority, and our Revolution was only a successful rebellion. But if those principles are sound and right, then the institution of slavery must be regarded now as it was regarded by the framers of the Constitution—as an evil to be got rid of, not as an institution to be cherished and extended. Sir, the people of this nation have never adopted slavery as a national institution. Such a claim was never put forth in its behalf until it was feared that all other means might fail of subjecting Kansas to that interest. But now it is claimed, with the utmost assurance, that no man or party can be national in their views unless they subscribe to the doctrine, that citizens of the slave States have the right to spread slavery in the Territories wherever they may see fit to go, and that there is no power in the Government to prevent them from doing so. And this right is conferred on them by the law of nations, the gentleman tells us. Sir, the gentleman has not told us when or how the law of nations became incorporated into, and became a part of, the municipal laws of this Government; and even if he is correct in basing the title to slave property upon that law, I think he has extended his claim in that behalf much further than the cases he cites will warrant. The cases he cites were decided by the high court of Admiralty and the court of King's Bench, in England; and they decide that, in 1817, English cruisers could not legally capture slave ships and their cargoes on the high seas, when owned by subjects of a nation that had entered into no treaty stipulations against the slave trade. They decide nothing more than this: that England could not rightfully interfere with the municipal or maritime regulations of a nation with whom she was at peace. If the owners of these slaves had voluntarily taken them to England, for the purpose of there holding them as property, these cases would have borne a much closer analogy to the claim made in behalf of the "peculiar institution" by the gentleman from Georgia; but, as they stand, it seems to me they do not sustain the point he has made.

Sir, I propose to meet the gentleman with authorities upon the issue between us; and it seems to me that the cases I shall cite entirely overthrow, not only the inferences he seeks to draw from the English cases he has cited, but the whole argument he has made, ingenious, able, and plausible as I concede it to be. The authorities I cite are American authorities, and they have this advantage over those cited by the gentleman, that they are directly upon one of the main points in the controversy, and they need no argument to enforce or apply them.

In the case of Jones against Van Zandt, 2 McLean's Reports, 596, the court says:

"Slavery exists only by virtue of the laws of the States where it is sanctioned; and if a slave escape from such State to a free State, he *is free, according to the principles of the common law*; and recaption, in a free State, is authorized *only* by the Constitution and act of Congress. There is no general principle in the *law of nations* which requires such surrender."

In deciding the celebrated case of Prigg vs. the State of Pennsylvania, 16 Peters, 540, the court lays down these propositions:

"By the law of nations, no State is bound to recognize slavery in another State. It is a matter of comity, and not a matter of international right. The state of slavery is deemed to be a mere *municipal regulation, founded upon*, and *limited to*, the range of the territorial laws."

The same principles were distinctly recognized in three English cases decided before the Revolution, all of which are cited by the court in deciding the case of Prigg vs. the State of Pennsylvania.

If your slaves are not held by virtue of your State laws, you have no power, under the Constitution, to retake them as fugitives from service. It is only persons held to labor or service "*by the laws of the States*" from which they escape, that can be returned; and if a slave should escape from a *Territory* where there is no law on the subject of slavery, will anybody pretend that he can be retaken and remanded into slavery? I commend this question to the careful consideration of those strict constructionists of the Constitution on this floor, who claim the right to carry *the institution of slavery*, under the name of *property*, into the Territories of the United States. And I desire, in this connection, to call attention to the opinion of a distinguished jurist of my own State—a Democrat, "dyed in the wool"—one of the hardest of the Hards—the Hon. Greene C. Bronson, formerly chief justice of the supreme court, and afterwards chief judge of the court of appeals—a man whose legal attainments and ability are known and acknowledged throughout the Union. In a letter dated July 15, 1848, after declining an invitation to attend a political meeting, he says:

"Slavery cannot exist where there is no positive law to uphold it. It is not necessary that it should be forbidden; it is enough that it is not specially authorized. If the owner of slaves removes with or sends them into any country, State, or Territory, where slavery does not exist by law, they will from that moment become free men, and will have as good a right to command the master, as he will have to command them. State laws have no extra territorial authority; and a law of Virginia which makes a man a slave there, cannot make him a slave in New York, nor beyond the Rocky Mountains.

"Entertaining no doubt upon that question, I can see no occasion for asking Congress to legislate against the extension of slavery into free territory, and, as a question of policy, I think it had better be let alone. If our southern brethren wish to carry their slaves to Oregon, New Mexico, or California, they will be under the necessity of asking a law to warrant it; and it will then be in time for the free States to resist the measure, as I cannot doubt they would, with unwavering firmness.

"I would not needlessly move this question, as it is one of an exciting nature, which tends to sectional division, and may do us harm as a people. I would leave it to the slaveholding States to decide for themselves, and on their own responsibility, when, if ever, the matter shall be agitated in Congress. It may be that they will act wisely, and never move at all, especially as it seems pretty generally agreed that neither Oregon, New Mexico, nor California, are well adapted to slave labor. But if our southern brethren should make the question, we shall have no choice but to meet

it, and then, whatever consequences may follow, I trust the people of the free States will give a united voice against allowing slavery on a single foot of soil where it is not now authorized by law.

"I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GREENE C. BRONSON.

"To Messrs. J. COCHRAN and others, committee.

It is true that we are not asked to *enact* laws to warrant the holding of slaves in the Territories, but we are called upon to admit that slaves may be rightfully held in the Territories without law. The very question is made in substance, which Judge Bronson said would leave the people of the free States no choice but to meet it, whatever consequences might follow, but where he stands now in this controversy I know not. I only know that very many, perhaps most of those with whom he had formerly acted, acquiesce in the new doctrine upon which I have been commenting.

But, sir, I turn to another proposition laid down by the gentleman from Georgia. I deny that "the title to slave property" anywhere "rests upon the same foundation as title to any other species of property." The Creator gave man dominion over the earth and its productions—over the fish of the sea and the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth, and everything that he intended man should use or control as property; but he has never given this kind of dominion to one man over another. He gave equal rights to all men. Our title to everything that is legitimately property rests upon an older and a higher law than the Constitution, and the Constitution only guaranties that title. I venture to refer to the "higher law," partly because I understood the gentleman from Alabama, [Mr. SHORTER,] in his speech some time ago, to claim that slavery was upheld by a "higher law" than the Constitution, though I believe he did not cite any particular authority upon that point, and in his printed speech the remark is somewhat modified. I have indicated the source of the "higher law" that I have referred to: and gentlemen are doubtless so familiar with the authority, that a more particular reference will be unnecessary.

Again, sir, I deny that the law of nations ever established or upheld slavery in any country. Each sovereign State makes law for itself on that subject. The law of nations only regulates the intercourse of nations, and declares and defines their rights and duties in regard to each other. It does not necessarily have anything at all to do with establishing or upholding the municipal laws of any country. This attempt to place slavery in the States, under the protection of the law of nations, must fail, and with it must fail the claim, that the citizens of slaveholding States may, by their own volition, carry that institution into the Territories of the United States, and establish it there in defiance of the General Government.

Sir, the *sovereignty* of the Territories, as well as the ownership of their soil, is vested in the General Government, and no State can claim to exercise any one of those sovereign rights any more than she could claim the ownership of a portion of the soil. To establish the institutions of a State or Territory is to exercise sovereign power. The gentleman from Georgia claims for his constituents the right to exercise this sovereign power in the Territories, in despite of the General Government, by establishing the institution of slavery. Whatever may be the tenure of slavery in the States—whether it rests upon State law, the law of actual force, or the law of nations, no such power as the gentleman claims can ever be conceded to the citizens of the slaveholding States. To concede that would be to surrender, by the national Government, absolutely, its right of sovereignty in the Territories to the citizens of a *section* to establish a *sectional* institution; and this Government would fail to accomplish one of the great—perhaps I should say the greatest—objects for which it was created.

None of the States ever had any title to the soil or the sovereignty of Kansas. That Territory was acquired by the Federal Government in its sovereign capacity, long after the Constitution was adopted. The same act that ceded the soil of this Territory to our Government, also, in express terms, ceded all the rights of sovereignty over it; and it will not be contended that any State can legally or rightfully so legislate as to affect in any way the institutions of that Territory. If the States themselves have no power in the premises, how can they confer the power upon their citizens to establish their State laws in these Territories, against the consent of Congress, and without the aid of any territorial law?

Sir, these Territories, prior to the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, had no law but the law of nature and the Constitution of the United States; and neither of these establish or uphold slavery. There is no legal slavery there. But the claim is made, that the citizens of the slaveholding States can plant it there in defiance of the General Government, and then compel the Government to uphold and defend it. The proposition is monstrous. It gives the citizens of the slaveholding States the absolute and exclusive control of the whole question, and of all the Territories. They do, it is true, concede in the argument, to freemen the privilege of cultivating the soil in those Territories, upon the condition that they should assume a social position approximating nearer to that of the slave than of his master. They do in argument here, concede the right of the citizens of the free States to emigrate to the Territories; but they claim for themselves the exclusive right, when they emigrate there, of carrying with them the laws of the States from which they emigrate, and of which they are no longer citizens.

The gentleman from Georgia has said that "there is not a slaveholder in this House or out of it but who knows perfectly well that, whenever slavery is confined within certain specified limits, its future existence is doomed; it is only a question of time as to its final destruction." And the gentleman tells us that, "if we take any slave holding county in the southern States in which the great staples of cotton and sugar are cultivated to any extent, and confine the present slave-population within the limits of that county, such is the rapid natural increase of the slaves and the rapid exhaustion of the soil in the cultivation of those crops, that in a few years it would be im-

possible to support them within the limits of such county: both master and slave would be starved out; and what would be the practical effect in any one county, the same result would happen to all the slaveholding States"—that "slavery cannot be confined within certain specified limits without producing the destruction of both master and slave: it requires fresh lands, plenty of wood and water, not only for the comfort and happiness of the slave, but for the benefit of the owner." This is the plea in behalf of slavery extension. Because it exhausts the soil—because sterility and desolation mark its path—because it would starve itself out, if confined within *any* limits, slavery must have unlimited power of expansion! Do not gentlemen perceive that this is a conclusive and unanswerable argument against the existence of this "peculiar institution" anywhere?

Mr. WARNER. Will the gentleman from New York allow me to interrupt him a moment?

Mr. KELSEY. Certainly.

Mr. WARNER. The gentleman has stated my remarks fairly. I do not desire to qualify them in any respect whatever. But when he attributes that result to slave labor, allow me to say to him, that the same result would happen if these crops were cultivated by free labor—the same result precisely. It is not the kind of labor employed, but it is the peculiar character of the crops themselves, and the peculiar character of the cultivation of these crops, as well as the peculiar character of the climate where those crops are cultivated. We have plantations cultivated on a small scale by white labor; in my immediate neighborhood, and those lands are quite as much exhausted, and more so, than those cultivated by slave labor, for the reason that they have not the same force to keep them in the proper condition, and to prevent the effects which result from the cultivation of the cotton crops. They have not the force to make hillside ditches, and prevent their lands from washing, to which they are much exposed in consequence of the necessary light culture in the production of the cotton crop. The same result precisely happens, whether the lands are cultivated by slave or by free labor.

Mr. KELSEY. I am not familiar with the cultivation of the crops alluded to by the gentleman; but I do not suppose they are more exhausting to the soil than many of the crops cultivated at the North by free labor, and where their system of husbandry, instead of impoverishing, enriches the land. And if the same system of husbandry were resorted to with these crops, I have no doubt that the same results would follow. But that system of cultivation never will be resorted to until a system is inaugurated that shall pay to labor its just reward. It is cultivation by the arm of the intelligent free laborer, that will enrich and not impoverish the soil of any country.

But suppose we give up all the Territories to slavery: will that satisfy its demands? No; for the gentleman tells us it "cannot be confined within certain specified limits without producing the destruction of both master and slave." And when the Territories have been overrun — when the wood has been consumed, and the soil worn out, slavery must spread still further, or cease to exist. If it is to spread still further, where shall it go? If there is no virgin soil except within free States, it must have that. The plea of necessity will be still stronger then than it is now, and will be pressed with more urgency and backed by more power.

Sir, this question must be met and settled now. And in my judgment there is but one basis upon which it can be settled so that it will remain settled. The absolute sovereignty of the General Government over the Territories must be admitted, as it always has been practically admitted, until this controversy was forced upon us; and the duty of this Government to exclude slavery from free territory must be acknowledged and performed. The manner in which that duty shall be performed is not very material, provided it is done speedily and effectually. There is one way of effecting this object that ought to be entirely satisfactory to the advocates of the Kansas-Nebraska act, who have sustained that measure upon the ground that it left the people of those Territories at liberty to settle this question for themselves; and that way is to admit Kansas into the Union with her present free constitution. Her people have settled this question for themselves, notwithstanding her territory has been invaded, her territorial government usurped, and her citizens lynched and murdered. The freemen of Kansas have decided in favor of freedom, and they call on you to redeem your pledges, and admit them into the Union. But they have not decided this question as you wished, and you hesitate to redeem your promises. You tell us, and the President tells us, this constitution was made by a party, and therefore Kansas must not be admitted. Well, sir, how many State constitutions have been made that were not made by a party? Is there a single one now in existence that was not framed by delegates, a large majority of whom were elected by a party vote, and in a large majority of cases have not those constitutions been adopted by a party vote?

But the President and his friends tell us, that neither Congress nor the Territorial Legislature authorized the people of Kansas to form this constitution. And this objection is urged by the advocates of "squatter sovereignty." What! gentlemen, do you object to the squatter sovereigns exercising the power you have so lately insisted that they possess? If the inhabitants of a Territory really have the right of sovereignty in that Territory, will you presume to dictate to them when or how they shall exercise that power? You repudiate the principle of squatter sovereignty the moment you attempt any dictation to or interference with them in this matter. True, you never have *practically* acknowledged that the inhabitants of this Territory possess the right of sovereignty over it. You have retained the control of the executive and judicial branches of their Government, while pretending to give them full power over all subjects of legislation, or, as you say in your Kansas-Nebraska act, you leave them perfectly free to form their own local and domestic institutions. But what a perfect mockery is this declaration, if the positions taken by the gentleman from Georgia are correct! In the Kansas-Nebraska act, you say the people of those Territories shall determine whether they will have slavery or not. The gentleman from Georgia says that the people of the slave States have the right to determine that question by taking

their slaves into the Territories, and there holding them as property; and that you not only cannot prevent them from doing so, but that you are bound to protect them in doing it.

I have no doubt that the doctrine of the gentleman from Georgia is now the doctrine of the Democratic party. The interests of slavery require that the doctrine of "squatter sovereignty" should now be abandoned, and it has been done by the very men who brought it into existence. The doctrines of the gentleman from Georgia settle this question, practically and forever, in favor of the claims of slavery, and therefore they will be adopted. Some northern Democrats may object to this at first, but they will eventually yield, as they always have yielded to such demands, to preserve the "*nationality*" of their party, and to "save the Union!"

Mr. WARNER. If the gentleman from New York will allow me—I have not maintained the doctrine of squatter sovereignty, in the general acceptation of that term.

Mr. KELSEY. I did not impute to the gentleman that he maintained that doctrine. My point was, that the doctrine of squatter sovereignty had been repudiated by the Democratic party, and that the doctrines laid down some time ago by the gentleman had been adopted by the Democratic party in its stead.

Mr. WARNER. I repudiate the doctrine of squatter sovereignty. I hold that, in the organization of the Territories, the people of the Territories can exercise no other powers than those delegated to them. My position is, that the Territories are the common property of the people of all the States of the Union; but that so long as they remain in their territorial condition, Congress has no power to discriminate against the people of one section of the Confederacy; that they shall remain as property common to all until such time as they shall assemble in convention, with the assent of Congress, to form a State constitution to be admitted into the Union as States, when the people may then decide whether they shall have slavery or not. The southern people have no desire to establish slavery in any territory, but to have the people of all the States perfectly free to settle that common territory with their property, and, when they come to form a State constitution, to decide the question of slavery for themselves.

Mr. KELSEY. I agree with the gentleman from Georgia that Congress has no right to discriminate between the people of the different sections of the country, in permitting them to go into the Territories of the United States. My position is that Congress shall prevent any such discrimination as would permit the citizens of one section to carry with them the laws of the States from which they emigrate, while the citizens of other sections can do no such thing. I insist on real equality of rights for the citizens of all sections of the country.

But, sir, the Union is always in peril when there is any serious objection to granting all that the interests of slavery demand. And the gentleman tells us, in his speech, that the people of Georgia have assembled in convention, and solemnly resolved that if Congress shall pass a law excluding them from the common territory with their slave property, they will disrupt the ties that bind them to the Union. And this is not a "*threat*," the gentleman tells us; for Georgia never threatens. But it is the same, in substance, as the "*threats*" of dissolving the Union that we have heard at intervals for the last twenty-five years. This is probably intended, by the people of Georgia, merely as a *warning*. But whether intended as a warning or a threat, it is a production that has often emanated from the slave States—South Carolina and Georgia having produced their full share of the article. But I can assure the gentleman that, so far as I know the views of the people of the North, neither these threats nor warnings will have any effect upon them. They will not subscribe to the doctrine, that slavery has the right to expand itself over the Territories, in despite of the legislation of Congress; they will not consent to any further extension of slavery, under any pretense, or in view of any alternative whatever.