

THE DEMOCRATIC DEMONSTRATION AT POUGHKEEPSIE.

S P E E C H

OF

HON. R. M. T. HUNTER, OF VIRGINIA.

FELLOW-CITIZENS: In response to your invitation, I appear before you this day to address, for the first time in my life, a popular assembly without the borders of my own State. I have refrained heretofore, not from any want of interest in whatever concerned a sister State, but from a feeling that it might seem an intrusion in me to offer counsel to those who had so many better advisers at home. But the present is no ordinary occasion. We have reached, in my opinion, a solemn crisis in public affairs. An issue has been made which may involve the fate of the Union itself. The public mind may be hurried to conclusions which may prove in the last degree mischievous and dangerous to all that American patriots and statesmen have been accustomed to hold dear.

Under these circumstances, I had felt that it was a duty which the States of this Union owe to each other, to interchange opinions fully, frankly, and candidly. For one, sirs, I should not be afraid to trust the decision of any question to the people, if it could be fairly presented to them, and when they are fully acquainted with the real state of the facts. But I fear that the American people are not acquainted with public sentiment in other sections than their own. This, sirs, is one of the considerations which has brought me here this day. I wish to put you in a stand-point, from which you may see the southern view of this question, upon the other side of which you have heard so much. I wish to make a plea in favor of this mighty Union, before it be further imperilled and endangered. [Cheers.] I wish to speak in behalf of this great scheme of Government which has contributed so much to the improvement and happiness of the American people, ere it may be too late forever.

In executing this task I wish, as a solemn duty not only to you, but to myself, to speak out fully, truly, and frankly. If, in speaking of this great question, I should handle topics (and I must touch them) which are delicate, and should perchance say anything that is unpalatable, I hope that much will be pardoned to the great cause I appear before you to advocate. I trust that no man will do me the injustice to assert that anything which I may say will be said in any other but a spirit of perfect respect and kindness to you all. Now, sirs, I need not say that this great issue is arising out of the disturbed question of African slavery upon this continent. But how and by whom it has been formed

is a matter of serious inquiry. It commenced, sirs, a long time ago. It made its first appearance in 1820, when the question arose in regard to the admission of Missouri as a State into this Union.

We are all acquainted with the results of that dispute; but how and by whom these results were brought about has been a matter of much difference of statement and representation.

[The speaker was here interrupted by the marching of a procession, which had just arrived on the grounds.]

As I was about to say, fellow-citizens, the mode in which these results were brought about furnished matter for much contradictory statement. It was settled upon two amendments, which were sent down from the Senate, one of which proposed that Missouri should be admitted by striking out the anti-slavery restriction, upon which condition alone it had been proposed to admit her as a State, and the other amendment proposed to apply this anti-slavery restriction to the territory north of 36° 30' which had been acquired from the State of Louisiana. Upon the first amendment in regard to striking out the restriction, the North voted more than five to one against it, while the South voted in solid column for it. Upon the other amendment the North voted ninety-five to five in favor; so that it appears that the North did not vote for the admission of Missouri in 1820 without this restriction. Yet it has been represented that in 1820 there was a compromise formed between the North and the South, by which the North consented to admit her upon the condition that it should be applied to the Territories; yet the record shows that the North did not vote for any such admission at all.

To show that the North has never been considered exclusive friends of that, we find that, in 1821, when the question came up for the admission of Missouri, Mr. Mallory, of Vermont, proposed that they should have this anti-slavery restriction as the condition of the admission of Missouri. The North voted twelve to one in favor; and upon the final vote for its admission the North voted against it: thus showing that there is nothing in the representation by the leaders of this new party that the South had violated a compromise, because the facts show that it never voted for the admission of Missouri without this restriction; for in 1820 the North made this compromise, and in 1821 it clearly violated it and proposed to impose this restriction upon its admission. But if you take it upon the true representation, which, doubtless, has been made to you before by the democratic party, that they voted for it as an ordinary act of legislation, this vote of 1821 was consistent with that of 1820, and no charge of breach of faith can be brought against it. To maintain that they had made any such compromise in 1820, as those who claimed to be their particular friends confessed, would be to fix upon them the charge of bad faith, when in the Congress of 1821 they departed from any such compromise, if it had been made. But in truth no such charge can be fairly made against them. They never did make such a compromise; they voted for it as an act of ordinary legislation.

Fellow-citizens—for I am endeavoring to show you how this issue was made up—the next thing which occurred in the sequence of events was the annexation of Texas. That can hardly have been considered as any sectional measure, when we come to look at the history; because the votes were given to it from all sections of the confederacy—

North, South, East, and West—and it is to be remarked, and I refer to it in that connexion, that, when it was annexed by the votes of all sections of the United States, a provision was made extending the line of 36° 30' to it; when, shortly afterward, the question came up in relation to the annexation of the territory acquired by them from Mexico, southern men proposed to extend that line. The question had been settled heretofore by this manner of computation, and they were willing that it should also be applied to the territory acquired from Mexico. But the North refused upon this occasion, and a new principle was introduced—namely, that of non-intervention. It was established by the compromise and adjustment of 1850 and 1851. It was established that this principle should be applied, by which the North virtually got the whole of the territory which was acquired by the Mexican concession, and all that the South gained was the declaration of an abstract principle, that Congress would not interfere with the Territories. The North excluded slavery, and it had no right to do so; hence the South felt itself to have been aggrieved by an adjustment which practically excluded them from the whole of the territory, and which gave them nothing in exchange but this abstract declaration.

After it had been acquiesced in by the whole country, then the Kansas and Nebraska Territorial question came up. We, the South, said, whatever rule you apply ought to be uniform. We are willing to extend the line to the Pacific. If it is right in regard to the Mexican territory, it is also right in relation to the Nebraska question. Make your action consistent and uniform. If it be wrong, as you assert, to exclude a southern institution from the Union by a law of Congress, here is a case in which Congress has passed such a law. To be consistent, you must repeal it; in other words, that the principle of the settlement of 1850 and 1851 should be applied to this Nebraska act. The moment this principle was adopted it was denounced by the leaders of the new party as a swindle upon the North. It was said that the South had violated a compromise with the North; and not contented with that, they denounced those noble northern men who chose to stand up in the vindication of the Constitution and the country—the men who vindicated your reputation for justice and good faith—who were not doing less in sustaining your interest than they were in sustaining the Constitution itself—those men were denounced among you as being doughfaces and traitors. Statesmen, sirs, and patriots were they all, and history will yet do them justice; and it will do justice to the great democratic party in having come forward to apply the principles of justice and the Constitution to the settlement of these exciting questions. [Cheers.]

Sirs, the day will come when the future student of American history will look with amazement upon the fact that they had ever been charged with a departure from a compromise or breach of faith in regard to these questions, and he will rank it along with the Popish and other popular delusions.

The journals of the two Houses show that the North voted for the anti-slavery condition, which was said to be the condition of the compact. But they have an object in making this charge against the South, and against the democratic party of the North. They wish to excite odium against the South and our opponents, that, under the

fire of that excitement, they might divert the attention of the people from the monstrous consequences of the principles by which the North was arrayed against the South; thus sowing the seeds of bitterness between them.

I wish to interchange sentiment and opinion with you in regard to them, because you may rely upon it that out of it will grow consequences which will seriously affect this Union. It was in the debate of 1850 that one of the leaders of that party declared, in regard to the slavery question, there was a higher obligation than the Constitution which proscribed it, and which must be obeyed in preference to the Constitution,—thus virtually declaring that so far as the South and its institutions were concerned, they could not be protected by any constitutional government, by any treaties or understanding between men, because they were proscribed by this higher law, and placed without the pale of human sympathy,—thus proclaiming that so far as the South was concerned, there could be no union between the free and the slave States on this subject. They could not enjoy the government of law—they would hold their domestic peace and property only so long as they had force to do it—that they would hold it only so long as the government might permit them to do. But this is not all; for a doctrine so monstrous as this could not have attained assent for a moment in any section of the community unless they could succeed in making one section of the Union odious to the other. To do that they commence by denouncing slaveholders of the South, by calling them an oligarchy, and holding them up to public contempt. The fact that slave property, like any other property, was unequally distributed, was used to get up this excitement and odium against them,—was used for the utter prostration of those institutions, for the destruction of their internal peace and tranquillity.

Now, sirs, what could they expect if the power was placed in the hands of such a party, and they were to get possession of the patronage and influence of the federal government? This was not all. These slaveholders were denounced as enemies of the human race, and ranked as pirates by the Christian world. Your own fellow-citizens were thus held up to the odium of the whole world. Outlawed under this higher law, which is to set aside the Constitution and all public laws and treaties, a doctrine under which it would be impossible for us to claim the protection of the Constitution. Is it not obvious, gentlemen, that to administer the government of the country upon any such principles as these, would be virtually to dissolve the Union, because it has excluded the South from all benefit of the Constitution; it would be to proclaim that no treaty or understanding could be made with them, this higher law of obligation making it null and void. I know that it may be said that these are the doctrines and tenets of a sect which are small and extremely wild in their opinions; but, unfortunately, we have seen instances of the practice and theory of this principle. It was but the very last session that they applied this doctrine, when they proposed to let in Kansas as a State upon the Topeka Constitution.

A convention assembled at Topeka, not only without the authority of the existing government, but in defiance of it. It had not the authority of the territorial legislature nor the Congress of the United

States, and undertook to apply for admission as a State upon the constitution they presented, which, upon its face, was not to be repealed for ten years. In this convention, which was not assembled according to law, or with the assent of the government of Kansas—a convention in regard to whose constituents we have never been able to ascertain the number—a constitution was formed and proposed to be recognised with the same party; and thus to admit the State—that is, to take in a State—and give it a constitution, not by their own action, but by an act of the constitution which should not be repealed by the State for ten years—thus trampling upon all notions of American sovereignty, and treading unto the ground that favorite idea that the people of each State had a right to establish their own institutions, and requesting Congress to recognise the action of a party in a State, regardless of the government, and not subject to amendment by the people for ten years. Could they have attempted this, had they not supposed that the monstrous consequences of these doctrines would be forgotten in the anti-slavery excitement? The fact that those people had adopted an anti-slavery constitution must have been recognised without thus trampling upon all the favorite notions of popular sovereignty. What would be the effect of that principle upon the South in connexion with those dangerous and alarming doctrines they have promulgated? According to that precedent they might assemble anywhere in a southern State and pass an anti-slavery constitution, if the majority were in favor of it, but they would recognise it as a State if the majority undertook to resist and put it down.

[The speaker was here again interrupted in his remarks by another procession, accompanied with bands of music, when he remarked—
I am willing at all times to be interrupted by the music of the Union.]

To resume the thread of my disclosure, you will perceive that, under these doctrines, which they propose to adopt, a convention could be called in any of the States, if it happened to suit the advocates of the higher law doctrine, and overturn the existing government. When you come to take these things in their connexion, there could not have been a more fearful precedent. To show how determined this sectional party were to carry out principles which would confiscate our property and disturb our domestic peace and tranquillity, they had nominated a candidate on the sectional platform. Fremont's letter of acceptance shows that he understood that, because he makes a distinct allusion to the subject of this difference, in which they have endeavored to get up a civil strife in the bosom of the slave States themselves, merely because that species of cause was unequally distributed; so that we have a right to expect that if this party should get into power—we would have a right to expect from their administration—the whole power of this party would be used to get up strife within the southern States, not merely to set the black man against the white, but to sow seeds of dissention among white men themselves.

We know that in the slave States they cannot effect any such purpose, for white men understand the vital interests of the white race to preserve the existing relations of things. But this party would be willing to use their power, if it should be given them, to effect such a result. Suppose that they were to elect a President upon such principles, and that they were to administer the government in that way,

where would the South be placed? Do you suppose that they would agree to sacrifice their constitutional rights! Do you suppose that they would remain in the Union! Well did Mr. Fillmore ask of the citizens of the States whether they would suffer the government to be administered in any such way. It was an appeal made to the sense of justice of ten millions of people in these United States. Could the South consent to remain in the Union in which the Constitution was to be treated as null and void as far as they were concerned? It is utterly impossible that the government should be administered upon such principles without leading to the destruction of this Union. I want to ask you northern men whether there can be any consideration in the election of a sectional President, such as Fremont, to justify the North in imperiling such institutions as materially, politically, and socially affect the preservation of the Union?

Before doing that, permit me to show you that those doctrines upon which they are agitating the public mind and seeking to subvert the social system of the South would be as destructive at the North as at the South. I will show you that these doctrines can lead to nothing but anarchy everywhere. This higher law proscribes the institution of slavery and nullifies the protection of the Constitution, because it violates that cardinal political maxim, that all men were created equal. We all know that in European society there is a sect which has been agitating a principle that the possession of all property was a theft, and that the institution of property itself was against the higher law. They have said it destroys the equality among men; they have charged it with leading to the very evils which have been ascribed in this country to the institution of slavery. If you once agree that the institutions of society are to be overturned in this way, I ask, sirs, what institution is safe? The institution of property itself will be the next thing in danger.

Let no man say that this is a weak and contemptible sect—let no man say there is nothing to be feared by this institution. We know that it was a powerful element in a late European revolution. Of all the wars that have scourged the human race, the most destructive have been the wars of human ideas. The next war of ideas in the Old World is to be between the social and individual government. This institution of property leads to a great deal more good than harm. Without it the poor would be poorer than they are, and civilized society itself must be dissolved. We know, from British experience, if the attempt should be made to dissolve the bond of union, the effect will be to drive the white man out, and leave it entirely to the black race, or else we expose the black race to the contest for subsistence with a superior race.

The evils which have been attributed to the institution of slavery have originated from the fact of the natural disparity between those two races, growing out of the circumstance that races so unequal struggle for their subsistence upon the same soil. The institution of slavery did not aggravate them, but rather modified and mitigated them. Since the early history of man, not a nation of modern times did not recognise it by law until recently. Nearly half the States in this confederacy recognise slavery by their laws; the Constitution of the United States itself recognises it. If such an institution is to be

proscribed by higher law, what government is safe? There are no men save those who live on their property that do not sell their time and labor for a limited time. And once admitting that, it follows that there must be involuntary servitude. Every government and society recognises that servitude. If it is attended by evils, those evils are **not** dissimilar to the evils attending African slavery. But would they, on that account, allow men to get up a crusade against labor? And yet that is what abolitionists do in regard to the South. It was decreed by Divine Providence that man shall live by the sweat of his brow, and the best that men and governments can do is to make the most of circumstances. If the South, by the institution of slavery, makes the most of circumstances, were they to be denounced and persecuted as tyrants?

The subject of disunion is one which no American approaches without a certain degree of awe, and long may that feeling remain; but have you ever considered well the possible consequences of disunion to the northern States themselves, and what it is you hazard when you endanger it? This is a subject which I propose presently to discuss; but before doing so, permit me to observe that the very principles which most expose the Constitution and the Union to such risks, would turn out in the end to be as dangerous to the domestic institutions of the North as to those of the South. If they should be used to overthrow the social system of the South, the plague would soon return to overthrow your own. An avenging Nemesis would present the cup to those who had brewed the poisonous draught for our destruction. If it be true that neither constitution of governments, nor treaties and compacts against men, can protect the institution of southern slavery, because it is proscribed by the higher laws of God, why is it so? It is so, as, in part, at least, we are told by its author, because it is contrary to the axiom that "all men are created equal." Equality is a fundamental condition of humanity, and slavery, or property in man, violates that law of the Creator.

Now, here is a large and influential political sect, who declare that all property is a theft and wrong, and that it is so, because it destroys this equality, which is said to be a fundamental condition of humanity. To the institution of private property they attribute the startling contrasts between the extremes of wealth and poverty we see around us. They ask how there can be either social or political equality between the very rich and the very poor. This institution, they allege, is the cause of the poverty, whose necessities, they say, lead to all the evils which are ascribed in this country to slavery. Whatever arguments are used here against slavery, are directed by them against the institution of property itself. The higher law which condemns one, condemns also the other, and laws and constitutions of governments can no more protect the one than the other. Let no man say that this is a weak and contemptible sect. It has proved itself to have been a powerful element in a late revolution in one of the first States in Europe. The throbs and throes in the bosom of European society still show the workings of this power within.

Among the wars which have scourged humanity most severely are those of ideas. Everything seems to presage that the next such war in Europe is to be one between the social and the individual principle

in governments. Those who now seem to be intent only upon the overthrow of the southern social system will inevitably inaugurate a similar strife in the bosom of northern society also, unless they are checked in time. He who sows false political ideas in the public mind, is indeed sowing the field with dragons' teeth, from which are to spring forth armed men. If we sow the wind, we must reap the whirlwind. It is true, no doubt, that a great many evils are attendant upon, I will not say caused by, the institution of property; but are we on that account to destroy it? Is not the true answer to the objection urged against it, that much more good than evil is produced by it—that without it the poor would be poorer than they now are, and men would return from civilization and refinement to a state of nature. Man would cease to be an intellectual, industrious, and progressive being, to become a nomade, like the wild Indian on the plains, and wander about in families or in hordes.

Now, if this be a sufficient answer in the one case, is it not equally so in the other? If the white and the black, the superior and the inferior races, are thrown together in close proximity, we know that slavery affords the only means yet discovered which can secure the happiness and the improvement of both races. Without it the one would either disappear and desert the land, or it would exterminate the other. The evils which are ascribed to the institution of slavery arise really from the disparity in the natural condition of the two races which circumstances have thus thrown together. To destroy that relation would aggravate, and not diminish, these evils, so long as two such races were dwelling together. The same arguments must protect or destroy both.

What more can be said for any government than that it does what, under the circumstances of the case, is the best for its people. How many can make even this claim, or exhibit a better title to favor than the fact that it enables the people to preserve their national existence, and from time to time to improve their condition?

An eminent statesman has said: "The rights of men in government are their advantages, and these are often in balances between differences of good; in compromises sometimes between good and evil; and sometimes between evil and evil. Political reason is a comparative principle—adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing morally, not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral denomination."

Let us look now to the ground upon which the southern slaveholders are attacked as an oligarchy, and see how far these arguments may be applied to other social systems also. The census shows that slave property, like all other property, is unequally distributed, and that a majority of the whites in the southern States do not own slaves. Upon this slender foundation, the charge of oligarchy is made and proclaimed. Suppose that the census had been so taken as to show the number of persons in the United States who own more than \$5,000 worth of property; they would probably constitute a less proportion of the entire white population than the slaveholders as compared with the non-slaveholding whites of the South. The number of persons holding an interest in real estate in this country is estimated only at a million and a half; the number holding as much as \$5,000 in property would probably be still less. When such a fact as that is shown, how easy

will it be to denounce those capitalists as oligarchs! May it not be said that the real power of society is in these few hands? These are the men who can establish powers, fee advocates, and wield the immense power which money gives.

The owner of the factory, who lives on his capital, perhaps gets as much of the proceeds as all the laborers who work in it day by day, and from morning until night. The shipowner, who sleeps quietly at home, probably divides equally with all the men who sail the ship and face the perils of the sea. This charge of oligarchy may be made in one case as in the other. Doubtless it may be said truly, in defence of all this, that without the laws which encourage and protect the accumulation of capital, this vast frame-work of human society, with all its refinement and civilization, would disappear, and that, by such an event, millions of employments by which human beings subsist would be destroyed, and along with them would perish those whom they enable to live. But cannot arguments of this nature be used to reply to the charge South as well as North? If those things only issue out of the necessary constitution of society in one place, so they do in the other.

But, fellow-citizens, if under the sanction of some supposed state of the public opinion of the world, which has no legal form of expression; if under the proscription of some law, written only in the breasts of those who claim to reveal it, those institutions which are guaranteed and recognised by the constitution and laws of the government ordained by society can be overthrown, how can any government be safe, or any constitution be secured and protected, otherwise than by force? I might have inquired how the public opinion of the world is ascertained, which is said to proscribe the existence of slavery; but I choose rather to examine into the alleged law, to see if it may not apply to institutions other than those of the South. I say I might inquire how this public opinion is ascertained, which is said to outlaw us, because it is notorious that slavery has been recognised as legal by the world during far the largest portion of its history. As far back as human traditions go it is to be found. There is not a nation of antiquity, as far as we have accounts of them, which did not tolerate it; there is not a nation in Europe which did not lay the foundation of its civilization in coerced labor, or involuntary servitude. The time is comparatively recent since it existed almost everywhere under the favor of the law. The strongest nation in Europe still maintains it; the Constitution of the United States recognises it; the laws of nearly half the States establish it, and the highest judicial tribunals in the land acknowledge this law to be valid.

If such sanctions as these cannot secure property and institutions, how is it to be done at all under the forms of law? But what is this law which thus overrules constitutions and human government? It is a law which ordains that man cannot hold property in man, and as a consequence proscribes involuntary servitude. Fellow-citizens, what is property in man, and what involuntary servitude? Property may be absolute or limited—it may be in fee or for a term of years. In practice one man may hold property in the services of another for life, as in the law of slavery; for a term of years, as in an apprenticeship; or for months, weeks, days, and hours, as in the case of domestics, or mechanics, or lawyers, or doctors. In civilized society there is no

man, except in the rare cases of those living on accumulated capital, who does not sell to another a property in his services. This is servitude, and if constrained by the necessities of poverty, it is as much involuntary as if it were forced by any other physical necessity. The evils which are ascribed to one form of this servitude are common to them all, and so claimed to be by this socialist sect of whom I have spoken.

Are hard cases of separation in families to be found where slavery exists; do they not also occur whenever a man is forced by his necessity to sell his labor in the highest market? Are many revolting instances to be found of the submission by one man of his will to another in the one case; do they not also occur in the other? Whatever evils are ascribed to involuntary servitude in the one case, can be and have been ascribed to the other. Shall we for this reason proclaim that no man shall be allowed to sell his labor, or give a right of property in his services to another? To do so would be to destroy more than half the value of labor, and to rob millions of human beings of the means of subsistence, and to dissolve all human society. Now, why these evils, or any evils, exist, it passes my metaphysics to determine. Why it was ordained that man should live by the sweat of his brow, or why the primeval curse was pronounced, I cannot satisfactorily explain. The most we can do is to make the best of the necessities which they impose upon us.

These considerations justify the social system of the South as well as that of the North. In the South we refer proudly to the fact that the negro race has improved more under our patronage than in any other situation in which they have ever been placed. Our system of organization has made the improvement of both races compatible with the peace and harmony of society. The co-existence upon the same soil of two races which differ so much in physical organization, and of which the one is inferior to the other, is undoubtedly attended by some evils; but these evils are mitigated, and not increased, by establishing this relation of slavery between them. The evils which are so often attributed to this institution are for the most part to be ascribed to the natural disparity of the races, and the fact that they are thrown together to struggle for subsistence on the same soil.

Fellow-citizens, I have been thus particular in endeavoring to show that the application of these principles would be revolutionary in any system of society, because I firmly believe, that, if they should serve their turn in one case, they will soon afterward be used as the weapons in a general war upon the institution of property itself. However that may be, there can be little doubt, I think, but that their present tendency is to put in peril the Union of the States. Is there any consequence to flow from the election of a sectional candidate that could compensate you for the risk which you are asked to incur? What is it that the North risks in the dissolution of the Union? I pass over for the present the loss of power, moral and political, that it would sustain in such an event as this. I ask, now, what would it lose in point of national wealth and resources? The expenditures of the country have probably now reached sixty millions of dollars, and the day is not far distant when they may amount to seventy millions. Of these the North secures by far the larger share of the disbursements. When the

army appropriation bill was in dispute, an approximate estimate was made as to the portions which would probably be disbursed in the non-slaveholding States and Territories. The result was, as well as I can recollect, that the proportion was something about four-fifths, and in some of the other general appropriation bills their share would have been still larger. I do not pretend that any accurate estimate could be made, but it was sufficiently near for general results. I suppose there can be little doubt but that the four-fifths of the entire expenditures are disbursed North.

But if we take population as the test of contribution, and although not accurate as a test, it is nearly enough so to approximate to the truth, their share would have been about thirteen parts out of twenty-two, or something more than one-half. Instead, then, of receiving the disbursement of four-fifths of sixty millions, as probably they will do, their share according to the Constitution would have been little more than thirty-five millions. The difference of twelve millions is what then they probably owe to the Union. Now, the constant disbursement of twelve millions per annum to any section beyond what it contributes, is equivalent to creating for its benefit a United States five per cent. stock to the amount of two hundred and forty millions of dollars. That this statement approximates to the truth of the case, I have very little doubt. That it receives much more from the federal expenditure than it contributes, if their contribution is to be measured by their population, I have no doubt. The last returns of navigation and commerce show the aggregate of American tonnage to be about five millions of tons.

If we take the relative population of the free and slave States as the measure of division between the two confederacies, the northern would be entitled to not quite 3,000,000 tons. If we take the statement in the census of the number of persons in the free and slave States employed in navigation, as a measure of the actual distribution of this tonnage, the North has more than four-fifths, or something more than 4,000,000. Here, then, are at least 1,000,000 of tonnage for which she is indebted to the Union. In the census table, the product of manufactures, mining, and the mechanic arts for 1850, is stated at \$1,013,336,463, which represents, according to that statement, a profit of something like 43 per cent. upon the entire capital employed in those pursuits, for labor, for raw material, machinery and fixtures. Deduct from this the amount exported abroad, and the residue is the product of supply for the home demand. If this demand be measured by numbers, then the share of the northern confederacy would be about \$600,000,000, but according to the table, the actual division gives them more than \$800,000,000. Here, then, is an annual profit of something like \$200,000,000, which is due to the Union.

To this is to be added an item whose value to the North we have no means to measure, even approximately—I mean the cotton trade. With the exception of specie, there is no commodity yet known to trade which is so capable of being made the basis of an enlarged system of credits. The cotton bale is an almost universal bill of exchange; there are few markets in the world where it is not to be sold for the costs of production and transportation, and a reasonable profit upon them. This fact, and the regularity of its supply, have given it

a capacity to constitute a basis for exchange such as no other commodity save specie has ever possessed.

Now the advantages of that vast system of credits go mainly to the American centre of trade—to your own great city—which is not only the centre of American commerce, but is destined to become the centre of trade and exchange for the world, if this Union should last long enough to enable her to fulfil her destiny. In this estimate of the material losses which the North would experience if the Union were dissolved, I have left out some important items. The employment ranked in the census as that of commerce is especially so. The general prostration of credit and commerce, which a dissolution of the Union might occasion, I have not considered. I have said nothing either of the chances of commercial rivalry on the part of the South; I have referred only to some of the leading items, whose importance may be estimated when they are considered along with the fact that the whole property, real and personal, of the United States, is computed only at \$7,000,000,000.

So far I have only considered the pecuniary risks; but the actual loss of political power which the North would suffer, in such an event, is a matter which involves considerations of as much or more magnitude than the other. As the Union now stands, the power of the government is in the hands of the free States. They have the majority everywhere in both branches of Congress, and in the electoral college, which makes the President. If they should choose to do so, they could wield the whole power of the government; whatever strengthens that, strengthens them. In that point of view, the strength which the South adds to the general government adds also to their own. As things now stand, they may wield not only their own power, but often that of the minority also. Divide the Union, and they are limited to the strength of the free States alone. Nay, this is the best view of the question, which supposes the confederacies to be friendly. If they were hostile, then her strength would be measured by the difference between the two. Such are the losses to which the North would be exposed by a dissolution of the Union in that view of the case; but those who are seeking to press you to extreme measures take another view of the question. They say that the South could not successfully resist, and in the end must submit. That is certainly very opposite to my opinion upon the subject; but for argument's sake let us suppose it to be so.

Suppose that in the event of resistance you had conquered the slave States; what would you do with them? There is no provision in the Constitution for holding dependent provinces. You would have to change that, and your form of government, too, to effect such an object. But suppose you could do it, there are the two races together; what would you do with them? Repeat the West India experiment—convert the southern States into one great Jamaica, one vast Nigritia? What then would become of the vast commerce and rich customers who now contribute to your power and wealth? What, too, would be the consequences of the destruction of the great source of supply for that staple upon which so many people beyond the limits of the southern States depend for subsistence? Unless that race be subjected in some way to involuntary servitude in the South, either these consequences would

arise, or they would be exterminated, like the red man, in its competition with the white. Is either event a consummation to be desired? Could the free States derive any benefit, morally, politically, or socially, from such results as these?

But there is still another view of this case. It is said that this sectional party might be placed in power, and administer the government upon their own principles, and still the South would remain in the Union. Suppose, then, for argument sake, that this supposition were true. Take it, that they remained in the Union with a fixed sense of the injustice of its government, with a belief that in their cases its power would be used for purposes of offence, instead of defence, and that its patronage would be employed to breed and engender civil strife in their midst. They still preserve their votes, according to this supposition, which gives them nearly one-half the power of the Senate, and more than one-third of that of the House of Representatives, and of the electoral colleges. How would that vote be thrown—to aid and support such a government, or to embarrass and thwart it? How long, under such circumstances, would the government continue to be a practicable machine? So great an obstruction as this constantly interposed in its way would destroy any representative government. Ours could hardly endure through one presidential term.

Now the moral and conclusion from all these arguments is, that the North has an immense power in this confederacy, and that this power is constantly increasing, and that it will continue to increase if they will only use it with moderation, and not abuse it for the purpose of wrong and injustice. Upon what consideration is it, I ask, fellow-citizens, that you should expose this Union and Constitution to these great risks? It is not for the purpose of giving the patronage, office, and spoils of the government to certain men. That would be a poor view to take of so great a subject. Would it be for the purpose of bringing into the Union Kansas as a free State? What is there in the present condition of things there to which the people of the North could object? The principle of the Kansas and Nebraska bill leaves it as a popular question for consideration between the North and South.

Is the North afraid of its power of colonization? Does it not believe that it has equal chances with the South in regard to that matter? Nobody wishes to force slavery into Kansas. In point of fact, so far as this question of northern power is concerned, the introduction of Kansas, whether it comes in as a slave or free State, could hardly affect the question of northern power, which has a relative superiority now. The North has increased largely with every census. Look at the Territories which have come in as free States; look at the fact that the population of the North increases more annually by the addition of the foreign emigration than the whole amount of the increase of the negro population of the Union. Under such circumstances is it not obvious that the present superiority, and, in point of fact, the political power of the North in the government must continue to increase?

Let things stand as they are at present, and this power must continue to grow. It is perfectly certain that nothing can prevent or interrupt this growth if the North do not use their power for sectional and unjust purposes, which, in the end, if persisted in, will destroy the Union itself. Why, you could not hold ten millions of people in subjection anywhere in the United States upon such terms. Our forefathers were not three millions of people, and they, for the most part, consisted

of slave owners; but they resisted the power of the British crown. You may rely upon it, that reason will find itself capable of ruling a people of that strength, placed as the southern people are, if they choose to resist.

In the one way your gain is certain, no matter what be the result of the Kansas question; in the other, you may risk everything. You have the power now and legitimately, and with the consent of the South, if you use it justly; but if you attempt to abuse it for sectional purposes, you expose vast interests to the risks and hazards of a contest which can eventuate in no way without some loss of power to the free States, and which might end in the destruction of both parties in the conflict. I can think of no calculation of chances which would justify the North in trying the fearful experiment of administering this government not only without a southern man in its counsels, but in opposition to the essential interest, and it may be, to the peace of the South itself.

But, fellow-citizens, I wish this matter to be impressed upon you, that if the North pursues the plan proposed of standing by the Constitution and the Union, as is urged upon you by the great democratic party, which holds its residence all over this vast confederacy, then your advance in power is certain and sure. The only thing that can risk or endanger it is to follow the counsels of those men who claim to be the particular friends of the North and the opponents of slavery, but who would imperil, and perhaps destroy, the Union. Is the State of New York to be asked to expose herself to such risk as that? What State in the Union has so mighty an interest in its preservation and continuance?

Surely, if there be any one State which would risk more than another in such an experiment, it is this, the empire State of the North. Yours is the queen city of the West, which sits enthroned on the shores of yonder beautiful bay, with one hand on the ocean and the other on the lakes, to gather wealth from both. No wind can blow that does not waft to her upon the wave the rich tribute of commerce from some distant clime or some neighboring State. The very snows of heaven, which benumb the arm of industry in so many places, only seem to give her access to hyperborean regions, and open to her Arctic and Antarctic stores. I know of nothing in the magnificence of the great cities of the dead or living of the East or West, of the old world or the new, of the present or the past—nothing in the creations of mediæval commerce, or of the present age, which can excel or even equal the probable future of your great city, if this Union should endure. Are all these hopes and prospects to be risked for such considerations as are presented to you in the election of a sectional candidate?

Fellow-citizens, dark days are indeed before us, if those who possess the immense power of such a government as ours can be found capable of using it so recklessly and wildly as from some quarters they are exhorted to do. When I look forward to the possible consequences of this mad course of action, I am filled with anxiety, not because I believe the southern States cannot and will not defend themselves if the sad necessity should arise, but because I wish to preserve the Union, and save this great scheme of human society. It is but a few months since the anniversary of our Independence passed over our heads; the sun of that morning rose upon more than twenty-three millions of American people, who united within themselves more of the elements of social strength and individual happiness than were ever combined in the same number of persons before. The country was adorned with the rich monuments of an industry which seemed to have been directed with an energy and a skill almost superhuman. Fair and stately cities crowned the shores of the seas and the borders of the rivers. The land smiled with happy homesteads which sent up as incense to Heaven the smoke of millions of household fires, kindled on as many altars, which had been consecrated to peace and all the domestic virtues. The husbandman went forth to sow his seed or plant his tree, in perfect confidence that he or his descendents would gather the fruit. The mariner plowed the seas, and looked proudly aloft to the stars and stripes, the emblems of his country's presence and of a jurisdiction which followed him, and could cover and protect him in the most distant climes. The young mother rejoiced that her man-child was born into the world, because she knew that when he

arrived at years of discretion he might take any one of a thousand roads which would lead him through this happy land to wealth or to honor. The old man descended willingly to the tomb, and closed his eyes in peace, in the belief that he was leaving this fair scene as a perpetual inheritance to be enjoyed by his children and their descendents. And upon what reposed this grand scheme of human happiness? It rested on the faith felt by our people that they would continue to live under the Constitution, and the equal laws which it enjoined, in the confidence they reposed in the sense of justice and mutual affection of each other.

But, fellow-citizens, the serpent has crept into that land of delight. He understands the secret of the charm, and well knows that to scatter ruin he must destroy the mutual confidence upon which so much happiness depends; accordingly he has been busy at work.

How long the mutual confidence of our people can withstand such attempts to destroy it, I know not. But if those feelings should be destroyed, this great scheme of happiness, this vast fabric of human society, must dissolve and perish. The skeleton outline may, indeed, remain, but its harmonious coloring will fade away, its beauty of proportion will disappear, and its grace of motion and its charm of life will become extinct. Whether there be anything short of power divine which can cause these dry bones to live again, or relume with light and life the inanimate form, I cannot say. But this I can say, that if there be any human means of regeneration for nations that have decayed, or social systems that have become effete, history has not, as yet, recorded them.

Fellow-citizens, it is in the power of this empire State to preserve the Constitution and the Union from the perils which threaten it. She has but to will it, and she can do it. Will she not strike the blow which may save the country? Is it not time that, from a sense of common danger, the good men of all parties had united for the sake of the Union? Or, if no such union can be formed, then let the democracy of this great State do the work. Be theirs the glorious task. But to do it, they must close up their squares and re-form their squadrons at once. Let them move up and rally round the flag of their country. Not that mutilated banner which has been dismembered of nearly half its stars, but the flag of their fathers and the Union, in which every State still finds its emblem, and in which every heart may fix its love. But there must be no divided camp. It will not do for one army to look on from the hill while another is doing battle on the plain. I care not whether Fabius shall go to Minucius, or Minacius return to Fabius, but the Roman armies must unite for the sake of Rome itself, to save the sacred city from the grasp of the wily Carthaginian.

In the closing struggle of the Revolution, at the siege of York, in my native State, it was a New Yorker who led the American column of attack upon the British redoubt. All that was won there may again be put at stake in the great civil contest in which we are now engaged. She is the empire State—let her take the lead once more. Advance ever as she may, right behind her she will hear the steady tramp of the great democratic host pressing on to cover and to aid her. At the battle of the Pyramids, Napoleon bade his troops remember that forty centuries of the past looked down from their heights upon their deeds in arms. I know not how many centuries which now lie hid in the invisible depths of the future may look back to a happy result in this civil contest, with praise and gratitude. There have been well stricken fields, so stricken that they floated in human blood; and well fought battles, fought until it might almost be said that armies whole had perished, whose consequences were not half so important as those which may flow from the result of this civil struggle, bloodless though it be.

It is said to be a time-honored custom in the British army to allow each regiment to inscribe upon its flag the name and date of the battle in which it was distinguished. May it be the glory of the democratic column of this State to write upon theirs, *the fourth day of November, 1856*, in commemoration of the fact that it had emerged from the smoke and storm of battle, bearing the sacred ark of the Constitution and the Union in their arms, to place it so high above the assaults

of its enemies, that hereafter the shafts which may be aimed against it will fall as harmless beneath its base as the arrows that are discharged in the face of the sun.

Fellow-citizens, I will not permit myself to harbor the fear of defeat. I place my trust in the great conservative democratic party of the country—that party which seems capable of elevating itself to a sufficient height to take in the whole horizon of a sectional question—that party which, in all times of trial and difficulty, has interposed and been ever able as yet to save the country. That they have been defeated at times is true; they sometimes returned from the field with

“Broken squares and banners torn,”

and themselves

“Battle tossed and worn.”

But they have never been broken in spirit, and never so broken in ranks but that they could and did return to the charge in time to save the country. The trial is not yet beyond their strength; they can save it again, and they will do it. If the ship of State weathers this storm, hereafter it will ride easily upon the billow, ready to make its world-wide voyage to spread American influence in distant lands, and by the moral power of a great example, to give a new impulse to the forward movement of the human races. Shall we disappoint this high destiny? shall we fail to fulfil our mighty mission, and hear a wondrous tale of human greatness still untold, because we choose rather to waste our strength in civil strife? Ephraime against Judah, and Judah warring against Ephraime, while the Asyrian and the Mede despoil both. In such a contest as this, can there be any doubt where the empire State will be found?

During the war of the Revolution, there was no military object to which Washington clung with so much tenacity as that of defending the highlands and the line of the Hudson. It was the greatest strategic line of the Union, behind which its communications were easy and sure. Accordingly, he planted it thick with bayonets, and, where he could do so, crowned its heights with cannon. If the British seized upon a post which threatened its integrity, he sent “Mad Anthony” to storm it; if they sought to obtain another through treachery, he hung the spy who attempted it; if he found that those who manned the line were relaxing in their vigilance, he despatched Putnam to watch them, well knowing that he would keep all wide awake who were around him; if the enemy organized an expedition in their northern provinces to take this line in the reverse, he was willing to strip himself to the last man and the last gun to capture and destroy it.

In the darkest hours of the Revolution, and amid its severest trials and difficulties, he made good his possession of that line. Fellow-citizens, it is still a great strategic point, and may again turn out to be that of chief interest. What shall I say of it in the Old Dominion, when they shall ask me the news from the empire State? That I left the democracy of the State in possession of the highlands, and that they mean to hold on to the line of the Union! If the democracy of the empire State will undertake to make good their possession of this great point, how many patriots throughout the land will hold up their hands, like the prophets of old, for a blessing upon their efforts.

But, fellow-citizens, I must draw to a close. I felt that there was so much which ought to be said, and which I was unable to say, that I have been brought into idle repetition in the vain effort to say those things, of which so many, after all, have been left unsaid.