

Speech of Hon. Daniel S. Dickinson, of New York : delivered at the Cooper Institute, New York, July 18, 1860.

Dickinson, Daniel S. (Daniel Stevens), 1800-1866.

Washington City : Issued by the National Democratic Executive Committee, 1860

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Speech at Cooper Union
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Dickinson, Daniel S.
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Speech at Cooper Union

n.y. 1860

Breckinridge & Lane Campaign Documents, No. 6.

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S P E E C H

OF

Hon. DANIEL S. DICKINSON, ^{tevens}

OF NEW YORK,

DELIVERED AT THE

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Cooper Institute, New York,

July 18, 1860.



WASHINGTON CITY:

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

1860.

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SPEECH

OF

HON. DANIEL S. DICKINSON,

At COOPER INSTITUTE, NEW YORK, July 18, 1860.

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AFTER the applause had subsided, Mr. DICKINSON proceeded to address the meeting. He said:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND MY FELLOW CITIZENS :

Ever-fleeting time has brought us upon another period prescribed by the Constitution for the election of Chief Magistrate of this great confederacy—a popular struggle known to no people under heaven but ourselves, and exceeding in interest and importance anything known in the history of governments amongst men, civilized or savage.

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

Upon preceding, similar occasions, generally, it has been the good fortune of that great party to which you and I belong (cheers), of that party which has swayed the destinies of the country and shaped its policy from the days of Jefferson to the present moment, to stand united in principle and purpose and movement, like a Roman Cohort in the best period of the mistress of the world. With such purposes, such principles, such united energies, and such harmonious action, the democratic party deserved, and won the highest confidence and gratitude of the toiling masses—it bore aloft on its banner the sacred word equality—it plucked hoary-headed privilege by the beard, and arraigned error and pretension before the great tribunal of the people—it was radical in the reformation of abuses—it was conservative in the preservation of all that experience had approved—the constitution was its pillar and its cloud, and progress was its watchword. (Loud cheers.) Under its benign policy our borders extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific—we subdued and fertilized new territories—we civilized, educated and absorbed their barbarous or semi-barbarous races, and nearly trebled the number of free sovereign States (Cheers.) Overshadowing, monopolizing, unconstitutional federal banks and protective tariffs, those devices of craft and fraud, that they might subsist upon the fruits of others' labor, have, after years of conflict with the democracy, finally been driven from the field and exterminated, and the only great work left them in the present crisis is to vindicate the supremacy of the constitution and the equality of the States. Its present administration by a wise and foreseeing foreign and domestic policy was quietly advancing the great inter-

est of the country in spite of the efforts of foes without and foes within, and democracy was in the zenith of its triumphs. (Cheers). If to-day that great conservative party of the people and the constitution, the country's safety and the patriot's hope, is crippled and divided—if its power is weakened, its forces scattered, its energies weighed down, and there are forebodings that its proud banner may fall trailing in the dust—let it be remembered that it is not the fault of the party or its principles, or of its masses, that it is thus degraded, but that it is because in an evil moment its management fell into the hands of the selfish, corrupt and venal, who have betrayed the trusts half gained by stealth, half confided to them, and because in attempting to use its power to advance personal ends only, they have destroyed its organization, divided it into sections, and brought them into conflict with each other, instead of concentrating all its forces upon the enemies of the constitution. (Loud cheers.)

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

This organization, with many elements of personal cleverness, bodes evil to the best interests of true freedom and humanity. It is founded in sectional disturbance, its aliment is prejudice and passion, its efforts calculated to array State against State, section against section, man against man, brother against brother—to destroy all kindly relations, and light up the fires of sectional discord and strife, to end in battles of blood. Though its managers threw overboard its great founder and leader, Governor Seward, because he had too plainly declared its principles, hoping thereby to conceal its dangerous tendencies, its true theories are belched by the Sumners and the Cheevers, and are reduced to practice by its John Browns. (Great cheers.) It disturbs and embitters the social relations—it severs the holy ties of religious brotherhood—it breaks the bonds of a common political faith—it blots out the great memories of the Revolution—it destroys commercial interests and the interchanges of free trade—it degrades us as a nation before the envious monarchs of the earth, and deprives us of our inherent power to vindicate our rights. It sows broadcast the terrible seeds of domestic strife and passion, that the people may reap in due season a harvest of ashes and desolation.

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION—PUBLIC EXPECTATION.

There was never a moment in the history of the democratic party, or a time when the masses of the people looked to the sitting of a National Convention with more confiding expectation, than when it was about to assemble at Charleston in April last. There was never a time when such confidence was more wickedly, wantonly, and shamefully betrayed—when reasonable expectations were so madly blasted, as in the results produced by its action. Its proceedings found no parallel in disgrace and degradation since the empire of the New World was sold at auction for money.

The democratic party, for its steady devotion to the principles of the Constitution, the catholicity of its creeds, for its grand radical analysis, and its just and lofty conservatism, had won the confidence of the masses, and wrung unwilling admiration from its hereditary opponents, and all good men looked to it in this the evil day of our country for deliverance and safety. Its convention assembled

at Charleston, and organized for business. A holy man, arrayed in the robes of his sacred office, with raised hands and fervent supplication, invokes the favor of the beneficent Being who has vouchsafed to us, as a people, so many blessings. The whisper of beauty is hushed in the galleries—the aged bow their gray hairs in sympathetic and deep devotion—levity is humbled in silence, and even lurking fraud is abashed, and cowers for a hiding-place. But the prayer is over, and a band of conspirators take possession of the assemblage, and, instead of a National Convention, a great huckstering bazaar is erected—a political trade-sales is opened—management inaugurates her slimy and repulsive court, and the office of Chief Magistrate of this mighty republic is put up, like the board of a public pauper, at the lowest bidder. Its proceedings bear evidence of deliberate and long cherished design, of a combination and conspiracy to tie up minorities against them, and to leave those free who were for them, and thus attain, by fraud or force, a particular result, regardless of popular sentiment, or of consequences which might follow. The ruling faction had snuffed up the scent of four hundred million of spoil, and for them the administration of Douglas was expected to rain milk and honey, snow powdered sugar, and hail Moffat's Vegetable Life Pills. [Laughter.] Under nearly two weeks of this application of the forcing process, the Convention proved unequal to the emergency, and paused for breath—a portion of the delegations withdrew, and the residue adjourned to Baltimore for a period of some six weeks for ventilation. The public had reason to hope that separated from the influences which surrounded them, and no longer breathing the contagions they engendered, but inhaling a healthy moral atmosphere, they might return and discharge the duty which they had undertaken. But abstinence only edged their appetites, and their last state was worse than the first. (A voice—"That's so.") The same drilled, packed, machine majority met again, composed of delegates from a portion of States, and assumed to sit in judgment upon the rights of regular delegates from another portion—to punish them for some nonconformity to the majority standard, or other delinquency—in short, to deny to sovereign democratic States the right to return to their seats at Baltimore, because they did not occupy them for the whole period of the protracted sitting at Charleston—a question belonging entirely to the constituency of these delegations alone, and with which the National Convention had no business whatsoever. And not only were these delegations expelled under such pretensions, but bogus delegations, made up to suit the convenience and necessity of the occasion, were put in their places. (Hisses and cheers.) A decision so abhorrent to every principle of common fairness—so replete with outrage and usurpation, divided, dismembered, and broke up the Convention, as it should have done, and as every sensible mind saw it would do; and I commend with my whole heart the spirit, and approve the conduct of the President, General Cushing, who refused longer to preside over the tyrannous cabal, and of the delegations who, under the same President, re-organized, and placed in nomination Messrs. Breckinridge and Lane. The remaining fraction, made up chiefly of delegates from republican States, whose delegations were the authors of the great wrong, deprived of their head, and without a democratic body, proceeded to nominate Messrs. Douglas and Fitzpatrick, as we were informed, amidst tremendous enthusiasm. Vermont and other New England States, and the whole Northwest, were pledged to Mr.

Douglas (subject, of course, to a slight incumbrance held by one Abraham Lincoln) with deafening applause. Some flat boatmen descending the Mississippi, in rather a jolly mood, passed a house on the shore where they were fiddling and dancing on the piazza—the boat fell into an eddy, and once in each half hour passed the house again, and the boatmen swore they were fiddling and dancing in every house for a hundred miles on the shore of the river—while they had been revolving in an eddy, and had seen but one. The Douglas strength is estimated in the same way.

CAUSE OF DISRUPTION—THE AUTHORS OF IT.

Waiving all questions of the merits or demerits of Mr. Douglas as a candidate, his pretensions were pressed upon the Convention, sometimes under the pretence of a platform upon which he could stand with convenience, sometimes in the admission and rejection of delegates by the process of machinery and management, and at other times in the direct presentation of his name, beyond all precedence or bounds of courtesy or reason, in a manner and in a spirit, and with a feeling which spoke defiance to nearly one half of the States of the Confederacy, when it was well known they would not acquiesce in his nomination, that they would not support him if nominated, and that he could not be elected without their votes; pressed, too, in a tone and temper, and with a dogged and obstinate persistence which was well calculated, if it was not intended, to break up the Convention, or force it into obedience to the behests of a combination. (Cheers.) The authors of this outrage, whom we should hold accountable, and who are justly and directly chargeable with it, were the ruling majority of the New York delegation. They held the balance of power, and madly and selfishly, and corruptly used it for the disruption of the Democratic party, in endeavoring to force it up to a fixed point, to subserve their infamous schemes. They were there charged with high responsibilities by a patriotic and confiding constituency—in a crisis of unusual interest in the history of the party and the country—they, in an evil moment, held in their leprous hands the destinies of a noble party and of this great country—they professed to be governed by honorable considerations, and to desire the unity and harmony and success of the Democracy. (Cheers.) They proclaimed, personally and through their accredited organs, that in their view the Southern States were entitled to name a candidate, and declared that it would be their first policy to second such suggestions as were made in that quarter, and support such candidate as should be named by, or be most acceptable to, the South; and with such professions and false pretenses on their lips, they went to Charleston. But from the moment they entered the Convention at Charleston, until it was finally broken up by their base conduct and worse faith at Baltimore—conduct which secured them the designation of political gamblers upon the floor of the Convention, their every act was to oppose the wishes and resist each, any, and every candidate who would be acceptable to the Southern States; and, their every effort, in season and out of season, by night and by day, was to force upon the Southern States a candidate whose creed they repudiated and condemned, a candidate they had declared, in the most solemn form, and with repeated asseverations, they could not and would not support; a candidate who was at open war with the Democratic Administration, who had but a single sup-

porter in the Democratic Senate, and whose especial adherents had just aided the Republicans in the election of a Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives, two of the most influential and commanding positions in the Government. (Cheers.) Those who ruled, and dictated to, and wielded the vote of the New York delegation, through the fraudulent process of a unit vote—a ruled forced upon a large minority of this delegation to stifle their sentiments, while small minorities were released from it in others to suit the purposes of the conspirators—will hereafter be known by the name plainly branded upon their guilty foreheads at Charleston—"political gamblers"—as creatures who hang festering upon the lobbies of State and federal legislation, to purchase chartered privilege and immunity by corrupt appliances; who thrive in its fœtid atmosphere, and swell to obese proportions, like vultures upon offal; office brokers, who crawl and cringe around the footsteps of power, and by false pretences procure themselves or vile tools places of official trust and emolument, that they may pack and control caucuses and conventions at the expense of the people they defraud and betray, while honest men are engaged in their industrial avocations to earn their bread. (Loud cheers, and a voice, "Go it, old man.") Oh! how has the once noble spirit of the Democracy fled from such contaminating approaches! Rome, whose proud banner once waved triumphant over a conquered world, degenerated, in the pursuit of sensual delights, to a band of fiddlers and dancers, and the Democratic party of New York, founded in the spirit of Jefferson, and emulating, for many years, the noble efforts of a Jackson and a Tompkins, has, in the hands of "political gamblers," been degraded by practices which would dishonor the resorts of a Peter Funk in cast-off clothing; cheating the sentiment of the people of the State and nation; cheating a great and confiding party, whose principles they put on as a disguise, for the purposes of enabling them to cheat; cheating the Convention which admitted them to seats; cheating delegations who trusted them; cheating everybody and everything with which they came in contact, except Mr. Douglas, their nominee, and then lamenting, through their accredited organ, from day to day, that the Convention had not remained together so that they might finally have cheated him. They have overthrown the Democratic masses, but "Wo to the riders that trampled them down." Political gamblers! you have breathed your contagion throughout the Democratic citadel, and profaned and polluted its very walls. You have defiled its holy places by your corrupting presence; unclean beasts fold in the area of its temples; and filthy reptiles have inhabited the sanctuary of its gods. Its towering eagle of liberty has fled for a brief season, and foul ravens croak for prey and whet their bloody beaks and dirty talons upon its sacred altars. Political gamblers! you have perpetrated your last cheat—consummated your last fraud, upon the Democratic party, for you will never again be trusted. Henceforth you will be held and treated as political outlaws, and set at defiance. There is no fox so crafty but his hide finally goes to the hatters. You will hang upon its skirts to regain power, and lie in ambush for revenge, but as an open enemy you are powerless, and are only dangerous to those who trust you. With parties, and especially cliques, who betray trusts and abuse power, as with individuals, there is a day of reckoning and retribution, and yours is at hand,

For time at last sets all things even,
And if we do but watch the hour,

There never yet was human power
 Who could evade, if unforgiven,
 The patient search and vigil long
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.—(Cheers.)

NEW YORK DIVISIONS—THE UNION AT SYRACUSE—ITS FRUITS
 DESTROYED, ETC.

The defection of a wing of the democratic party in 1847, under cover of advocating "free soil" principles, defeated General Cass in 1848, and prostrated the power of the democratic party in the State and nation. While its sections were yet standing, or professing to stand, on principles or doctrines in direct antagonism to each other, there were those who advocated a coalition of sections and a division of spoils, for the purpose of securing patronage and of "beating the whigs." Regarding it as most shamefully demoralizing, I resisted it with all the force I could summon, and all the arguments I could command; but the necessities of office-seeking patriotism were too strong for me, and under the ministrations of some who had received a taste of official favor, and were willing to barter principles for place, and the acquiescence of good-natured weakness, the foul scheme was consummated—individuals obtained place, and the moral foundations of the party were shaken. From that day to the present, elements theretofore unknown and unheard of in the history of the party became rife, wielded by "political gamblers." Since then, caucuses have been run by contract, conventions have been packed, and the management of the party machinery has been assigned to its chief and assistant engineers, with as much precision and regard to minutiae as the running of railroad trains. When a corps of hands were wanted to falsify domestic history at Washington, and calumniate faithful democrats and honest men, they were in motion with all the alacrity of police detectives who start to arrest and punish, not perpetrate fraud. In short, they usually keep stationed there a drill-sergeant and a file of men, to serve in emergencies. When an office was vacant, or a job of depleting the treasury was in the market, they snuffed up the spoil with that keen instinct given to all birds of evil omen, and demanded it as their lawful booty. They were "political gamblers" by trade, and pursued their avocation with appropriate and shameless desperation. Administrations which have known, or ought to have known, their bleared and blackened history, which knew, or should have known, their occupation, and should have shunned them as they would a contact with the plague, though, at first, regarding this clique as

A monster of such frightful mien,
 That to be hated needs but to be seen, (Cheers.)

have usually realized the humiliating illustration of the poet and

Being once familiar with its face,
 First see, then pity, then embrace.

Hereafter, when democrats or others abroad fail to understand what they term the tangled web of New York politics, let them understand that nine-tenths of the "tangled web" and embarrassment to the democratic party has arisen from abroad, because this same clique of "political gamblers," who make politics a business,

have been enabled to fasten their fangs upon the party organizations at home, from being recognized and clothed with power, and place, and patronage abroad; and that they have been recognized and rewarded abroad, for the alleged reason that they had power and position at home: which power and position they gain by the very patronage placed in their hands by those having its dispensation. This enables them to drive a profitable trade in political affairs, when true democrats are prosecuting their ordinary pursuits, and looking to popular sentiment, to direct political affairs. This clique, and its accomplices and sympathizers, professed free soil doctrines until they were universally repudiated and condemned by the democratic party everywhere, and then, without the least inconvenience, professed the doctrines of the democratic party with equal zeal, and, probably, about equal sincerity. Though I opposed their recognition as democrats by the party so long as they refused to stand upon its platform, yet they were bargained in, and I could do so no longer when they professed and acknowledged its whole creed, and swore allegiance again to its principles. Many of the old free soil wing, I cheerfully admit, have proved to be among the most reliable and faithful members of the party. But I have looked upon all the movements of the particular clique of whom I speak with distrust, and would gladly have seen them perform quarantine before landing. But they had sapped and mined the foundation of the democratic edifice so long that they knew its weak points, and having perfected their machinery accordingly, they were enabled to influence its movements, and to rule or ruin in party affairs, generally doing the last when they failed to accomplish the first. Thus they became formidable, and thus did a great and generous party yield to their impious demands from time to time, rather than to see their treacherous arms turned against the democratic encampment, while its hosts were engaged in a great periodical battle with its open enemies. As the great conflict of 1860 approached, it was obvious that New York must be the battle ground over the constitution, and bear a conspicuous part in the mighty struggle, if, indeed, her potential act did not decide it for good or for evil. In view of this, I early determined to countenance no divisions in the ranks, for any purposes under any circumstances. I knew that divisions, no matter how arising, would produce certain and inevitable defeat. I knew this clique of politicians had abated not one jot or tittle of their rule or ruin policy. I knew it was loud in its professions of harmony, for foreign consumption, to gull the masses, and I determined to take it at its word—(cheers)—to discountenance all divisions; to obtain as fair a selection of delegates to the National Convention as possible, and to make a last final experimental effort for union for the sake of the Union. Events at Syracuse, whither I went to promote reconciliations and prevent disruptions, gave my voice potential influence. I exerted it to bring all elements into one organization, which should represent the Empire State, and though the effort was censured by some and resisted by others, and criticised by mole-eyed vision, it was substantially successful. I appealed to the masses throughout the State in popular addresses, and the democracy responded by electing the most important portion of the ticket placed in nomination. But a single delegated representation was recognized at Charleston, and if that delegation had discharged, nay, if it had not grossly violated its duty, the State of New York in this great contest would have been the surest State in the Union for the democratic nominees. When the Syracuse Convention of 1859 approached, I could have remained at home and permitted a division, which I saw was almost certain; the division would have come, New

York would have been prostrate, and I and my friends should have been charged with producing it, and good-natured credulity abroad would have believed the asseverations of those whose vocation it is to verify such falsehood. I could have joined others, and have ministered to the just but profitless revenges of true and faithful men for a long catalogue of wrongs; but I preferred to look forward for the benefit of all rather than backwards to gratify the just resentments of the few. (Cheers.) I could have seconded others in some Quixotic expedition to attain results, to minister to far-fetched individual hopes; but each of these would have left New York powerless for good, and old-line democrats seemingly responsible, and I determined to give those who had power to rule or ruin, and a determination suited to the occasion, undisputed power to rule, after associating with them all the good influence I could command. They professed to desire harmony, unity and conciliation. I proposed to take them at their word, without saying how much or how little faith I had in their professions. I saw they would have the power. I determined they should have, so far as I could control it, the responsibility also. I knew that if they fairly and faithfully represented the State, they would merit and receive the commendation of all good democrats, and that the party would be compensated in the results which would follow. I knew if, by treacherous schemes and gambling resorts, they betrayed their trust, and repeated the cheats abroad which they practiced at home, they would expose to the world their own perfidious natures and destroy themselves forever, and defeat their further power for mischief at home and abroad; and that the democratic party of New York could afford unbounded compensation for a consummation so devoutly to be wished. In short, I saw they would have the power. I meant they should have the responsibility with it, and they had both. The power they might have exercised so as to have given life, health and joy, and unquestioned success to the democratic party of the State and nation. But they chose to exercise it in an opposite direction, and now let them prepare for the responsibility which they cannot escape. They have, that they might advance the selfish purposes of a corrupt clique, with malice aforethought, wickedly and wantonly committed the crime—let them stand up in the world's pillory and suffer the penalty due to falsehood, treachery, ingratitude and baseness. (Cheers.) When I threw my whole soul into an effort to unite the democratic party of this State, I determined, if it was finally unsuccessful, because of the bad conduct of this trading combination, that I would never again make an effort to unite the party with such material in it. That effort at union would have been crowned with complete success but for them, for the ranks of the party had closed up, and the masses hailed a deliverance from internal division and strife, as a proud day in their country's history. But they have torn open again its wounds to subserve their own selfish schemes, and now let division be the order of the day until these faithless "political gamblers" are driven without the pale of the democratic party forever. So totally abhorred as they are, we shall sooner attain success without than with them, and we have proved now, to the satisfaction of all, how vain the attempt for a party to repose upon such rotten foundations, and hereafter their power will not be courted, nor their necessities rewarded by democratic administrations. No, I shall hereafter make no effort for union where they are to be recognized, but war upon any faction under their treacherous rule, and nothing but faction will follow their lead.

Twice have I sought clan Alpine's glen
 In peace, but when I come again,
 I come with banner, brand and bow,
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.—(Loud cheers.)

NON-INTERVENTION—SQUATTER SOVEREIGNTY.

Much has been said upon the subjects of non-intervention and squatter sovereignty, as it is termed, and there has been much more said upon them than has been understood by those who have said it. And it would be well for the political magpies who chatter so flippantly upon the subject, to learn their lesson before they prate it. ("That's true," and cheers.) The two principles, which really have no relation to each other and are entirely different, have been strangely and unpardonably confounded; but I will state the true definitions of each separately. Non-intervention means that there should be no intervention to extend or prohibit slavery in the Territories, but that the people of the States and the Territories should be left, while a Territory, to enjoy just such rights as to carrying their slaves with them when removing into the Territories, or exclusion therefrom, as it should be held by the courts belonged to them. Squatter sovereignty claims the sovereign right of the people of a Territory to exclude the introduction of slavery from the Territory by hostile Territorial legislation, regardless of the construction given to the constitution by the decisions of the Supreme Court. Before the Dred Scott decision this was an open question; since that decision it is so no longer. The difference is plainly this: non-intervention by Congress and qualified popular sovereignty proposed such Territorial legislation as should be in deference to, subject to, and in harmony with the decisions of the Supreme Court upon the great question. Squatter sovereignty defies the authority of the courts, and asserts the power of the Territorial legislature to exclude slavery from the Territory by law, absolutely, regardless of the construction given to the constitution by the court. (Cheers.)

MR. DICKINSON'S RESOLUTION OF 1847, IN THE SENATE, AND MR. CALHOUN'S VIEWS.

It has been often said with truth, that I was the first to introduce the principle of non-intervention and qualified popular sovereignty into Congress for the government of the Territories. When the doctrine has been regarded with disfavor it has been assigned to me; but when it has been greeted with popular applause it has had numerous claimants. It has sometimes been said, but erroneously, that I was an advocate, if not the author of the doctrine of squatter sovereignty. I was, and am, an advocate of non-intervention with qualified popular sovereignty. That is, with the right of the people to legislate in harmony with the constitution for their domestic government. I never was an advocate for, or a believer in, the doctrine of squatter sovereignty, and hold it to be an out and out absurdity. For it makes the laws of a Territorial Legislature to override the Constitution of the United States. The resolutions which I introduced in 1847, proposing non-intervention in the Territories and suggesting the principle of popular sovereignty in a qualified form, proposed, as shown by the speech which followed their introduction, that the Territorial legislation should keep in view such construction as should be given to the Constitution by the Supreme Court, and legislate in harmony with and in declaratory obedience to it. They were never brought to a vote, because practical measures involving the precise question came under consideration soon after their introduction, and for other reasons. (Cheers.) In 1848, Mr. Calhoun, myself, and others, were upon the committee charged with a bill known as the Clayton Compromise. I proposed, and Mr. Calhoun assented, that the bill should be framed upon the principle of non-intervention, and it was so framed and so passed the Senate, but was, near the close of the session, laid on the table in the House of Representatives. The only difference between Mr. Calhoun and myself upon the subject, then or at any other time, was this: He proposed that the bill should recognize, in declaratory form, the right of the citizens of all the States to go to the common Territories with their property, slave property included, and there be protected. Without affirming or denying his position, I proposed, as it was an unsettled question, and strictly belonged to the judiciary, to leave it to be decided

by the courts, to which he readily assented, remarking that the South had such entire confidence in the position that they were willing to stand upon non-intervention, and await a judicial construction of the constitution and of their rights in the Territories. The position of Mr. Calhoun has since been fully vindicated and sustained by the Dred Scott decision.

COMPROMISE MEASURES OF 1850.

The compromise measures of 1850 were based upon the same non-intervention idea, and while they were under discussion in the Senate of the United States, I had the honor to state my position there in a speech upon the floor as follows:

Now, sir, I wish to say, once for all, that it is not my intention, either directly or indirectly, to favor, by voice or vote, the extension of slavery, or the restriction of slavery in the Territories, by Congress, or any interference with the subject whatever. Nor am I influenced in this conclusion by the local laws of the Territory in question, either natural or artificial, the laws of nature or the laws of man; and, for all the purposes of the present action, I will not inquire what they are in either respect. I will stand upon the true principles of non-intervention, in the broadest possible sense for non-intervention's sake, to uphold the fundamental principles of freedom, and for no other reason, and will leave the people of the Territories and of the States to such rights and privileges as are theirs under the constitution and laws of the United States, without addition to, or diminution from, such rights by the action of Congress.

KANSAS AND NEBRASKA BILL.

The Kansas and Nebraska bill, except in its disturbance of the Missouri line, contained no new principle whatever, but copied the same non-intervention principle which had been recognized by Congress, and awaited the judicial construction of the Constitution.

THE DRED SCOTT DECISION.

After the passage of all these measures came the Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court of the United States, pronounced after unusual labor and deliberation, construing the Constitution, and the rights of citizens of States in the Territories, as Mr. Calhoun and other Southern statesmen had contended, and thus settling the question forever, for all those who propose to abide by the Constitution and laws. The substance of the decision was this:

The Territory acquired, is acquired by the people of the United States for their common and equal benefit, through their agent and trustee, the federal government. Congress can exercise no power over the rights of persons, or property of a citizen in the Territory, which is prohibited by the Constitution. The government and the citizens, whenever the Territory is opened to settlement, both enter it with their respective rights defined and limited by the Constitution. Congress has no right to prohibit the citizen of any particular State or States from making their home there, while it permits citizens of other States to do so. Nor has it a right to give privileges to one class of citizens which it refuses to another. The Territory is acquired for their equal and common benefit, and if open to any, it must be open to all, upon equal and the same terms. Every citizen has a right to take with him into the Territory any article of property. The Constitution of the United States recognizes slaves as property, and pledges the Federal Government to protect it, and Congress cannot exercise any more authority over property of that description, than it may constitutionally exercise over property of any other kind. The act of Congress, therefore, prohibiting a citizen of the United States from taking with him slaves when he removes to the Territory in question to reside, is an exercise of authority over private property which is not warranted by the Constitution, and the removal of the plaintiff by his owner to that Territory, gave him no title to freedom.

Now, if all had acquiesced in this decision, like good citizens; had yielded willing and cheerful assent and obedience to it as an authentic construction of the fundamental law, by the highest tribunal, the question of slavery in the Ter-

ritories would have been at rest, and the democratic party would have been on its way rejoicing. But every kind of means was resorted to to evade it. Rampant abolitionism, more manly than its accomplices in mischief, openly denounced it and defied it, as it is wont to do all legal obstacles to the consummation of its own distempereḏ idea—demagogism inflated itself—fanaticism foamed, and trimming cowardice shrank around it, and insisted that the question was not decided, and all these combined together sought to deny to the citizens of the slave States the benefits of the decision, either in theory or practice. (Cheers.) I repeat, the South were satisfied with non-intervention, awaiting in good faith the decision of the courts before this adjudication; since the decision, they would have been satisfied with non-intervention, and the acknowledgment and practical execution of it according to its fair and equitable spirit.

THE OBJECTION OF THE SOUTH TO MR. DOUGLAS.

The South did not object to Mr. Douglas because of his principles of non-intervention—nor because of his doctrines of qualified popular sovereignty in the Territories, as is so often and so pompously alleged; but their opposition to him arises, to say nothing of his unfortunate controversy with the administration, from his advocacy of what they regard as a most rank and mischievous error, the squatter sovereignty heresy; contending, as he does, as we have already seen, that notwithstanding the decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case, holding that all citizens with their property are to be admitted there on equal terms, slave property included, a Territorial legislature may, by its enacted law, exclude slave property from the Territory—thus virtually investing a Territorial legislature with power to annul this provision of the Constitution as construed by the highest tribunal known to the law. These are the articles of creed proposed by Mr. Douglas, to which the South object. In the celebrated campaign debate with Mr. Lincoln, previous to the Dred Scott decision, in answer to certain questions proposed by Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Douglas answered as follows:

The next question propounded to me by Mr. Lincoln is,—Can the people of a Territory, in any lawful way, against the wishes of the United States, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution? I answer emphatically, as Mr. Lincoln has heard me answer a hundred times from every stump in Illinois, that, in my opinion, the people of a Territory can, by lawful means, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution. Mr. Lincoln knew that I had answered that question over and over again. He heard me argue the Nebraska bill on that principle all over the State in 1854, in 1855, and in 1856, and he has no excuse for pretending to be in doubts as to my position on that question.

After the Dred Scott decision had been pronounced and published, Mr. Douglas states his position thus:

It matters not what way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as to the abstract question, whether slavery may or may not go into a Territory under the Constitution, the people have the lawful means to introduce or exclude it as they please, for that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere unless it is supported by local police regulations. These police regulations can only be established by the local legislature; and if the people are opposed to slavery, they will elect representatives to that body who will, by unfriendly legislation effectually prevent the introduction of it into their midst. If, on the contrary, they are for it, their legislation will favor its extension. Hence, no matter what the decision of the Supreme Court may be upon that abstract question, still the right of the people to make a slave Territory of a free Territory is perfect and complete under the Nebraska bill. I hope Mr. Lincoln deems my answer satisfactory on that point.

If it be true, that the Territorial Legislature can, by an act, exclude the citizen of a Southern State, with his slave property, from all enjoyments of, and participation in the common territorial property of all the States, as is asserted by Mr. Douglas, the constitution and the decisions of the Supreme Court and the rights of persons and property there, are the playthings of a Territorial Legislature, to be put up and down—to be given or taken away at pleasure. (Cheers.) For these doctrines, the Southern States refused to accept Mr. Douglas as a candidate, and who, had he been

with and of them, would have done otherwise. But whether the Southern States were reasonable or capricious in their refusal to accept and support Mr. Douglas, they had taken their stand deliberately, after mature consideration—their avowal was before the country and was well understood; and unless he had some pre-emptive right to the nomination, which is not conceded, they had a right to set him aside as a mere matter of choice without any reason whatever. These States held one hundred and twenty electoral votes, sure for the democracy with an acceptable candidate, while every other State except those on the Pacific, were counted against us or doubtful, and yet, managers of the minority and doubtful States, by artifice and combinations, sought, through the strangely protracted Sessions of the Conventions held at Charleston and Baltimore, to force this one candidate upon the Southern States, and in this persistent and insane effort, first dismembered and then adjourned the Convention at Charleston, and finally divided and broke it up at Baltimore. It was of all others an occasion when all mere individual preference should have been forgotten and surrendered for the public good; but it was Douglas or nothing, and hence the result. The Convention broken up, the party divided, and all for a candidate who cannot get a single electoral vote. The democratic party under such rule is like the serpent in the fable, which gave up the lead for a time to the tail instead of the head to prevent its clamor, and in attempting to go tail foremost it stuck fast, and thus remained—the tail refusing to give up the right to go ahead. And thus will the democratic party remain until it sheds its tapering extremity which insists on being honored with command.

CHARGE OF A SLAVE CODE—THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM.

For the purpose of turning attention from the weakness and absurdity of their own position, for the mad and selfish prostration of the Democratic party, to alarm the fears of the timid, shake the knees of the weak, and administer to the morbid cravings of a lingering and dormant abolitionism, they proclaim that the national democracy who have placed in nomination Breckenridge and Lane, are the advocates of a slave code for the Territories. This ideal bantling was begotten by design upon ignorance, and is supported by empty noise and brazen clamor. The platform asked for and insisted upon by Southern States, was just what the Constitution entitles them to, as construed by the Supreme Court, and nothing more. Here it is in all its length and breadth, as adopted in the Convention of Democratic States which nominated Breckenridge and Lane. It is the same non-intervention which every true Democrat has advocated, and giving effect to the decision of the Court, and nothing more. Let every Democrat read it with unclouded vision, and not through the smoked glass of incipient abolitionism; let him analyze it carefully, and then tell us in what section or sentence or syllable this terrific slave code reposes; and when read, and weighed and understood, let all who cannot subscribe to the great principles of personal and State equality there enunciated, as established and guaranteed by the Constitution, and authorized and vindicated by the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, remember that he has taken the first lesson in abolition republicanism, and is already on his way to that organization in his sympathy with a sectional bigoted creed and narrow political belief. But here is the platform of Democratic principles which will speak for itself:

PLATFORM OF THE REGULAR NATIONAL DEMOCRACY—ADOPTED IN CONVENTION AT BALTIMORE, JUNE, 1860.

Resolved, That the platform adopted by the democratic party at Cincinnati be affirmed with the following explanatory resolutions:—

First.—That the government of a Territory, organized by an act of Congress, is provisional and temporary, and during its existence all citizens of the United States have an equal right to settle with their property in the Territory, without their rights either of person or property, being destroyed or injured by Congressional or Territorial legislation.

Second.—That it is the duty of the federal government, in all its departments, to protect the rights of person and property in the Territories, and wherever else its constitutional authority extends.

Third.—That when the settlers in a Territory, having an adequate population, form a State constitution, the right of sovereignty commences, and being consummated by their admission into the Union, they stand on an equality with the people of other States, and a State thus organized, ought to be admitted into the Federal Union whether its constitution prohibits or recognizes the institution of slavery.

Resolved, That the democratic party are in favor of the acquisition of the Island of Cuba on such terms as shall be honorable to ourselves and just to Spain, at the earliest practicable moment.

Resolved, That the enactments of State Legislatures to defeat the faithful execution of the Fugitive Slave law, are hostile in character, subversive of the constitution and revolutionary in effect.

Resolved, That the democracy of the United States recognizes it as the imperative duty of this government to protect the naturalized citizen in all his rights, whether at home or in foreign lands, to the same extent as its native born citizens.

Whereas, One of the greatest necessities of the age, in a political, commercial, postal, and military point of view, is a speedy communication between the Pacific and Atlantic coasts; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the national democratic party do hereby pledge themselves to use every means in their power to secure the passage of some bill, to the extent of their constitutional authority by Congress, for the construction of a Pacific Railroad from the Mississippi river to the Pacific ocean at the earliest practicable moment.

Let us hereafter hear no more from any one professing the democratic creed, and pretending devotion and obedience to the constitution and laws, in denunciation of the Southern Democratic States, or asserting that they have either proposed or demanded a slave code, or that the Convention of Democratic States which nominated Breckinridge and Lane have adopted one, but let all such foolish fabrications be left to the rantings of Sumner, and Cheever, and Giddings, and their sombre associates. (Cheers, laughter and hisses.)

DEMOCRATIC NOMINEES.

The public and private history of our nominees constitutes their eulogy. Both are now, and for years have been, in high places in the government. Mr. Breckinridge is an able, intrepid and popular statesman, and General Lane has written his name upon his country's history with his sword. They are true friends to the constitution, and free from the expediency clap-traps of the day. They were placed in nomination by the operations of public sentiment, and not forced upon the public by the process of political machinery. They will carry seventeen States by acclamation, with a fair chance for others in addition.

REGULARITY OF NOMINATIONS.

When all other expedients fail, we are reminded that the nomination of Douglas and Johnson is entitled to support over the other for its regularity; and I have observed that certain gentlemen who were regular members of the speckled Buffalo Convention of 1848, are most emphatic in swearing allegiance to regularity. The Convention which made this nomination had no sign, nor show, nor shadow of regularity. The delegated Convention at Charleston had no power to adjourn to Baltimore—a distance of hundreds of miles, in another State, and nearly two months afterward. No such thing was ever contemplated; no such power or discretion was delegated even by the most far-fetched implications. A good nomination at Baltimore would have been entitled to respect and support, but not on the score of regularity, for it had not even the semblance of it.

The regular delegations for a large number of States were rejected, and bogus contestants, some of them without pretense of regularity or delegated authority were admitted in their places, while regular delegations from numerous other States, because of this outrage, withdrew, and this pretended regular Convention was a mere fraction of one, partly but not wholly filled up with unauthorized persons from the outside. It acted in violation of the uniform rule of democratic National Conventions, which it had itself adopted, requiring two-thirds to nominate, and then disregarded it in making the nominations, for at no time, bogus delegates included, did the vote reach near a two-thirds vote. Its nominee for Vice-President was Mr.

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Fitzpatrick, who declined to accept such a nomination, and the regularity of Mr. Johnson, who now runs as Vice-President with Mr. Douglas, consists in the request of some half dozen individuals, after the adjournment, that he should run—in and which request, it seems, he cordially united. (Cheers.) The regular President of the Convention, Gen. Cushing, left his chair and went away, and presided over the Convention which nominated Breckinridge and Lane—so that the regularity of the nomination of Douglas and Johnson may be summed up in this: that Mr. Johnson was not and has not yet been nominated by any convention; that Mr. Douglas was nominated by delegates of an irregular fractional, broken-up Convention, without a head, without a democratic body, but a mere skeleton, half soft, half republican State delegations and a bogus tail.

No one pretends that the nominations of Breckinridge and Lane have the authority of a regular National Convention, according to the usages of the party; but they have more claim to regularity than the other. The Convention had a head in the President of the whole Convention. It had a democratic body in the regular delegations from all the sure democratic states—a majority of the States of the Union—it had no bogus extremity and it had a platform of manly principle—of liberty, equality and fraternity upon which every true democrat of the whole Union can stand together. The question recurs what shall we do? Do! Why stand resolutely by principle, and let the storm rage on—there is sunshine beyond the clouds—shun all entangling alliances of every name and kind. The readiest, surest, speediest, most honorable way to success is to repudiate all fusions, all factions, all patchwork, all devices, all expedients, all efforts to mend the break as old ladies mend broken crockery, with Spaulding's prepared glue, all efforts to be upon both sides, and stand by our candidates and our creed. We shall then commence to deserve success, and if we persevere in this stern path of constitutional rectitude, we shall preserve our self respect, command the respect of all others, and our efforts will be crowned with triumph for our party and our principles, the good influences of which will last when party managers and tricksters and their vile schemes are forgotten, or remembered only to be hated and execrated.

Loud and repeated cries for "O'Connor and Brady" then resounded through the hall.

The PRESIDENT stated that Mr. O'Connor was absent from the city, and that Mr. Brady was not well enough to attend the meeting.

A VOICE.—That's too bad.

Then there were cries for "Governor Wise," "Benjamin," "Yancey" and "Stevens."

The PRESIDENT entreated gentlemen to come to order, as he desired to submit a resolution to the meeting before he should introduce the next speaker.

The following resolution was then read and agreed to:

Resolved, That a committee of one from each Congressional district be appointed to call a State Convention to nominate an electoral ticket and candidates for the coming election.

The PRESIDENT then introduced to the meeting Captain Marriott, who, he said, had served with General Lane, in Mexico. (Applause.) Captain M. made a stirring speech, and was followed by Mr. A. R. Wood, who concluded the proceedings in a few well timed remarks.

OUTSIDE MEETING.

A large meeting outside, composed of some eight thousand persons, was addressed by several distinguished gentlemen. After the adjournment Mr. Dickinson and Mr. John T. Henry were serenaded.

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