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# SLANDER REFUTED,

IN TWO LETTERS FROM

## ANDREW JACKSON,

EXPRESSING FULL CONFIDENCE IN THE PUBLIC MEASURES OF

### MARTIN VAN BUREN,

AND HIS ENTIRE CONCURRENCE IN THE

#### DIVORCE

OF

#### BANK AND STATE.

ALSO, Mr. Calhoun's Resolutions, relative to the Constitutional rights of the South on the

#### ABOLITION QUESTION:

WITH

#### MR. BUCHANAN'S

#### REMARKS ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

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# A SLANDER REFUTED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATIONAL UNION.

Sir—A friend in Nashville has sent me the Republican Banner of the 19th inst, in which is contained the following remarks:

*"The President and Ex-President.*—The old Chief of the Hermitage, himself, appears to have lost all hope of Mr. Van Buren's success in 'treading in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor.' An intelligent and responsible correspondent communicates the fact that, on his recent visit to Nashville, General Jackson remarked, that Mr. Van Buren's administration must go down: that he knew that so soon as Mr. V. B. called Congress together in September, and thereby admitted that he possibly might be wrong, his fate was sealed. If he had refused to convene the extraordinary session, he would not now be in a MINORITY. But, said he, although the President must go down, he will fall in a glorious cause. We do not pretend to give the exact words said to have been used on the occasion referred to, but have stated the substance of the remarks."

This is one of the many fabrications which have been made and circulated by those who control this paper, with the hope of prejudicing my character in the estimation of my countrymen. Neither during my late visit to Nashville, nor on any other occasion, have I used any remarks which can justify such a statement. It ascribes to me opinions that I never held, and fears that I never entertained. I never for a moment harbored the thought that the administration of Mr. Van Buren would not be successful. All his official acts manifest his determination to conform his administration to that construction of the constitution which has ever been claimed and sustained by the republican party. Thus far he has shown, in my judgment, that he has taken principle for his guide, and aims at no other object but the public good. It is, therefore, not possible that I could have used any language respecting him, which could create a doubt in the mind of any one as to my confidence in his future success.

It is with regret that I feel called upon to notice the effusions of a press which has been so generally characterized by a disregard of truth, and in respect to myself, by the most gross calumny. As it intimates,

however, in this instance, that it has the authority of a respectable and intelligent correspondent, I have felt myself warranted in making this communication on the subject, in order that the public may not credit the misrepresentation of my feelings and views. If the editors themselves are not the correspondent, it is to be expected that they will name him, and the time when, and the place where, and before whom, in Nashville, the alleged conversation was held.

ANDREW JACKSON.

Hermitage, Dec. 21st, 1837.

From the Cincinnati Daily Advertiser.

## SLANDER REFUTED.

"The old chief of the Hermitage, himself, appears to have lost all hopes of Mr. Van Buren's success in 'treading in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor.' An intelligent and responsible correspondent communicates the fact, that on his recent visit to Nashville, General Jackson remarked, that Mr. Van Buren's administration *must go down*: that he knew that as soon as Mr. Van Buren called Congress together in September, and thereby admitted that he might possibly be wrong, his fate was sealed: if he had refused to convene the extraordinary session, he would not now be in the MINORITY. But, said he, although the President must go down, he will fall in a GLORIOUS CAUSE. We do not pretend to give the exact words said to have been used on the occasion referred to, but have stated the substance of the remarks."

Having seen the above extract from a Nashville paper, the day before we received from the "Old Chief of the Hermitage," a letter in which he freely expresses his sentiments on the measures of his successor in office, and those sentiments being so very different from those attributed to him, we did suppose that its publication would be a conclusive refutation of what we had no doubt was a foul slander, and therefore wrote by the express mail to General Jackson for liberty to publish his letter, which would show to the world that he entertained no such ideas as have been attributed to him by the calumniator, who-

ever he may be. It gives us great pleasure to state that we have had authority for giving the letter publicity; and as well in refutation of the above slander, as for the importance of the noble sentiments it contains on the present state of the country, we have no doubt it will be read with the deepest interest by every honest democrat into whose hands it may come.

After we had written the letter to the Hermitage, as above stated, we saw in the Republican of the next day the disavowal of the General, under his own signature, of his having expressed any such sentiments as contained in the above extract. This we would have published last Saturday, but waited in the hope that we would obtain permission to publish what we conceived would have been itself a complete refutation of the slander, in order that the disavowal and its corroboration should appear together. Our readers therefore have all together in the paper this day, which we have no doubt will be read by them with great pleasure and edification.

As further corroboration of the implicit confidence placed in the integrity of Mr. Van Buren by General Jackson, we give here a short extract from a letter of his, dated the 31st of August last, before the meeting of Congress in the extra session. This letter was received the very day on which we received the President's message.

The extract is in these words: "I have no doubt that the President's message will be full and strong, and meet the wishes of all his friends, on the subject of the entire separation of the government from all Banks as a repository of the public revenue." In this letter, which was not a short one, there was not a word against calling the extra session of Congress, or expressive of any doubt that Mr. Van Buren would not be fully sustained in his measures by the American people.

HERMITAGE, December 17, 1837.

Dear Sir:—

Your letter of the 4th instant has been for some days before me, but it has not been in my power to reply to it earlier than the present moment.

In relation to the aspect of public affairs which to some of our friends appears unfavorable to the hope of effecting an early separation of the fiscal operation of the treasury from the agency of banks, state and national, I see nothing that should beget despair, or induce us to retrace our steps or relax our exertions. The recent elections in New York manifest, it is true, some supineness on the part of those who have heretofore sustained the ascendancy

of the old Jeffersonian principles; but they expose also the real objects and true character of the Federal party, which is ever vigilant to seize any opportunity that is presented for the recovery of the ground they lost in the establishment of the present constitution, and in the memorable contest of '98 and 1800. Such an opportunity was afforded in the present crisis, by the division in the Republican ranks respecting the means which should be immediately adopted to increase the metallic basis of our circulating medium and place the government money, or rather the money of the people, in a state of proper security. If this division has thus cost a defeat, may we not hope that it is but temporary, and that it will bring us again, as it has always done before, a solid and lasting victory—a victory which will be the result of enlightened co-operation and concert on the part of all true republicans, sacrificing all minor differences, and rallying as one man to the defence of the great principles which it is the design of the common enemy, the federal party, to overthrow.

I participate with you in the regret expressed at the attitude occupied by Mr. Rives and Mr. Ritchie, in the present contest. None of us, however, doubt their good intentions, and feel confident that they will soon see that nothing good is to be attained by a further struggle for the restoration of the connection between the Banks and the Treasury. After the treachery of the Banks to the Government, it will be vain to suppose that the people can ever be induced to acquiesce in their employment again as public depositories. What security can we have that they will not always suspend payment when those who control and make money out of them, will find it their interest to do so? Let it be borne in mind that the recent suspension occurred at a time of profound peace with all foreign nations, when our exhaustless resources were all in successful operation, and then let us consider what would have been the consequences if such an event had happened in a critical state of war. The Banks, in such an exigency, would have held the sinews of war, without responsibility to the General Government. Managed as they now are by those who use them as instruments of profit, they would have been unable, even if willing, to meet the demand of the public necessity. Is it reasonable to suppose that the people can acquiesce in the idea of trusting the public defence to such corporations? Rest assured they never will, and those who are so unfortunate as to entertain that idea, will

find that all their attempts to give effect to it are of no avail, except to aid the party which is anxious to defeat the Republican will.

The truth is, Sir, that the separation of Bank and State was supposed to have been accomplished by the Federal Constitution as it now reads. The union of the two at the close of the Revolution was as odious as that of church and state, and such will now be found to be the sentiment of the great body of the American people, whenever the question is fairly submitted to their judgment.

I am aware that the confidence I reposed in the State Banks when the removal of the deposits was determined upon is used to justify, not only the re-union of the Banks and the Treasury, but also as an argument against the consistency of those who like Mr. Van Buren, sustained that act of my administration. I admit that this confidence existed and had some influence on the considerations which prompted me to resort to them at that time as a substitute for the Bank of the United States. When this latter institution took the political field, and avowed the insulting right, to expend the public money in disseminating its anathemas against the general government, it was natural for me to seek for a substitute for such an institution in the State Banks. These Banks were in operation, and if prudently managed, could have safely filled the vacuum occasioned by the winding up of the U. S. Bank, without producing any serious change in the commercial or business operations of the country. They could not at least do worse than the U. S. Bank had done, and it was but charitable to indulge the hope that they would do better. But was this confidence well founded, and whose fault is it that it was not? Let their treachery to the government and the people answer. Every day that the directors of these Banks met at their boards, they knew their liabilities and their assets to meet them. They were repeatedly and earnestly cautioned by the Treasury Department not to over-issue—their charters prohibited it—their solemn obligations to the government and people, and every principle of moral honesty forbade it. Still, in open violation of all obligation, they suspended specie payment in a time of profound peace, robbed the treasury of many millions of money, and cried out at the same time that the Treasury was bankrupt.

But aware that the administration cannot be injured by the charge, that confidence was once reposed in the State Banks, the raw-head-and-bloody-bones of the purse

and sword in the hands of the Executive is conjured up for political effect. There are none who resort to this humbug, who believe that the danger exists which they so clamorously deprecate. Their only wish is to delude the people and obtain their sanction to the domination of banks and their irresponsible issues. They know that Congress is vested with the power to lay and collect taxes—to raise armies of which the President is charged with the direction and with the due execution of the laws—that by law all money appropriated is speedily applied to the objects of its appropriation, and one cent cannot be drawn from the Treasury but in pursuance of law and on the warrant of the Secretary of the Treasury countersigned by the Treasurer and 1st Comptroller—that the President is bound by solemn oath to see the laws faithfully executed; and that to every Congress the Secretary of the Treasury is bound to make an expose of all the disbursement, which is examined by Congress—that the President for failure of duty is liable to impeachment—away then with this raw-head-and-bloody-bones. It is only a device to continue the usage of taxing the people for the benefit of Banks,—an effort to take the public revenue out of the hands of responsible to put it into the hands of irresponsible agents, who will use it to encourage over issues of paper money, and thus expose the Government and people perpetually, to the injuries we are now experiencing from the want of a stable currency.

If the revenue is received in gold and silver, it will force the Banks to resume specie payments, keep them within the bounds of just banking principles, give the people a metallic currency or its equivalent, and put an end to the overtrading and wild speculation which have been so long the bane of our country. Is it not then our duty to rally round such a measure, and are we not wrong in doubting the disposition of the people, to sustain what is so manifestly their interest and welfare?

In separating the Government from the Banks we secure to labor its fair reward in an undeviating tender of value, every honest pursuit is promoted, the Government is relieved from the political influence of the money power, legislation is purified, and the republican feelings of our citizens are cherished. The mint, for the support of which the people are taxed, will then be employed in its proper office, that of coining the metals, which, in exchange for our profitable commodities, will steadily flow into our land.



On this subject, Sir, I acknowledge that I feel the deepest interest, as I am persuaded it is pregnant with consequences of the highest importance to our beloved country. If we are not now able to occupy the ground prepared for us, by those who framed the constitution, in respect to the influence of Banks and moneyed associations, I fear its recovery hereafter will cost the people difficulties and disasters compared to which those that have been occasioned by the suspension of specie payments will be considered as nothing. The idea that in the event of war, the Banks are again employed as public depositories, it will be in their power to stop payment and thus deprive the nation of its means of credit and support, is sufficient in my judgment, to enlist the ardor of every patriot on the side of those, who will refuse to commit so great a trust to any moneyed institution. All experience tells us that money is the sinew of war, and that no nation can long be free and independent, which places this element of its power in hands that are irresponsible in their very nature. Such would be our situation if the Banks, as at present organized retain the public money. They could much more easily in war, than in peace, find an excuse for refusing payment and violating their pledges to the Government; and

all who are conversant with history must be aware that there are exigencies from which we are not exempt in a state of war, when the Bankruptcy of our Government, would force it to make a dishonorable peace, if it did not compel its submission to a foreign yoke. Looking at the subject in this light, I indulge in the hope that all true Republicans will discard the idea of our again trusting the public money to Banks. The plan proposed by Mr. Van Buren exposes us to no hazards.—On the contrary, if adopted, it will simplify the operations of our revenue, purify legislation by removing from it the corrupting influence of money, and ensure peace, harmony, and prosperity, to all the great and diversified interests of our country.

Excuse the haste in which I have been compelled to throw together these ideas.— They are but an outline of the general views which belong to the subject; yet short and imperfect as it is, I feel that it has required quite as much labor as my infirm health enables me to bestow upon it.

Thanking you for your friendly solicitude for my personal welfare,

I remain, yours truly,

ANDREW JACKSON.

MOSES DAWSON, Esq.

And resolved, That any attempt to abolish slavery in any Territory of the United States, in which it exists, would create a riotous clamor, and just indignation in the States sustaining that domestic institution, would be a violation of good faith towards the inhabitants of any such Territory who have been permitted to settle within, and hold slaves therein, because the people of any such Territory have not assented to the Abolition of slavery therein, and because when any such Territory shall be admitted into the Union as a State, the people thereof will be entitled to decide that question exclusively for themselves.

The Resolution, That the Government was established and adopted by the several States of the Union as a common agent in order to carry into effect the powers which they had delegated by the constitution for their mutual safety and prosperity, and that in fulfillment of this high and sacred trust the Government is bound to exercise its powers as not to interfere with the stability and security of the domestic institutions of the states that compose the Union and that it is the solemn duty of the Government to resist to the extent of its constitutional power all attempts by one portion of the Union to use it as an instrument to attack the domestic institutions of another or to weaken or destroy such institutions.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE SENATE  
On Mr. Calhoun's Resolution on the Abolition of Slavery

In Senate, January 25, 1845.  
Resolved, That any attempt to abolish slavery in any Territory of the United States, in which it exists, would create a riotous clamor, and just indignation in the States sustaining that domestic institution, would be a violation of good faith towards the inhabitants of any such Territory who have been permitted to settle within, and hold slaves therein, because the people of any such Territory have not assented to the Abolition of slavery therein, and because when any such Territory shall be admitted into the Union as a State, the people thereof will be entitled to decide that question exclusively for themselves.

Mr. Buchanan of Pennsylvania, said the resolution was a mere declaration of opinion, and that it was not the duty of the Senate to pass upon it. He said that the resolution was a violation of the Constitution, and that it was not the duty of the Senate to pass upon it. He said that the resolution was a violation of the Constitution, and that it was not the duty of the Senate to pass upon it.

## MR. CALHOUN'S RESOLUTIONS.

The following is a copy of these resolutions, as they passed the Senate:

I. Resolved, That, in the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the states adopting the same acted, severally, as free, independent, and sovereign states; and that each, for itself, by its own voluntary assent, entered the Union with the view to its increased security against all dangers, *domestic* as well as foreign, and the more perfect and secure enjoyment of its advantages, natural, political, and social.

II. Resolved, That in delegating a portion of their powers to be exercised by the Federal Government, the states retained, severally, the exclusive and sole right over their own domestic institutions and policy to the full extent to which those powers were not thus delegated, and are alone responsible for them; and that any intermeddling of any one or more states, or a combination of their citizens, with the domestic institutions and police of the others, on any ground, political, moral, or religious, or under any pretext whatever, with the view to their alteration or subversion, is not warranted by the constitution, tending to endanger the domestic peace and tranquility of the states interfered with, subversive of the objects for which the constitution was formed, and, by necessary consequence, tending to weaken and destroy the Union itself.

III. Resolved, That this Government was instituted and adopted by the several states of this Union as a common agent, in order to carry into effect the powers which they had delegated by the constitution for their mutual security and prosperity; and that, in fulfilment of this high and sacred trust, this Government is bound so to exercise its powers as not to interfere with the stability and security of the domestic institutions of the states that compose the Union; and that it is the solemn duty of the Government to resist, to the extent of its constitutional power, all attempts by one portion of the Union to use it as an instrument to attack the domestic institutions of another or for to weaken or destroy such institutions.

IV. Resolved, That domestic slavery, as it exists in the Southern and Western States of this Union, composes an important part of their domestic institutions, inherited from their ancestors, and existing at the adoption of the Constitution, by which it is recognised as constituting an important element in the apportionment of powers among the States, and that no change of opinion, or feeling, on the part of the other States of the Union in relation to it; can justify them or their citizens in open and systematic attacks, thereon, with the view to its overthrow, and that all such attacks are in manifest violation of the mutual and solemn pledge to protect and defend each other, given by the States respectively, on entering into the constitutional compact which formed the Union, and as such are a manifest breach of faith, and a violation of the most solemn obligations.

V. Resolved, That the inference by the citizens of any of the States, with the view to the abolition of slavery in this District, is endangering the rights and security of the District; and that any act or measure of Congress designed to abolish slavery in this District, would be a violation of the faith implied in the cession by the States of Virginia and Maryland, a just cause of alarm to the people of the slaveholding States, and have a direct and inevitable tendency to disturb and endanger the Union.

And resolved, That any attempt of Congress to abolish slavery in any Territory of the United States, in which it exists, would create serious alarm, and just apprehension, in the States sustaining that domestic institution, would be a violation of good faith towards the inhabitants of any such Territory who have been permitted to settle with, and hold slaves therein, because the people of any such Territory have not asked for the Abolition of slavery therein, and because when any such Territory shall be admitted into the Union as a State, the people thereof will be entitled to decide that question exclusively for themselves.

### REMARKS of Mr. BUCHANAN,

On Mr. Calhoun's Resolutions on the Abolition of Slavery.

IN SENATE, Friday, Jan. 5.

Mr. Buchanan, of Pennsylvania, said he rose with extreme reluctance, to make some remarks upon the question now before the Senate. I myself, said Mr. Buchanan, had determined this morning to move a reference of these resolutions of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. Calhoun) to a select committee, but was dissuaded from my purpose after I reached the Senate. This motion has now been made by another gentleman (Mr. Benton) and I am called upon to vote either for or against it. As I am still clearly of opinion that an immediate reference of these resolutions to a select committee would, under existing circumstances, be the wisest course, whether we regard the interest of the North or the South, I

am prepared to give this motion my hearty support.

On this exciting question I desire to do nothing as a member of this body, which can in the slightest degree interfere with the constitutional rights of the slaveholding States. My fate as a public man is as deeply staked upon the preservation of these rights as that of any other individual in the country. I have long since taken my stand, and from it I shall not be driven. I do not desire to maintain myself at home, unless I can do it with a due regard to the rights and the safety of the people of the South. I am prepared therefore, to adopt any just measure within the pale of the Constitution, to settle this dangerous

question, and to afford the greatest security to slave-holding States. Notwithstanding these are my sentiments, I cannot believe that the Senator from South Carolina has chosen the course best calculated to attain these results. This is the great centre of agitation. From this Capitol, it spreads over the whole Union. I, therefore, deprecate a protracted discussion of the question here. It can do no good, but may do much harm, both in the North and in the South. It was for this reason that, after the right of petition had been recognized by a solemn vote of this body, I was content to act as we have done for the last two years, and leave the question to be discussed by the people of the country themselves. We have now abandoned this safe, this prudent course, and what has been the result? For the last three days we have been engaged in a discussion eminently calculated to irritate and inflame the public mind; and as yet we have not adopted the third series of resolutions. If we proceed, I shall be agreeably disappointed if another week should close this debate. And what shall we gain by the adoption of these resolutions? Nothing, worse than nothing. Those who look to the votes upon them, as the standard by which to ascertain how many are in favor of, and how many opposed to their main object, will be greatly mistaken. Some thirteen or fifteen votes have been recorded against these resolutions; when, from my knowledge of Senators, I am firmly convinced that there are but very few, if any, who are not prepared to vote for resolutions prepared in such a conciliatory spirit, as not to encounter the opinions or the prejudices of any, and which ought to give, and I believe would give, entire satisfaction to the South. The moral effect of such a unanimous or almost unanimous vote of the Senate, would be great upon the country. It is, therefore, for the purpose of arresting this unprofitable debate, and of having such resolutions reported by a select committee, that I shall vote in favor of the proposition.

What have we witnessed upon the present occasion? The Senators from Delaware, although representing a slave-holding State upon this floor, have voted against these resolutions, because, in their opinion, they can detect in them the poison of nullification. Now, I can see no such thing in them, and am ready to avow that in the main they contain nothing but the assertion of correct political principles to which I am devoted. But what then? These Senators are placed in a false position, and are compelled to vote against resolutions the object of which they heartily approve. Again, my friend, the Senator from New Jersey, (Mr. Wall) votes against them, because they are political abstractions, of which he thinks the Senate ought not to take cognizance; although he is as much opposed to abolition, and as willing to maintain the constitutional rights of the South as any Senator upon this floor. Other Senators believe the right of petition has been endangered; and until that has been established, they will not vote for any resolutions upon the subject. Thus we stand; and thus those of us in the North, who must sustain the brunt of the battle, are forced into false positions. Abolition thus acquires force by bringing to its aid the right of petition and the hostility which exists in the North against the doctrines of nullification. It is vain to say that these principles are not really involved in the question. This may be, and in my opinion, is true; but why, by our conduct here, should we afford the abolitionists such plausible pretexts? The fact is, and it

cannot be disguised, that those of us in the Northern States who have determined to sustain the rights of the slave-holding States at every hazard, are placed in a most embarrassing situation. We are almost literally between two fires, whilst in front we are assailed by the abolitionists, our own friends in the South are constantly driving us into positions where their enemies and our enemies may gain important advantages. Let us then sacrifice forms if we can obtain the substance.

Now, sir, if a select committee should be raised, they might, I think, report these resolutions, which would receive the almost unanimous vote of the Senate.

What is the evil of which the Southern States complain? Numerous abolition societies have been formed throughout the Middle and Northern States; and for what purpose? It cannot be for the purpose of effecting any change of opinion in the free States on the subject of slavery. We have no slaves there; we never shall have any slaves there. The object cannot be to operate on the slave-holders; because the abolitionists must know every person within the sound of my voice knows that their interference with this question, has bound the slave-holding interest together as one man against abolishing slavery in their respective States. Before this unfortunate agitation commenced, a very large and growing party existed in several of the slave States in favor of the gradual abolition of slavery; and now not a voice is heard there in support of such a measure. The abolitionists have postponed the emancipation of the slaves in three or four States, of this Union for at least half a century. They have, by their interference, produced such a state of public opinion that no man within these States would now be bold enough to raise such a question before any of their Legislatures. What, then, is the purpose of these societies—I will not say the purpose, for I cannot, and do not, attribute to them such unholy intentions—but what is the direct tendency of their measures? To irritate and exasperate the feelings of the slaves; to hold out to them vague notions and delusive hopes of liberty; to render them discontented and unhappy, and, finally, to foment servile insurrection, with all its attendant horrors, and to cover the land with blood. However devoted to the Union the South may be the cup of forbearance may yet be exhausted. If the father of a family be placed in such a deplorable condition that he cannot retire to rest at night without apprehension that before the morning his house may be enveloped in flames, and those who are nearest and dearest to him may be butchered or worse than butchered, the great law of self-preservation will compel him to seek security by whatever means it may be obtained. Now, sir, I have long watched the progress of this agitation with intense anxiety, and I can say, in solemn truth that never before have I witnessed such a deep, pervading, and determined feeling as exist at present upon this subject among the sober and reflecting men of the South. They love the Union, but if its blessings cannot be enjoyed but in constant fear of their own destruction, necessity will compel them to abandon it. Such is now the Southern feeling. The Union is now in danger, and I wish to proclaim the fact. The brave man looks danger in the face, and vanquishes it; whilst the coward closes his eyes at its approach, and is overwhelmed. The Union is as dear to me as my heart's blood. I would peril life, character, and every earthly hope, to maintain it; but the best mode of preserving it is to warn its friends of ap-

proaching danger. This I verily believe now exists, and that too, solely from the efforts of these abolition societies. I can fancy no other cause which could by possibility endanger its existence.

And, if the Union should be dissolved upon the question of slavery, what will be the consequences? An entire non-intercourse between its different parts, mutual jealousies, and implacable wars. The hopes of the friends of liberty, in every clime, would be blasted; and despotism might regain her empire over the world. I might present in detail the evils which would flow from disunion, but I forbear. I shall not further lift the curtain. The scene would be too painful. The good sense and sound patriotism of the people of the North, when once aroused to the danger, will apply the appropriate remedy. The peaceful influence of public opinion will save the Union.

The select committee might report a resolution which would obtain the unanimous vote of the Senate, declaring that neither the Congress of the United States, nor any State, nor any combination of individuals in any State, has any right to interfere with the existence or regulation of slavery in any other State, where it is recognised by law. Even the abolitionists themselves, so far as my knowledge extends, have never denied this principle. It was solemnly announced by the first Congress; and it is most clearly the doctrine of the Constitution. That instrument expressly recognises the right to hold slaves as property in the States where slavery exists. This, then, is not a question of general morality, affecting the consciences of men, but it is a question of constitutional law. When the States became parties to the Federal compact, they entered into a solemn agreement that property in slaves should be as inviolate as any other property. Whilst the Constitution endures, no human power except that of the State within which slavery exists, has any right to interfere with the question. An attempt on the part of any other State, or of Congress, to violate this right would be a palpable violation of the Constitution. Congress might as well undertake to interfere with slavery under a foreign Government as in any of the States where it now exists. I feel confident that there would not be a single dissenting voice raised in the Senate against the adoption of such a resolution as I have suggested.

A second resolution might assert the principle that Congress have no right under the constitution to prohibit the transfer of slaves by a citizen of one State to a citizen of another State, when slavery is recognised by the laws of both. The power "to regulate commerce among the several States" can never be construed into a power to abolish this commerce. *Regulation is one thing, destruction another.* As long as slaves continue to be property under the constitution, Congress might as well undertake to prohibit the people of Massachusetts from selling their domestic manufactures in South Carolina, as to prohibit the master of a slave in Virginia from disposing of him to his neighbor in North Carolina. Both cases rest upon the same principle of constitutional law. The power to regulate does not imply the power to destroy. I believe that such a resolution would encounter no serious opposition in the Senate.

Again, a third resolution might be adopted in regard to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, which would unite nearly every suf-

frage in the Senate. This District was ceded to the United States by Virginia and Maryland. At the date of the cession, they were both slave-holding States, and they continue to be so at this day.—Does any man suppose, for a single moment, that they would have ever made this cession, if they had supposed that Congress would abolish slavery in this District of ten miles square whilst it existed in their surrounding territories? So long as it continues in these two States, it would be a violation of the implied faith which we pledged to them by the acceptance of the cession to convert this very cession into the means of injuring and destroying their peace and security.

If this District were free, it would become a city of refuge for the abolitionists. It would be a secure asylum from whence they could scatter arrows, firebrands, and death throughout the slave-holding States. It would become the very centre of agitation.

The people of this District have viewed with amazement and indignation, the reiterated and persevering attempts which have been made by the citizens of distant States, to interfere in their domestic concerns and deprive them of their property. They have protested against this foreign interference with their rights; but they have protested in vain. Petitions still continue to flow in, although the petitioners ought to know that slavery exists here in its mildest form, and that if they should be successful, there would not be a single slave left in the district upon which the law could operate. Before any bill for this purpose could pass Congress, all the slaves here would be sold and sent away into the slave States, far from the place of their birth and their affections. Success in this attempt would thus place the slaves themselves in a worse condition than they are at present.

A resolution might, therefore, be adopted, in accordance with the spirit and tone of President Van Buren's remarks upon this subject, in his admirable inaugural address. It might declare that whilst slavery exists in Maryland, and Virginia, it ought not, in the opinion of the Senate, to be abolished in the District of Columbia.

This Committee ought to be most carefully selected by the Senate. It would be composed of men whose opinions would command the greatest weight throughout the country. Every thing like party politics should be banished from our deliberations on this subject. I should deem myself guilty of moral treason, if, on a question which may endanger the existence of the Union, I could permit my conduct to be influenced by the petty desire of obtaining a party triumph. Let the resolutions be framed in a most conciliatory spirit, and let them be clothed in language which shall shock the opinions of no Senator. Provided the substance be retained, I care not for the form. Such resolutions, adopted by an almost unanimous vote, might exert the happiest influence. They would mark a clear and a broad line of separation between the friends of the Union on the one side, and the abolitionists on the other. They would free the question from the party politics of the day, and would rally all the friends of the Constitution every where in their support.

The Middle and Northern States are the field upon which this great battle must be fought. I fear not, I doubt not the result, if Senators from the South, where the people are already united, would but consent to adopt the counsels of those who must bear the brunt of the contest.









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