SPEECH
OF
MR. CASS, OF MICHIGAN,
ON COLONIZATION IN NORTH AMERICA,
AND ON THE POLITICAL CONDITION OF CUBA.
DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES
JANUARY 18, 1853.

The Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution declaratory of the views of the United States respecting colonization on the North American continent by European Powers, and respecting the Island of Cuba; which is as follows:

"Be it resolved, &c., That the United States do hereby declare that the American continent, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, is henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Power. And while existing rights should be respected, and will be by the United States, they owe it to their own safety and interests to announce, as they now do, that no future European colony or dominion shall, with their consent, be planted or established on any part of the North American continent. And should the attempt be made, they thus deliberately declare that it will be viewed as an act originating in motives regardless of their interests and their safety, and which will leave them free to adopt such measures, as an independent nation may justly adopt in defence of its lives and its honor.

"And be it further resolved, That while the United States disclaim any designs upon the Island of Cuba inconsistent with the laws of nations and with their duties to Spain, they consider it due to the vast importance of the subject, to make known, in this solemn manner, that they should view all efforts on the part of any other Power to procure possession, whether peaceably or forcibly, of that Island, which, as a naval or military position, must, under circumstances easy to be foreseen, become dangerous to their southern coast, to the Gulf of Mexico, and to the mouth of the Mississippi, as unfriendly acts, directed against them, to be resisted by all the means in their power."

The question pending was on the following amendment offered by Mr. HALL:

"And be it further resolved, That while the United States, in like manner, disclaim any designs upon Canada inconsistent with the laws of nations, and with their duties to Great Britain, they consider it due to the vast importance of the subject to make known, in this solemn manner, that they should view all efforts on the part of any other Power to procure possession, either peaceably or forcibly, of that Province, (which, as a naval or military position, must, under circumstances easy to be foreseen, become dangerous to their southern boundary, and to the lakes,) as unfriendly acts directed against them, to be resisted by all the means in their power."

Mr. CASS said:

Mr. President: The question of the recolonization of any part of this hemisphere by the European Powers has occupied the attention of the American people for many years, with more or less interest, as passing events seemed to render the effort more or less probable. The general subject, as well as the principles involved in it, has been so often discussed, that I do not propose to enter into a very full examination of our rights and condition, connected with this important topic, but rather to present the general considerations belonging to it.

Two Presidents of the United States have, by solemn public acts, in their messages to Congress, declared and maintained the principles respecting American exemption from European dominion, which are laid down in the first of the resolutions before us, and have distinctly and satisfactorily established, not only our right but our duty to do so, as one of the great elements of our national safety and prosperity. Mr. Monroe, in 1823, said:

"We owe it, therefore, to candor, and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers, to declare, that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the Government, which have declared
their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and just principles acknowledged, we could not view with indifference, attempts of opposing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny by any European Power, in any other light, than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States."

Mr. Polk, in the same spirit, in 1845, said:

"The people of the United States cannot, therefore, view with indifference, attempts of European Powers to interfere with the independent action of the nations on this continent. The American system of government is entirely different from that of Europe. Jealousy among the different sovereignties of Europe, lest any one of them should assume the right to dictate to the rest, has caused them anxiously to desire the establishment of what they term the 'balance of power.' It cannot be permitted to have any application to the North American continent, and especially to the United States. We must ever maintain the principle, that the people of this continent alone have the right to determine their own destiny. Should any portion of them, constituting an independent State, propose to unite themselves with our Confederacy, this will be a question for them and us to determine, without any foreign intervention."

We can never consent that European Powers shall interfere to prevent such a union, because it might disturb the balances of power which they may desire to maintain upon this continent. Near a quarter of a century ago, the principle was distinctly announced to the world, in the annual message of one of my predecessors, that 'The American continent, by the free and independent condition, which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Power.' This principle will apply with great increased force, should any European Power attempt to establish any new colony in North America.

In some remarks upon this subject in the Senate, a few days since, I alluded to, rather than considered, the general grounds, upon which this claim of independent action for the nations of the American continent rested for its assertion. I shall not repeat those views, except for pointing myself to the condition of this continent, and from those general principles of the public law of the world, by which it protects the interests and safety of nations, in the varying circumstances, in which they may be placed. The history of that code shows, that it has a power of adjustment to the changing condition of nations, and that rigid inflexibility is not one of its attributes. The changes introduced by it into the discovery of America, in the establishment of the principles of occupation and settlement, are familiar to all, and furnish an illustration of this progressive improvement. The right of reoccupation would necessarily lead to the renewal, indeed, to the perpetual domination of European Powers, and their colonies, wherever planted, would become parties, with the mother countries, in all their wars, though far beyond the true sphere of their causes and objects.

We should thus find ourselves in juxtaposition, it might be, and at any rate within the reach of the action of communities, rendered enemies by the disputes, too often frivolous, and almost always indifferent, of nations on the other side of the Atlantic. Such a state of things, bringing within the field of involvement, and intensifying the painful and probable evolutions of a whole continent, to gratify the pride or jealousy, or some other equally unworthy passion of ministers or mistresses, where these are the depositories of power, would be "dangerous to our peace and safety."

But I do not know, that the general principle of this claim of exemption is contested. Certainly it cannot be upon any just grounds. Our Executive Government has assumed it upon full consideration, and the history of our negotiations with England, to be a matter of interest to the Union, and of great importance, and of interest to our country, and the principle to the recently emancipated Spanish Colonies, which in fact, conceded the right of the United States to attend the same policy to any portion of the continent, not then actually possessed by a European Power. And Mr. Monroe distinctly announced this fact, saying:

"It is gratifying to know, that some of the Powers, with whom we enjoy a very friendly intercourse, and to whom these views (concerning the condition of the Spanish-American States) have been communicated, have appeared to acquiesce in them."

When Mr. Canning announced to Mr. Rush that "England could not see the transfer of any portion of them (the same States) to any other Power with indifference," the reply was made upon considerations much more applicable to our condition than to hers, and which are so extensive with the continent. There is great force in the remark of that eminent British statesman upon our situation and political duties:

"Great Britain and the United States, under these aspects and interests, are in immediate and constant communication, as it did or could any of the States of Europe. They were the first Power on that continent, and now confessedly the leading Power. They were connected with Spanish America by their position, as with Europe by their relations. And they also attached themselves with the new States by political, rather than by military success. With it in England, they could see with indifference their fate, decided only by Europe? Could Europe expect this indifference? Had not a new epoch arrived in the relative position of the United States towards which Europe must acknowledge? Were the great political and commercial interests, which hung upon the destiny of the new Communities, could not be connected and adjusted in this hemisphere (Europe) without the cooperation or even knowledge of the United States?"

We are desirous, written one of the most enlightened men of England, command ourselves, by our justice and liberality, to the consideration of every true American, although they are not the less just and liberal, because they were urged with a view to induce our Government to become a party to a European arrangement of the American States. It was wise to reject the proposal, it is not less wise to acquiesce in the doctrine, which led to it, and to make it ours by its practical enforcement in our own way, as a question of American policy, beyond the sphere of European interposition. When such statesmen as Mr. Monroe, Mr. Polk, and Mr. Canning, unite in the interests of our rights and duties, those of us, who believe in the principles on which our freedom is based, and in the expediency of enforcing it, may well bear the censures, and sneer, and ridicule, and reproach, which our efforts encounter from some, because we go too far, and from others, because we do not go far enough, while the cautious and the timid are still waiting for the right of national rights and honors to be established by them, and until our country, ready to burst upon us, and sweep away our prosperity, if not our existence."

One third of a century has passed away, since those diplomatic discussions, and if our position and circumstances, being the oldest of the faculties of nations in this hemisphere, conferred upon us at that time, such rights, accompanied by such duties, how much stronger is the appeal of this policy of continental independence to our earnest attention now, when time has developed our strength and our dangers, and when these American interests are primary, and those, which connect us with Europe, but secondary in importance, and when, from day to day, this disparity is increasing."

This, then, being our settled plan of policy, and having been so announced to the world by two Chief Magistrates of our country, why, it may be asked, does it become necessary for Congress to interpose, and by a legislative declaration, reaffirm it? The nature of our Government furnishes a satisfactory answer to this question. Though there is no doubt, but that Executive declarations were beneficial to their operations, and aided in checking schemes of aggrandizement, which, had they been allowed, would have changed the political aspect of the countries south of us, and greatly to our injury, still they have not been wholly regarded, as events upon the La Plata and in other respects has principally demonstrated. And occurrences haveasioned the belief among Central America, and which, for the reason that it is not a few years since, a principle long agnored, until authorizedly reaffirmed in the name of the American people. An experiment is making upon our forbearance, or rather upon our apprehension, and as it is not to us, yet, they will be abandoned, or pushed away, which no nation now ventures openly to know. It is but a few years since, a principle long ago disregarded by other nations, the American balance of power, was announced by the French Prime Minister, Mr. Guizot, in the Chamber of Deputies, in relation to occurrences at Buenos Ayres, utterly inconsiderate and with that hypocrisy, and in the same period of our other rather truculent, has encouraged this spirit of preemption, and led to the belief, that we do not intend to carry out our own principles, and that, therefore, they may be safely disregarded by other nations."
I repeat, that the nature of our Government furnishes a satisfactory solution of this course of foreign policy. The annunciation of our doctrine had the object of warning the Powers of Europe of our policy, and thus to prevent the violation of its principles. But upon this, as upon many other occasions, we hesitated in our course, and did not come up to our work. We did not keep on the line of political knowledge. We should have used the solemnity and the force of a legislative concurrent in the way of Executive declarations. Such announcements, when made by the head of a European State, are made authoritatively, because he who issues them has the power to enforce them. They become settled maxims of policy, and other nations are aware, that they cannot be interfered with, except at the hazard of war. But they can be closed upon us by the occupation of commanding positions, whenever opportunities can be found, or made for seizing them. Considerations of this nature, far more than their intrinsic value, give importance to Honduras, to the Colony of the Day of Islands, to Sonora, to Chihuahua, and to other points, where it can be done in a fair and equal field for exertion, and if we have not industry and enterprise enough to hold our own way, in the great career of advancement, we deserve to fall behind our rivals and contemporaries, and ought to find no one to do us reverence. But I have no fear of this, nor indeed has any one else. It should, therefore, be a cardinal maxim of our policy, to preserve, as far as we can, the integrity of the Central American Republics, for it is almost as much for their interest as it is for ours, that these great lines of communication should be opened to all the world, and free to the competition of every nation.

There has recently been an attempt to wrest Sonora from the Mexican dominion, which at first attracted some attention in this country; but it has apparently failed, and the effort seems now rather to be ridiculed than condemned. The circumstances, connected with the right of movement, are obscure, but it is reported that the attempt has been made indirectly to French agents, made with a view to the extension of the jurisdiction of their country over that region. There are strong reasons for believing, that this conjecture was correct, though to what extent those concerned, acted from authority, will probably be, especially as the result was unexpected, and generally leaves these speculations to the consideration of their own responsibility. But it is not a little curious, that it was known here, that such a movement would be made, before we had any actual information of its occurrence, and it was not only well known, but our people were prepared and ready to meet it. Considerations if it is for ours, that these great lines of communication should be opened to all the world, and free to the competition of every nation.

I received a letter myself, from a quarter, I am not at liberty to disclose, some days before we heard of the enterprise, which I mentioned to my colleague and to other gentlemen, foretelling the movement and coupling it with designs of permanent connection. And a document has since reached this country, which is worthy of our attention, and which goes far to confirm these anticipations. It is a memoir, published recently at Paris, by M. Dupasquier de Dommartin, in order to draw the attention of European Powers, and especially of France, to the purpose of colonizing Sonora and Northern Mexico by the only means of checking the rapid and formidable advance of the United States, and preventing forever the acquisition of a railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific ocean. The writer has devoted himself, for some time, to the careful study of this subject, has thoroughly explored the region of which he writes, and has laid the foundation for the policy he recommends, by procuring, through the aid of the French Minister in Mexico, large grants of land for the purpose of colonization, from the local authorities of Sonora and Chihuahua.

It is well remarked by the New York Times—to which paper I owe the above extract, as well as the translated memoir—that the fact of the commencement of such a colony, with the open avowal of such a purpose, is, of itself, sufficient to command the prompt attention of the American people and Government. And the interest is increased by the consideration, that such an appeal is thus publicly made for co-operation in the plan, made also, in the French capital, where no such publication could appear, without the consent of the Government, that a French company has obtained exclusive grants in Sonora; and that an attempt has been made to wrest that region by arms from Mexico. All these may, by possibility, be accidental coincidences, and not co-operating causes; but the suggestion requires a good deal of national charity, if not of national credit. I wish there was time to lay this memoir before the Senate, for it is a very significant document, advocating the very policy from which we have most to fear in all our foreign relations. But I must confine myself to a very general summary of it,
The writer advert to our commercial interests, and to their extension; to our object to obtain absolute command of the commerce of the world, and to the certainty with which our projects of aggrandizement will be affected, from the wonderful progress we are making, cannot be made, unless Europe interferes to prevent it. Consider the terrible condition of Mexico, with a view to show, that from her state of weakness and division, she will fall a prey to the grasping rapacity of the United States, unless saved by European colonization. He also gives a narrative of his explorations in Mexico, and of his efforts to carry his designs into effect. This brief abstract must suffice for the general purpose I have in view. I shall add to it the summary made by the author himself. He says:

"From the preceding there result two facts: First, that Mexico possesses the key of the Northern Continent, of the Atlantic and the Pacific, by land and by these two seas, of all the commerce which is carried on there. Second, that the existence of Mexico, pressed on all parts by the United States, hangs only on a thread." The whole question is now reduced to knowing if Europe will permit the United States to attain so much power."

A French periodical, of high and established character, The Annaire Des Deux Mondes, for 1852, has some remarks strongly corroborative of the importance of the suggestions of Dr. Dupasquier de Dommartin. "Some attempts," says that journal, "to afford a remedy for Mexican difficulties, have meantime been recently made. We mention the commencement of the colonization of the State of Sonora, which has been greatly aided by the French Minister. He who supposes that a French diplomatic agent would take such a step, without the instructions of his Government, knows nothing of that parsimonious sentiment of duty, which animates his corps, and little of the responsibility he would encounter. "Three hundred Frenchmen," says our authority, "collected from different parts of the Republic, are already settled upon the lands granted by the Government. Within a few years, a Frenchman, Mr. Dupasquier de Dommartin, has shown a lively interest in these projects of colonization ... 

"This," the adoption of his plans, "will be the surest dyke against the usurpation of the American race."

"There is also involved the great interest of influence for Europe, in not allowing to be accomplishing, in spite of her, perhaps against her, and not distinctly announced, this new dismemberment of the Spanish-American Empire." The Courrier des Etats Unis, published at New York, the well-known organ of the French Government in this country, in an article, a few days since, made a very pregnant allusion, whether carelessly or carefully I know not, but certainly well worthy of attention: "As yet," says the Courrier, "France has not set her foot on the American continent. We may fear what she will do, we admist, but in good faith the does not yet merit the least estimination. This is honest enough, indeed, whether intended as a prophecy or as a warning. It may be that it will be found expedient to irritate the new empire with the luster of conquest; and it also may be, that the great augmentation of the French Navy is connected with the designs upon this continent, so distinctly portrayed in the quotations I have made. Nothing is lost by a provident forecast."

Now, it can hardly be doubted by any man, who is familiar with the course of European interposition, that if the effort just made to overthrow the Mexican Government in Sonora, and that long the country would have possessed any possession of France, unless prevented by our remonstrances, or by armed intervention. As it failed, we shall not know its true history, until we read it in another attempt, and perhaps a successful one. That, however, will not be made, if we are true to ourselves, by any notion of continuing to manifest a determination to resist it, or any similar scheme of European agitation. This is obvious, from the foregoing recapitulation, that our policy and purposes are adverse to the attainment of European and, whatever difference of opinion we may have respecting the true origin and objects of the recent movements in Sonora, it is equally obvious, that we may look, for similar explosions, from time to time, with results far more injurious to us, unless anticipated and prevented by a prompt, bold, and decisive declaration, which would enforce itself with all our power, should circumstances be grave enough to require us to put forth our whole strength."

If, then, we have a right to insist upon this principle of American exemption, and if the condition of things, here and elsewhere, may render the exercise of this right essen-
The right of one country, to occupy or control portions of the possessions of another, is deducible from the great law of self-defence, which is as applicable to communities as to individuals. There are many instances in modern history of the application of this doctrine, and the code, which regulates the intercourse of nations, and which adapts itself to the existing circumstances of the world, recognizes this power of self-preservation. Like other human pretensions, this is liable to abuse, and has been greatly abused in Europe, and especially by the usurpations, arising out of the balance of power—a principle avowedly introduced for the protection of the weak against the strong, but practically perverted to make the strong more powerful, and the weak more dependent. A nation, feeling the responsibility of its conduct towards God and man, and sensible of its own duties, should take care, when driven to avert danger by anticipating it, that it does not mistake a spirit of aggravation for the just claims of self-defence, and seize the fleet of a friendly Power, a Danish fleet, for example, as a mere instrument of maritime supremacy.

The true principle is well laid down in our own legislative history, and was announced in the resolution of Congress of March 3d, 1811, which declared that, "Taking into view the peculiar situation of Spain, and of her American provinces, and considering the influence, which the destiny of the territory adjoining the southern border of the United States, may have upon their security, tranquility, and commerce:

The power of self-preservation is deducible from the great law of self-defence, which is as applicable to communities as to nations.

In the act of Congress, passed on the same day, for the purpose of carrying this declaratory resolution into effect, it is provided that the President "be authorized to take possession of the country east of the Perdido river, and south of the State of Georgia and the Mississippi Territory," among other events, in case it should be delivered up by the native authority, "for the event of an attempt to occupy the said territory by any foreign Government."

This is our doctrine and our policy, and the very proposition of the French and British Governments to our own, to regulate by a tripartite treaty, without the participation of Spain, the future condition of Cuba, is itself a concession of the right to direct and control peculiar positions, upon whose fate important interests depend.

Does the Island of Cuba present those paramount considerations, connected with our safety and prosperity, which justify the United States, in the exercise of a vigilant supervision over its destiny, and in the adoption of decisive measures for its protection, should any other nation seek to obtain it, by force or by purchase? The importance of the question, rather than any difficulty in its solution, deserves a passing consideration, and in referring to it, I must repeat views, I have heretofore presented to the Senate upon this subject.

The Gulf of Mexico is the reservoir of the great river of the North American continent, whose importance it is as difficult to realize, as it is the value of the country, which must seek an outlet to the ocean through its waters. That country is nearly equal to Europe in extent, and in the adaption of decisive measures for its protection, should any other nation seek to obtain it, by force or by purchase? The importance of the question, rather than any difficulty in its solution, deserves a passing consideration, and in referring to it, I must repeat views, I have heretofore presented to the Senate upon this subject.

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I Stotes had to Mexico, because a sum of £45,000,000 was due to him from Cuba, Havana, as once she did in 1762, when she held it for about a year, and then exchanged bloated suggestions that ever marked even that notorious receptacle of Vile, could this be removed by any scheme of partition, the mortgage would be foreclosed, for stated, that if the United States did not possess herself of Cuba, Great Britain would, boasts would be heard of what the United States could do, &c.

Against this country. The present security of Cuba from European interference, independent of our position, is to be found in the jealousy of France and England, and could this be removed, by any scheme of partition, the mortgage would be foreclosed, for France also has a similar lien, and the property transferred, as soon as the process could be completed. And we are reminded, in the recent correspondence between Mr. Everett and the Ministers of France and England, on the subject of the proposed partition treaty, suggestively or significantly, as may be, that the hypothesis is yet in full force as "British and French subjects, as well as the French Government, are, on different accounts, creditors of Spain for large sums of money." How soon the creditors may disagree on the terms of a treaty, is the subject of speculation, but it may be, as well as the other being a member of the French or of the British Cabinet, who did not know, as well before the project was referred to us, as after, that the offer would be peremptorily rejected. They did not then read the "sublime alliances," for these are truly so; and they knew our views with regard to Cuba, and that we would not sacrifice our permanent interests to any such scheme.

Then why this solemn farce of an invitation to do, what it was known we would not do? Well, sir, there is but one rational answer to this inquiry. Those two Governments are to say to us, now and hereafter, we shall take our own course with respect to Cuba. "We have asked your participation, in the measures necessary for its security, and you have declined to join us. We are free to act as we please. We have given you warning, that we do not recognize your right to acquire that Island, and that we shall "discountenance" all efforts, that you may make to obtain possession of it. This declaration is explicitly made by the French Government, and the same view is easily deduced from the letter of Mr. Fontenay, where he says, with regard to the equivocal declaration of the United States, in consequence of the "justification" of the words "European" and "Power," and inviting a plain avowal of our intention ever to obtain possession of Cuba. This, of course, he neither got, nor expected to get. But I say, this being the case, and with respect to the annexation of this matter: France and England have assumed the right, or, rather, have laid claim on the destiny of Cuba, and have asked the concurrence of the United States in their proposed arrangements. This has been declined, and the two Powers, upon their own principles, are free to regulate the whole subject, so far as they can agree in their policy. If they cannot do that, each of them will probably avail the chapter of accidents, procrastinating or seizing, as one or the other may be in the ascendant—provided, however, that we sit still and philanthropically try peace, peace, when there is no peace."

4. Now, sir, I have endeavors to show why these resolutions should pass. I have endeavored to show, both our right and our duty to adopt them, and also that their adoption would have a powerful operation in checking projects of aggrandizement, which, without our influence, will go on to their consummation. I do not presume to say, that this solemn process of principle and our policy, we exercise in the best manner of his character, and not till then. Why, Gentlemen opposed to this course, while they know their indisposition to act, acknowledge also, that our policy must be enforced by war, if hesitancy on the effort be made to thwart it and to endanger our safety.

A highly estimable member of the House of Representatives, for whom I have much regard, has recently remarked that "he was not willing to sustain the resolution." He was opposed to serving a John Doe and Richard Roe notice to the world," though he was opposed to a vote in favor of partition by force, if European colonization should be attempted, or if there should be danger of any maritime nation taking Cuba. Then why not to say the declaration may do, and can do no harm. No American, Mr. President, has the right to undervalue his country, by saying, that the avowal of a higher sentiment that Publicists, down to the present time, have pressed upon us, will be received in Europe with indifference, or lightly regarded. No, it is not so; and without the fear of any imputation of self-exaltation, we may estimate our influence by a higher ...
standard than that. If, indeed, we do nothing, by our own differences and discussions, to cast suspicion upon our ultimate course, leading the politicians of Europe to believe, that when the trial comes the record containing our words will never be inscribed with our firm sagacity, which befits our condition. It is just as certain, that these principles themselves will be permanently ingrained into the American policy, and in the most imposing form, as it is that they are now ingrained in the hearts of the American people.

My friends, the Senator from New Hampshire, (Mr. Hale,) said the other day, with that sedate manner, which distinguishes his public conduct, and that was unjust and unconstitutional, that the right would be preserved for their fulfillment, that we should back out of this declaration, if made, as we always do. The sentiment is not very patriotic, nor is the assertion correct; nor, indeed, is it redeemed by the charm of novelty. I heard the same strain in 1815, though in different terms. The phrase then was, and it was daily heard from our political opponents, that the country could not be kicked into a war. Well, sir, we went to war, notwithstanding, and came out of it without backing. And he, who thinks we shall not, and urges that as a reason for submission to national degradation, knows little of the resolution of his countrymen, when the hour of trial comes. There is one redeeming and encouraging feature of our public character in all these contests between standing still and going on, and that is, that the national feeling, in all grave conjunctures, has always gone ahead of the Congressional feeling. I know of no exception; the latter hangs upon the former, and not entirely in vain. And it is best it always is. The public instinct and judgment are right, and are animated with an ever active love of country, which feels its way and follows it, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left.

Mr. President, I am not going over the ground of our manifest destiny, and the mission we have to fulfill, and other similar phrases, exponents, if you please, adopted into our political vocabulary, and which have provoked more criticism than they merit, and been assigned more importance than they are entitled to. I take it, you are all

...indirectly indicative of a strong impression of the mighty career, that is before us, and of the duties and responsibilities, it brings with it, as well towards ourselves as the world. However these may be magnified or depressed, they cannot be avoided; and that past, which some have over-noticed, and others think the most startling proofs of national progress, which have ever arrested the attention of mankind.

The generation has not yet wholly passed away, since we were a peaceful dependency of England, and he who, by the kindness of Providence and the favor of his fellow citizens, is called to serve a John Doe and Richard Roe notice to the world, is bound to answer it, and to write down the result of our thought when the trial comes. The record containing our words will never be inscribed with our firm sagacity, which befits our condition. It is just as certain, that these principles themselves will be permanently ingrained into the American policy, and in the most imposing form, as it is that they are now ingrained in the hearts of the American people.
ble contests arising out of the French Revolution—schemes which were defied, in elaborate State papers, upon a highwayman's plea, that he robs you, because you have been, or will be robbed, by some one else. All this, too, is with the things that have been, and thither we go, that the time will ever return, when the right to sell, or the extent of one of the States of this Union will be ceded upon such pretexts, as those which dismembered the State of Maine! Never, in my opinion, was there a public claim urged upon grounds so utterly indefensible as that; but we yielded, and now let us make the best of it, just as acquiring resolution as we acquire strength, in what is right—and demand it four others. That is our true policy, and as it is right, that we should exercise the same authority, as the other Powers of the world, our coequels only in position, in the declaration of great principles of international law, the true sentiment of self-respect will teach us, ere long, to maintain its inviolability when threatened with dangerous innovations, hostile to the freedom and independence of nations, by the same solemn and authoritative procedure, as that which announces its peril. If we choose, that our Chief Magistrate should wear a hat, and not a crown, we desire it to be understood, that another are jealously of our rights and honor, and have as much of both, as the gaudiest monarch of them all.

We committed a great error, not a fatal one, that it would be difficult to do in our condition of elasticity, when, last session, we refused to pass a declaration denying to the influence of Russia, the authority he had assumed, to set the part of universal legislator, and to impress his own will upon the code of the public law of mankind, prostrating with his pen, preparatory to prostrating with his sword, all the barriers, that protect the political rights of nations. Well, we shrank also from this high duty. We got alarmed at the shadow of something—I do not know precisely what, whether Russian u/aces, or the entangling alliances, and left the Czar to pass his own law, and to enforce it too. And hereafter, when the occasion comes, and it will come, for power, like the daughters of the horse-leech, always cries give, give, he will be able to quote his own precedent, submitted to both hemispheres, and seek to regulate the interchange of intercommunication, and of national rights by a usus, as he regulates the lives and fortunes of the sixty millions of people, who call him lord and master. In brief, we shall abjure all this, as well our own subservience, as his presumption, and assume this new great legislative council of nations.

We have evidently reached one of those epochs in the career of nations to which the historian of their decline and fall looks back, in his searching investigation, into the causes of their fate. Our duties are plain, noble indeed, and our position invites us to fill them without fear, and to extend to all branches of human industry, and especially those, in which relate to the intercommunication of nations, and to the benefit, that each may derive from all by the interchange, as well of knowledge as of material products, have brought the human family more closely into contact, than at any former period, and have opened interests, which, if not new, have become much more powerful in their extent and operation, and which give some degree of unity to the public feeling of the world. We cannot withdraw from this great association. We cannot isolate ourselves from the common sentiment of the age. It is not to be expected that those events almost beyond our control, and as we fill it, worthy or unworthy, the judgment of the future will pronounce us the inheritors of the spirit, as we have been of the labors and sacrifices, of the men of the Revolution, or craven descendants, false to their principles, as to our own honor. I am well aware, Mr. President, that such views expose a man to a great deal of obloquy in this country. I have experienced all that, in common with innumerable others. But neither the sedent, nor the apprehension of it, has deterred me, at much earlier periods of life, and certainly will not deter me now, when that life is fast drawing to a close, from the expression of an earnest hope, that the American name and fame will be maintained by the American people, with the brightness of true glory, unimpaired by the neglect of a single deed, which national honor may require we should do, or leave undone.

Our American citizens even, who cannot appreciate sentiments like those— who disbelieve in their existence, and who deride and denounce all those, who own them as demagogues—that is the term—and which, when truly translated from our party vocabulary into old-fashioned English, means all, who differed in great measures from those standards of truth, and advocate them, even though they are acceptable to the people—a fatal error, indeed, in a country like this. I saw the other day a specimen of this exclusive patriotism, which rails at all it does not accept, in a Buffalo paper, the

Commercial Advertiser, which, from its near relation to the present Administration, I should have thought would have tried to elevate itself above this tone of affected moderation, but of real subservience, and which reflects on our European encroachments, talks of the ghost of the Monroe doctrine, and of palpable chicanery, of the equalization of the rights of European monarchs with the United States upon this continent, and much of the same sort, little suited to the banks of the Niagara, but which would find its proper home upon the banks of the Thames, as would be well for this Anglo mania, and when the patient once recovers, he wonders how he ever caught the disorder.

I have seen a great deal of this political perversity, this unpatriotic disposition, which prompts so many men to take part against their country, whatever be the position, in which he is placed. I do not recollect a single controversy, in which we have been engaged, except that upon the foreign power, since I have been on the stage of action; just the whole sentiment of the country was united in the cause of the country. I doubt if there is any want of true national pride, patriotism rather, as our own. Whether it results from any peculiar political idiosyncrasy I know not; or whether our party feelings are so strong, opponents do; or it may be, at any rate, so far as England is concerned, that some of the old colonial leaven remains, which leavens much of the lump,—be it one or the other, or whatever else, the deplorable consequence is certain, and the sentiment of Decatur, not rather, means, that when embarked in a controversy with a foreign nation, it becomes authority, to submit to that decision and to propose the remedy. We do not mistrust our imperial neighbor on the other side of the Pacific, the mighty brother of the sun and moon, will set up no Chinese claims to our new possessions upon that ocean; for if he should, they might create much embarrassment, a I fear the children of their fate. Our duties are plain, noble indeed, and our position invites us to fill them without fear, and to extend to all branches of human industry, and especially those, in which relate to the intercommunication of nations, and to the benefit, that each may derive from all by the interchange, as well of knowledge as of material products, have brought the human family more closely into contact, than at any former period, and have opened interests, which, if not new, have become much more powerful in their extent and operation, and which give some degree of unity to the public feeling of the world. We cannot withdraw from this great association. We cannot isolate ourselves from the common sentiment of the age. It is not to be expected that those events almost beyond our control, and as we fill it, worthy or unworthy, the judgment of the future will pronounce us the inheritors of the spirit, as we have been of the labors and sacrifices, of the men of the Revolution, or craven descendants, false to their principles, as to our own honor. I am well aware, Mr. President, that such views expose a man to a great deal of obloquy in this country. I have experienced all that, in common with innumerable others. But neither the sedent, nor the apprehension of it, has deterred me, at much earlier periods of life, and certainly will not deter me now, when that life is fast drawing to a close, from the expression of an earnest hope, that the American name and fame will be maintained by the American people, with the brightness of true glory, unimpaired by the neglect of a single deed, which national honor may require we should do, or leave undone.

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