

SPEECH  
OF  
HON. JAMES DIXON,  
OF CONNECTICUT,  
ON THE  
THIRTY MILLION BILL,  
FOR  
THE ACQUISITION OF CUBA.

DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, FEBRUARY 25, 1859.

The Senate having under consideration the bill to facilitate the acquisition of Cuba—  
DIXON said:

MR. PRESIDENT: I shall attempt to discuss the question now before the Senate with the utmost degree of brevity and condensation to which I can attain. If I shall find it necessary to crave the indulgent attention of the Senate for a longer time than has been my custom, I must beg my apology in the great importance of the subject.

For a period of more than three hundred and fifty years, according to the laws which are recognized by civilized nations, the Island of Cuba has belonged to Spain. Her title was originally founded on discovery, followed by long, uninterrupted, and peaceable possession. Reaching out, as she did, from her rocky peninsula, upon the Atlantic Ocean, the foremost nation of Europe in position as well as in power, sent forth Columbus to search for that new world of the existence of which he had convinced that Government. The result of this great enterprise, in which every other leading nation of Europe refused to participate, was the acquisition of an empire, richer, if not more extensive, than any which ever owned the sway of a single monarch. A large portion of the muniments of her title, perhaps we should not value very much respect. By the bull of Pope Alexander VI., the title of the New World was granted to Spain; but she actually came to possess, not only the Island of Cuba, but the Floridas, California, and the whole of the northern portion of the continent of South America; and afterwards, by cession from France, she came into possession of the whole of the territory of Louisiana, extending, as was afterwards claimed, by us, as far north as 54° 40'.

At the time of our revolution we found her in possession, not only of the whole of the western side of the Mississippi, but also of the State of Louisiana on both sides of the Mississippi, as far north as that State now extends, and about that time she actually undertook to refuse to us the right to navigate that river. She intimated to us that in order to procure that advantage, the citizens of Kentucky would perhaps be willing to come under the jurisdiction of Spain, and she claimed that they would make very good Spanish subjects—a compliment which the Senator from Kentucky, (Mr. THOMPSON,) the other day did not seem disposed to return. He did not believe that Spanish subjects would make good American citizens.

Until about the year 1820, with some slight interruption in 1762, when Great Britain took a large portion of the Island of Cuba, (by the expedition under Lord Albemarle,) which she very soon relinquished, the title of Spain to this portion of her territory was undisturbed. I do not find, in any examination of the official or private correspondence of any of our statesmen, that any very extensive remark was made upon that subject until about the year 1820, and subsequently. Then it became the subject of extensive private and official correspondence, to some portion of which I desire to call the attention of the Senate. The Senator from Wisconsin, (Mr. DOOLITTLE,) and the Senator from Vermont, (Mr. COLLAMER,) have already alluded to a portion of this correspondence. I propose, a little more fully than they have done, to examine it. I shall call attention to some points in this connection, which, perhaps, may not have escaped their notice, but which their time did not permit them to examine.

We have heard very much of the pretensions of France and England to the Island of Cuba. Those nations have been denounced by the honorable Senator from Louisiana, (Mr. BENJAMIN,) for presuming to offer to us a project for a tripartite treaty, by which the three nations should guaranty the title of Cuba to Spain. I find, on an examination of the correspondence to which I have alluded, that the project of such a treaty came originally from this country. I find that it was first proposed by Mr. Jefferson himself, in a letter written by him to Mr. Monroe, in October, 1823. In that letter he says:

"The foothold which the nations of Europe had in either America is fast slipping from under them; so that we soon shall be rid of their neighborhood. Cuba alone seems to hold up a speck of war to us. Its possession by Great Britain would, indeed, be a great calamity to us. *Could we induce her to join us in guarantying its independence against all the world, except Spain, it would be nearly as valuable to us as if it were our own*; but, should she take it, I would not immediately go to war for it; because the first war, on other accounts, will give it to us, or the island will give itself to us when able to do so."

In another letter, he says:

"It is better, then, to lie still, in readiness to receive that interesting incorporation when solicited by herself."

Here is a direct proposition from Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Monroe, in 1823, that we should propose to Great Britain a treaty guarantying the title of Spain to the Island of Cuba, and providing that neither nation should acquire it. That subject was not there dropped. I cannot say whether the idea was originally suggested by Mr. Jefferson or not. Perhaps the idea was not new with him.

Mr. BENJAMIN. Will the Senator be kind enough to repeat the date of that letter?

Mr. DIXON. October, 1823. This, probably, had been a subject of conversation among official gentlemen. Mr. Jefferson, we all know, took a deep interest in everything that was going on under Mr. Monroe's administration. I find this idea again alluded to, in a somewhat different shape, in a letter of Mr. Forsyth to the Secretary of State, on the 22d of February, 1822, a short time before the letter of Mr. Jefferson. In this letter Mr. Forsyth says:

"In a conversation with one of the members of the political commission of the Cortes, I expressed a conviction that Spain would procure, by an immediate recognition of Colombia and Mexico, and the adoption of a liberal system of commerce, a *guarantee of the island from Colombia, Mexico, and the United States*; the three Powers being equally interested to keep it in the hands of Spain, out of the hands of England, and of each other."

At that time there prevailed a very exaggerated idea of the importance of Colombia and Mexico. Mr. Clay seems to have had that idea. He speaks in his correspondence of the immense armies of these two nations which would soon be deprived of employment; and the impression then seemed to prevail that Colombia and Mexico could unite with us, and, in that way guaranty the title of Spain by a tripartite treaty; but that, of course, was very soon abandoned.

I find that, on the 17th of December, 1822, Mr. Adams, as Secretary of State, in replying to Mr. Forsyth on this subject, says:

"Spain, though disinclined to such an arrangement, might resist it with more firmness, if, for a limited period of time, she should obtain the joint guarantee of the United States and France, securing the island to herself."

On the 10th of July, 1823, Mr. Appleton writes to Mr. Adams:

"I have not dared to suggest any, though I should suppose that the United States, or the United States and England jointly, might find one, in a guarantee of the island to Spain, while in the enjoyment of the provincial government lately decreed for it by the Cortes. The present is the moment when such an arrangement might be made with Spain."

On the 13th of April, 1826, Mr. Clay, then Secretary of State, alludes to the same subject, in his letter to Mr. Everett. He says:

"If the acquisition of Cuba were desirable to the United States, there is believed to be no reasonable prospect of affecting, at this conjuncture, that object; and, if there were any, the frankness of their diplomacy, which has induced the President freely and fully to disclose our views, both to Great Britain and France, forbids absolutely any movement whatever, at this time, with such a purpose. This condition of the great maritime Powers (the United States, Great Britain, and France) is almost equivalent to an absolute guarantee of the island to Spain."

Then he goes on to say that we cannot, in consequence of our peculiar policy, (in regard to entangling alliances,) enter into any such agreement; but he considers the then position of affairs, which he was not willing to alter, equivalent to a guarantee. At that time our statesmen were very far from supposing that such a proposition would have been anything like arrogance or insolence, on the part of Great Britain and France. On the contrary, I think nobody can read the correspondence without believing that, if the proposition had then been directly made to Mr. Adam's administration, it would have been accepted; unless it had been prevented by the great unwillingness of our country to form any alliance of this sort. It was considered in itself, as it would seem, a desirable proposition.

Now, pursuing this official correspondence somewhat further, I wish to call the attention of the Senate to two or three other suggestions which arise in reading it. I find, throughout the whole of the correspondence, not only a friendly, and entirely amicable disposition manifested towards Spain, but also a continual and constant repetition of the idea that, so long as Spain shall hold the island, we shall be contented. The Senator from Florida (Mr. MALLORY) is very much mistaken in supposing that this arose from our idea of the strength of Spain. He told us this morning, as he told us in the first part of his speech a few days ago, that, although it is true that at that time, we said to Spain we did not desire to interfere with her possession, it was because she was strong, and was able to retain it. I find that no such idea prevailed in the opinions of those official gentlemen who had this subject under their consideration at that time. Mr. Clay, in his first letter on this subject, enlarges on the weakness of Spain. He says:

"The war upon the continent is, in fact, at an end; and not a solitary foot of land, from the western limit to Cape Horn, owns her [Spain's] sway; not a bayonet in all that vast extent remains to sustain her cause."

You will find, in pursuing the correspondence, that the proposition is often repeated; but I do not wish to fatigue the Senate. It is repeatedly stated, that if Spain were not able to retain possession of the Island of Cuba, we ourselves would guaranty it to her against all the world. She was considered weak, feeble, unable of herself to retain it; and we assured her that there was no necessity, in consequence of her feeble condition, that she should suppose herself under the necessity of yielding it up to France, or any other Power; but that we would protect her against the world in her possession. Thus it will be perceived that our established policy was not founded, as the Senator from Florida has supposed, on any idea prevailing in this country of the strength of Spain at that time.

I desire, now, to call the attention of the Senate to a few extracts showing what was the established policy of the Government down to the time of the Ostend manifesto. It was not confined to any one Administration. It was not confined to Mr. Adams, or Mr. Clay, or Mr. Forsyth, or Mr. Webster, but Mr. Buchanan himself participated in it. Mr. Forsyth writes, in 1823:

"To this plain remark, I could only reply that, without instructions, I could only speak of what I supposed to be the wishes of my Government, and believed to be the interest of the United States; that we desired no other neighbor in Cuba but Spain; that I felt confident the United States would do everything in their power, consistent with their obligations, to prevent Cuba from being wrested from Spain; that he was no doubt aware that there could be no misunderstanding between the two Governments on this point without a reference to Washington."

This policy of our Government was summed up by Mr. Webster, in the year 1843, in his dispatch of January 14, while he held the office of Secretary of State. He says:

"The Spanish Government has long been in possession of the policy and wishes of this Government in regard to Cuba, which have never been changed, and has been repeatedly told that the United States never would permit the occupation of that island by British agents or forces, upon any pretext whatsoever; and that, in the event of any attempt to wrest it from her, she might surely rely upon the whole naval and military resources of this country to aid in preserving or recovering it."

In the year 1848, on the 17th of June, Mr. Buchanan wrote to Mr. Saunders; and at this time he seems to have imbibed somewhat of the spirit and to have copied somewhat of the manner of those great masters of diplomacy who had preceded him. He says:

"By direction of the President, I now call your attention to the present condition and future prospects of Cuba. The fate of this island must ever be deeply interesting to the people of the United States. We are content that it shall continue to be a colony of Spain. Whilst in her possession, we have nothing to apprehend. Besides, we are bound to her by the ties of ancient friendship, and we sincerely desire to render these perpetual."

He then goes on to say that we can never consent that she shall become a colony of any European Power; and adds:

"Desirable, however, as the possession of this island may be to the United States, we would not acquire it except by the free will of Spain. Any acquisition not sanctioned by justice and honor would be too dearly purchased. While such is the determination of the President, it is supposed that the present relations between Cuba and Spain might incline the Spanish Government to cede the island to the United States, upon the payment of a fair and full consideration."

He then proceeds to give instructions as to the manner in which that negotiation shall be conducted. This policy continued down to the year 1854, when you will find, on examination, a sudden and an entire change. That was the period of the Ostend manifesto; when three gentlemen, clothed in customary suits of diplomatic black, made their appearance at Ostend; whence they issued this remarkable document, and you will then see an entire change in the spirit of our negotiations. If Spain had been aware of the mission of these sable-robed diplomats, when they flitted from Aix-la-Chapelle, and alighted at Ostend, she might have felt as the Roman shepherd did, when the hoarse note of the sinister raven, from the hollow oak on the left, predicted the loss of his possessions. What is now the language used towards Spain? I quote from the Ostend manifesto:

"Our past history forbids that we should acquire the Island of Cuba without the consent of Spain, unless justified by the great law of self-preservation. We must, in any event, preserve our own conscious rectitude, and our own self-respect."

"Whilst pursuing this course, we can afford to disregard the censures of the world, to which we have so often and so unjustly exposed."

"After we shall have offered Spain a price for Cuba far beyond its present value, and this shall have been refused, it will then be time to consider the question, does Cuba, in the possession of Spain, seriously endanger our internal peace, and the existence of our cherished Union?"

"Should this question be answered in the affirmative, then, by every law, human and divine, we shall be justified in wresting it from Spain, if we possess the power; and this upon the very same principle that would justify an individual in tearing down the burning house of his neighbor, if there were no other means of preventing the flames from destroying his own home."

The question which he says, must be answered in the affirmative in order to justify us in wresting Cuba from the possession of Spain is this: "does her possession seriously endanger our internal peace and the existence of our cherished Union?" That very question they there proceed to answer in the affirmative in another part of the same document. I find, in a previous part of the same paper, this expression of opinion on the part of its distinguished authors:

"Indeed the Union can never enjoy repose, nor possess reliable security, as long as Cuba is not embraced within its boundaries."

That answers the question which has been put by these gentlemen, most emphatically in the affirmative. That seems to be a decisive expression of opinion in regard to the necessity of our occupation of Cuba as a matter of self-preservation.

I do not see how the question could be answered more affirmatively than Mr. Buchanan has proceeded to answer it in this Ostend letter. Then, in his judgment, the time has actually come when we shall be justified in wresting Cuba from the possession of Spain, on the same principle that you would tear down the burning house of your neighbor to protect your own. Here, then, is an entire and complete change in the policy of this Government in regard to the management of this negotiation. But the change is not confined to the policy of the negotiation, but also extends to the manner of conducting it. Up to that time, there had been manifested the most conciliatory spirit toward Spain; a careful avoidance of anything likely to wound her sensitive honor had been manifested, even by Mr. Buchanan himself. Look at his instructions to Mr. Saunders, in the first instance, to show how very carefully everything offensive was to be avoided:

"The attempt should be made, in the first instance, in a confidential conversation with the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs; a written offer might produce an absolute refusal in writing, which would embarrass us hereafter in the acquisition of the island. Besides, from the incessant changes in the Spanish Cabinet and policy, our desire to make the purchase might thus be made known in an official form to foreign Governments, and arouse their jealousy and active opposition. Indeed, even if the present Cabinet should think favorably of the proposition, they might be greatly embarrassed by having it placed on record; for in that event it would almost certainly, through some channel, reach the opposition, and become the subject of discussion in the Cortes. Such delicate negotiations, at least in their incipient stages, ought always to be conducted in confidential conversation, and with the utmost secrecy and dispatch."

"In order to convince him (the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs) of the good faith and friendship towards Spain with which this Government has acted, you might read to him the first part of my dispatch to General Campbell, and the order issued by the Secretary of War to the commanding general in Mexico, and to the officer having charge of the embarkation of our troops at Vera Cruz."

"You may then touch lightly, delicately, upon the danger that Spain may lose Cuba by a revolution in the island, or that it may be wrested from her by Great Britain, should a rupture take place between the two countries arising out of the dismissal of Sir Henry Bulwer, and be retained to pay the Spanish debt due to the British bond-holders. You might assure him that, whilst this Government is entirely satisfied that Cuba should remain under the dominion of Spain, we should, in any event, resist its acquisition by any other nation."

Such was the conciliatory and cautious language of Mr. Buchanan in his instructions to Romulus M. Saunders in 1848.

Mr. Saunders, in reply, informs Mr. Buchanan how strictly he had followed his advice on this subject. He says he made the approaches in the most delicate and careful manner; that in the first interview the minister did not know that he actually was talking of cession; that he supposed he was talking of guaranty, so delicately did he approach him; and he says he was satisfied, before the conversation with him was finished, that there was no hope of obtaining the island. Such, at that time, was the kind, the amicable manner in which the negotiation was conducted. Mr. Marcy was somewhat surprised when he found that this amicable tone had been abandoned in the Ostend manifesto, and administers to Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Soulé and Mr. Mason a somewhat severe rebuke couched in apparently ironical lan-

guage, for having presumed to say that the time might have come when we should be justified in wresting the Island of Cuba from Spain; and he expressly instructs Mr. Soulé to inform the Spanish Ministry that our ancient policy does still continue to exist, notwithstanding the tone of the Ostend manifesto might lead him to suppose that it had been abandoned by our Government. Now, what is the present mode of conducting this negotiation? I have shown you how it was formerly conducted, not only as to its ultimate policy, but, also, as to the manner of negotiation. The change, I think, is as great in the manner as in the ultimate policy. And, in the first place, look at the President's message. Instead of the conciliatory tone which had been previously held, he begins by exaggerating pending difficulties. He informs us, in his message, that our relations with Spain are very unsatisfactory. He then goes on to state to Congress, in several portions of his message, what are the grievances now existing against Spain; and, after all, he only makes out that there is a debt of about one hundred and twenty-seven thousand dollars which has not been paid; and he intimates that Spain has a demand against us of a larger sum, including interest, in the celebrated Amistad case. In the debate which took place in the upper House of the Cortes on this subject, the Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that he was utterly astonished when he read this message, and found that the condition of the negotiations between the two countries was not in a satisfactory state. He said he was not aware of any cause of quarrel whatever; that everything, as he supposed, had been settled. He received this message with astonishment. It was all new to the minister who had the care of the matter in Spain.

Then, how is the question treated in the report of the honorable Senator who has reported this bill? In what manner does he attempt to commence this negotiation with Spain? Does he follow out that conciliatory spirit which has heretofore been shown? He knows very well how to negotiate. When he holds the language he does towards Spain, it is not because he is not well aware that it is not the way to induce a reluctant nation to part with a valuable possession. I beg leave to read a few extracts from that report, to show how the honorable Senator from Louisiana (Mr. SLIDELL) thinks it proper to conduct this negotiation. This report will be carefully read in Spain. It will be there as soon as it can be conveyed, if it is not there already. He says, on the twelfth page of the report:

"But even these arguments will not be pressed upon unwilling ears. Our Minister will not broach the subject until he shall have good reason to believe that it will be favorably entertained. Such an opportunity may occur when least expected. Spain is the country of *coups d'état* and *pronunciamientos*. The all-powerful minister of to-day may be a fugitive to-morrow. With the forms of a representative government, it is, in fact, a despotism sustained by the bayonet—a despotism tempered only by frequent, violent, and bloody revolutions. Her financial condition is one of extreme embarrassment. A crisis may arise when even the dynasty may be overthrown unless a large sum of money can be raised forthwith. Spain will be in the position of the needy possessor of land he cannot cultivate, having all the pride of one to whom it has descended through a long line of ancestry, but his necessities are stronger than his will; he must have money. A thrifty neighbor whose domains it will round off is at hand to furnish it. He retains the old mansion, but sells what will relieve him from immediate ruin."

Now, it is perfectly evident that the honorable Senator could not have supposed this to be a conciliatory mode of conducting the negotiation. He informs Spain that she is in the condition of a bankrupt who has parted with the largest portion of his estate, and must now sell the remainder in order to save the family mansion. This idea has been followed up here in debate. The other Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BENJAMIN) has taken a somewhat similar course. The Senator from Georgia (Mr. TOOMBS) who, I think, can condense about as much contempt and scorn into his language, if he entertains such a sentiment, as any member on this floor, has used very extraordinary and remarkable language. He says:

"Young, thriving, vigorous nations are purchasers; the weak, the feeble, the decrepit, are sellers. It has always been so; it always will be so. When nations begin to decay they sell their territory, or it is taken from them by conquest, or even sometimes before decay. With a prodigal Administration, improvident rulers sell their territory, as Charles II. of England sold Dunkirk. Decayed nations always sell, and generally do a good thing by it; because what they do not sell is generally taken away from them for nothing."

That will also go to Spain, with the report of the honorable Senator from Louisiana.

We are told that all this is not insulting; that Spain has no right to complain of it. Now, sir, I have no idea that a proposition made in diplomatic language to any nation to sell one of its possessions, is, in itself, to be considered insulting or offensive, though it may not always be in very good taste. It, perhaps, would not be insulting to Great Britain if we should propose to her to buy Jamaica. But if we go to a nation and tell her she is a bankrupt and must sell; that she cannot retain her possessions; that she shall never be permitted to sell to any other people than to us; that if she does not sell to us, we will then consider the question whether self-defence does not require us to take forcible possession—if we tell her at the same time that we have satisfied ourselves that we are bound, as a matter of self-preservation, to wrest it from her possession—if we tell her furthermore, as the Senator from Louisiana tells Spain, that if she will not part with it to us, we will encourage a revolution which will subvert her jurisdiction; I think that then, the negotiation may be considered offensive and insulting in the highest degree. I think it would be so considered in a private transaction between man and man. It is not always in very good taste to say to a man, unless you know that he wishes to sell his property, that you desire to buy it. If he has told you that he considers the proposition offensive; if he requests you not to repeat it, and you then persist; if you say you will encourage some litigant who will obtain the title, and you will purchase of him if he will not sell at your own price, I think that, in a private transaction, would be considered somewhat offensive.

It seems, therefore, that the whole mode of conducting this negotiation has been as offensive as the ingenuity of able politicians and diplomats could possibly make it. I do not see how it could have been made more so; and I am compelled to believe that this has been done by design, for I know these gentlemen do nothing by accident. I shall revert to this point again; but I wish here, in this place, barely to allude to one consideration that presents itself in the examina-

tion of these official papers regarding our negotiations with Spain for the Island of Cuba. Is Spain willing to sell? In all this correspondence she has given us, in every instance, a decided refusal. She told Mr. Saunders, when he was commissioned by Mr. Buchanan to make the proposition, that under no possible circumstances would she part with this island to any nation; that she would rather see it sunk in the ocean than do so. He stated as a reason why the people of Spain, as well as the Government, entertained this feeling, that the people had no confidence that, if it were sold, one dollar of the money would ever go into the possession of the Government; that it would all be taken by the ministers who might then be in power. He said that was the feeling of the people of Spain in regard to it, and that was one reason why they did not wish to sell. At any rate, a decided refusal has been given to the offer in every instance; even to the extent of saying that they would rather see the island struck out of existence and lose its place on the globe.

It is very difficult for me to believe, when I examine the manner in which this negotiation is now conducted, that it can really be intended to obtain the Island of Cuba. First, consider the publicity which has been given to it. In 1848, Mr. Buchanan wrote to Mr. Saunders that it was all important that the negotiation should be private. He said, if you make it public there will be a discussion in the Cortes. He has made it public in his last message, and it produced the very effect which he imagined it would produce. In 1848 he considered such a discussion very much to be dreaded. It has happened as he apprehended. I say, therefore, it is difficult for me to believe the President of the United States, and the Senators who advocate this bill, expect by this means to obtain the Island of Cuba. I am driven to the belief that they have some other object in view than the acquisition of Cuba. I am driven to the belief that the solution presented by the Senator from Michigan (Mr. CHANDLER) was correct, that some party object is intended to be advanced by this measure. It is difficult to believe that gentlemen, having high official functions to perform, could be influenced to so great an extent by party objects; that they should desire by such means to advance the interests of their party, without regard to the interests of the country; but the conclusion is forced upon us.

It is said there is a political necessity for this measure. I think there possibly may be a political necessity as to the party now in power, but I can see no political necessity for the country. It may be that what is wanted, is what we call here a new "issue," and what is called in England a new "cry." I am not sure that the Senator from Michigan is mistaken in regard to it. I apprehend you are not satisfied with the present issue before the country. That has been found somewhat disastrous. The Senator from Ohio (Mr. PUGH) seems to intimate that it has been discovered, that whenever there was a disaster in the Democratic party, there was a mode of healing it; that a remedy may be soon provided; and what is that remedy? A proposition to annex some foreign territory. He intimates that, by "the blindness of the Opposition" to this measure, the Democratic party may recover

from any mistake, or defeat, or disaster. I am inclined to think that that is the political necessity which now prevails, and that there is no other. I am led to this conclusion also by the details of the bill which the honorable Senator from Louisiana has reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations. The details of the bill, the manner in which this money is to be raised, are such as must surprise every Senator. How is it proposed to raise \$30,000,000 to be placed in the hands of the President? I read from the bill:

"Provided, That if there should not be in the Treasury a sufficient amount unappropriated to meet the demands above called for, the President of the United States be, and hereby is, authorized, at any time within two years from the passage of this act, to borrow on the credit of the United States, a sum not exceeding \$30,000,000, or so much thereof as may be required for that purpose, redeemable in not less than twelve, nor more than twenty years, and the Secretary of the Treasury be, and hereby is, authorized, with the consent of the President, to cause certificates of stock to be prepared, which shall be signed by the Register, and sealed with the seal of the Treasury Department, for the amount so borrowed, in favor of the parties lending the same: *Provided*, That no certificate shall be issued for a less sum than \$1,000."

Has there ever been a loan bill of this kind which contained no restriction whatever on the President, which did not provide in any manner for the amount of interest to be paid, for the mode in which these securities should be issued.

Mr. SLIDELL. Will the Senator pardon me for interrupting him? The bill does contain a restriction on the interest; that it shall not be a greater rate than five per cent.

Mr. DIXON. I have the bill before me, and it contains no such provision.

Mr. SLIDELL. There was a mistake in the printing, but it has been corrected.

Mr. DIXON. I am glad that has been provided for; I thought it a singular thing that the President was not limited as to the rate of interest, to be paid for the money he was authorized to borrow. It still appears that he is authorized by the bill, without the slightest knowledge on the part of anybody, at any time to issue certificates of stock for \$30,000,000 to any person, without requiring bids, or imposing any restriction whatever, except as to rate of interest. If the Senator has provided for that, he has certainly acted wisely. But, sir, the bill contains no provision for public notice of the issuing of the loan; no restriction on the President except as to the rate of interest. He can, at any time, issue bonds to any person without offering for bids. Well, sir, with the money received in this way, I very much doubt whether it is the belief of the President, or any of the distinguished gentlemen who have advocated this bill, that they can acquire Cuba. In short, I understand the Senator from Florida to say expressly, that it cannot be acquired for money. If I have not misunderstood him, he has directly asserted it to be his opinion that, under no circumstances can we purchase the Island of Cuba from Spain by money.

Mr. BENJAMIN. I do not see the Senator from Florida in his seat, but I heard him very distinctly; and I am sure his statement was,

that any proposition for the purchase of the Island of Cuba must be accompanied with a commercial treaty; that money *alone* would not buy the island; but that money, connected with a commercial treaty satisfactory to the people of Spain, would acquire the island in his judgment.

Mr. DIXON. I understood him as the Senator from Louisiana did. I understood him to say that the money was a very trifling consideration; and I understood him to say that, by money, it could not be acquired, but that a commercial treaty must also be made. I further understood him to say that the money, if paid, would not inure to the advantage of the people or the Government of Spain; but that it would, *in transitu*, pass into the hands of persons who were not entitled to it; and that the commercial treaty was the great object by which the acquisition of Cuba could be accomplished.

Well, sir, if we place \$30,000,000 in the hands of the President, if he cannot acquire Cuba with it, he can certainly do something. That is a sum with which great ends and objects may be accomplished, though it may not purchase Cuba. Now what will probably be those ends and objects? The President of the United States the other day, sent us a message which, I think, was the most remarkable communication that ever was presented to the Congress of the United States, by the Chief Executive officer. In my opinion it has not excited all the surprise and all the attention which it ought to excite. I confess that I heard it read, and I have since read it with astonishment. In that message the President of the United States asks Congress to invest him with certain powers which he does not now possess. He says:

"It (the Executive) cannot legitimately resort to force without the direct authority of Congress, except in resisting and repelling hostile attacks. It would have no authority to enter the territories of Nicaragua, even to prevent the destruction of the transit and protect the lives and property of our own citizens on their passage."

Again, he says on the next page:

"Without the authority of Congress, the Executive can not lawfully direct any force, however near it may be to the scene of difficulty, to enter the territory of Mexico, Nicaragua, or New Granada, for the purpose of defending the persons and property of American citizens, even though they may be violently assailed whilst passing in peaceful transit over the Tehuantepec, Nicaragua, or Panama routes. He cannot, without transcending his constitutional power, direct a gun to be fired into a port, or land a seaman or marine to protect the lives of our countrymen on shore, or to obtain redress for a recent outrage on their property."

That is what he cannot now do, under the Constitution. Let us see what he says he will do. He first states what he has no power to do; he has given you correctly the limit which the Constitution has placed upon him. Now, I ask the Senate to give their attention, while I read to them what the President of the United States informs them he will do, although the Constitution does not give him the power. Here it is:

"It is true that, on a sudden emergency of this character, the President would direct any armed force in the vicinity to march to their relief; but in doing this he would act upon his own responsibility."

He has no power to redress the wrongs of an American citizen in a foreign country. The Constitution does not confer on him that

power. To do so would be to violate the Constitution; to do so would be to violate his official oath; and yet he informs us that whenever the event occurs, whether or not we grant the power, he will take the responsibility of exercising it. I do not know how that may have fallen on the ears of the Senate of the United States, but I confess it struck me with more surprise than any sentiment I have ever heard avowed here or elsewhere; that the President of the United States should come to Congress, and, while asking for power to redress injuries of citizens of this country; not for self-defence—the Senator from Vermont (Mr. COLLAMER) showed us the other day that he was not asking power to prevent an injury, but to redress it—that he should ask for power to take vengeance into his own hands; and, at the same time, tell us that whether we give him that power or not, he will assume the responsibility of exercising it, in violation, as he acknowledges it to be, of his official oath!

If this is not despotism, I confess I am entirely ignorant of what constitutes it. The Senator from Illinois, (Mr. DOUGLAS,) as I understood him, advocated and sustained the whole of this message in its entirety. He said that he would not only give the President the power which he asked for, a limited power in certain instances and in specified countries, to use the Army and Navy of this country, but that he would give it to him for all countries and for all time. I have not the Constitution of the United States before me, but I think the language of it is, that "Congress shall have power to declare war." The war-making power is vested in Congress by the Constitution. What, then, is the meaning of a law of this kind? Suppose you were to add to the clause of the Constitution giving Congress the war-making power, a proviso of this description: "except that the President of the United States shall, at all times and in all countries, be authorized to use the land and naval force of the United States to redress any injury which any citizen of the United States may have suffered:" where would that leave the war-making power? It would be taking it from Congress and vesting it in the President of the United States; or, if not taking it from us, it would be sharing it with him. This I understand to be the doctrine avowed by the Senator from Illinois; but as he is not present, I will not dwell on it. It is a doctrine wholly subversive of the principles of our Government.

The question recurs, what can the President of the United States do with this money? He has told us what he will do in his special message. Well, sir, give him \$30,000,000, and what will be the result? He says he will violate the Constitution of the United States: he says he will avenge the wrongs which he claims are constantly committed against citizens of this country, whether the power is given to him by Congress or not. He requests us to give him the power, lest he should be driven to take the responsibility of violating the Constitution; and he asks us in connection—for the two messages are to be taken together—to place in his hands \$30,000,000, for the purpose of negotiating with Spain for the acquisition of Cuba. How the negotiation will be conducted, I think I have shown you. I do not stand here to bring any unfounded charges against the President. I have read

his message. I have stated to you what he therein informs you he will do. I think you may very fairly infer what he will do if he receives these \$30,000,000 that he asks for, although Congress may not pass the act authorizing him to take the course which he indicates to you that he will pursue. I say here, on my official responsibility, that, reading these two instruments together, I should not dare to trust the President of the United States with the power of using \$30,000,000 in this manner. Taking his own language, I should expect him to involve the country in war. If there were no other reasons, I would not place this money in his hands.

But, sir, leaving this branch of the argument, and supposing, now, for a single moment, that it were possible to purchase Cuba; supposing it could be purchased for \$120,000,000, or \$200,000,000—the President has indicated in one of his dispatches, I think, in the instructions to Mr. Saunders, what he would be willing to give; and I believe, by calculation, it was shown at that time to be \$120,000,000; probably the sum now required would be at least \$200,000,000; but, whatever it may be, suppose that, with the money now proposed to be placed in the hands of the President, the acquisition of Cuba might be accomplished; what are its advantages, as stated in the arguments principally relied on in the Senate? The Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BENJAMIN) has discussed that subject with great ability, I might say with more than his usual ability; and he has frankly stated to us what is the object to be gained by the acquisition of Cuba; and why it is that the people of the free States are asked to contribute of their resources \$200,000,000 for the acquisition of this island. I will state it in his own language. He says:

"The leading fact, which ought to be kept constantly in view by all who would form just conceptions on this subject, is, that the wealth and productiveness of this island have been created, and their continuance can only be secured, by a system of compulsory labor."

How is it to be accomplished? How is "a system of compulsory labor" to be continued in Cuba? The Senator has told us—he says:

"I now proceed to inquire from what source an adequate supply of this compulsory labor can be obtained. I know, sir, of but three possible methods:

- "1. The actual increase of the slaves already there."
- "2. The introduction of persons bound to service, under the name of apprentices, or coolies, or colonists."
- "3. The African slave trade, which is the present method."

He also gives, in another place, a fourth mode—acquisition by the United States, and the introduction of slaves from this country, and of our slave system.

These are his four modes of continuing compulsory labor in Cuba. The first, by natural increase, he says is impossible, under the present state of things. Probably it is. The second—the importation of coolies and apprentices—he says has been abandoned for its inhumanity. The third—the African slave trade—must at some time cease. It cannot always go on. It may be many years—it may continue for generations to come; but the time must arrive when that traffic will cease. Then what remains? There is but one mode. Annexation to this country is the only mode of perpetuating slavery in

Cuba. That, then, is the object of the bill; and in that point of view I am very willing to present it to the northern people. It is to perpetuate slavery in Cuba, that the people of the North are requested now to contribute of their means for this acquisition. I think the Senator from Louisiana will admit that I have stated his argument fairly. There is no other object to be accomplished. This is the great cardinal point that must be kept in view. It is for this purpose—to perpetuate slavery in Cuba—that we are asked to appropriate this money. Why should we do it?

In the first place, the honorable Senator has drawn a picture of the effect of emancipation in the West Indies. He has painted it with the matchless skill of an artist who excels in coloring as well as in composition. I do not deny that he has shown a state of things existing there very much to be regretted by all lovers of humanity. That it has been caused by the emancipation, I by no means admit. But suppose you admit that the free negroes of the Island of Jamaica are in a condition of distress unparalleled by that of any people on the face of the earth; what does that prove? It does not tend to prove that we ought to acquire Cuba. If it proves anything, it proves that we ought to acquire Jamaica, and right that wrong, if such it be. Why do not the Senator from Louisiana and his distinguished colleague propose that we should restore the blessings of slavery by the acquisition of Jamaica? Why not go to Great Britain, and say to her, "You have Africanized the Island of Jamaica; you have imperiled our institutions, and, therefore, from necessity, for the sake of self-defence, we must obtain from you that island; if you do not sell it to us, you shall to no other nation; we will give you such a sum as we think proper; your national debt is immense; you are bankrupt; sell it to us or we will wrest it from you." The reason why that is not said, is obvious, and I need not state it. England may abolish slavery in all her territories; and you will never hear either of the Senators from Louisiana say to her, "You are imperiling our institutions by so doing!" No, sir; they will submit; they have submitted, either because they think it does not imperil their institutions, or for some other reason satisfactory to themselves. There is no danger that this country will ever be involved in war because Great Britain has seen fit to Africanize Jamaica. There is no danger that you will ever present to her the considerations which you are presenting to Spain. Such language as has been used in this report, will never be used towards Great Britain, for reasons which I think are quite obvious.

Then, if this argument proves anything, it proves that we ought to take the Island of Jamaica. It does not tend at all to prove that we ought to take the Island of Cuba; because Cuba is not on the eve of emancipation; there is no project, as I understand, for the emancipation of the slaves there. The Senator from Louisiana informs us that the blacks of the Island of Jamaica are in the miserable condition to which I have alluded. If it were a subject that I wished to pursue, I might show him that the blacks on that island, although in the condition described by him, are not alone in misery; that the whole race are more or less in a suffering condition all over the world. Go to

Cuba, where slavery exists, which the Senator has argued, is a great blessing to the blacks; I have here a work which describes the condition of the slaves on the sugar plantations in Cuba. I do not now wish to detain the Senate with it; but I could show that, if emancipation in Jamaica has caused great distress among the blacks, slavery in Cuba has overwhelmed the black race in distress indescribable.

Mr. BENJAMIN. I do not desire to interrupt the Senator's speech; but I will suggest that if he prove that, he follows out the line of my argument precisely. I stated that the negro slaves, under the Cuban system of slave labor, were exterminated in every generation.

Mr. DIXON. I know very well that the Senator argued that their condition would be improved by annexation to the United States, and I shall attempt hereafter to show that that will not be the case. I was barely saying now, that if the free blacks of Jamaica are great sufferers, if their condition is such as has been described—I might show the same thing as regards the slaves in Cuba, and I dare say, if I were to follow it up, the slaves everywhere else in the world. I think it could be shown that a want of ventilation, and every other physical evil to which the Senator alluded in that connection, exists in this very city of Washington, and in many other portions of the country; but I do not wish to follow out that line of remark in this stage of my argument.

Now, sir, how would you improve the condition of the slaves in Cuba by annexation to this country? That, it is true, is one of the objects which the Senator from Louisiana told us he had in view in the acquisition; but how will he do it? I suppose the Senator would say that, by increasing the value of the slaves which would result from the abandonment of the slave-trade, the interest of the owners would require of them to afford to the slaves better treatment than they now receive, and that is probably what he means when he says the advantage of American institutions would be extended there. I suppose his idea is that slavery would exist there as it does here, and that self-interest here induces owners to treat their slaves well, in consequence of the great value of their property. His great means of accomplishing the object of the improvement of the condition of the slave is by affecting the interest of the owner. This is to be done by abolishing the slave-trade with Cuba, by making the slave more valuable, by introducing our system of slavery.

I think, however, that the Senator from Vermont was entirely right, when he argued to the Senate that the acquisition of Cuba would not tend to the abolition of the slave-trade. In the first place, it would seem very strange if increasing the value of the slaves, and thus increasing the inducement to import them, would tend to suppress the slave-trade. We know that if you raise the price of slaves in Cuba from \$500 to \$1,500, you treble the motive which already leads to their illegal importation at every hazard.

But, sir, how will you, by the acquisition of Cuba, suppress the slave-trade? What are you doing now? The British Government have a portion of their fleet on the coast of Cuba for the suppression of the African slave-trade. Our treaty with Great Britain requires



us to keep some portion of our fleet on the coast of Africa, for the same purpose. There is, besides, in the island, a mixed commission, partly British and partly Spanish, the object of which is to try offenders against the laws prohibiting the slave-trade. Acquire Cuba, annex it to this country, and the British fleet must leave; we will not brook the presence of British men-of-war on that coast any more than we would on the coast of Georgia or Florida. The British fleet must then be removed. I take it to be an undeniable fact, that a very large portion of the slave-trade is now carried on against the efforts of the British and the American Governments, by the abuse of the American flag. I find that in 1838, nineteen vessels laden with slaves from Africa, came into Havana under the American flag. One, in particular, the *Venus*, attracted great attention, and landed its cargo of Africans under this protection. When the mixed commission notified our consul, then Mr. Trist, of this transaction, and called his attention to it, and requested him to use the authority of this Government, what position did he take? Mr. Trist said it was an interference with the independence of our Government for that commission to dare to call his attention to that subject. We had then been independent some sixty years, and it does seem to me to be about time for us to cease our sensitiveness on the subject of our independence. I do not find that Great Britain and France, and other nations, are sensitive lest they should not be considered independent nations; but our consul said we could not take notice of this call on us to examine the subject, because it was a violation of our independence. The American ship to which I allude, landed eight hundred and fifty slaves in the face of our consul. She started from the coast of Africa with eleven hundred and fifty, and landed eight hundred and fifty alive in Cuba.

Very soon after, a French ship came in loaded with eight hundred slaves, and the mixed commission called the attention of the French consul to the subject. Had he any fears in regard to the independence of France being violated by that notice being given to him? Not at all. He called the attention of the Prince De Joinville, who was there in command of one of the vessels of France, and a serious and earnest attempt was made, which I am sorry to say was unsuccessful, to arrest the owners of the slave ship. I say, then, that this trade is carried on now under the American flag; and what are we doing? We will not permit any search of an American vessel. There is no subject upon which we are so sensitive as the right of search. I confess that I think it has been carried to a great extreme. I understand the doctrine to be that an avowed slaver, carrying at its mast-head the American flag, is safe against the visitation and search of a British ship. That, I believe, is the modern doctrine, and we have driven Great Britain to accept it. I am not in favor of it. I think it is going too far; but that is the prevailing doctrine. Now, I do not suppose the British Government would attempt to visit any acknowledged, known slaver, or interfere with her in any manner whatever, although loaded down with African slaves, if the American flag, without right, wrongfully desecrated and abused, was float-

ing at her mast-head; and if, to-day, information was to come to us that the British Government had inferred with such a vessel, I think you would find southern Senators on this floor ready to declare war on the instant.

If such is our feeling, if our flag is desecrated in that manner; if it is desecrated with our consent and connivance—for how else can you consider it?—how can you expect the slave-trade to stop? Here is our flag, the most glorious on the face of the earth, which is an entire protection to the slave-trade, anywhere on the broad ocean. As I understand our doctrine in regard to the right of search, the American flag anywhere protects the slave-trader, and I do not wonder that the trade goes on. I do not see how it can be considered that this Government, taking this ground, is desirous to check the slave-trade. But it is said the trade never has existed with any portion of our own country. I agree that it has not, until recently, and there are several reasons for that. The people of the South do not take the ground that the slave-trade is against humanity; I do not recollect that I have ever known that argument to be made in the South. I believe, as a general thing, the ground taken by the South is, that the condition of the native wild Africans, on the shores of Africa, is improved, by being brought into this country and subjected to slavery.

Then, if the slave trade is to be stopped by the acquisition of Cuba, it is not to be done from humane considerations; it is to be done because the interest of the parties requires it. I think that is the principal reason why the trade has not been carried on with our southern States. But look at the recent case of the *Wanderer*. You find there a cargo of slaves brought into the southern country. You find that, for a long time, one of the distinguished judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, sitting in the circuit court, could not succeed in impaneling a grand jury who would find a true bill of indictment for the offense. I think that distinguished judge would have been very glad to bring these malefactors to justice; but the grand jury would not find a bill. I understood, recently, from the Senator from South Carolina, that, in another portion of that State a bill has been found. But where are the Africans who were imported? It is said they cannot be found; they cannot be identified. Suppose a cargo of fugitive slaves had been restored, under the fugitive slave law, and brought into a port in Georgia or South Carolina: do you think they could not have been identified? Is there any difficulty in identifying slaves, if there is a desire to identify them? The fact is, these Africans were thrown into the masses of the black population; mingled up with them; and, it seems to me, by the consent, and the connivance, of the southern people. It is useless to say to me that they do not know where these slaves are. They do know where they are; they can produce them if they will. Why they do not, is for them to answer. I have no doubt they will easily identify a cargo of five hundred fugitive slaves, and visit them with condign punishment. They are well known; but they are not so well marked, not half so distinguishable, as Africans freshly imported from the coast of Africa.

I say, then, that is a pretext. They can be known; they are known.

At this day, they are laboring on the fields of the southern country, perfectly well known to be imported slaves from Africa. The southern people say it betters their condition; but if you desire to check the slave-trade, you can do it. It is a bare question for the southern people to decide. I do not think the northern people can check it; I do not see very well how we can prevent it. I think the citizens of the South, of Georgia, of South Carolina, and Virginia, must decide for themselves, if they desire to restore the slave-trade. I do not see how this Government can prevent it. At any rate, it would test the powers of the Government to do it. I do not believe the present Administration would make the attempt, though I do not mean to say they are not doing their duty, so far as the punishment of the persons connected with that ship are concerned. I have been told they were. I have been told that process was now being pursued. I have no doubt that the judge, to whom I have alluded, did his whole duty on the subject.

It seems you cannot identify the slaves brought in the Wanderer. Now, suppose you annex Cuba to this country: I beg to know how you will identify the slaves brought into Cuba? I wish to know if you will desire to abolish the slave-trade there, more than in your present country? Every possible motive you have now to encourage it, will exist in a tenfold stronger degree than at present. The price of slaves will perhaps be doubled; it will certainly be increased to a great extent, in consequence of the demand there existing to fill the places of those slaves who, we are told, are no longer to be brought from Africa to the Island of Cuba. If you stop the African trade, then, of course, you must have it from this country. I am free to say that if the slave-trade must continue with the Island of Cuba, and the question is presented to me whether it shall be with this country or with Africa, I should hesitate very much, before I should say that I would prefer it to go on from this country. Senators say the slave-trade will stop as relates to Africa, and commence as relates to this country; that you are to take your slaves from the United States into the Island of Cuba. Now, without indulging in any incendiary remarks in regard to the right of the slaves of this country, I think I may be justified in saying that they have some claim on us. They are faithful, they are industrious, they are docile; they are now performing their duties all over your southern fields, knowing very little of what is going on here. I undertake to say that if this black population, now cultivating your fields, knew that this proposition was here, all their interests would be awakened. If they supposed the question was whether the slave-trade should cease from Africa and should commence from this country; that the question was, whether Cuba should be supplied with slaves from there or from here, they would be listening with all the attention they could give; and if they found that the Congress of the United States were about to pass a law, which would lead to the transportation of themselves, or their children, to Cuba, I say to you that, from that whole black race, there would ascend to Heaven a more piteous cry than ever pierced the skies.

They have rights here, and we ought to consider them. Will you

supply the labor of Cuba by slaves born, not in Africa, but in this country? Shall they be subjected to that horror? I will not attempt to describe it. Southern Senators know better than I do, how these Africans feel when they are carried to the Red river. They know what sort of punishment it is for certain portions of the African race, now held as slaves in this country, when they are transported from the homes to which they are as much attached as we are to our own, growing there, perhaps, with a stronger root than we do, with stronger social feelings, with warmer affections, with local feelings as ardent as our. You know, Senators from the South, how these slaves feel when they are transported to another country; and you know perfectly well what a state of things would exist if they were liable to be transported to Cuba. I do not wish to dwell on it; but I say, to-day, my preference is, if Cuba is to be supplied with slaves from any other country than itself, that it should not be from this country. I would stand here and give my vote and my voice, in support of the claims of the colored men of the South. The slave-trade is sufficiently horrible in Africa; but for that we are not wholly responsible; let it never be carried on from this country.

I do not believe, then, that the slave-trade would be in any sense checked by the annexation of Cuba to this country. I acknowledge that that has been in the minds of many; and it was, at one time, in my own mind, an argument in favor of the acquisition of Cuba. Before I examined it, I had a vague idea that it might tend to abolish the slave-trade; but, on examination, I think, on the contrary, it would remove obstacles now in the way of the trade.

But, sir, the Senator from Louisiana informs us, that unless we can perpetuate slavery in the Island of Cuba, the civilized world must give up the use of tropical productions to a great extent. He says tropical productions cannot be produced to an extent commensurate with the wants of the world, without compulsory labor in Cuba. I think it can be shown that the Senator is mistaken. I have no idea that, if Cuba was to-day stricken from the face of the globe; if she was where the Spanish say they would rather she should be, than come into our power—at the bottom of the ocean—I have not the slightest idea that the supply of tropical productions, especially sugar, would be wanting to the world. In the first place, let us see whether it be true, that sugar is only raised by slave labor, and in slave countries.

I understood the Senator from Florida, this morning, to say that it could not be raised by white labor; but perhaps I misunderstood him. I have before me a book of travels in Cuba and Porto Rico, by David Turnbull, published in 1840, from which I desire to read a few extracts on this subject, as to whether the world is dependent on compulsory labor in Cuba, or on the existence of Cuba at all, for its supply of tropical productions. He says:

"The most remarkable fact connected with the history and the present state of Porto Rico, is that the fields are cultivated and sugar manufactured by the hands of white men under a tropical sun. It is very possible that this might never have occurred had not the island been treated as a penal settlement at an early period of its history. The convicts themselves were condemned to hard labor as a part of their punishment; and when the term of their sentence expired, they were compelled to continue it in order to obtain the means of subsistence."

He says further:

"The large population of Barbadoes, the practice which formerly obtained there of inducing white settlers, of an humble class, to emigrate by an offer of small grants of land, and the law which compelled the planter to maintain on his estate a fixed proportion of white persons, compared with the number of his slaves, have had the effect of reducing a considerable number of white persons in that island to the rank of hired laborers; and there, also, I have seen them engaged in digging can holes, which, I believe, is considered the severest labor to which the negro is exposed. It is nevertheless true, that, for a white man to labor in the field, is regarded in Barbadoes as a serious degradation. This, however, is by no means the case in Porto Rico, where inveterate usage has reconciled the white laborer to the necessity of working, without a murmur, in the same field with his colored brethren, of every variety of complexion, and even with slaves."

The question whether tropical productions, sugar, coffee, &c., in Cuba, depended on compulsory labor, was also discussed at great length at Havana, some years ago; and a large portion of the intelligent people of the island came to the conclusion that it might be better done in another manner. This writer says, in the same book above quoted:

"The question has therefore arisen, and has ever been proposed for public discussion in the 'Transactions of the Royal Patriotic Society of the Havana,' whether sugar can be successfully cultivated and manufactured in the island without the aid of compulsory labor. It was not easy, and might not have been prudent, for the Colonial Government to put the veto of censorship in a discussion which could not be supposed to originate in any sinister consideration; and it has therefore been suffered to proceed without official interference."

In some States of the Union, probably a veto would have been put on it; but it was not done in Havana:

"In the mean time, it is no small gain for the cause of humanity, that a community so deeply committed to the trade with Africa, and hitherto so entirely dependent on the continuance of slavery, should become familiarized with such topics of discussion, and should habituate themselves to the contemplation of another state of things."

"In the very outset of this discussion, it is laid down as an incontrovertible principle, that the labor of a single freeman, who works voluntarily for his own interest, is at least equivalent to all that can be extracted from any two of the most robust of the African race."

"The mode of proceeding proposed for the attainment of their object by the economists of Cuba throws more light than could be easily obtained through any other channel on the moral, intellectual, and physical condition of the island. Although they have before them the example of the sister island of Porto Rico, whose staple productions of sugar and coffee have long been successfully cultivated by the white descendants of the original colonists; and although Cuba contains a greater number of white inhabitants than all the other islands of the Archipelago together; it is only by the importation of white laborers from the Canaries, that the proposed object is to be attained."

"Nay, while it is admitted that the whole of the field-labor can be sufficiently performed by white men, it is held that negro assistance is necessary in the interior of the Ingenio. This necessity is assumed, partly from the custom, invariable in Cuba, and hence thought indispensable, of keeping the mill and the boilers incessantly at work from the commencement of the crop season till the last of the canes are cut down; and partly, also, from a very natural mistake, that a negro can support, better than a white man, a high artificial, as well as a high natural, temperature. The reverse has been completely demonstrated on board the British Government steamers on duty within the tropics, where it was for some time supposed that negro stokers could be employed more advantageously and at less risk to their health than to that of the white men long accustomed to the duty in a colder climate."

"The experience of several years has completely proved that an African constitution is not so well suited as that of a European to withstand the heat of the furnace, or, rather, the frequent alternations of heat and cold to which the stoker of a steamboat, and the fireman and boilerman of an ingenio (or engine) are equally exposed. When it is found that the fires can be extinguished, and the boilers suffered to cool during the night, without disadvantage, and that the heat of the furnace is, comparatively, not so detrimental to the white man as to the negro, some change will doubtless take place in the views of

the patriots and philanthropists of Cuba, as to the necessity of employing negroes—either in a state of slavery or freedom—in the interior of the sugar-houses. This matter is better understood in the English islands, where the white man's chief danger is supposed to consist in application to any active employment under a vertical sun.

"The prize essay of Don Pedro José Morillas, which was crowned by the Royal Patriotic Society with the patent of *socio de merito*, contains many interesting suggestions as to the substitution of the labor of white freemen for that of negro slaves. He contends that the extreme cheapness of African labor is the sole cause why the white inhabitants of the West Indies have, by the mere disuse and want of exercise, lost a large proportion of their physical force. He denies, however, that the debility, arising from inaction, is so general as it is so commonly supposed to be. The young men, born and bred in the interior districts of the island, are so well formed and robust as to be able to withstand the extreme heat of the dog days and the cold of winter, which is not unknown in Cuba, with no other covering but the light linen vest which they wear all the year round. From sun to sun these men will make a journey of twenty leagues, on foot, without being worn out by the heat, or impeded by the suddenly swollen rivers, and with no encouragement to proceed but their cup of coffee and their cigar. Their dress is a linen shirt and pantaloons, a straw hat, and shoes of the untanned leather of the country. They carry, besides, a hammock and a single change of dress, which, with a sword and a long knife at their girdle, complete their equipment. When surprised by nightfall, they enter the nearest thicket and hang their hammock between two trees, where, after smoking their cigar, they sleep soundly till awakened by the song of birds, the cry of wild animals, and other sounds which serve, in a thinly peopled country, to intimate the approach of day. Yet these men show no signs of weakness, and live to a good old age. On such grounds, Señor Morillas concludes that the (white) young men of the Havana need nothing but the habitual exercise of their muscular powers to enable them to rival, in activity, the *Peon de tierra dentro*."

"It is the presence of slavery which, in the Island of Cuba, as in every other country where it exists, throws every sort of personal exertion into discredit. Because labor is the lot of slavery, the pride of the freeman is alarmed lest the line of demarkation should not be broad enough between him and the slave; and he therefore abstains from working altogether."

"If the sun of the tropics be less friendly to physical exertion than the climate of the temperate zones, it affords at least some compensation by fertilizing the soil and multiplying the crops which may be reaped from it. It is, moreover, a well-known fact, that, in the Island of Cuba, men of color are very rarely employed in the work of cutting down the timber; and yet it will readily be admitted that, to fell with a hatchet a full-grown mahogany tree, is a task as arduous as most of those to which the ordinary field laborer is opposed. In some districts of the island, the Isleño from the Canaries, and the Gallego from the north of Spain, may be seen bent down at this employment from the dawn of day till sunset, without experiencing any bad consequences from it. The smiths and the carpenters of the island are, in like manner, almost all white men; but although it is not uncommon in Europe for a soldier to sink on the march, a similar failure, if we may believe the best informed inhabitants, is seldom heard of, either among the troops or the white tradesmen of Cuba."

"Compare the labor of cutting down the *cnobas*, the *chicharrones*, and the *quiebra-hachas*, literally the break-hatchets of the country, or the less laborious employment of the carpenter at his bench, or the smith at his anvil, with the planting and cutting down of the sugar-cane, and you will probably find that the balance is greatly in favor of an employment on which disgrace and discredit have been thrown by the exclusive application to it of the labor of slaves. Sugar, it has been seen, can be cultivated successfully by white men in Porto Rico; and there is nothing in the climate of Porto Rico to distinguish it from that of the islands in its neighborhood."

The truth is, that sugar and other tropical productions produced by slave labor, are produced at a very great waste. Scientific improvements, new modes of manufacture, are introduced where free white labor prevails, as is seen in France and Germany, and as alluded to in an article to which I desire soon to call attention. Now, sir, I say that when you consider the sufferings of the black race, so powerfully and eloquently depicted by the Senator from Louisiana, in Cuba, in the manufacture of sugar, almost any man of ordinary humanity would say that if sugar could not be produced in any other manner, the

human race had far better abandon its use; the luxury and comfort gained from sugar would not compensate, in the mind of any man of humanity, not to speak of an American Senator, for the indescribable suffering which, the Senator from Louisiana informs us, in the course of a few years, actually destroys the whole black race in Cuba. That is too expensive. No man of humanity could desire to continue the manufacture of sugar in such a manner. Why, sir, there is, in the manufacture of sugar, a process of filtration through animal carbon—which is bone reduced to a carbonaceous substance by calcination in a closed vessel. That process is found to be a very useful improvement, but it could not for a while be carried out, because of the very great expense; the calcined bones being very soon rendered useless; until there was discovered what was called, technically, a mode of *revivification*, by which the animal carbon could be restored to its former value. But when you use the human sinew, and human muscle, and human bone in this way, there is no revivification; you cannot restore them; you destroy the whole race in less than one generation, and are obliged to supply the places of the dead from the coast of Africa. Any man of ordinary humanity would say, the whole world had better abandon the use of such a luxury than to attain it at such a price. That, however, is not necessary; our philanthropy is driven to no such point. If the Island of Cuba were to-day annihilated, the manufacture of sugar would scarcely be diminished after the lapse of a few years.

I have before me an article in De Bow's Review, written, I think, by the Senator from Louisiana. I judge so partly from its style, and partly because it bears all the marks of his ability, and is signed with his initials—J. P. B. I have not asked the Senator whether he wrote it; but I believe he did. [Mr. BENJAMIN assented.] In this article, he inform us of the improvements in the machinery and modes of manufacture adopted in France, and resulting from free labor. The Senator himself states enough to justify me in saying that, if Cuba were out of existence, this country and the world would have, from other sources, a sufficient supply of sugar, and in a very short time. He says:

"The extent to which the production of sugar can be carried in Louisiana is appreciated but by few; but those who reflect on the subject, and who feel an interest in all that concerns the prosperity of our State, foresee, with exultation, the day not far distant, when boundless tracts, now covered by the primeval forest, shall team with plenteous harvests of the cane; when nearly every plantation shall be a manufactory of refined sugar, supplying not only the wants of our own country, but forming a large item in our annual exports; when, in a word, the industry and enterprise of our population shall succeed in developing, to their full extent, the resources which a bounteous Providence has lavished on this favored land."—*De Bow's Review*, vol. 2, pages 344, 345.

Ought we, then, to perpetuate slavery in Cuba, under such a terrible state of things, that, according to the Senator's own showing, almost the entire civilized world would rather abandon the use of sugar, could it be produced in no other way, and when, too, he tells us that sugar enough can be raised under the patriarchal system that prevails in Louisiana? I will not speak now of white labor; I will not speak of free labor; I will not speak of the manner in which sugar is raised

in other free countries; but the Senator informs us that the institution, as it now exists in Louisiana, can not only supply the wants of Louisiana and of this country, but supply a large annual export to the rest of the world. Then, we may allow Cuba to pursue its own course; we may allow the cultivation of tropical products to be abandoned there, if the world will not suffer in consequence. I find, also, in this article, that the Senator intimates that it might be advantageous to have some white people, who know a little more than the blacks, to carry on the manufacture of sugar. In fact, the whole tenor of his argument shows that for the cultivation of sugar, you require intelligent, cultivated, skillful, and I might almost say free labor. It is very true, that it is claimed by many there is a portion of the work that cannot very well be accomplished by white labor; but when you take the whole manufacture together, you find skill and ingenuity necessary.

There are other modes in which sugar can be raised. How is sugar produced in France? You would suppose, from hearing the Senator from Louisiana, that if Cuba were out of the way, we should actually suffer for want of this luxury. There was a time, when, under the colonial system of Great Britain, under the system she pursued of cutting off all trade with France, that country was deprived entirely of the use of sugar. Her trade with the sugar-growing countries was entirely destroyed; and what resource did Napoleon adopt? He at once introduced the manufacture of sugar from the beet root, and it has grown now to be one of the greatest interests in Europe, and is pursued extensively in France, Germany, Russia, and Poland. All over Europe the people are supplied with sugar, in a great measure, from their own labor. It would be so in a short time here, if it were not true that Louisiana is able to supply the world; and we have been willing to give them all the protection they have asked.

It seems, then, that this argument addressed to the physical comfort of the people of this country, that they need to acquire Cuba for the sake of increasing their luxuries to this extent, is entirely fallacious. If you wish to cheapen sugar, there is a direct mode of doing it—just strike off your duty. Will the Senator from Louisiana propose to do that? I think he will find no very great objections to it on this side of the House. That is an effectual mode by which sugar may be cheapened; but it is entirely fallacious to argue that it is necessary, in order to supply the people of this country with this luxury, that we should perpetuate compulsory labor in Cuba. There is no such necessity; if there were, our people would never consent that it should be done through their responsibility. It is too high a price to pay.

Having attempted to dispose of that portion of the subject, I now come to another branch. I will state another objection which, it seems to me, may be made with great force to the present acquisition of Cuba, supposing that it might be acquired in the manner pointed out by this bill. I allude to the character, the habits, and the peculiarities of the people inhabiting that island. What do we propose to do? We do not propose to take them as a colony, to be governed by a pro-consul, by a viceroy. We do not propose to take them in any other

manner than as one or more sovereign States of this Union; and, when we do so, we must guaranty to them republican institutions, and, for the first time in all our history, we shall find the duty of guarantying republican institutions a very arduous work. Are these people fit to come into our Government as equals? What makes a people fit for free government? I take it that free institutions, such institutions as ours, are not a cause, but an effect. They are produced by the character of the people previously; they do not create the people. Our people, with the character they already possess, created our institutions. Our institutions did not create the people. They practiced self-government long before those self-evident truths were pronounced by Mr. Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence. That was no new discovery. The State of Connecticut, the State of Massachusetts, and other States, were perfectly well prepared by long practice, which had continued from generation to generation, and had become hereditary, for free institutions; and, at this very day, if you were to shatter this Union into its original elements, the State of Connecticut, the State of Massachusetts, and, perhaps, every other State, could go on with its government precisely as it now does, because they are all practiced in self-government. The sovereignty which I, in part, represent, went on for more than one hundred years before the Revolution, and has now been practicing self-government for two hundred years; and never had a Governor who was not chosen by itself. We never had a royal Governor. Such were the people who established our institutions. The people made the institutions, not the institutions the people. Now, let us look at these people of Cuba. What kind of institutions can they establish or sustain? Mr. Clay, in his first letter on this subject, to which I allude, gives his opinion in regard to their fitness for self-government. He says:

"The population of the islands is incompetent at present, from its composition and its amount, to maintain self-government."

That was the opinion of Mr. Clay, in 1825. Have they improved since? I doubt it. The difficulty is in the race. All southern Senators claim that the black portion of that population are unfit for self-government, and they constitute a large proportion. How is it with the whites? They are not of our race. They are of a race which has never yet succeeded with self-government. In considering this subject, a comparison has been sometimes made with the annexation of Florida and Louisiana. In Louisiana there were scarcely any people; in Florida there were not many; and at this very day, they send no Spaniards here to represent them in the Senate. They send men with good Anglo-Saxon names, and with good Saxon blood running in their veins. Those people never were a foreign people. That was not the annexation of a foreign country, although it has been spoken of sometimes as if it were. It was the annexation, for the most part, of virgin soil, not peopled; and, therefore, from that no analogy can be drawn.

But what are these people? I have here a short description of their character, to show you that they are totally unfit to come into the Union to-day as citizens of a republican government. They are more

unfit than any nation of Europe; far more so than Spain at this moment. We suppose that certain notions of individual equality are necessary to prepare a people for self-government. They should exist beforehand, as they did exist here in the early settlement of our country. Notions of individual liberty and personal freedom, existed long before the Declaration of Independence. Is there anything of that kind in the Island of Cuba? Let us see what the state of society is there. I read from the same book to which I before referred, Turnbull's Cuba, page 49:

"The distinction of ranks among the various classes of society is as carefully kept up in Cuba as in the most aristocratic countries in the Old World. The first includes the resident grandees of Spain, of whom there are about thirty; the Titulos of Castile, resembling as nearly as possible the anomalous rank of Baronet of England; and the Hacendados, or landed gentry of this island. Next after them come the Empleados, or civil functionaries in the public offices, of whom, at the Havana alone, there are said to be one thousand; and on the same level with these gentlemen may be placed the officers of the army and navy. The merchants, Spanish, creole, or foreign, hold only the third place in the order of precedency. After them come their clerks, French, English, North American, or German; such of them as come from Spain, being chiefly *Gaditanos*. Retail merchants and shopkeepers hold a still lower station; they come in general from the Canaries, Catalonia, Biscay, or North America. The *Gallegos*, like our own Irish laborers, occupy the lowest place in the social scale; the colored and negro race being tabooed altogether. The emigrants from old Spain and the Canaries, but especially the Catalans and Gallegos, with their descendants, may be considered a permanent addition to the population; but foreigners, who generally come as clerks and depart as merchants, take root, but rarely."

That is the state of society in Cuba at this day. Ranks are as well settled and established there as they are in any country of Europe. There is no notion of personal equality there. The great self-evident truth "that all men are created equal" has never been discovered there. Do you suppose you can force it on them by bringing them into this country? Surely not in one generation. But the Senator from Louisiana, in his report, gives us rather a different picture of the state of the island in that respect. He says:

"The feeling of caste or race is as marked in Cuba as in the United States. The white creole is as free from all taint of African blood as the descendant of the Goth on the plains of Castile. There is a numerous white peasantry, brave, robust, sober, and honest; not yet, perhaps, prepared intelligently to discharge all the duties of the citizen of a free republic, but who, from his organization, physical and mental, is capable of being elevated by culture to the same level with the educated Cubans, who, as a class, are as refined, well-informed, and fitted for self-government as men of any class of any nation can be who have not inhaled with their breath the atmosphere of freedom."

"Many of them, accompanied by their families, are to be met with every summer at our cities and watering places, observing and appreciating the working of our form of government, and its marvelous results; many seeking, until the arrival of more auspicious days, an asylum from the oppression that has driven them from their homes; while hundreds of their youths in our schools and colleges are acquiring our language, and fitting themselves hereafter, it is to be hoped at no distant day, to play a distinguished part in their own legislative halls, or in the councils of the nation."

I have had the honor of seeing some of those distinguished men, and, no doubt, they are men of very high characters; but they are the thirty grandees who are described in the book from which I read. I have seen them at a respectful distance, at the watering places alluded to by the honorable Senator; and while their behavior has certainly been gentlemanly and proper, I could never see that their studies were much occupied in "observing and appreciating the working of our form of government," and studying its principles and details.

in order to reduce it to practice in their own country. That picture drawn by the Senator from Louisiana is, by far, too flattering to the people of Cuba, as regards their fitness for self-government.

Now, I shall assume that the people of Cuba are very similar to the Spanish people. In point of fact they are of Spanish descent, Spanish blood, and Spanish culture. They are no better than the people of Spain to-day. I have before me a book, written by a very eminent scholar and gentleman, which is a standard work, I think, upon the subject of the character of the people of Spain. I know it was so, some years ago, and I do not know of anything on the subject that has been written better since. It is entitled, "A year in Spain, by a young American, A. Slidell Mackenzie." He gives us his views on the subject of the fitness of the Spanish people for self-government. He says :

"Never have those much abused words, liberty and civilization, been so often invoked in the cause of persecution and murder, as in the Spain of our day. The liberals have far outstripped the fanatics who preceded them, in the perpetration of injustice and inhumanity. They have been more fanatical than the fanatics themselves, and fanatical against religion; clemency is usually found to accompany power; but the Spanish liberals have all the ferocity of weakness and vacillation. The sacredness of life, liberty, and property, is equally disregarded by them. If they let the tongues of the multitude wag more freely than before, still it is only after one fashion. It was the liberals of Spain who first began the slaughter of prisoners in cold blood, and in the name of civilization; it was they who first denied to the gentler sex its immunities."

He sums up in these words :

"The beauty of a Government is not wholly intrinsic. It consists of its adaptability to the peculiar condition, habits, and manners of the people who live under it. Our form of Government is beautiful, not merely in itself, but because it has strong foundations in our national character, in the love of order and sense of probity bequeathed to us by our British ancestors, in the condition of property, in the habits of self-government, as old as the era of our origin as colonies, and in universal intelligence, fostering and fostered by the system under which we live. The same Government, excellent and beautiful, as it is admitted to be, without other modification than occurred in translating the document which embodied its precepts from one language into another, has been adopted by Mexico and other Spanish American States, prematurely severed by revolution from their parent State. What have been the consequences? Have they been order, security of life and property, the supremacy of the law, the rapid development of the national resources? Not at all. They have been anarchy one day, followed by military despotism the next, and anarchy and military despotism again, until the world has ceased to be attentive to the oft-repeated intelligence of wars and revolutions. And so it would be with Spain, with a form of government borrowed from England."

So it would be with Cuba, with a form of government borrowed from this country. The difficulty with Mexico and the nations of South America, who have tried this experiment, has been in the character of the race. I doubt whether the race is capable of self-government. You see what Mr. Clay thought of the power of those Governments in the first instance. He thought Columbia and Mexico were so powerful that we should make a treaty with them to guaranty Cuba to Spain against all the world. Now they make a new government in Mexico as often as the Democratic party in this country makes a new platform. A new constitution is made there quite as frequently. Suppose you attempt to establish a republican government in Cuba; what will be the result? Both the Senators from Louisiana, and others seem to think you have only to carry our institutions there, and that you will have a republican form of govern-

ment at once. I say to you you will find it necessary to enforce it; you will find it necessary to guaranty and defend it, and it will require all the efforts of your Government to do it. You never can establish it in spirit, though you may do it in form. The bribery and corruption that prevail there now will prevail in their elections. You will have worse than violent revolutions, you will have deep-seated corruption at the foundation of all your attempts to establish republicanism, and in that way you may throw disgrace over the very name. I do not think it best for us to force that people, in their present condition, to come under our form of government. It would be no blessing to them, and certainly would be none to us.

But, sir, there is another consideration arising out of the enormous expense proposed. I do not speak now of the \$150,000,000, or more, to be paid for the island; because that would be a small proportion of the ultimate expense. But suppose it cost that sum: there is the interest on that money; then, there is the expense of sustaining and establishing a government in Cuba. The Spaniards find it necessary to keep twenty-five or thirty thousand troops there for some purpose. It certainly is not to prevent the slave-trade. I doubt very much whether it is entirely to keep down the creoles. I am afraid that it is to keep down the blacks. There are some three or four hundred thousand free blacks there to-day; and I am apprehensive that, if the troops were removed, you would find repeated the scenes which have been described by the Senator from Florida this morning. But, suppose we could get along with ten thousand troops: if they should cost us as much as our troops in this country do—and probably they would cost quite as much, if not more—there would be an expense of \$10,000,000 a year. That, added to your other expenses, would make over twenty million dollars a year. If you follow this measure out, in all its ramifications, you will find that the expenses of the Government will be increased in every imaginable degree. When I say this, I do not speak merely of the bare expenditure of the money. That is an evil, but is comparatively a small consideration. You cannot pay out large sums of money from the Government without producing deep-seated corruption. That is the great danger. You destroy, subvert, the whole character of your republican institutions. There is no Senator here, who does not know perfectly well that every public and private vice follows in the train of prodigality. I am surprised when I see southern gentlemen, who are the advocates of economy, not for the bare sake of money-saving, but because they wish to preserve our Government in its original purity; Senators who claim to have somewhat of the feeling of the Madisonian era, of the Jeffersonian era, and even of the Washingtonian era, now willing to submit this Government to the trial of such a vast increase of its patronage and its expenditure. If there is anything from which we have cause to fear, it is from the vastly-increasing amount of the patronage and expenditure of the General Government. In extending our limits at home within the two oceans, we must necessarily extend these expenses; but, when we go abroad to take in a foreign country, of different habits and different races, and attempt to force on them re-

publican institutions, we cannot but cause a vastly increased expenditure; and the consequences which I have named will most certainly follow.

It is said that the people of the North ought to be in favor of the acquisition of Cuba, and the people of New England particularly, because it will extend their trade. I have to say for the people of my own State, that while they are desirous, so far as can properly be done, of extending all those advantages, they wish to reap no advantage by the extension of their trade, at the expense of the true principles of this Government. They claim to be no more patriotic than other States, but I do not think they can be influenced by this argument that their trade is to be extended, and that they ought, therefore, to consent to a proposition which violates the principles of our Government. They claim only to walk with equal steps, with other States, in the path of patriotism, but they do not desire to advance their material interests at the expense of principle. If they had any such desire, I think they might possibly do well to inquire, if they look at it merely in respect to the material advantage to be gained, whether they will receive any very great advantage by bringing into this Union four Senators, and eight Representatives at least, who will be, by position and by connection, opposed to all their dearest interests. I think they might very well consider that, if they were to regard the mere question of advantage.

The Senator from Florida closed his remarks by denying that it was or should be one of the great objects of our pursuit, to adorn and cultivate what we have. He argued that we ought, instead of that, to devote ourselves to pursuing some further acquisitions. I confess that I cannot agree with him in this sentiment. It is not long since we were told that we were to have an ocean-bound Republic; that we were to extend from ocean to ocean. The Senator from Illinois claimed to be the father of that doctrine, but it was originated many years before his day. The Romans had the same sentiment, "*Imperium oceano, famam qui terminet astris*;" which, if I were freely to translate it, so as to avoid a translation by my friend from New Hampshire, (Mr. HALE,) might be supposed to mean "our empire is bounded by the ocean, our glory by the stars"—and stripes added. Now you propose to go beyond this; to leave the idea of an ocean-bound Republic, and to go in search of foreign nations to be annexed to our own—and for what purpose? I have already indicated what seemed to me to be the great object, as given by the Senator from Louisiana, (Mr. BENJAMIN.) I have stated somewhat at length some of the objections which I have to the proposition to place thirty millions in the hands of the President by this bill. All of them seem to me important; but I will not conceal from you that the reason offered by the Senator from Louisiana for the present acquisition of Cuba, namely, the perpetuation there of African slavery, is to me the most ample reason for its rejection. I have no desire, and I believe the people I represent have no desire, to interfere with the institutions of the States of this Union. They will yield to them all their rights under the Constitution. But when you ask them, in addition to this, not only

to extend slavery into free territory, but to go beyond, and annex to this Union foreign nations and foreign people, for the purpose of perpetuating compulsory labor, they object most emphatically.

Do you ask why we are unwilling to extend slavery, to add more slave States to this Union? Not because we desire to gain, or to keep political power. It is for a higher and nobler reason. Slavery, wherever it exists, must, necessarily, disgrace and degrade free labor. The opinions expressed at the last session of Congress by an honorable Senator from South Carolina, on this floor, and by other Senators on other occasions, though severely animadverted upon at the time, are the logical result of the system of slave labor which prevails in our southern States; and which the Senator from Louisiana proposes by this bill to perpetuate in Cuba. They are the legitimate consequence of a policy permitting the existence of a servile class in a community, subjected to the actual ownership of those for whom they labor. In other words, a policy which permits capital to own the labor it employs, necessarily degrades all similar labor in which free men may be occupied. It is impossible for any manual labor to be considered honorable, while it is almost exclusively performed by slaves, and is thereby made a badge of slavery. This, sir, is one of the strongest objections existing in the minds of the people of the North to the extension of slavery into the Territories now free. The humanitarian objection has great weight with many, and, so far as it can be shown, that the condition of the slave will be rendered more intolerable by the extension of slavery, that objection alone would be sufficient. But aside from this, leaving out of view all considerations of humanity or justice, it is a sufficient objection to the introduction of slavery into any Territory, and to the introduction into our system of any foreign slaveholding State; that free labor is degraded by contact with slavery. It is in that point of view that I now wish to consider it. What is free labor in a community where slavery does not exist, and what is the same labor in a slaveholding State? Look at the condition of free labor in my own State, and the estimation in which it is there held. The population of that ancient commonwealth has not doubled in the eighty-three years which have passed since the Declaration of Independence. Yet, if the vast multitude of her industrious sons and daughters whom she has given to populate, and build up and enrich other States had remained within her borders, her soil could scarcely have sustained them. Every State in the great West owes her a debt of gratitude for the people she has supplied them. Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and those younger sisters, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Oregon, with Kansas, soon, I trust, to be a State, all count among their best citizens emigrants and the descendants of emigrants from Connecticut. The immense region occupied by those States has been made what it has now become, by the labor, the free, voluntary, compensated labor, of men who have carried with them the principles of the early settlers of New England, and their habits of unremitting industry. In no other way could that wilderness have been subdued, and made to blossom as the rose. The sentiments of our people have thus been scattered like seed; literally

disseminated far and wide, throughout the western States; and there they have taken root, and are flourishing in their matured growth. What is felt there, with regard to the character of free labor, is only the transplanted sentiment of the State from which they received so large a proportion of their population.

Now, sir, to say that the people of New England, and their descendants in the West, have always looked upon labor as honorable, is but feebly to express their sentiments. They consider idleness disgraceful. They know that to be idle is to be vicious. They know how this earth was designed by its maker to be subdued and cultivated by human hands—whose labor should be guided by a free human intellect. The vulgar, unphilosophical idea, that human labor, in whatever useful occupation it may be employed, is dishonorable, has no place among their opinions. With them, “work is worship.” This sentiment, sir, was at the foundation of their institutions. The idea of the dishonorable grade of manual labor—as compared with such occupations as war, hunting, marauding, and the like—came from the degradation of a class, in the ages when the masses of mankind were subjected, by conquest, to the rule of the few. The monarch and his companions were the masters; their subjects were menial laborers. Useful labor was, therefore, considered degrading. Yet this was not the result of education, or refinement, or high culture. On the contrary, in all ages, the most cultivated and refined nations have most respected labor. The name of the man who first wrought in brass and iron, was deemed worthy to be recorded in Holy Writ. The son of Jupiter is described by the Greek poets, toiling at the anvil, and forging the shield of Hercules, and the armor of Achilles. Not to the intellects of those early days—unsurpassed even yet in exquisite taste and lofty sentiment—who looked on life and its duties with the unclouded eyes of an age not yet corrupted by the accumulated follies and vices of thousands of years of progress, could any such idea present itself, as that the labor of the human hand, in any useful occupation is dishonorable. That notion was reserved for a later time; and had its origin, as it has and must have its support and advocacy, in a system of slavery. It is idle, therefore, to denounce those who, on this floor and elsewhere, have stigmatised manual laborers and operatives as slaves, however indignant we may justly be. The idea is not theirs: it is the idea of their system. Negro slavery does, in truth, not only enslave the African race, but, in every community where it exists, it also includes, in the chains of its bondage, the labor of the white man. For him I now speak. Let those Senators who consider what they call hireling labor degrading, visit the North, and a new vision will greet their eyes; intelligent, free-labor, with its ample rewards, its happy firesides—the homes of education and refinement; its hours of leisure, for the studies which fit freemen for their political duties; its means of educating the children, who, while the father bends in cheerful toil over the plow, the bench, or the anvil, are laying the foundations of that learning, which is preparing them to become your authors, your inventors, your teachers, your Governors, your Senators, and the Presidents of your Republic.

Such are the people, and such is free-labor, where slavery is unknown. Now, sir, what would be the same people, and what their labor, in a slaveholding State?

We, sir, object to the extension of slavery into any free territory. Southern men can see no reason for this, but a desire to invade and violate the rights of the South. It seems to them aggressive. Sir, their own philosophy ought to furnish them with a satisfactory reason for our opposition to the introduction of foreign slave States into our Union, and to the extension of slavery over territory now free. We do not need them to instruct us, that where slavery exists free labor is degraded, and dethroned from its natural, rightful position. Where a mechanic can be bought in the market overt, mechanics will rank as chattels, and will not be very likely to be selected to govern the State.

Mr. REID. I understand the Senator from Connecticut to take the position that slave labor degrades free labor in the States where slavery exists.

Mr. DIXON. Certainly I do; that is my position.

Mr. REID. The Senator from Connecticut has certainly given to me a piece of information that I did not expect to hear, for, so far as my observation extends in a State where slavery exists, it is not so regarded there; and I should think people of the region of the country where slavery exists, would have a better opportunity of judging of that fact than gentlemen who reside where slavery does not exist.

Mr. DIXON. I founded my remarks mainly on the opinions which have been expressed on this floor and elsewhere by southern Senators, in regard to the labor of operatives what they call hireling laborers at the North. They have been denounced in more than one place, not to speak of the debates on this floor, as virtually slaves. I have seen that in more than one speech delivered at the South, from which, if I had time, I might quote. Although this excites indignation in the minds of the people of the North, it is the legitimate result and consequence of the institutions of the South.

[Mr. REID renewed his denial.]

Mr. DIXON. I think the Senator will admit, that every species of labor which is performed for the most part by slaves, a servile class held as property by those for whom they labor, must become the badge of slavery, and be degraded. It may be that certain higher classes of labor not performed by slaves, which require more intelligence and more ingenuity, may be to a certain extent respected in that community; but I say, that where labor for the most part is performed by slaves, the legitimate logical result is that free labor will be held in the estimation in which the Senator from South Carolina stated at the last session, that he held it. I doubt very much whether the Senator from North Carolina would deny my assertion, that where mechanics are advertised for sale; where you can buy a me-



chanic in the market overt, mechanics will be held to be a subject and degraded class. Suppose you were to advertise a physician, a lawyer, or a minister, to be sold at the block, as you advertise a faithful, honest, industrious, intelligent mechanic, will the Senator say that the result, the tendency of that, would not be to degrade those professions? If a single instance would not do it, suppose it was the habit, the custom, the law, in any State, that lawyers, and ministers, and physicians should be held as property, and sold as personal chattels. I think, then, lawyers, and ministers, and physicians in that State would rank as chattels.

[Mr. REID repeated that in North Carolina labor was held in respect.]

Mr. DIXON. I am very glad to hear that, in the State of North Carolina, free labor is somewhat respected. I think it is very likely that it is more respected there, than in some other States where slavery is of a more malignant type. But I deny utterly—it is not true; every man who knows anything about it knows it is not true; it cannot be true—that free, intelligent labor stands on its rightful position, and occupies its true, natural ground in a State where capital owns labor. As a general rule, I pronounce it entirely impossible. It needs no argument; a bare statement of the fact is enough; and that is well understood by the free people of the North. They know perfectly well what the effect of this system must be.

Can you wonder, then, that our laborers, who are joint owners with you of our Territories, will not consent to their being subjected to slavery? Their free labor is their wealth, in exchange for which they intend to transfer some considerable portion of that territory to themselves. But what do you demand? That capital should there, as in your own slaveholding States, own labor. Can you expect labor to agree to that? I beg leave to say that the free labor of the North is proverbially intelligent. I incline to think that nowhere, on the face of this earth, can be found a more intelligent race, than the free laboring men of the North. They know, very well, what must be the effect upon them of a system of law by which capital shall be made the owner of labor. They know that the views to which I have alluded are the necessary result, the logical consequence of the long-continued existence of slavery in the States represented by those who entertain them. They know that labor must, in all slave States, lose its ennobling, its divine character, and that in the perverted estimation of men, whose judgment is clouded by a false system of education, the cunning work of that most wonderful instrument, the human hand—the marvelous invention of a Divine artisan—will be despised and degraded. Therefore, it is, that never by their consent, never if they can by any lawful means prevent it; never through fear of any personal or any political consequences, will their free, intelligent labor be subjected, in the Territories of this Government, to a degrading competition with the labor of African slaves; nor, sir, will they ever consent that their treasure shall be expended in a forced purchase from an unwilling nation, of slave territory, for the avowed purpose of perpetuating therein compulsory labor.