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SPEECH

OF
HON. J. B. THOMPSON, OF KY.,

ON THE
ACQUISITION OF CUBA.

DELIVERED IN SENATE U. S., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1859.

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The Senate, as in Committee of the Whole, resumed the consideration of the bill (S. No. 497) making appropriation to facilitate the acquisition of Cuba by negotiation; the pending question being on the amendment offered by Mr. Foot.

Mr. THOMPSON, of Kentucky. Mr. President, it is annoying to me that, after having been on good terms with all my brother Senators, I have had so much difficulty in getting the floor to say what little I have to say on this subject, just as I am going out. I will not say that it is impolite or unfeeling, but it is certainly very annoying. I desire to say something on this bill which proposes to make an appropriation "to facilitate the acquisition of Cuba by negotiation," so far as my strength and voice may hold out.

In the first place, I object to the title of the bill. It imports that we are to acquire Cuba by negotiation somehow, and that we simply want some facilities for that purpose, which in mercantile phrase means money. Here it means \$30,000,000. I will not vote to commit myself to anything of that sort; and besides, before I get through, I hope to show to any reasonable man that the whole scheme is ill-timed, improper, and uncalled for.

The zeal and ability with which the Senators from Louisiana press the acquisition of Cuba have struck me with some surprise. It seems to me that if Cuba were acquired, the whole sugar interest of Louisiana, which is now protected by a tariff, would be prostrated. The lands of Louisiana are too far south to be very well convertible into cotton lands. The loss of machinery, the loss of time, the ignorance of the hands, would be equivalent to a fire on each plantation. Not only that; but there would go out from Louisiana to Cuba, for the purpose of getting lands there, the active, the enterprising capitalists, the men of value, and the men of substance. Many of the sugar planters, and the best of them, would emigrate; the drones, the idlers, and the triflers, would stay at home. We see this exemplified in the case of every new State. You find there an active, enterprising, thrifty population, more so than you see in the old States, because the active, the enterprising, the intelligent, the men bent on making a fortune, have gone there. Kentucky has been bled in that way by Missouri, by Louisiana, by Illinois, and by Indiana, until I will not say that it has such a sorry population that it lately turned to be a Democratic State; for I believe we still could have held our own if it had not been for this everlasting nigger question and the American question.

Well, sir, what will be the second effect upon Louisiana? Wherever in the world commerce prevails, its entrepôts are the points of transshipment, the termini of great lines; they are the places where commodities are exchanged, and there cities grow up. Now, suppose the city of Havana should grow up under American protection; it will be some six, or eight, or ten days shorter, for foreign vessels to load with cotton there than to go to New Orleans; and cotton will be transported there from the Mississippi valley, passing by New Orleans. Cotton will land at the last terminus, land in a good harbor; and it is a pleasanter place than New Orleans, and no more liable to yellow fever. I say, then, this is a bill to break up the sugar-planting interest of Louisiana,

and to dwarf the city of New Orleans. Why, Mr. President, that little city of Lexington of yours, in Kentucky, was a very nice, pretty, growing town until it had a couple of railroads run through it, and now nobody goes there at all; people do not even dine there. [Laughter.] Two railroads have run through it—one going to Cincinnati and one going to Louisville; and all the people go to the one city or the other where they have a larger stock of goods to pick from, and because they like a little pleasant travel, and ladies like to take an airing anyhow, and see another city. There is neither trade nor commerce, nor eating, nor anything, done there. Why, sir, the jimson weeds are all over the streets, and the town absolutely looks seedy. [Laughter.] That is the effect of going through one of these places and giving them a thing of that sort. Just before that, the little town of Nicholasville, when I was a boy, as a matter of great enterprise, constructed, and nearly broke themselves in constructing, a turnpike road to the city of Lexington; and a fine turnpike road it was. At that time they had twenty-three stores and a good deal of trading there; but when the turnpike road was made, everybody went to Lexington, and Nicholasville is now a perfectly finished town. There is a grocery, and, perhaps, one or two stores and a sort of tavern—just symptoms of a town having been there. Whenever you translate the terminus, the entrepot of transshipment, you will find that New Orleans, as a place of business, will shrivel up and sink in the same way. Vessels will pass her in going out to Havana, laden with tobacco, cotton, and other products, and laden with sugar and the like freight, and not even anchor at her wharves in returning. That is my judgment.

This bill proposes to grant the President of the United States \$30,000,000, to be used in purchasing Cuba. It was known to the President, when he made the suggestion in his message, that Spain had refused the trade; and he knew very well that, by the civil or common law, it took two to make a trade. Now I will ask what was the use, instead of resorting to the ordinary means of negotiation, to put into the message a sort of proclamation to Spain that we would buy anyhow, and to carry it forward by this bill, when we know that the proposition of the message was received and spurned at Madrid, I will not say with Castilian pride, but at least with Spanish pomp? They inscribed their determination on columns and pillars; and unanimously made addresses to the throne, saying that they would never part with Cuba. They have said to you they will not trade; and yet, in the face of their declaration, you propose to trade with them. What sort of a trade do you mean? You say your avowed policy is, that England and France shall not have Cuba. Do you mean to beat off all other bidders, and levy on the island by a sort of forced sale of it, without authority of law? just say it is a sale and seizure, and buy it for what you please? That is it substantially. Or, if you do not mean that, I ask what kind of pious and Christian humanity there is in a proud nation like this, to a poor, weak old Government that has a raw, sore place, to take an ignited firebrand and be jabbing her, and jabbing her, and jabbing her, just to torment her? Is the idea that, although she is not willing to trade, you will torment her so that she shall have no peace of her life, and finally make the trade to get rid of you?

Without regard to the fact that Spain says she will not trade, the bill is an enormous proposition upon its face. We gave \$15,000,000 to the Emperor Napoleon for Louisiana, a vast territory, reaching from the mouth to the source of the Mississippi river, embracing the present States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota. There was a perfect kingdom for \$15,000,000. We got a vast domain of public land, of crown lands belonging to France, more than enough to pay all the expenses of the purchase, and of their survey, and leave us a profit. That is a trade that a man might well strain a point for. Jefferson was said to entertain some constitutional scruples about that acquisition; but almost any man's constitutional scruples would give way under the force of such a trade as that. Then we bought the whole

southern end of Florida, that vast peninsula, for \$5,000,000. It would have been a pretty good purchase, if we had not been paying ever since. I will not say that we have paid more than the State is worth, for it is a good State now, and I will not speak disrespectfully of her; but if it had not been for Osceolo, and Sam Jones, and Jumper, and the enormous price *per capita* that it has taken to transport, catch, or kill the Indians there, that would have been a reasonable trade. But I do not suppose now, if Florida was put up at public auction and sold, it would bring more than would indemnify us for the expenses of the various Indian wars. Perhaps that is a little too extravagant.

Now, sir, we come to the Island of Cuba, and what are we to get? We get the public property—the Moro Castle, the jails, and the court-houses. We do not own the negroes; we do not buy the land for ourselves; but it is a trade simply for the sovereignty. Well, what does that sovereignty amount to? It amounts to this: that you are to protect the people of Cuba; that you are to extend over them the laws of the Union; that you are to keep off pirates; that if they get into a fight you are to help them. Of course, we shall have to build up their wharves; attend to their public wants. The youngest child in the family of course will be petted, and how much you are to expend to get her in proper trim, the Lord only knows.

Mr. President, I do not believe, with the Senator from New Hampshire, [Mr. HALE,] that our course of empire is, by any political trick, at least in this instance, going in a southern direction. That has been the natural course of emigration, from the time when the Goths and the Vandals came down upon the sunny plains of Italy, to the present time. It is the instinct of human nature to hunt out the best lands, find where they are, locate on them, and settle them. In the far-off North, during the long, cold, winter nights, the children, as they sit around the fire, perhaps chill-blained or frost-bitten, eat figs and oranges and dates, and they are told that they come from a country where there is no snow and no ice, but a balmy breeze, and their notions start as though they want to get off to that better country; it is a dream of golden myth or mystery.

O Christ! it is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven has done for this delicious land;
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree;
What goodly prospects o'er the whole expand."

They have but one sentiment, and that is to go down there and better their condition. It is the natural tide and flow of emigration. It is by instinct, and they follow it. I do not think, properly, that a consideration of the nigger question ought to have been connected with this matter; but it has been forced into it, and forced upon us.

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. BENJAMIN] gave us an essay, graphic and eloquent; a poem, I might say—a poem, I mean, as to eloquent diction, not a poem as to facts—upon the wrongs England has inflicted on her West India colonies; but the whole of it is no more relevant to this question than to examine whether Wilberforce, if he were alive, would repent of what he did or not. The Senator from New Hampshire, for whose great amiability, for whose good judgment, and especially for whose good feeling, I have eminent respect, overrates these things, over-estimates them. He is against the acquisition of more slave territory. The Senator from Louisiana gave us a beautiful description of Cuba; he spoke of the Cubans, of the Creoles, and the free negroes; and it is under the influence of descriptions such as he gave that our people rush that way, and there is a delusion upon them. They are what they call in the country "enthused"—run mad on the subject.

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine?

Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom:
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute:
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In color though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East: 'Tis the land of the Sun—
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?"

That is enthusiastically, in spirit and in feeling, imagined, and by a vast number applied to Cuba. I will describe her truly. I trust I shall be able to show that this question is not to be met in that way. I regret, also, that the Senator from New Hampshire; in his speech, made objection to the acquisition, because he does not like the Cubans on account of their Catholic religion. Mr. President, under the Constitution, I believe every man has the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience; to do it in safety under his own vine and fig tree, without fear and trembling; and to follow whatever those dictates are. I would prescribe religion and faith to no man, nor proscribe him or his religion. I will not say it is illiberal. I will not discuss the question whether that faith is inconsistent with republican institutions. I rather think, myself, it is adapted to the genius and turn of the people where it exists. One thing I know; I have lived half my life with American Catholics, and better citizens I have never known—loyal, true, industrious, as good as any. I speak of American Catholics in this country; I do not know what the case may be elsewhere. Surely, that could be no objection with me if Cuba is to come in.

The Senator from Georgia, [Mr. TOMBS,] the other day, was for annexing Cuba; and I understood him to say that he was for annexing Canada too. Whether he said that in irony or in earnest, I am unable to say; but it is a monstrous proposition. We are young and robust, and so far have stood the poisons already introduced into our system; but, however, we may have Mithraditized our Constitution, an over-dose may yet kill, and I think this may be the very dose and very time of our political death, if taken. The people of Canada are of Anglo-French descent, and, in the first place, I do not think them fit for a Republic. I have never seen a Frenchman in my life that had a notion of such a Republic as ours. They have tried it in old France several times; but the very height of liberty and republican institutions for a Frenchman is to get a chance to vote for an Emperor. Pick him a master to do his thinking about government and he is satisfied. Nay, it is a French extatic exercise of the rights of republican institutions. Mercurial and curious in his nature, he is unsuited to a Republic like ours. When the Senators talk against Great Britain, they ought to recollect that Great Britain is a landholder on this continent. Take her possessions and provinces in Canada, and all over North America, running as they do to the polar regions, embracing all beyond our boundary except the Russian possessions; and she has a larger tract of land on this continent than we have—more acres, though they are not so valuable; and if we annexed that cold country, with the people in villages, having small States, as exemplified in New England, they would overrun us. I would not wish to be in a republic having a gentleman here from Vancouver, and another from Nova Scotia, and another from Davis's Straits, and a hundred of them at that, to overpower me by their vote and by their voice. I never approved or harbored any desire for a rupture of the Union; but if Canada and the British Provinces are to come in and be carved up into a hundred States, to weigh us down, I hope that the Union will break, like your humbug sub-marine telegraph line—break in two simply because it will be too long—break in two, as, in the Augustan age, one of her best poets sang of Rome, "Roma ruat suis veribus."

It was said that Rome tumbled to pieces in consequence of acquisition; and that, I am afraid, is to be our destiny. I prefer tiling over into a southern confederacy, if the fissure is to be made anywhere down the Ohio river, as I suppose it is very likely to be.

Two or three very vague notions have been introduced into this debate. Gentlemen have talked about Americanizing Cuba. What sort of Americanization will go on there? I understood the Senator from Louisiana to express sympathy with Cubans, who, he said, were "panting for liberty." Annex Cuba, and men from Georgia, from Alabama, from Kentucky, will go in there; they will say: "The Government has bought it;" and, as against a Cuban, they will consider that it is pre-empted and paid for by them. The truth is, it is hereditary, or it has been taught to them; at any rate, it is in the Anglo-Saxon blood. Our people believe it is no harm to take away from a Spaniard or a Mexican or an Indian anything he has got, and they want; and they do not believe it is homicide or murder to kill him either. [Laughter.] What will be done by our adventurers when they land there? Not to be invidious, I will take my own State as an illustration. I will suppose that three Kentuckians go down to Cuba; one of them an old fellow, with a parcel of negroes. As Mr. Buchanan is going to buy Cuba by a sort of forced sale, without authority of law, warning off all other bidders, this old fellow would settle upon some Cuban, hunt him out, and take possession. He would then begin to survey and demark for annexation some other man's plantation. He would elbow him, browbeat him, and frown at him; show him bowie-knives and revolvers; knock him down with his fist, perhaps, and stamp on him a little in a place where he could not be seen, so as to escape the law. A man would be inclined, naturally, under such a process, to give up. There is a sentiment among our people that they have a right to do that thing. They would murder; they would marry; or they would do anything in the world to get all that was going.

The other two young gentlemen, whom I suppose to go down from Kentucky, are a couple of your fillibusters—elegant men, having nothing to live upon and doing nothing, and nothing to do anything upon. [Laughter.] They talk about fast horses, about pistol-shooting, and about gunning; and they can shoot pistols. One of them will get to be an overseer for a widow, and marry her, and the next year you would find the rest of the family disinherited. [Laughter.] The other, being a remarkably spry and good-looking fellow, will run away with some old Cuban's daughter; he would get into the family, and he would be there but a little time before the old man would be in a corner of the plantation, and he in full possession and with a good title. That is the way it is to be Americanized, and the way they will go on when they get there.

Why, sir, there is not a Spaniard now to be found in New Orleans; and I have been there and perambulated over the whole city. There is not one that I ever saw in St. Louis, and I have been there two or three times. At St. Augustine and Pensacola there are none. The truth is, the Spanish race get out of the way of our race. They will not remain in Cuba; they have too much instinct for that. You just put out here in one of our forests, or on the plains at a spring or lick, a lion from the torrid zone, and let a herd of buffalo see him lash his sides with his tail, and roar, and strike down with a blow, and break the back of one of them or of their leader, and they will have sense enough not to go back there. Put down a tiger, and let him, with his fierce scream and his yellow, glaring eyes, pounce in upon a gang of deer at a lick or spring, and I venture to say they will not be in that neighborhood, nor within twenty miles of that place, in forty days. Your Cubans know, if they have any sense, how their kindred population have been rooted out. I will give a familiar illustration that you can all understand, and that I want the people in the country to understand. We formerly had about our barns in Kentucky what we called the old-fashioned blue rat, and there are in the country swarms of another description of rats called the Norway rats,

who eat up the blue rats. When the travelling gangs of the Norway rats invade a barn, the blue rats scamper for their lives, knowing that they will be eaten up if they do not leave. They are literally Cubans "panting for liberty," and would also be Cubans panting for life under those circumstances. [Laughter.] That will be the effect of it, evidently and plainly. That is the process by which the Americanization would go on.

One effect of this measure will be its connection with the contest about the next Presidency, and I am going to venture a piece of advice on that, and I ask the attention of the Senator from New York, [Mr. SEWARD.] The Democrats have a Pacific railroad in their platform, and it is no harm for you to take one on board. As this seems to be a game for the Presidency, and a brag game at that, on credit also, I think the American party, if they have a platform at all, ought to go two better, and go in for building all three roads. It was proposed that we should appropriate \$250,000,000 as a beginning to construct a railroad through a country where there is neither wood, nor water, nor population; where the mountains will have to be tunneled; where viaducts must be made, and bridges built; where the iron must be transported to every spot. Why, sir, we should be as long building that road as the children of Israel were in the wilderness; and I am not so certain, as to the debt in which it would involve us, we should not be in a sort of Egyptian bondage for four hundred years, making brick without straw, in order to build this road. I am willing to give land, but no money, for that purpose. That bill, however, has turned out to be a harmless proposition for a survey by which we may learn some geography; know something more about the country. Old Colonel Benton said the buffalo were the best engineers in the world. So they are, to a certain extent. If they travel from one pasturage to another, or one lick to another, they pick the best ground; but, in the Colonel's case, they happen not to come from San Francisco, and, of course, would not do for engineers to St. Joe or any other given point from which we may start on this side. When we get in the reports of all those surveys, the estimates will fall far short of what will be required. The natural process is, as population progresses, the people will find where the good land is; they will find where there is water; they will get convenient to fuel; and, in the meantime, the transit routes will suit us well enough. Besides, we are yet in our infancy; a century is but a year in the age of a nation, and we are not a year old. Surely our rapid growth, thus far, ought to satisfy us. *Festina lente*, is the maxim of wisdom. As they say in the country, slow and sure is the true policy. Let us consolidate, compact, build up, secure, and settle, what we have.

The Senator from New York said the building of that road would afford an outlet for the wild spirits of the country. Surely, sir, it would be no outlet for them. Cork and Connaught and Belgium and all Germany would furnish the men to build it; the men who deal with the spade and pick; the men who crack rock on turnpike roads and work about the sills and carry iron. Talk to one of these regular fillibusters about working, letting off his steam by cracking rock away out in the wilderness on one of these roads, and he will be worse insulted than Spain is. If we get into a war about Cuba, these are not the men who are going to do any fighting unless you make up a regiment of colonels or majors. They would join that, but they will never go in the rank and file. They will follow in the track of the army like vultures and wolves following in the wake of any other army, greedy, and hungry; and like jackals, when the battle is over and lost or won, ready to gravel for their carious food in the graves of the brave and the dead. That is what they will do. They go along to live by their wits outside of the camp. The men who die there are no men for fillibustering about here. They must all be officers. Go down to the taverns and look at some of them as you see them strutting about. They toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon in all his glory was hardly arrayed like one of them. I have seen two or three of them here this winter that out-strutted, and

out-talked, and out-shone any men I ever saw on the face of the earth. It is a shame that the government should pander to that spirit; that feeling which is dominant in the land.

I made the point, in the first instance, that Spain will not trade, and it takes two to make a bargain. That, of itself, would be a sufficient objection to this bill; but I have some other objections. I think it is ludicrous to propose such a measure in the face of the world, after the declaration that Spain has made. It appears as if we wished to make her confess her shame and humiliation before the whole world. But there is a continual talk that England and France will get Cuba if we do not. Now, sir, I do not believe that either England or France wants to get it, and I will tell you why. So far as the ambition of the Emperor of the French is concerned, he wants to carry his conquests into Algeria. I used to suppose that the Algerian struggle was simply a foreign war got up by the old French king to get rid of his fiery spirits; that it was a fight to keep them busy; a trick of Louis Philippe to employ his army. I see, however, that there is more French emigration to Algeria than anywhere else. Frenchmen do not come to this country; we do not suit them, and they do not suit us; they do not commingle with us. All that is now Canada once belonged to France; but England wrested it from her at the battle upon the plains of Abraham, and ever since it has been held by England, and France knows that she cannot wrest it from her. France sold us an empire on this continent for a bauble. She has only two or three little islands left over here, and probably Cayenne, a sort of penal colony, the whole of it of no value and no account. Her attention is not in this direction. She does not emigrate in this direction. She is advancing towards the Italian States, looking out on the Mediterranean, and to the old Rhenish border. In his heart devoted to his uncle, his great prototype, and affecting to follow his policy, to imitate this would be the ambition of the Emperor. The Emperor would not forget, either, how difficult it is to conduct a war in these climates. In the time of Generals Beauharnais and Le Clerc, under the republic, they sent out two or three expeditions of troops to San Domingo, and they were as good troops as those that fought afterwards at Austerlitz and Marengo; but did they accomplish anything? Not at all. In that climate it may be said, literally, that

“ For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as they passed,
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heav'd and forever grew still !
And there lay the steed, with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride ;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf,
And there lay the rider, distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail.”

Now, sir, do you believe, with that prestige of bad luck, the French Emperor would care about turning his eyes in this direction, and interfering with Cuba? Not at all.

Then the question is as to England. I am constrained to say that I do not know how to understand her. In virtue of having large possessions on this continent, being a large land-holder here, she probably has a right to be heard, and a right too look out somewhat on this continent. That would be fair. But if she wanted Cuba, she would take it; and, in my judgment, we could not stop her, especially if she were hacked by France. Look at what she has done in the Crimean war, which is just past; a war more destructive than any other, on account of the improved state of fire-arms, and the vast additions made by new inventions to destructive implements of every sort; a war such as you read of neither in fable nor in history. The fabled war of the gods, when huge stones were torn from the mountains, and the trees were torn up by their roots and thrown at each other, or Milton's description of the artillery of heaven in battle with the fallen angels, does not equal in grandeur and greatness, and

everything that pertains to fighting, Balaklava and Inkerman, and the taking and storming of Sebastopol.

Do these great achievements seem to stop her? Not at all. After that unfortunate charge of Cardigan's, I supposed she had hardly an efficient horse left; but she concluded since that time, that she must go over into Persia and box her jaws. Notwithstanding the example of the disastrous and bloody charge of horse at Inkerman, under Cardigan, not warned or deterred by example or failure. The English made a charge against ten thousand Persians, on the plain of Teheren, compacted and fixed in the best way they could be for fighting. They stood their ground for battle; but the English troops came up—I suppose the same Scotch Greys that charged Napoleon's artillery at Waterloo—in three columns uniform, dusky as death, and with but one forlorn man to a column, a lieutenant to each, to break the rank. They charged down upon those ten thousand men. Two of the lieutenants cut their way out safely, and the third one was killed, from the fact that his horse careened, and he lost his sword-arm before he plunged him on the bayonets; but all three columns made a road through the enemy, and they fell before them like knocking down ten-pins. They formed and re-charged through again; and, compared with the number engaged in that battle, there were not in twenty minutes as many Persians left to tell the tale, as there were Grecians left by Leonidas at the straits of Thermopylæ. That is the sort of fighting they do. Ours is done with Mexicans and Indians.

What else has England done? She has made China come into her measures. The fact that there was a vast rebellion in her provinces in the East did not check her at all. General Hocklave, who was to have been made a peer, and a glorious old Christian commander he was, in a series of one hundred splendid engagements subjugated place after place, until he eventually died. His successor, Sir Colin Campbell, seems to go ahead with equal spirit and equal strength. The provinces will all be brought in, and they will be made to pay the expenses of the fight. They will be put under stricter discipline by way of prevention, and to satisfy herself, England will annex a few other provinces. There is where her ambition is; there is where the prosperity of her empire, in a great degree, lies. She has been going on in this way for centuries, without the horrors of a war at home upon her own shores, or any fear of a foreign invasion, and with only occasional civil outbreaks. Of her it may be said that, for a thousand years, the temple of Janus has substantially never been closed. A bloody old bruiser, she has roamed around the world insulting, brow-beating, and whipping anybody and everybody she chose.

Her fleet is five or six hundred ships, ten or eleven times as strong as ours. The fleet of France is about ten times as large as ours, and I suppose she would join in such a struggle just for the grandeur of the thing. Suppose we get into a fight with them about Cuba; how are we to get men there? and if we get them there, how are we to succor them with other men and with provisions? Will they not cut off all intercourse? If the island was given us to-day, they could come and take it, or starve us out, unless the climate killed them off; nothing but the yellow fever would ever save us. It is absolutely a point of weakness, in my estimation, instead of a point of strength. Gentlemen talk about its being the key, and commanding the Gulf of Mexico, the queen of the Antilles, a gem, and I hardly know what all. All manner of things are said. Why, sir, does not every man know that outside of the reefs of Florida, there is passage enough for vessels, and that you cannot raise such works of fortification there as would interrupt the passage of vessels in the channel? So it is on the Cuba side, where you go into the Caribbean sea. It is utterly impracticable, where Yucatan puts out towards her, or at either passage to make Gibraltares. The passages are both seventy or eighty miles wide. And now suppose we had possession of Moro Castle, and there were before it twenty, forty, or one hundred seventy-four gun ships, French or English, how long do you suppose it would stand? There are many points on the island

where soldiers could be landed. England keeps twenty-five thousand men in Canada of her regular well-drilled troops. She could run them down and land in Cuba trained regular soldiers—trained in war. Your regular French Zouaves Bedouin Arab fighters, could go there; and what would be our raw troops, our green troops, against them? Our troops, of course, would be unprepared for such conflict. We should be driven out of the island, not because our people are not brave and willing to fight, but because we could not stand such fighting. We have a standing army of about 17,000; England over 400,000; France about 500,000.

Then, instead of going on in this way, I should like to have some reflection and some thought bestowed upon the subject. If we get Cuba, we must certainly hold it by fortifications; and I should like to send a commission there to examine it, such as we sent out in the Crimean war to examine the Russian fortifications and the armaments of the allied armies; and I would add to that commission the Senator from Mississippi, [Mr. DAVIS,] for I have more confidence in his military ability than in any man now in the United States; and I would also put on it the Senator from Minnesota, [Mr. SHIELDS.] Let them go down and survey Cuba as a man would survey a piece of land before he bought it. Let them come back and tell us whether there is any Cronstadt there, such as the Russians have in the Neva to defend St. Petersburg. Let them tell us whether there is a place where a fortification may be built such as was built at Sebastopol under the genius of the immortal Todleben. Let them tell us whether there are any places for a Redan and a Malakoff tower to rear their heights in such grandeur as to be able to beat back an English fleet. I would wish to be satisfied on all these points; because, when we come to get it, I should suppose we want to hold it. We are the best customer England has. We buy of her very largely. Of course she wishes to retain us. The vast quantity of cotton she wants and must have, is a bond on her to keep the peace. She does not desire outbreaks or emutes among her operatives at Manchester and elsewhere. It is idle to suppose, under the circumstances, that she wishes to break with us.

I spoke before of our going in debt, for four hundred years, to build the Pacific railroad. I think that if we should get into a war on account of Cuba, we should be so crippled that we should never get out of debt. I think I propose a fair way of trading. A man does not buy a horse without looking at it. Let us have the commission and reconnoissance, if possible.

I do not care for all the popular clamor down south about buying Cuba. They do not know anything about it. If you talk to the people in the South about it, and tell them what a fine country it is, they are very willing to have it; but our people have been so petted and so spoiled upon this subject, again and again surfeited, like a great child whose appetite is vitiated by sweetmeats, that they are eternally whining because their stomach is not as big as their eyes, and they cannot swallow everything they see. (Laughter.) They ought to have somebody who is willing to tell them the truth. When you talk to them about the acquisition of Cuba, they think it is all right. Men say, "Uncle Sam foots the bill; and who knows that there may not be a wind-fall for him; that I may not draw a ticket in the lottery? I do not know how it will come out." And so men go on, just as an adventurer, without knowing anything about the population, habits, pursuits, or character of the people. I have heard a man rant about Cuba, and if you landed him on the island he would be the most lonesome poor creature in the world. Imported African negroes would palaver and jabber at him, and supercilious Cubans would look at him scornfully and walk around by him as a turkey looks at a snake in the grass in a rain, (laughter;) and the very negroes, unless feed, would not wait on him; and they would not wait on him for a very substantial reason—they would not know what in the world he said, and he would not know what they said.

The people of Cuba speak a different language, they profess a different re-

ligion, and they are of different extraction from us; and our people have regarded them as aliens and outlaws from the pale of humanity and civilization. That is the feeling of our population out West, I know. Suppose we annex them: by the annexation you have the high prerogative of taking them under your wing. You have to protect them in war, and attend to them in peace. You marry them as a man does his wife, "for better or for worse." If the Senator from Louisiana gives a true account of Cuba, I would rather, before she comes into the family, consult a little further and a little longer about it. Saying nothing about color, I think I have been at more respectable weddings than it would be to bring her into the household. (Laughter.) What is she? In round numbers say 300,000 free negroes, 8,000 or 9,000 barbarians, imported slaves from Africa chiefly, some Coolies, and a few others, of such uncertain blood and hue—I suppose they are speckled and pie-bald. Say 600,000 Cubans—a motley and nice crew, well fitted for a free Republican State. The bill or bills for the soldiers of the war of 1812, and other Indian wars, have gone to the tomb of the Capulets. However strong the appeal the old patriot soldiers who were at Tippecanoe, Raisin, or the Thames, or under Adair and Slaughter, at New Orleans, and yet survived the perils of battle and the rigors of the northwestern army, when told that their appeal was spurned and rejected, that it cost too much, in shame and sorrow will they not hang their heads, their eyes suffused with tears, instead of gleaming with joy and gratitude that their country still recollected them before death? However strong a Democrat any one of them may be, the purchase at \$30,000,000 of Spaniards, of Africans, and of Coolies, instead of listening to his age, his wants, and penury, will strike deep within him. Of the rank and file of American soldiers who shall fight in Cuba—of the few who survive the perils of battle and disease, or the many who shall have perished—not one of ten thousand can or could have ever settled in that land of promise. They are staunch and stalwart yeomen, self-reliant and dependent on their brawny arms for a livelihood. They cannot toil in that climate—they cannot buy coffee-estates nor sugar-plantations—nor should they be murdered by hecatombs, that other people may get them. Cuba is to be civilized and Christianized, and all this under the guardianship and protection of the United States. It is a heavy job. No doubt the spirit of our people can accomplish it, for they have achieved wonders; but it is certain there would not be many of the natives of Cuba left there long.

Well, sir, what is the immediate haste for this measure now? There is no necessity for any haste about it. We are at peace with England, we are at peace with France, and we are at peace with Spain. Why make this attempt in time of profound peace, when even the authorities, cited in the able report of the Senator from Louisiana, [Mr. SIDELL,] admit that we ought not to make any effort to take the island while it remains under Spanish rule? England and France proposed to us a tripartite treaty guarantying that we would not seize the island; but Mr. Everett refused to agree to it. They see that we eventually look to it, and we have all avowed it here, and still they do not interfere. I ask you, is not this bill calculated to create a rupture between the three nations? They may protest; they may not fight; but I ask, at this time, is it not premature, uncalled for, unnecessary? We had better pay the debts we owe now. I have known several very respectable Old Virginia gentlemen, of Anglo-Saxon blood, out in Kentucky, get broke just by paying taxes on too much poor land. Ragged negro after ragged negro would go, but they would still hold on to their land, and at last it would be eaten up by taxes, and they be insolvent; and, in some cases, after their death, their estates would not be worth enough to pay their funeral expenses. I have known one or two absolutely ruined by having too much land.

I think we have a pretty good sized country now; and it would have been entirely too large, but for the fortunate turn up of gold in California. That was a godsend to the country; and if it had not been that we found gold there

to redeem the country from the position it was in, the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo would have been a blistering sore to us for years and years to come. So, when we bought Louisiana, we made a lucky hit; but in buying Cuba there is no chance of anything of that sort. We buy the negroes for the owners to keep them; and we buy the land for the owners to hold it. We trade for the sovereignty—that is, the burden of taking care of them, and protecting them, and civilizing them. There is no godsend left there.

Why do you want Cuba? Some gentlemen talk about gravitation, and say it gravitates this way; and others tell us that there is a political necessity for our side of emigration going in that direction. Well, sir, I know that if you go out into the country and talk to the people, you will find them in favor of the next war, or some war, and of getting more land; and it is a pretty safe platform to go upon.

Mr. Clay and Mr. Adams were not (nor had they reached the Presidency) at the head of the Government when they spoke about this gravitation. They spoke of it, I suppose, as a kind of humbug for the South; but they cut off the time of acquiring it indefinitely, until Buchanan at last has brought it up. After Mr. Clay wrote his letter, and John Quincy Adams came into power, did they practice what they said? Not at all. They held it up as a happy delusion to all the Gulf States that they must eventually have Cuba, and would have it at no remote day; that such was manifest destiny and passionate attraction, according to the free-love school, that Cuba would just rush into our arms any how. [Laughter.] It is said she is gravitating towards us—that is the term. Well, sir, she has not gravitated an inch from where she stood when they wrote; and if the Cubans understand how the Americans will treat them, it will not, with their consent, gravitate this way any longer; but they will keep well satisfied and content from our fillibusters and our Government, and will still "pant for liberty." I say that, because the report seems to insinuate that the population are willing to come to us. I do not know whether they are or not; upon that subject I have no information. They seemed at Cardenas to welcome "with hospitable hands to bloody graves" the men who, it was said, went there to aid them in obtaining freedom. You may say those who did that were the soldiery. Well, that Spanish soldiery is a mixed-up affair; and I suppose most of it is collected from the Cuban peasants who live on the mountains, and they will do the same thing again.

There is nobody to be benefited by this except Spain, who would get largely more than the island would be worth, and we would be cursed with a burden. The Cubans might stand their ground until they could sell out. Negroes are much cheaper there, I understand, than they are in Louisiana; and the annexation of the island would cause them to rise immensely in value there. The Cubans could sell out to the Gulf-State men who wanted to go over there; and even if they were forced sales, they would get more than they are worth now. That is the way they would go off—that is the way the island would be settled up; but I do not take it for granted that they desire it, except as a mere matter of avarice, of the meanest sort—and that avarice which the Senator from Louisiana says makes the Cuban planter annually count what is the value of a negro in sugar. He supplies him from the coast of Africa, and by his infernal alchemy makes him into molasses or sugar. If the best of the population, the planters, are so cruel as to be professional pirates and negro traders, and regularly make calculations upon a negro's life in that way, I do not think they are fit to come into this Union. With their barbarism and their cruelty they would not suit us.

Mr. President, there are many other things to which I should allude; but I know the time of the Senate is precious. Perhaps I should be indulged with a continuance; but, condensing as well as I can, I will make an effort to get through with what I have to say.

I have an objection to the terms of this bill itself—an insuperable objection.

"That the sum of \$30,000,000 be, and the same is hereby, appropriated out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to enable the President to make a treaty with Spain for the purchase of the Island of Cuba, to be used by him in the event that said treaty, when signed by the authorized agents of the two Governments, and duly ratified by Spain, shall call for the expenditure of the same, or any part thereof; full and accurate accounts for which expenditure shall be by him transmitted to Congress at as early a day as practicable."

What does this mean? O'Donnell, or Espartero, or somebody else, is at the head of Donna Isabella's Government. To-day some one else, to-morrow another, is in power. Like Mexico and much of South America, not as well off now as at the death of Senor Bolivar, the Great Liberator—countries of *coup d'etat and pronunciamientos*. Who is in power I do not know; but the intention is—if I understand the intention—that the money is to be drawn out, and lodged safely with our Minister, Mr. Preston, under the flag of the United States, and then we are to wait for a revolution in Spain, and then we are to make a trade with the out-going and falling Government—say it is a *de facto* Government—get them to sign a treaty, and the thing is finished. A *coup d'etat* treaty disavowed by the ministry coming in—as fraudulent, and not binding—and then war with Spain. They will have got \$30,000,000 of our money as a prepayment. It is to be on hand in readiness to take advantage of the nick of time; for it cannot be supposed it is to be used in any other way, or any other juncture, or at any other time. Some *pronunciamiento* or a *coup d'etat* upsets the Government, and there is a trade of this sort. Well, sir, I am not much for that kind of negotiation; and, besides, I am for keeping the money where it is.

The Constitution provides that the President may make treaties, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate of the United States—two thirds of them concurring. The framers of the Constitution were so cautious in regard to this matter that they put upon the President the check of requiring two-thirds of the Senate to ratify any treaty he might make, before it should be binding. In the beginning of the government the Senate was regarded as a consulting Executive Chamber. How many Senators the President has consulted about this matter, I do not know; what Senators he has consulted, I cannot tell. The money, however, is to be drawn out of the treasury, and we are not to know how it is to be used; but after it has been spent the President is to file full and accurate accounts. What is filing full and accurate accounts?

Suppose the money is misspent; suppose it is lost or fooled away; you have granted him a vote of confidence, and I would as soon grant a vote of unlimited confidence, as to have no further security than this. He is to file accounts of what he spends. He is to have this vast amount of money in his pocket, under his control. He is anxious to distinguish his administration, anxious if possible to do something by which posterity will remember him and connect his name with Cuba. In addition to his natural ardor, and the opinions he already has on this subject, he might think if you vote him this money that he was under obligations to do something—that he must move. Well, sir, I will not put any such embarrassing obligation on him. I do not care how fair or how accurate his accounts may be, whenever they come in there will be an eternal scandal and gossip in the politics of this country, and a supposition that all was not right. People will so talk and will so think, and you cannot help yourselves. By the terms of the treaty itself, we may not at all have a right of reclamation to the \$30,000,000, if we dare to amend the treaty when sent here, or do not force ourselves to agree to the additional instalments and stipulations. Moreover, the President well knows that nearly one-half of this Senate, coming from the free States, would rather see the \$30,000,000 in the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, than see Cuba annexed for nothing; and how does he expect to get two-thirds of the Senate to ratify any treaty?

Besides, when the Senate come to ratify the treaty, I do not think it is fair for them to have such a constraint imposed upon them as the payment of such

a large sum would be. When my successor comes here to act upon the treaty I want him to be untrammelled, to act according to his dictates of duty under his oath, and according to his conscience; but if you have already paid \$30,000,000, that will hang like a millstone around his neck. As to this \$30,000,000 he will—pro tanto—have been unconsulted—rather in duress. The Senate will act, under the fear of losing this large sum, and the demand will be, “come down with the balance to secure what you have already antied, or you will lose what you have already put up.” That is not the Constitution; that is not the way the Constitution contemplates. It is not the way, in my judgment, to carry it on.

Mr. President, in reflecting on the proposition of the Senator from New York to let off the spirit of filibustering, I must say a word or two more to him. He is a man of eminent ability, and genial in feeling. I do not think his election would be a *casus laesi fœderis*; no breach of the league between the States. He is a constitutional man, and if he should be elected there must be some overt act of oppression, or dereliction from duty, before you could complain or fabricate a *casus belli* or justify rebellion. My opinion is, that he is such a generous-hearted man that he would rather lean towards the South, by way of showing that he was impartial. But, sir, I do not want him to talk any more about that gang of Austrians and Netherlandmen and Irishmen in the Rocky Mountains, making his Pacific railroad, with the idea that that is going to work off the filibuster spirit. It reminds me of an anecdote which I heard, about a countryman of mine from South Carolina. For the first time in his life he saw some monkeys; and from the agility with which they jumped from prong to prong with their nice little fingers, he thought it would be the grandest speculation in creation to train them to cotton-picking, and he got some for that purpose. A friend met him afterwards and asked him how he had made out. “First rate,” said he, “except that it took two overseers to watch each monkey.” [Laughter.] That will be precisely the way you will then work the filibusters out there, according to the plan of the Senator from New York.

Mr. President, this is a mischievous project for another reason. It brings up agitation on the negro question inevitably and certainly. I was in hopes that after we had got rid of Kansas, the country would have some quiet. I have been now, off and on, nearly twenty years in Congress; and I trusted that for one session, at least, I should live here in peace, and hear no more about negroes. Now, we have the same old story again. I do not say that the President proposes any such thing, or that he has any designs or views in it; but I know this: the other morning the Senator from Pennsylvania, [Mr. BIGLER,] who, it was said, represented the President—and he did not deny it when he was called upon by the Senator from New Hampshire—gave us his views on the tariff. As the Senator from New Hampshire said the President had not been invited to the Democratic caucus, or from some other cause, he did not agree with them, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania, representing the President's views on the tariff, went in for a pretty large incidentalism on iron for Pennsylvania. If his Cuba horse, his Cuba hobby, can tickle the South, and upon the iron question he can hang the old Keystone State to him by bars of iron and hooks of steel, he will be very apt to stand in a pretty good position for demanding a re-nomination—a position where he can just step upon the Charleston platform, and say, Gentlemen, here is your candidate for the Presidency; you cannot do without me. You must take him; you cannot do without him. It looks to me very much that way.

I know, Mr. President, that it has been mentioned often, laughingly, that there has been a belief that if nothing else, your luck would kill him; that you got everything you ever went for, all you wanted, and that if there was nothing else in his way, he would never survive your luck. [Laughter.] Well, sir, I have taken a good look at him. He looks firm, pretty substantial, and strong, and I tell you the white of your eye is too white, and all the con-

juration and witchcraft, and incantations, known in the Highlands of Scotland, cannot avail. Your spirit will not overpower his spirit. I know something of hygiene, and am a pretty fair doctor. I give it as my decided medical opinion, he is good for ten years, and I profoundly ask your pardon for saying so. [Laughter.] I know he has said that he only wanted to run for one term; but Jackson talked that way, and I suppose Jackson was nearly as firm a man, and probably as pure a man, as Mr. Buchanan. Of Mr. Buchanan personally, I desire to say nothing. Although General Jackson only wanted one term, he was willing to serve another. Cæsar thrice put away the crown, and yet he took it. But beyond all history or example, I never knew a Scotchman when he had got a grip upon anything, and had it in his grasp, who would ever let go, if it was a good thing, until death. He will hold on, unless you wrench it from him; and then, if it were in his power, he would send it to some lineal favorite son of his—in politics, I mean, for none he has otherwise. [Laughter.]

I hear a great many gentlemen talking about it; and they say it is getting near time to have a southern President. Perhaps it will be, after Mr. Buchanan shall have served eight years, according to the usage of the earlier Presidents; and he flatters himself that he can get Cuba, as Jefferson got Louisiana; and I think, by that time, it will come to be the turn for a southern man once more; and, although it has been said that “Old Virginny never tires,” I think, before then, she will be getting a little impatient; and her descendants are not so patient as the old Commonwealth; they will get tired of waiting before that.

Well, sir, this is a fight in which I have no hand. Let them make it up among them. I do not desire to say anything harsh or severe about the Democracy. I admonish you of that, because in my position here,

I feel like one,
Who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed.”

When I was in politics, and I may say, when I was alive, [laughter,] and old man Clay battled against the Democratic party, lion-hearted as he was, like Richard Cœur de Lion himself, when he went into the Holy Land to rescue it from the custody of the Infidels, Mr. Clay, with a lion's heart, and his battle-axe uplifted, fought to rescue what he believed to be the Constitution and the rights of the country from the Democratic party, that he thought was disloyal and untrue, an infidel to them; then, sir, I fought and felt like a field-marshal.

Well, sir, as to the Democratic party, I do not know that I could very well join them, unless I see a little further into them. I could not be a Locofoco any way, and I understand that the discipline is extremely rigid. [Laughter.] They muster their men with great severity, according to regular drill, and if a man does not chalk up to the mark, overboard he goes; and the rule is, that it is better to have an enemy out of the camp than a friend in the camp, cutting capers and cutting shames. John Randolph, (not Roanoke John,) of Virginia, said of the Democratic party—but I will not say it of them—that all they wanted was men of sense enough to lead, and fools enough to follow, [laughter;] and if any man could not subscribe to these principles, and went into the party as a leader, who had not sense enough to lead, he ought to be turned out. I believe they have cashiered and torn the epaulettes off one or two. I do not know what the severity of the discipline is. If I can get a private conversation with my friend from Illinois [Mr. DOGGETT] before I leave here, I should like to know if he has not learned something on that subject. [Laughter.] I wish, just privately and confidentially, to know from him if the discipline is not excessively tight. If I was to go in, I do not know upon what sort of probation or trial I should be put. I suppose it would be long enough to make them certain that they had got all the old, genuine, gentlemanly Whig principles and feelings out of me, and that I really had the true religion, and was converted. Then they might put me in the kitchen of the household, with filibusters and the Locofocos, until they believed I was really a Christian; and showed it evidently. I do not know how I should be treated. I think I shall look a little further before I go in.

I have spoken heretofore in what way platforms are fixed for the Presidency. Now, I do not know what may be the result of the next Presidential election. I expect to take no part in it. I have been favored much by my own State of Kentucky, cherished beyond my merit, upheld always, except recently, when my successor was elected. I love her, even as a strong-hearted man loves his own mother. Whatever may be her waywardness in politics or my own fortunes, I can only say that I hope that the dews of Heaven, all night long, may descend richly on her fields and her forests, and the sun shine brightly all day over her borders.

Mr. President, my strength is failing me, but I must say something more. I utterly condemn this rampant spirit and cry for war. It is a wrong cry; it is a wrong teaching for the country; and I predict that, if we get into a calamitous war with France and with England on this account, we shall repent it to the latest day of our lives. Do not pass this unnecessary bill, and insult a neighbor by this proposition, which is every way unadvised and uncalled for. When you get into a war, you will find that fighting John Bull is not talking. When England sent men here in the last war, and burned this Capitol, it was a mere by-play for her. She was upholding all continental Europe then against the colossal power of Napoleon; and yet she came here just as a by-play, and troubled us as she did. Our people think we whipped England, and you hear them say throughout the country that we whipped Wellington's invincibles; and they believe that we absolutely whipped the veterans who fought the battle of Waterloo, although that battle was not fought until the 18th of June, after the 8th of January, when our battle of New Orleans was fought. They are stuffed up in that way, and influenced with a war spirit.

Old John Bull, as I said, is a bloody old bruiser. If the Senator from Georgia was here, I would ask him if he did not see how Spain and Sardinia sent off their quota to the Crimean war at the request of England, although they had just about as much interest in it as I had. England just said to them, "if you do not fight on my side, I will whip you." That is the whole of it. They follow England in that kind of way. John Bull, if I may use a familiar illustration, that will be understood in the country, is like a great masterly mastiff, a bull dog. Old Bull goes prowling about the neighborhood, hunting up fights. Along in his train follow Caesar and Pompey, Juniper and Jupiter; and though the first two are Romans of high degree and the last a god, they follow in his train with fear and trembling. When he nails a dog, they leg him, and nip him, and down they get him until he is throttled to death by old bull; and there is a nation blotted from the map of the earth; or if, after worrying him, and crippling him, and wounding him, they send him home, it is in pain to work the balance of his days to pay the expenses of the fight.

Well, sir, I do not know the Senator from Georgia's idea about it; but I take it, that in making up a fight there ought to be some sense about it, as there is about anything else. There ought to be some reason for it. Now, sir, the United States comparatively is a bull-terrier—that is as game as ten thousand lions; and, superadded to his natural pluck, he has the spirit of the seven devils that were driven out of Mary Magdalen. Do you suppose I would hiss him on that old bull and his train, if I thought anything of the dog? and I know I love my country better than I could any dog. I do not want to make up a fight of that kind.

Sir, these men who are so ready to talk about fighting very often are the last men to do it. Whenever I see a man out in a muster-field or in a court-yard, blustering and talking about his willingness to shed his last drop of blood, I would rather see somebody who would be willing to shed the first drop. [Laughter.] If we get into this war we must go through with it at all hazards, at every expense, and at every loss. Our commerce, our progress, everything would be lost and ruin to us. We, with our insufficient Navy, should be utterly unable to cope with those two Powers. They do not seem inclined to fight us; they do not want to fight us; they were willing to share fairly with us. I suppose the talk about fighting just means this, and no more: men know that there is in this country a deep-rooted popular sentiment of dislike, an inveterate feeling of hatred, towards England—I mean with the lower orders. It comes down traditionally from our revolutionary war. It was revived by the last war we had with her. It is a safe thing in any ignorant crowd to curse England, and you will not find anybody of any party who does not back you. I suppose it is a popular theme for declamation; but I think it is time we had quit it. It is a stale staple, relished before every Presidential election. I believe that is the prevailing, dominant feeling with the ignorant portion of our population. Whether it is just or unjust I will not pretend to say; but it is an element in the American character—an element like their ignoring the rights of a Mexican or a Spaniard. It is a feeling they have. They hate a red-coat and a Britisher. Mr. Dallas and Lord Napier may have as many suppers and feasts as you please; they may talk about the same language, and reading the same Milton and the same Shakespeare, and about a common blood and fraternity, and all that. Very well, that is just as nice as two old ladies, who hate each other like devils, gossiping very pleasantly over a tea-table. [Laughter.] That is what it amounts to. Our folks do not feel that way. It is as harmless, and just about as foolish, as the ovations to the success of the Atlantic telegraph. That was another one of your schemes—a dead failure. It is said, now, that it is doubtful whether Mr. Buchanan ever did get that message of the Queen.

I have seen it stated that, so far from any of that sort of conversation passing, it was a trick of trade. The stockholders got up the messages, and they were conveyed as the Government's; and the shrewd ones got out by selling their stock, and the soft people got bit. Those that were not in the trick were left in the lurch. Whether that is true or not, I do not know; but I do not reckon any message was ever sent. Two years ago, the Senator from Louisiana, who is

so enthusiastic now about Cuba, predicted repeatedly that we should have great results from this telegraph. I told him it would be a failure. I pointed out that you were contributing money to make a line of telegraph, both ends of which would belong to England; and I said that, throughout such an extent of ocean, a shark could bite it in two, or a whale could knock it in two, or it would be cut in two running over the mountains in the sea. Practically, in my mind, there was no chance for the thing.

Now, sir, you are here after Cuba. It seems to be a favorite project of Mr. Buchanan. I have not the time or ability to say all that I want to say, or to say it in such a style as I should like to be in trim to say it. I think Mr. Buchanan is hardly consistent upon this subject. When he was Secretary of State he wrote about it to Romulus M. Saunders, our Minister at Madrid—a rough, coarse, North Carolina man—a gentleman, though; but I reckon, from his manner, and his walk, and his look, (for he was ugly although he was clever,) the last man in the world to send upon such an errand. So keen and eager was Mr. Buchanan then to get Cuba, that he wrote a letter to Mr. Saunders, on the subject. I will not put it in my speech, but I will ask somebody to comment on it who can explain it. He told him to approach the Spanish Government, not in the ordinary diplomatic way, by notes, but to talk to the Spanish Minister in a sort of quasi-unofficial conversation, in a friendly chat. "Do not send notes, because they may bind the next government against us, but make the suggestion;" and he told him how, in the most delicate and the most insinuating and plausible way, to approach, to feel the Queen's Government. One hundred million dollars was the limit; and if the proposition was not listened to, was not entertained at all, Mr. Saunders was to say, really, I intended nothing at all, Madam; I purposed no insult to your Majesty. It pains me to suppose you so misconstrued me. Here he comes again with this proposition, now by a sort of forced sale, warning off all other bidders, and he wants \$30,000,000 to start on. He will never get \$30,000,000 by my vote to hang as a millstone around my successor's neck; and if a treaty were made in that way, I would vote to reject it anyhow, even at the risk of losing the \$30,000,000, just to vindicate the independence of the Senate.

Mr. President, I believe I have spoken nearly to the extent of my strength and power to-day. [The honorable gentleman, from physical debility, had been compelled to be seated while he spoke.] I will not ask for a continuance to any other day, because I know that the time of the Senate is precious. I can only say, in relation to this whole project, that it will requitate the country with the slavery question; that it is, I think, contrary to the spirit of our institutions to put money in the President's pocket, I suppose to be sent to Madrid, for Mr. Preston to use in an emergency. I think it would be improper, unjust, and ungenerous to our successors, who are to ratify the treaty, to take this advantage of them. I think it is an unfair way of negotiation. I think it would injure Louisiana above all the States in the Union. I think that at this time we ought to compact and bind together and build up and strengthen what we have. We are young. Let the gristle grow into the bone; let us get our muscles developed. Let us feel strong before we enter into such a contest; let us cultivate the arts of peace, for "Peace hath its victories, no less renowned than war." That would be my policy, and I hope it will be the policy enforced upon the President by Congress. I am going to look for some sensible man for the next Presidency—a sound man: I would rather he had no platform; I do not want to run him in blinds. I confess to you that, in my opinion, my colleague [Mr. CHITTENDEN] would, of all men on the face of the earth, suit me the best. If you will give him a chance, I will risk him upon my personal confidence, without laying down a creed of faith for him to go by; I do not want to stand a man upon a platform, or run him in blinds.

Besides, these platforms are all nonsense. Let me say to my friend, the Senator from New York, if he should ever get to be President, I want him to recollect that this platform business is all humbug; and when he gets in power, to kick down the ladder by which he got there. The two or three last platform Presidents we have had, when they got in the car of State and safely seated, all around, everywhere, you could see posted up, "Do not stand on the platform when the cars are in motion." [Laughter.] That is the way they manage it. There is always some emergency, or something to justify a departure from it. Well, sir, I hope I shall be forgiven. I have been to four or five conventions myself, on account of Mr. Clay, chiefly, and once, I believe, on account of my colleague, to keep him out of a scrape of some sort, and I know a good deal about them. In the time I was in politics, and we were dominant, I always knew a long time before the convention came on who would be Governor. It used to be said that you never could know who was Governor until the election was over; but it was all fixed up—all done in advance. I wish the country to get on prosperously and peacefully, and gloriously, without any slavery agitation. I want a man of sound heart and sound head, who will administer the government with that view. I can say for myself, as was said by the immortal Webster, that I trust it will be one and indivisible, now and forever; and that the God who overrules us and guides us now, as heretofore, and, as I hope, will for ages to come, will so shape our ends that all will result in good; that for years and years we shall abide in peace, in prosperity, and solid progress. Save us, O God, from the degradation of national debilities, and check the robber spirit and rampant rapacity of our people.