

She sustained herself in the last war; she paid her own expenses and has not yet been paid entirely from the treasury of the nation. The enemy hovered on her coast with his ships, as numerous almost as the stars. He looked on that warlike land and the memory of the olden time came back upon him. He remembered how, more than forty years before, he had trodden on that soil; he remembered how vauntingly he invaded it and how speedily he left it. He turned his glasses toward it and beheld its people rushing from the mountains to the sea to defend it; and he dared not attack it. Its capital stood in the salt sea spray, yet he could not take it. He sailed south, where there was another capital, not far from where we now stand, forty miles from the sea. A few staggering, worn-out sailors and soldiers came here. They took it. How it was defended let the heroes of Bladensburg answer!

Sir, the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. Keitt] made a speech; and if I may be allowed to coin a word, I will say it had more cantankerousness in it than any speech I ever heard on this floor.

It was certainly very eloquent in some portions—very eloquent indeed, for the gentleman has indisputably an eloquent utterance and an eloquent temperament. I do not wish to criticise it much, but it opens in the most extraordinary manner with a “weird torchlight,” and then he introduces a dead man, and then he galvanizes him, and puts him in that chair, and then he makes him “point his cold finger” around this hall.

Why, it almost frightens me to allude to it. And then he turns it into a theatre, and then he changes or transmogrifies the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. Colfax], who has just spoken, into a snake and makes him “wriggle up to the foot-

lights;” and then he gives the snake hands, and then “mailed hands,” and with one of them he throws off Cuba, and with the other clutches all the Canadas. Then he has men with “glozing mouths,” and they are “singing psalms through their noses,” and are moving down upon the South “like an army with banners.” Frightful, is it not? He talks about rotting on dead seas. He calls our party at one time a “toad,” and then he calls it a “lizard;” “and more, which e’en to mention would be unlawful.” Sir, his rhetoric seems to have the St. Vitus’s dance. He mingles metaphors in such a manner as would delight the most extravagant Milesian.

But I pass from his logic and his rhetoric, and also over some historical mistakes, much of the same nature as those made by the President, which I have already pointed out, and come to some of his sentences, in which terrific questions and answers explode. He answers hotly and tauntingly that the South wants none of our vagabond philanthropy. Sir, when the yellow pestilence fluttered its wings over the southern States and when Massachusetts poured out her treasures to a greater extent in proportion to her population than any other State, was that vagabond philanthropy? I ask the people of Virginia and Louisiana.

But, sir, the gentleman was most tender and most plaintive when he described the starving operatives. Why, sir, the eloquence was most overwhelming upon some of my colleagues. I thought I saw the iron face of our speaker soften a little when he listened to the unexpected sympathy of the gentleman with the hardships of his early life. Sir, he was an operative from boyhood to manhood—and a good one, too.

Ah, sir, he did not appreciate, as he tasted the sweet bread

of honest toil, his sad condition; he did not think, as he stood in the music of the machinery which came from his cunning hand, how much better it would have been for him had he been born a slave and put under the gentleman from South Carolina—a kind master, as I have no doubt he is—where he would have been well fed and clothed, and would have known none of the trials which doubtless met him on every hand. How happy he would have been if, instead of being a Massachusetts operative, he had been a slave in South Carolina, fattening, singing, and dancing upon the banks of some southern river.

Sir, if the gentleman will go to my district and look upon those operatives and mechanics; if he will look upon some of those beautiful models which come from their brains and hands, and which from time to time leap upon the waters of the Atlantic, out-flying all other clippers, bringing home wealth and victory with all the winds of heaven, he might have reason to change his views. Let him go there, and, even after all he said, he may speak to those men and convince them if he can of their starving condition. I will guaranty his personal safety. I believe the people of Massachusetts would pour forth their heart's blood to protect even him in the right of freedom of speech; and that is saying a great deal after all that has happened.

Let him go to the great county of Worcester—that beehive of operatives and Abolitionists, as it has been called—and he will find the annual product of that county greater, in proportion to the population, than that of any other equal population in the world, as will be found by reference to a recent speech of ex-Governor Boutwell, of our State. The next county, I believe, in respect to the amount of products in proportion to population, is away up in Vermont.

Sir, let him go and look at these men—these Abolitionists, who, we are told, meddle with everybody's business but their own. They certainly take time enough to attend to their own business to accomplish these results which I have named.

The gentleman broke out in an exceedingly explosive question, something like this: I do not know if my memory can do justice to the language of the gentleman, but it was something like this: "Did not the South, equally with the North, bare her forehead to the god of battles?" I answer plainly, No, sir, she did not; she did not.

Sir, Massachusetts furnished more men in the Revolution than the whole South put together, and more by ten-fold than South Carolina. I am not including, of course, the militia—the conjectured militia furnished by that State. There is no proof that they were ever engaged in any battle. I mean the regulars; and I say that Massachusetts furnished more than ten times as many men as South Carolina. I say on the authority of a standard historian, once a member of this House (Mr. Sabine, in his history of the loyalists), that more New England men now lie buried in the soil of South Carolina than there were of South Carolinians who left their State to fight the battles of the country.

I say, when General Lincoln was defending Charleston he was compelled to give up its defence because the people of that city would not fight. When General Greene, that Rhode Island blacksmith, took command of the Southern army South Carolina had not a federal soldier in the field; and the people of that State would not furnish supplies to his army; while the British army in the State were furnished with supplies almost exclusively from the people of South Carolina. While the American army could not be recruited,

the ranks of the British army were rapidly filled from that State.

The British post of Ninety-Six was garrisoned almost exclusively from South Carolina. Rawdon's reserve corps was made up almost entirely by South Carolinians. Of the eight hundred prisoners who were taken at the battle of King's Mountain—of which we have heard so much—seven hundred of them were Southern Tories. The Maryland men gained the laurels of the Cowpens. Kentuckians, Virginians, and North Carolinians gained the battle of King's Mountain. Few South Carolinians fought in the battles of Eutaw, Guilford, etc. They were chiefly fought by men out of South Carolina; and they would have won greater fame and brighter laurels if they had not been opposed chiefly by the citizens of the soil. Well might the British commander boast that he had reduced South Carolina into allegiance.

But, sir, I will not proceed further with this history, out of regard for the fame of our common country; out of regard for the patriots—the Sumters, the Marions, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Haynes—truer patriots, if possible, than those of any other State.

Out of regard for these men I will not quote from a letter of the patriot Governor Mathews to General Greene, in which he complains of the selfishness and utter imbecility of a great portion of the people of South Carolina.

But, Mr. Chairman, all these assaults upon the State of Massachusetts sink into insignificance compared with the one I am about to mention. On the 19th of May it was announced that Mr. Sumner would address the Senate upon the Kansas question. The floor of the Senate, the galleries, and avenues leading thereto, were thronged with an expectant audience; and many of us left our places in this House to

hear the Massachusetts orator. To say that we were delighted with the speech we heard would but faintly express the deep emotions of our hearts awakened by it. I need not speak of the classic purity of its language, nor of the nobility of its sentiments. It was heard by many; it has been read by millions. There has been no such speech made in the Senate since the days when those Titans of American eloquence—the Websters and the Haynes—contended with each other for mastery.

It was severe, because it was launched against tyranny. It was severe as Chatham was severe when he defended the feeble colonies against the giant oppression of the mother country. It was made in the face of a hostile Senate. It continued through the greater portion of two days; and yet during that time the speaker was not once called to order. This fact is conclusive as to the personal and parliamentary decorum of the speech. He had provocation enough. His State had been called hypocritical. He himself had been called "a puppy," "a fool," "a fanatic," and "a dishonest man." Yet he was parliamentary from the beginning to the end of his speech. No man knew better than he did the proprieties of the place, for he had always observed them. No man knew better than he did parliamentary law, because he had made it the study of his life. No man saw more clearly than he did the flaming sword of the constitution, turning every way, guarding all the avenues of the Senate. But he was not thinking of these things; he was not thinking then of the privileges of the Senate nor of the guarantees of the constitution; he was there to denounce tyranny and crime, and he did it. He was there to speak for the rights of an empire, and he did it bravely and grandly.

So much for the occasion of the speech. A word, and I

shall be pardoned, about the speaker himself. He is my friend; for many and many a year I have looked to him for guidance and light, and I never looked in vain. He never had a personal enemy in his life; his character is as pure as the snow that falls on his native hills; his heart overflows with kindness for every being having the upright form of man; he is a ripe scholar, a chivalric gentleman, and a warm-hearted, true friend. He sat at the feet of Channing, and drank in the sentiments of that noble soul. He bathed in the learning and undying love of the great jurist, Story; and the hand of Jackson, with its honors and its offices, sought him early in life, but he shrank from them with instinctive modesty. Sir, he is the pride of Massachusetts. His mother Commonwealth found him adorning the highest walks of literature and law, and she bade him go and grace somewhat the rough character of political life. The people of Massachusetts—the old, and the young, and the middle-aged—now pay their full homage to the beauty of his public and private character. Such is Charles Sumner.

On the 22d day of May, when the Senate and the House had clothed themselves in mourning for a brother fallen in the battle of life in the distant State of Missouri, the senator from Massachusetts sat in the silence of the Senate Chamber, engaged in the employments appertaining to his office when a member from this House, who had taken an oath to sustain the constitution, stole into the Senate, that place which had hitherto been held sacred against violence, and smote him as Cain smote his brother.

One blow was enough; but it did not not satiate the wrath of that spirit which had pursued him through two days. Again and again, quicker and faster fell the leaden blows, until he was torn away from his victim, when the senator

from Massachusetts fell in the arms of his friends, and his blood ran down on the Senate floor. Sir, the act was brief and my comments on it shall be brief also. I denounce it in the name of the constitution it violated. I denounce it in the name of the sovereignty of Massachusetts, which was stricken down by the blow. I denounce it in the name of civilization, which it outraged. I denounce it in the name of humanity. I denounce it in the name of that fair play which bullies and prize-fighters respect. What! strike a man when he is pinioned—when he cannot respond to a blow! Call you that chivalry? In what code of honor did you get your authority for that? I do not believe that member has a friend so dear who must not in his heart of hearts condemn the act. Even the member himself, if he has left a spark of that chivalry and gallantry attributed to him, must loathe and scorn the act. God knows, I do not wish to speak unkindly or in a spirit of revenge; but I owe it to my manhood and the noble State I in part represent, to express my deep abhorrence of the act. But much as I reprobate the act, much more do I reprobate the conduct of those who were by and saw the outrage perpetrated. Sir, especially do I notice the conduct of that senator recently from the free platform of Massachusetts, with the odor of her hospitality on him, who stood there, not only silent and quiet while it was going on, but when it was over approved the act. And worse: when he had time to cool, when he had slept on it, he went into the Senate Chamber of the United States and shocked the sensibilities of the world by approving it. Another senator did not take part because he feared his motives might be questioned, exhibiting as extraordinary a delicacy as that individual who refused to rescue a drowning mortal because he had not been introduced to him. Another was

not on good terms; and yet if rumor be true, that senator has declared that himself and family are more indebted to Mr. Sumner than to any other man; yet when he saw him borne bleeding by, he turned and went on the other side. Oh, magnanimous Slidell! Oh, prudent Douglas! Oh, audacious Toombs!

Sir, there are questions arising out of this which far transcend those of a mere personal nature. Of those personal considerations I shall speak when the question comes properly before us, if I am permitted to do so. The higher question involves the very existence of the government itself. If, sir, freedom of speech is not to remain to us, what is all this government worth? If we from Massachusetts, or any other State—senators, or members of the House—are to be called to account by some “gallant nephew” of some “gallant uncle,” when we utter something which does not suit their sensitive natures, we desire to know it. If the conflict is to be transferred from this peaceful, intellectual field to one where it is said, “honors are easy and responsibilities equal,” then we desire to know it. Massachusetts, if her sons and representatives are to have the rod held over them, if these things are to continue, the time may come—though she utters no threats—when she may be called upon to withdraw them to her own bosom, where she can furnish to them that protection which is not vouchsafed to them under the flag of their common country. But while she permits us to remain, we shall do our duty—our whole duty. We shall speak whatever we choose to speak, when we will, where we will, and how we will, regardless of all consequences.

Sir, the sons of Massachusetts are educated at the knees of their mothers in the doctrines of peace and good will, and God knows, they desire to cultivate those feelings—feelings

of social kindness and public kindness. The House will bear witness that we have not violated or trespassed upon any of them; but, sir, if we are pushed too long or too far, there are men from the old Commonwealth of Massachusetts who will not shrink from a defence of freedom of speech, and the honored State they represent, on any field where they may be assailed.