

nominate no candidate for President or vice-president who is not in favor of interdicting the introduction of slavery north of 36 degrees 30 minutes." The resolution was laid on the table by a vote of yeas 141 to nays 52; and Mr. Fillmore was nominated on this neutral platform, which offers no opposition whatsoever to the extension of slavery. Mr. Fillmore himself stands before the country a perfect cipher on the question of Kansas, whose wrongs have elicited from him neither sympathy nor rebuke. . . .

It is pleasant, gentlemen, to turn from these schemes for slavery extension to glance at the Republican party that has sprung into existence, like the armed Minerva, from the brain of Jove—beautiful in its proportions and terrible in its strength—with the principles of Washington and the Fathers for its chart, and "the pathfinder of empire" to bear aloft its standard.

The platform of the Republicans, as adopted at Philadelphia on the 18th of June, 1856, is at once so simple and comprehensive as to admit all Americans who are in favor of restoring the government to the principles of Washington, and putting a final stop to the extension of slavery, without compromising their individual preferences on the other political questions which naturally exist in our government, but which are, for the time, overshadowed by this paramount issue.

The Republican party holds that an adherence to the principles of the Fathers and the Declaration of Independence—which the sham democracy of the day ridicules as a tissue of glittering sounding generalities—is essential to the preservation of our republican institutions, of the federal constitution, of the rights of the people, and the union of the States. It denies the authority of Congress, or of any territorial

legislature, or of any association of individuals to establish slavery in the Territories, and claims that it is the right and the duty of Congress to prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism—slavery and polygamy. It arraigns the Pierce administration before the country and the world for the crimes it has instigated and perpetrated against Kansas. It declares that Kansas should be admitted as a free State, with its present free State constitution; and, having thus declared its policy at home, it denounces the highwayman's plea, that might makes right, as declared in the Ostend circular, as unworthy of American diplomacy.

Is there a single point in that platform to which you cannot heartily subscribe? Do you find there anything that conflicts with the rights of the South, with the duties of the North, or with the proper harmony of the Union? For myself, I believe that the triumph of these principles—making it a fixed fact for all coming time, that slavery shall not be extended beyond its present limits—can alone quiet the country and secure the stability and repose of the Republic. If the struggle is not now ended it will undoubtedly continue. The election of Buchanan and the triumph of slavery would be not a settlement but only a postponement of the question.

Such are the principles of the Republicans, which they have not invented in Cincinnati nor imported from Ostend, but which they find in the writings of the Fathers of the Republic, and in the constitution that they ordained for the establishment of liberty and justice. Such is the platform,—now for the candidate. . . .

The hour for a change has come and with the hour appears the man. The country demands a change not only of policy but of rulers.

We want no longer men who have made politics a trade—

who have grown gray in party traces—who in the pursuit of office have veered from federalism to democracy, from democracy to slavery and buccaneering, and who now merge principles and ideality in the Cincinnati platform,—nor do we want one who has plunged from abolitionism into slave-catching and from slave-catching by a natural transition, I cannot call it a descent, into sectionalism and disunionism—viewing the while with cold indifference the sacrifice of freedom and the wrongs of Kansas. Our people demand one whose heart beats responsive to their own—who unites the generous enthusiasm of youth with the matured vigor and wisdom of manhood.

They need one who has given a guarantee in the past for his career in the future—one whose identity and individuality is stamped upon his life—who fears not to avow in outspoken words his manly principles and who would scorn to become the padlocked plank of a platform or the pliant puppet of a party.

The day approaches when you are to do your part toward determining the question of America free or America slave. One of the famous laws promulgated by Solon for the governance of the Athenians declared dishonored and disfranchised every citizen who in a civil sedition stood aloof and took part with neither side. Here, gentlemen, the very government is in rebellion against the constitution and the people and Kansas looks to you to free her from its tyrannic grasp. Remember the dignity of your position—ponder the importance of your vote. Upon the ballots cast in your quiet village may depend the future of the republic—the destiny of the continent.

The issue is the broad one of freedom and slavery. All other issues are for the time absorbed in this, and personal

animosities and prejudices should disappear before a common danger as in the early days of the republic. Shall our constitutional liberties be preserved? Shall the mission of the country be accomplished? Shall peace and freedom shower their blessings over our western Territories? or shall club-law rule at Washington? Shall honorable murderers stalk unpunished in the capital? Shall a military despotism trample the life-blood from our Territories, and an arrogant oligarchy of slave masters rule as with the plantation-whip twenty millions of American citizens?

That is the issue. It concerns not only the North, but the South, where an immense majority of non-slaveholders are now shorn of their rights by the exacting influence of slavery.

Ours is no sectional party. It is bounded by no geographic lines. We believe with Burke that virtue does not depend on climate or degrees. We fight not against a section but a class; not against a people but a system. Our leader is one whom the South has delighted to honor, and it should not be forgotten that to South Carolina that gave birth to a Brooks, whom the House of Representatives spurned as the assassin-like assailant of Charles Sumner—to the same South Carolina belongs the credit of having reared Fremont, whom by God's blessing we hope to install as the constitutional defender of the liberties of the country.

Our opponents would have us believe that instead of "Fremont and victory," we are on the verge of a defeat. Whether victory or defeat await us duty is ours, consequences are God's, and I have long regarded the battle for freedom in America as one that we are to wage steadfastly if not hopefully while life lasts, preserving untarnished the weapons of our fathers, and bequeathing them untrusted to

our sons. Stand by the principles of the Declaration of Independence, whose irresistible point and divine temper converted rebellion into revolution—contend as your fathers contended for “the rights of human nature.”

Nothing, it is said, can be more uncertain than the near future of American politics. Men’s judgments in such cases are naturally biased by their wishes and influenced perhaps, more or less, by the predominancy of one party or another in their own neighborhood. The “New Orleans Delta,” reviewing from that far corner the whole country, declares that party leaders engaged with the loaves and fishes have culpably kept them in ignorance of the real strength of the Republican party, which it says threatens to swallow up every other in the North as the rod of Moses swallowed up those of the Egyptians. It admits that the Republican party has increased, is increasing, and is not likely to be diminished, a fact that, it remarks, has just spoken with 8,000 voices in Iowa, 15,000 in Vermont, and 20,000 in Maine with Blair, a Fremonter from a slave State, and that these, as signs of the times, possess the utmost significance. It reminds its readers that like causes produce like effects and it anticipates a similar result in all of the free States.

There are two disturbing causes that may prevent this result: one, the deception that has been practised by the Democratic leaders in some of the States in pretending to be opposed to the extension of slavery, and the belief which they have been successful in propagating, that the rights involved in the Missouri Compromise have been definitely disposed of by its repeal, whereas it is the very question in an intensified form that is now directly put by the people of Kansas to the people of the United States.

It is no longer shall slavery be permitted to pass the line

of 36 degrees 30 minutes quietly and under the sanction of “popular sovereignty?” but shall it be permitted to pass that line by the aid of fraudulent elections, a lawless executive, and a corrupt judiciary by the connivance of the federal government and the power of the federal arm, trampling upon the constitution of the United States, the sovereignty of Kansas, and the rights and liberties of its people?

The blood already spilt in consequence of the repeal of the Missouri compact drips from the hands of every man who aided that breach of faith. But he who now votes for either Buchanan, who indorses, or for Fillmore, who by his silence approves the encroachment of slavery upon Kansas, not only incurs, with the original repealer of the compact the ancient curse, “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark. And all the people shall say, amen,” but he assumes the responsibility of all the blood that is destined to water the plains of Kansas if the slave power is now supported in its attempt to force slavery upon that consecrated soil.

The other disturbing cause is the power of money in the hands of men whose principles allow them to approve the election frauds perpetrated in Kansas, and who may be ready to repeat the experiment nearer home. With a certain class of politicians the importation of illegal votes and other frauds upon the purity of elections seem to be regarded as venial offences, if not actually entitling them to the gratitude of their party, when in truth no act of treason can strike more directly at the sovereignty of the people and the stability of the Republic.

Looking at our future prospects it is to be remembered that the people of the slave States also are awakening to a knowledge of their strength and a remembrance of their right and truest interest. Not only Missouri but Virginia too are pre-

paring to throw off the insolent domination of the slave power, and the manly spirit shown by Professor Hedrick of South Carolina, in avowing his principles and preference for Fremont, is an indication that the Reign of Terror which banishes booksellers, silences presses, and gags all expression of anti-slavery sentiment, will soon suffer interruption.

Tyranny and treachery though they may prosper for a while irresistibly sow the seeds of their own destruction, and if we are but true to ourselves, true to the principles of our fathers, true to the historic associations that cluster about our soil, let us trust that we shall soon restore freedom to Kansas and quiet to the Union, and let us resolve and re-resolve never to falter in our course until we have placed the federal government on the side of freedom and reinaugurated that olden policy of Washington and Jefferson by which they ordained that throughout the wide extent of our western Territories "the sun should not rise upon a master nor set upon a slave."

## HENRY W. DAVIS



HENRY WINTER DAVIS, an American politician, son of an Episcopal clergyman at Annapolis, Md., was born in the latter city, Aug. 16, 1817, and died at Baltimore, Md., Dec. 30, 1865. Educated at Kenyon College, he studied law at the University of Virginia, and began to practice his profession in Alexandria. In 1840, he removed to Baltimore, where he soon became prominent in social and professional circles. He entered Congress in 1855 as a Whig member, and on the dissolution of the Whig party joined the American or "Know-Nothing" party. In 1859, he voted for Pennington, the Republican candidate for speaker of the House; and when censured for this act by the Maryland legislature, announced to his constituents that "if they were not disposed to allow him to use his private judgment regarding the best interests of his State, they might send a slave to Congress if they chose, but they should not send him." After the attack upon the Massachusetts troops at Baltimore, in April, 1861, Davis declared himself an unconditional Union candidate for Congress. He was much abused for this announcement and defeated at the polls. He sat in Congress, nevertheless, from 1863 to 1865, and was chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. He was an enthusiastic advocate of emancipation and favored the enlistment of negro soldiers in the Federal army. In 1865, he spoke at Chicago in favor of negro suffrage. Davis was a man of strong convictions, with considerable courage in their avowal, and as an orator was alike brilliant and forcible. His published works include "The War of Ormuzd and Ahriman in the Nineteenth Century" (1853), and a collection of "Speeches and Addresses," posthumously published.

### ON RECONSTRUCTION

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MARCH 22, 1864

**M**R. SPEAKER,—The bill which I am directed by the committee on the rebellious States to report is one which provides for the restoration of civil government in States whose governments have been overthrown. It prescribes such conditions as will secure not only civil government to the people of the rebellious States, but will also secure to the people of the United States permanent peace after the suppression of the rebellion. The bill challenges