

Texas should remain outside of the Union until she should consent to relinquish her self-instituted slavery; but the Democratic party precipitated her admission into the Union, not only without that condition, but even with a covenant that the State might be divided and reorganized so as to constitute four slave States instead of one.

In 1846, when the United States became involved in a war with Mexico, and it was apparent that the struggle would end in the dismemberment of that republic, which was a non-slaveholding power, the Democratic party rejected a declaration that slavery should not be established within the territory to be acquired. When, in 1850, governments were to be instituted in the Territories of California and New Mexico, the fruits of that war, the Democratic party refused to admit New Mexico as a free State and only consented to admit California as a free State on the condition, as it has since explained the transaction, of leaving all of New Mexico and Utah open to slavery, to which was also added the concession of perpetual slavery in the District of Columbia and the passage of an unconstitutional, cruel, and humiliating law, for the recapture of fugitive slaves, with a further stipulation that the subject of slavery should never again be agitated in either chamber of Congress. When, in 1854, the slaveholders were contentedly reposing on these great advantages then so recently won, the Democratic party unnecessarily, officiously, and with superserviceable liberality, awakened them from their slumber, to offer and force on their acceptance the abrogation of the law which declared that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude should ever exist within that part of the ancient Territory of Louisiana which lay outside of the State of Missouri, and north of the parallel of 36° 30' of north latitude—a law which, with the exception of one other,

was the only statute of freedom then remaining in the federal code.

In 1856, when the people of Kansas had organized a new State within the region thus abandoned to slavery, and applied to be admitted as a free State into the Union, the Democratic party contemptuously rejected their petition and drove them with menaces and intimidations from the halls of Congress, and armed the President with military power to enforce their submission to a slave code established over them by fraud and usurpation. At every subsequent stage of the long contest which has since raged in Kansas the Democratic party has lent its sympathies, its aid, and all the powers of the government which it controlled, to enforce slavery upon that unwilling and injured people. And now, even at this day, while it mocks us with the assurance that Kansas is free, the Democratic party keeps the State excluded from her just and proper place in the Union, under the hope that she may be dragooned into the acceptance of slavery.

The Democratic party, finally, has procured from a supreme judiciary, fixed in its interest, a decree that slavery exists by force of the constitution in every Territory of the United States, paramount to all legislative authority either within the Territory or residing in Congress.

Such is the Democratic party. It has no policy, State or federal, for finance, or trade, or manufacture, or commerce, or education, or internal improvements, or for the protection or even the security of civil or religious liberty. It is positive and uncompromising in the interest of slavery,—negative, compromising, and vacillating in regard to everything else. It boasts its love of equality; and wastes its strength, and even its life, in fortifying the only aristocracy known in the land. It professes fraternity; and, so often as slavery requires,



allies itself with proscription. It magnifies itself for conquests in foreign lands; but it sends the national eagle forth always with chains, and not the olive branch, in his fangs.

This dark record shows you, fellow citizens, what I was unwilling to announce at an earlier stage of this argument, that of the whole nefarious schedule of slave-holding designs which I have submitted to you, the Democratic party has left only one yet to be consummated—the abrogation of the law which forbids the African slave trade.

Now, I know very well that the Democratic party has at every stage of these proceedings disavowed the motive and the policy of fortifying and extending slavery and has excused them on entirely different and more plausible grounds. But the inconsistency and frivolity of these pleas prove still more conclusively the guilt I charge upon that party. It must, indeed, try to excuse such guilt before mankind and even to the consciences of its own adherents. There is an instinctive abhorrence of slavery and an inborn and inhering love of freedom in the human heart which render palliation of such gross misconduct indispensable. It disfranchised the free African on the ground of a fear that if left to enjoy the right of suffrage he might seduce the free white citizen into amalgamation with his wronged and despised race. The Democratic party condemned and deposed John Quincy Adams because he expended \$12,000,000 a year, while it justifies his favored successor in spending \$70,000,000, \$80,000,000, and even \$100,000,000, a year. It denies emancipation in the District of Columbia, even with compensation to masters and the consent of the people, on the ground of an implied constitutional inhibition, although the constitution expressly confers upon Congress sovereign legislative power in that District, and although the Democratic

party is tenacious of the principle of strict construction. It violated the express provisions of the constitution in suppressing petition and debate on the subject of slavery, through fear of disturbance of the public harmony, although it claims that the electors have a right to instruct their representatives, and even demand their resignation in cases of contumacy. It extended slavery over Texas and connived at the attempt to spread it across the Mexican Territories, even to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, under a plea of enlarging the area of freedom. It abrogated the Mexican slave law and the Missouri Compromise prohibition of slavery in Kansas, not to open the new Territories to slavery, but to try therein the new and fascinating theories of non-intervention and popular sovereignty; and, finally, it overthrew both these new and elegant systems by the English-Lecompton bill and the Dred Scott decision on the ground that the free States ought not to enter the Union without a population equal to the representative basis of one member of Congress, although slave States might come in without inspection as to their numbers.

Will any member of the Democratic party now here claim that the authorities chosen by the suffrages of the party transcended their partisan platforms and so misrepresented the party in the various transactions I have recited? Then I ask him to name one Democratic statesman or legislator, from Van Buren to Walker, who either timidly or cautiously like them, or boldly and defiantly like Douglas, ever refused to execute a behest of the slave-holders and was not therefor, and for no other cause, immediately denounced and deposed from his trust and repudiated by the Democratic party for that contumacy.

I think, fellow citizens, that I have shown you that it is



high time for the friends of freedom to rush to the rescue of the constitution and that their very first duty is to dismiss the Democratic party from the administration of the government.

Why shall it not be done? All agree that it ought to be done. What, then, shall prevent its being done? Nothing but timidity or division of the opponents of the Democratic party.

Some of these opponents start one objection and some another. Let us notice these objections briefly. One class say that they cannot trust the Republican party; that it has not avowed its hostility to slavery boldly enough, or its affection for freedom earnestly enough.

I ask, in reply, is there any other party which can be more safely trusted? Every one knows that it is the Republican party, or none, that shall displace the Democratic party. But I answer, further, that the character and fidelity of any party are determined, necessarily, not by its pledges, programmes, and platforms, but by the public exigencies, and the temper of the people when they call it into activity. Subserviency to slavery is a law written not only on the forehead of the Democratic party but also in its very soul—so resistance to slavery, and devotion to freedom, the popular elements now actively working for the Republican party among the people, must and will be the resources for its ever-renewing strength and constant invigoration.

Others cannot support the Republican party because it has not sufficiently exposed its platform and determined what it will do and what it will not do when triumphant. It may prove too progressive for some and too conservative for others. As if any party ever foresaw so clearly the course of future events as to plan a universal scheme for future action,

adapted to all possible emergencies. Who would ever have joined even the Whig party of the Revolution, if it had been obliged to answer, in 1775, whether it would declare for independence in 1776, and for this noble federal constitution of ours in 1787, and not a year earlier or later?

The people of the United States will be as wise next year, and the year afterward, and even ten years hence, as we are now. They will oblige the Republican party to act as the public welfare and the interests of justice and humanity shall require through all the stages of its career, whether of trial or triumph.

Others will not venture an effort because they fear that the Union would not endure the change. Will such objectors tell me how long a constitution can bear a strain directly along the fibres of which it is composed? This is a constitution of freedom. It is being converted into a constitution of slavery. It is a republican constitution. It is being made an aristocratic one. Others wish to wait until some collateral questions concerning temperance or the exercise of the elective franchise are properly settled. Let me ask all such persons whether time enough has not been wasted on these points already without gaining any other than this single advantage, namely, the discovery that only one thing can be effectually done at one time, and that the one thing which must and will be done at any one time is just that thing which is most urgent and will no longer admit of postponement or delay. Finally, we are told by faint-hearted men that they despond; the Democratic party, they say, is unconquerable and the dominion of slavery is consequently inevitable. I reply to them that the complete and universal dominion of slavery would be intolerable enough when it should have come after the last possible effort to escape



should have been made. There would in that case be left to us the consoling reflection of fidelity to duty.

But I reply, further, that I know—few, I think, know better than I—the resources and energies of the Democratic party, which is identical with the slave power. I do ample justice to its traditional popularity. I know, further—few, I think, know better than I—the difficulties and disadvantages of organizing a new political force like the Republican party and the obstacles it must encounter in laboring without prestige and without patronage. But, understanding all this, I know that the Democratic party must go down, and that the Republican party must rise into its place. The Democratic party derived its strength originally from its adoption of the principles of equal and exact justice to all men. So long as it practised this principle faithfully it was invulnerable. It became vulnerable when it renounced the principle, and since that time it has maintained itself, not by virtue of its own strength, or even of its traditional merits, but because there as yet had appeared in the political field no other party that had the conscience and the courage to take up and avow and practise the life-inspiring principle which the Democratic party had surrendered. At last the Republican party has appeared. It avows now, as the Republican party of 1800 did, in one word, its faith and its works, “Equal and exact justice to all men.” Even when it first entered the field, only half organized, it struck a blow which only just failed to secure complete and triumphant victory. In this, its second campaign, it has already won advantages which render that triumph now both easy and certain.

The secret of its assured success lies in that very characteristic which, in the mouth of scoffers, constitutes its great and lasting imbecility and reproach. It lies in the fact that it is

a party of one idea; but that idea is a noble one—an idea that fills and expands all generous souls; the idea of equality—the equality of all men before human tribunals and human laws, as they all are equal before the divine tribunal and divine laws.

I know, and you know, that a revolution has begun. I know, and all the world knows, that revolutions never go backward. Twenty senators and a hundred representatives proclaim boldly in Congress to-day sentiments and opinions and principles of freedom which hardly so many men, even in this free State, dared to utter in their own homes twenty years ago. While the government of the United States, under the conduct of the Democratic party, has been all that time surrendering one plain and castle after another to slavery, the people of the United States have been no less steadily and perseveringly gathering together the forces with which to recover back again all the fields and all the castles which have been lost, and to confound and overthrow by one decisive blow the betrayers of the constitution and freedom forever.