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Who Reads an American Book

Title: Who Reads an American Book

Author: Sidney Smith

Date: 1820

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, p.144-146

Smith, Who Reads an American Book, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.144

Thus far we are the friends and admirers of Jonathan. But he must not grow vain and ambitious; nor allow himself to be dazzled by that galaxy of epithets by which his orators and newspaper scribblers endeavor to persuade their supporters that they are the greatest, the most refined, the most enlightened, and the most moral people upon earth. The effect of this is unspeakably ludicrous on this side of the Atlantic—and, even on the other, we should imagine, must be rather humiliating to the reasonable part of the population.

Smith, Who Reads an American Book, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.144

The Americans are a brave, industrious, and acute people; but they have hitherto given no indications of genius, and made no approaches to the heroic, either in their morality or character. They are but a recent offset indeed from England; and should make it their chief boast, for many generations to come, that they are sprung from the same race with Bacon and Shakespeare and Newton. Considering their numbers, indeed, and the favorable circumstances in which they have been placed, they have yet done marvelously little to assert the honor of such a descent, or to show that their English blood has been exalted or refined by their republican training and institutions. Their Franklins and Washingtons, and all the other sages and heroes of their revolution, were born and bred subjects of the King of England—and not among the freest or most valued of his subjects: And, since the period of their separation, a far greater proportion of their statesmen and artists and political writers have been foreigners, than ever occurred before in the history of any civilized and educated people.

Smith, Who Reads an American Book, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.145

During the thirty or forty years of their independence, they have done absolutely nothing for the Sciences, for the Arts, for Literature, or even for the statesman-like studies of Politics or Political Economy. Confining ourselves to our own country, and to the period that has elapsed since they had an independent existence, we would ask, Where are their Foxes, their Burkes, their Sheridans, their Windhams, their Horners, their Wilberforces?—where their Arkwrights, their Watts, their Davys?—their Robertsons, Blairs, Smiths, Stewarts, Paleys and Malthuses?—their Porsons, Parrs, Burneys, or Blomfields?—their Scotts, Campbells, Byrons, Moores, or Crabbes?—their Siddonses, Kembles, Keans, or O'Neils—their Wilkies, Laurences, Chantrys?—or their parallels to the hundred other names that have spread themselves over the world from our little island in the course of the last thirty years, and blest or delighted mankind by their works, inventions, or examples?

Smith, Who Reads an American Book, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.145

In so far as we know, there is no such parallelto be produced from the whole annals of this self-adulating race. In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue? What does the world yet owe to American physicians or surgeons? What new substances have their chemists discovered? or what old ones have they analyzed? What new constellations have been discovered by the telescopes of Americans?—what have they done in the mathematics? Who drinks out of American glasses? or eats from American plates? or wears American coats or gowns? or sleeps in American blankets?—Finally, under which of the old tyrannical governments of Europe is every sixth man a slave, whom his fellow creatures may buy and sell and torture?

Smith, Who Reads an American Book, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.146

When these questions are fairly and favorably answered, their laudatory epithets may be allowed: But, till that can be done, we would seriously advise them to keep clear of superlatives.

The Missouri Compromise, 1820

Title: The Missouri Compromise

Author: James G. Blaine

Date: 1820

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, p.147-153

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.147

Six years after Louisiana entered the Union, Missouri applied for admission as a slave State. A violent agitation at once arose, continued for two years, and was finally allayed by the famous compromise of 1820. The outbreak was sudden, its course so turbulent, and its subsidence so complete, that for many years it was regarded as phenomenal in our politics, and its repetition in the highest degree improbable if not impossible. The "Missouri question," as it was popularly termed, formally appeared in Congress in the month of December, 1818; tho during the preceding session petitions for a State government had been received from the inhabitants of the territory. When the bill proposing to admit the State came before the House, Mr. James Tallmadge, Jr., of New York, moved to amend it by providing that "the further introduction of slavery be prohibited in said State of Missouri, and that all children born in the State after its admission to the Union shall be free at the age of twenty-five years." The discussion which followed was able, excited, and even acrimonious. Mr. Clay took an active part against the amendment, but his great influence was unavailing in the face of the strong antislavery sentiment which was so suddenly developed in the North. Both branches of Mr. Tallmadge's amendment were adopted and the bill was passed. In the Senate the antislavery amendment encountered a furious opposition and was rejected by a large majority. The House refused to recede; and, amid great excitement in the country and no little temper in Congress, each branch voted to adhere to its position. Thus for the time Missouri was kept out of the Union.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.148

On the second day after the opening of the next Congress, December, 1819, Mr. John Holmes presented a memorial in the House of Representatives from a convention which had been lately held in the District of Maine, praying for the admission of said district into the Union "as a separate and independent State, on an equal footing with the original States." On the same day, and immediately after Mr. Holmes had taken his seat, Mr. John Scott, territorial delegate, brought before the House the memorial presented in the previous Congress for the admission of Missouri on the same terms of independence and equality with the old States as prayed for by Maine.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.148

From that hour it was found impossible to consider the admission of Maine and Missouri separately. Geographically remote, differing in soil, climate, and products, incapable of competing with each other in any pursuit, they were thrown into rivalry by the influence of the one absorbing question of negro slavery. Southern men were unwilling that Maine should be admitted unless the enabling Act of Missouri should be passed at the same time, and Northern men were unwilling that any enabling Act should be passed for Missouri which did not contain an antislavery restriction.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.149

Mr. Clay, then an accepted leader of Southern sentiment—which in his later life he ceased to be—made an earnest, almost fiery, speech on the question. He declared that before the Maine bill should be finally acted on, he wanted to know "whether certain doctrines of an alarming character, with respect to a restriction on the admission of new States west of the Mississippi, were to be sustained on this floor." He wanted to know "what conditions Congress could annex to the admission of a new State; whether, indeed, there could be a partition of its sovereignty."

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.149

Despite the eloquence and the great influence of the Speaker, the Southern representatives were overborne and the House adopted the antislavery restriction. The Senate refused to concur, united Maine and Missouri in one bill, and passed it with an entirely new feature, which was proposed by Mr. Jesse B. Thomas, a senator from Illinois. That feature was simply the provision, since so widely known as the Missouri Compromise, which forever prohibited slavery north of 36° 30' in all the territory acquired from France by the Louisiana purchase. The House would not consent to admit the two States in the same bill, but finally agreed to the compromise; and in the early part of March, 1820, Maine became a member of the Union without condition. A separate bill was passed, permitting Missouri to form a constitution preparatory to her admission, subject to the compromise, which, indeed, formed one section of the enabling Act. Missouri was thus granted permission to enter the Union as a slave State. But she was discontented with the prospect of having free States on three sides—east, north, and west.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.150

Altho the Missouri Compromise was thus nominally perfected, and the agitation apparently ended, the most exciting, and in some respects the most dangerous, phase of the question was yet to be reached. After the enabling Act was passed the Missouri Convention assembled to frame a constitution for the new State. The inhabitants of the Territory had become angered by the long delay imposed upon them, caused, as they believed, by the introduction of a question which concerned only themselves, and which Congress had no right to control. In this resentful mood they were led by the extremists of the convention to insert a provision in the constitution, declaring that "it shall be the duty of the General Assembly, as soon as may be, to pass such laws as may be necessary to prevent free negroes or mulattoes from coming to or settling in this State under any pretext whatsoever." As soon as the constitution with this obnoxious clause was transmitted to Congress by the President, the excitement broke forth with increased intensity and the lines of the old controversy were at once formed.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.150

The parliamentary struggle which ensued was bitter beyond precedent; threats of dissolving the Union were frequent, and apprehension of an impending calamity was felt throughout the country. The discussion continued with unabated vigor and ardor until the middle of February, and the Congress was to terminate on the ensuing fourth of March. The House had twice refused to pass the bill admitting Missouri, declaring that the objectionable clause in her organic law was not only an insult to every State in which colored men were citizens, but was in flat contradiction of that provision in the Federal Constitution which declares that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States."

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.151

The defeat, apparently final, of the admission of Missouri, created intense indignation. Southern senators and representatives charged that they were treated unjustly by the North, and dealt with unfairly in Congress. In pursuance of the compromise of the year before, Maine had been admitted and her senators were in their seats. The organs of Southern opinion accused the North of overreaching the South in securing, under the name of a compromise, the admission of Maine, while still retaining power to exclude Missouri. A feeling that bad faith has been practised is sure to create bitterness, and the accusation of it produces increased bitterness in return. The North could easily justify itself by argument, but the statement without argument apparently showed that the South had been deceived.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.151

The course pursued by the senators from Maine—John Holmes and John Chandler—in voting steadily for the admission of Missouri, tended greatly to check recrimination and relieve asperity of feeling. Mr. Holmes was a man of ability, of experience in public affairs and of eminent distinction at home. With a rare gift of humor, and with conversational talent almost unrivaled, he exerted an influence over men in private and social intercourse which gave him singularpower in shaping public questions. He was an intimate friend and political supporter of Mr. Clay, and their cordial cooperation at this crisis evoked harmony from chaos, and brought a happy solution to a question that was troubling every patriotic heart. They united in a final effort, and through the instrumentality of a joint committee of seven senators and twenty-three representatives—of which Mr. Holmes was chairman on the part of the Senate, and Mr. Clay on the part of the House—a second and final compromise was effected, and the admission of Missouri secured.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.152

This compromise declared that Missouri should be admitted to the Union upon the fundamental condition that no law should ever be passed by her Legislature enforcing the objectionable provision in her constitution, and that by a solemn public act the State should declare and record her assent to this condition, and transmit to the President of the United States an authentic copy of the Act. Missouri accepted the condition promptly but not cheerfully, feeling that she entered the Union under a sever discipline, and with hard and humiliating conditions.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.152

It was in this compromise, not in the one of the preceding session, that Mr. Clay was the leading spirit. Tho the first was the more important, and dealt with larger questions of a more enduring nature, it did not at the time create so great an impression on the public mind as the second, nor did its discussion produce so much antagonism between the North and the South. Thirty years after these events Mr. Clay called attention to the fact that he had received undeserved credit for the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which he hadsupported but not originated. On the other hand, he had received only the slightest mention for his agency in the compromise, which he had really originated and carried through Congress. The second compromise had passed out of general recollection before Mr. Clay's death, tho it had made him a Presidential candidate at forty-three years of age….

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.153

The Missouri question marked a distinct era in the political thought of the country, and made a profound impression on the minds of patriotic men. Suddenly, without warning, the North and the South, the free States and the slave States, found themselves arrayed against each other in violent and absorbing conflict. During the interval between the adoption of the Federal Constitution and the admission of Missouri, there had been a great change in the Southern mind, both as to the moral and the economic aspects of slavery. This revolution of opinion had been wrought in large degree by the cotton-plant.

Blaine, The Missouri Compromise, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.153

When the National Government was organized in 1789, the annual export of cotton did not exceed three hundred bales. It was reckoned only among our experimental products. But, stimulated by the invention of the gin, production increased so rapidly, that, at the time of Missouri's application for admission to the Union, cotton-planting was the most remunerative industry in the country. The export alone exceeded three hundred thousand bales annually. But this highly profitable culture was in regions so warm that outdoor labor was unwelcome to the white race. The immediate consequence was a large advance in the value of slave-labor, and in the price of slaves.

An Apprehensive View of the Missouri Compromise

Title: An Apprehensive View of the Missouri Compromise

Author: Thomas Jefferson

Date: 1820

Source: America, Vol.5, pp.305-308

The Missouri Compromise was the first of the great measures that followed the spirit of mutual accommodation found in the Constitution itself. It was an arrangement between the free and slave States, embodied in an Act of Congress approved March 6, 1820, which provided for the admission of Missouri into the Union as a slave State, but which prohibited slavery in all other Louisiana territory north of the southern boundary line of Missouri.

Jefferson betrays both apprehension and alarm for the future of the Union, in these three letters written in 1820. It is the Southern view of a lukewarm slaveholder. Following it is the Northern view taken from the journal of John Quincy Adams, then (1820) Secretary of State. His prophecy of civil war, in the third paragraph, was fulfilled in 1861. Niles, whose moderate view follows, founded (1815) and edited "Niles' Weekly Register," the files of which are an invaluable record of contemporary events.

Jefferson, Apprehensive View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.305–p.306

ALTHOUGH I had laid down a law to myself, never to write, talk, or even think of politics, to know nothing of public affairs, and therefore had ceased to read newspapers, yet the Missouri question aroused and filled me with alarm. The old schism of Federal and Republican threatened nothing, because it existed in every State, and united them together by the fraternism of party. But the coincidence of a marked principle, moral and political, with a geographical line, once conceived, I feared would never more be obliterated from the mind; that it would be recurring on every occasion and renewing irritations, until it would kindle such mutual and mortal hatred, as to render separation preferable to eternal discord. I have been among the most sanguine in believing that our Union would be of long duration. I now doubt it much, and see the event at no great distance, and the direct consequence of this question; not by the line which has been so confidently counted on; the laws of nature control this; but by the Potomac, Ohio and Missouri, or more probably, the Mississippi upwards to our northern boundary….

Jefferson, Apprehensive View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.306

I CAN say, with conscious truth, that there is not a man on earth who would sacrifice more than I would to relieve us from this heavy reproach, in any practicable way. The cession of that kind of property, for so it is misnamed, is a bagatelle which would not cost me a second thought, if, in that way, a general emancipation and expatriation could be effected; and, gradually, and with due sacrifices, I think it might be. But as it is, we have the wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other.

Jefferson, Apprehensive View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.306–p.307

Of one thing I am certain, that as the passage of slaves from one State to another, would not make a slave of a single human being who would not be so without it, so their diffusion over a greater surface would make them individually happier, and proportionally facilitate the accomplishment of their emancipation, by dividing the burden on a greater number of coadjutors. An abstinence too, from this act of power, would remove the jealousy excited by the undertaking of Congress to regulate the condition of the different descriptions of men composing a State. This certainly is the exclusive right of every State, which nothing in the Constitution has taken from them and given to the general government. Could Congress, for example, say, that the non-freemen of Connecticut shall be freemen, or that they shall not emigrate into any other State?

Jefferson, Apprehensive View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.307

I regret that I am now to die in the belief, that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of 1776, to acquire self-government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be, that I live not to weep over it. If they would but dispassionately weigh the blessings they will throw away, against an abstract principle more likely to be effected by union than by scission, they would pause before they would perpetrate this act of suicide on themselves, and of treason against the hopes of the world….

Jefferson, Apprehensive View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.307–p.308

THE Missouri Question is a mere party trick. The leaders of federalism, defeated in their schemes of obtaining power by rallying partisans to the principle of monarchism, a principle of personal not of local division, have changed their tack, and thrown out another barrel to the whale. They are taking advantage of the virtuous feelings of the people to effect a division of parties by a geographical line; they expect that this will insure them, on local principles, the majority they could never obtain on principles of federalism; but they are still putting their shoulder to the wrong wheel; they are wasting Jeremiads on the miseries of slavery, as if we were advocates for it. Sincerity in their declamations should direct their efforts to the true point of difficulty, and unite their counsels with ours in devising some reasonable and practicable plan of getting rid of it.

Jefferson, Apprehensive View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.308

Some of these leaders, if they could attain the power, their ambition would rather use it to keep the Union together, but others have ever had in view its separation. If they push it to that, they will find the line of separation very different from their 360 of latitude, and as manufacturing and navigating States, they will have quarrelled with their bread and butter, and I fear not that after a little trial they will think better of it, and return to the embraces of their natural and best friends. But this scheme of party I leave to those who are to live under its consequences. We who have gone before have perfumed an honest duty, by putting in the power of our successors a state of happiness which no nation ever before had within their choice. If that choice is to throw it away, the dead will have neither the power nor the right to control them. I must hope, nevertheless, that the mass of our honest and well-meaning brethren of the other States, will discover the use which designing leaders are making of their best feelings, and will see the precipice to which they are lead, before they take she fatal leap….

A Northern View of the Missouri Compromise

Title: A Northern View of the Missouri Compromise

Author: John Quincy Adams

Date: 1820

Source: America, Vol.5, pp.309-312

Adams, Northern View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.309

I HAD some conversation with Calhoun on the slave question pending in Congress. He said he did not think it would produce a dissolution of the Union, but, if it should, the South would be from necessity compelled to form an alliance, offensive and defensive, with Great Britain.

Adams, Northern View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.309

I said that would be returning to the colonial state.

Adams, Northern View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.309

He said, yes, pretty much, but it would be forced upon them. I asked him whether he thought, if by the effect of this alliance, offensive and defensive, the population of the North should be cut off from its natural outlet upon the ocean, it would fall back upon its rocks bound hand and foot, to starve, or whether it would not retain its powers of locomotion to move southward by land. Then, he said, they would find it necessary to make their communities all military. I pressed the conversation no further; but if the dissolution of the Union should result from the slave question, it is as obvious as anything that can be foreseen of futurity, that it must shortly afterwards be followed by the universal emancipation of the slaves….

Adams, Northern View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.309–p.310

After this meeting, I walked home with Calhoun, who said that the principles which I had avowed were just and noble; but that in the Southern country, whenever they were mentioned, they were always understood as applying only to white men. Domestic labor was confined to the blacks, and such was the prejudice, that if he, who was the most popular man in his district, were to keep a white servant in his house, his character and reputation would be irretrievably ruined.

Adams, Northern View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.310

I said that this confounding of the ideas of servitude and labor was one of the bad effects of slavery; but he thought it attended with many excellent consequences. It did not apply to all kinds of labor—not, for example, to farming. He himself had often held the plough; so had his father. Manufacturing and mechanical labor was not degrading. It was only manual labor—the proper work of slaves. No white person could descend to that. And it was the best guarantee to equality among the whites. It produced an unvarying level among them. It not only did not excite, but did not even admit of inequalities, by which one white man could dominate over another.

Adams, Northern View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.310–p.311

I told Calhoun I could not see things in the same light. It is, in truth, all perverted sentiment—mistaking labor for slavery, and dominion for freedom. The discussion of this Missouri question has betrayed the secret of their souls. In the abstract they admit that slavery is an evil, they disclaim all participation in the introduction of it, and cast it all upon the shoulders of our old Grandam Britain. But when probed to the quick upon it, they show at the bottom of their souls pride and vainglory in their condition of masterdom. They fancy themselves more generous and noble-hearted than the plain freemen who labor for subsistence. They look down upon the simplicity of a Yankee's manners, because he has no habits of overbearing like theirs and cannot treat negroes like dogs….

Adams, Northern View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.311–p.312

The impression produced upon my mind by the progress of this discussion is, that the bargain between freedom and slavery contained in the Constitution of the United States is morally and politically vicious, inconsistent with the principles upon which alone our Revolution can be justified; cruel and oppressive, by riveting the chains of slavery, by pledging the faith of freedom to maintain and perpetuate the tyranny of the master; and grossly unequal and impolitic, by admitting that slaves are at once enemies to be kept in subjection, property to be secured or restored to their owners, and persons not to be represented themselves, but for whom their masters are privileged with nearly a double share of representation. The consequence has been that this slave representation has governed the Union. Benjamin portioned above his brethren has ravined as a wolf. In the morning he has devoured the prey, and at night he has divided the spoil. It would be no difficult matter to prove, by reviewing the history of the Union under this Constitution, that almost everything which has contributed to the honor and welfare of the nation has been accomplished in despite of them or forced upon them, and that everything unpropitious and dishonorable, including the blunders and follies of their adversaries, may be traced to them. I have favored this Missouri Compromise, believing it to be all that could be effected under the present Constitution, and from extreme unwillingness to put the Union at hazard. But perhaps it would have been a wiser as well as a bolder course to have persisted in the restriction upon Missouri, till it should have terminated in a convention of the States to revise and amend the Constitution. This would have produced a new Union of thirteen or fourteen States unpolluted with slavery, with a great and glorious object to effect, namely, that of rallying to their standard the other States by the universal emancipation of their slaves. If the Union must be dissolved, slavery is precisely the question upon which it ought to break. For the present, however, this contest is laid asleep.

A Moderate View of the Missouri Compromise

Title: A Moderate View of the Missouri Compromise

Author: Hezikiah Niles

Date: 1820

Source: America, Vol.5, pp.313-317

Niles, Moderate View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.313

IT IS established (so far as large majorities in both houses of Congress can establish it), that the power to check the progress of a slave population within the territories of the United States, exists by the Constitution; but admitted that it was not expedient to exert that power in regard to Missouri and Arkansas. The latter depended on many considerations of no ordinary importance: the safety and feelings of the white population in several of the States appeared to be involved in it, and the rights and feelings of others were as deeply concerned in the subject at large. In this conflict of interests, among persons who possibly desired the same ultimate issue, though their views of it were diametrically opposed, a spirit of conciliation prevailed and a compromise was effected.

Niles, Moderate View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.313–p.314

The people of those sections of country in which there are few or no slaves or persons of color, very imperfectly appreciate the wants, necessities or general principle of others differently situated. Collectively, the latter deprecate slavery as severely as the former, and dread its increase—but individual cupidity and rashness acts against the common sentiment, in the hope that an event which everybody believes must happen, may not happen in their day. It is thus that too many of us act about death; we are sure it must come, yet we commit wrong to acquire property, just as if we should hold and enjoy it forever! That the slave population will, at some certain period, cause the most horrible catastrophe, cannot be doubted—those who possess them act defensively in behalf of all that is nearest and dearest to them, when they endeavor to acquire all the strength and influence to meet that period which they can; and hence the political and civil opposition of these to the restriction which was proposed to be laid on Missouri, &c. They have the offensive population, and no feasible plan has yet been contrived to rid them of it, if they were disposed so to do. Will the people of any of the States, so much alive to humanity, pass acts to encourage emancipation by agreeing to receive the emancipated—what will they do, what can they do, to assist the people of others to relieve themselves of their unfortunate condition? It is easy to use severe terms against the practice of slavery—but let us first tell the Southern people what they can safely do to abolish it, before we, by wholesale, condemn them.

Niles, Moderate View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.314–p.315

No one can hate slavery more than I do—it is a thing opposed to every principle that operates on my mind, as an individual—and, in my own private circle, I do much to discourage it. I am, also, exceedingly jealous of it, so far as it affects my political rights as a citizen of the United States, entitled to be fairly and fully represented, and no more. But I can make great allowances for those who hold slaves in districts where they abound—where, in many cases, their emancipation might be an act of cruelty to them and of most serious injury to the white population. Their difference of color is an insuperable barrier to their incorporation within the society; and the mixture of free blacks with slaves is detrimental to the happiness of both, the cause of uncounted crimes. Yet I think that some have urged their defensive character too far—without a proper respect for the rights and feelings of others, whose business it is also to judge on the matter, as applicable to an extension of the evil. But we advocated the compromise, as fixing certain points for the future government of all the parties concerned; believing that the moral and political evil of spreading slavery over Missouri and even in Arkansas, was not greater than that which might have arisen from restriction, though to restrict was right in itself. The harmony of the Union, and the peace and prosperity of the white population, most excited our sympathies. We did not fear the dreadful things which some silly folks talked of, but apprehended geographical oppositions which might lead to the worst of calamities. We had no pleasant feeling on the compromise, for bad was the best that could be done. Nevertheless, we hoped that the contest was at an end, and that things would settle down and adapt themselves to the agreement which necessity imposed.

Niles, Moderate View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.315–p.316

Thus situated, it was with no little concern that we saw in the constitution which Missouri was about to offer for the sanction of Congress, new causes of collision. The objectionable provisions cannot be of any use to the new State, as to the things which they aim at. We are willing to believe that they were unthinkingly introduced; but they have the appearance of braving opposition, and of manifesting a spirit which the meekest man feels disposed to resist—to say nothing of one of them as being contrary to the Constitution of the United States—that to prevent the emigration and settlement of free blacks and mulattoes. It appears that some of the former and a number of the latter are entitled to bounty lands, for services rendered in the late war: if their lots should be in Missouri, it is idle to pretend they may not settle upon and enjoy them, if they please. But we are not disposed to examine the subject in detail—the principle adopted by the convention of Missouri, to give our opinion of it in a few words, is destructive of the federative character of our great compact, and may just as well apply to the exclusion of persons with black hair or blue eyes; and no one can seriously apprehend injury from the emigration of free people of color to a slave-holding state. It would be about as reasonable as to expect that the Mississippi will discharge her waters into the lakes, instead of naturally to disembogue them into the Gulf of Mexico.

Niles, Moderate View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.316–p.317

The result, in the House of Representatives, was anticipated; but we did think that both Houses, with large majorities, would have so decided, as to striking out the offensive provisions, for the sake of harmony, in the spirit of the compromise: all would then have been well, and a great deal of time, trouble and anxiety saved. We totally reject the idea that anything which it is the business of Congress to do, should be left to the judiciary or any other power. With due deference to the eminent gentleman who proposed it, we regret that he did it; for had his plan been adopted, who can tell where the precedent would have stopped? But we think it more strange that, because Missouri was empowered to make a constitution, it should be argued that Congress was bound to accept it. Why, then, are constitutions offered, referred to committees, and sanctioned by both Houses? All this is mere mummery, if they are to be accepted at any rate—as contended for by some of the members. No one wishes harm to the people of Missouri—they are of our own kindred and lineage; they may have urged their claims imprudently, and, in our belief, have mistaken their true interests—but they have a right to judge for themselves; and if that judgment is repugnant to the general opinion or principle on the matter, they will yield it, we trust, to the law, and respect the majority.

Niles, Moderate View of Missouri Compromise, America, Vol.5, p.317

We had written thus far when we first saw the resolution offered by Mr. Eustis, in the House of Representatives, on Tuesday last…. It precisely meets our wishes, so far as it goes, and may accomplish all that either party is really just now disposed to contend for. The anti-restriction members, as well as others, regretted the existence of certain clauses in the constitution of Missouri, as unnecessary, and calculated only to create doubts and excite opposition. Let them be expunged by the unanimous voice of Congress, and then we shall hope for an obliteration of the feelings which this unfortunate controversy has given birth to, and that all will be willing to disavow sectional interests within the body of the Republic; the peace and prosperity of which can only be maintained by a spirit of forbearance and moderation: and, if we must differ in opinion, let us differ like rational beings, and grant to others the rights which we assume for ourselves, always recollecting that the fairly expressed will of the majority must govern.

How a Log Cabin was Built

Title: How a Log Cabin was Built

Author: Unknown

Date: 1822

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, pp.154-157

How a Log Cabin Was Built, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.154

In building our cabin it was set north and south; my brother used my father's pocket-compass on the occasion, for we had no idea of living in a house that did not stand square with the earth itself. This showed our ignorance of the comforts and conveniences of a pioneer life. The position of the house, end to the hill, necessarily elevated the lower end, and the determination to have both a north and south door, added much to the airiness of the house, particularly after the green ash puncheons had shrunk so as to leave cracks in the floor and doors from one to two inches wide. At both the doors we had high, unsteady, and sometimes icy steps, made by piling up the logs cut out of the wall. We had a window, if it could be called a window, when, perhaps, it was the largest spot in the top, bottom, or sides of the cabin at which the wind could not enter. It was made by sawing out a log, and placing sticks across; and then, by pasting an old newspaper over the hole, and applying some hog's lard, we had a kind of glazing which shed a most beautiful and mellow light across the cabin when the sun shone on it. All other light entered at the doors, cracks, and chimney.

How a Log Cabin Was Built, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.155

Our cabin was twenty-four feet by eighteen. The west end was occupied by two beds, the center of each side by a door, and here our symmetry had to stop, for on the side opposite the window were our shelves, made of clapboards, supported on pins driven into the logs. Upon these shelves my sister displayed, in ample order, a host of pewter plates, basins, dishes, and spoons, scoured and bright. It was none of your new-fangled pewter made of lead, but the best of London pewter, which our father himself bought of the manufacturer. These were the plates upon which you could hold your meat so as to cut it without slipping and without dulling your knife. But, alas! the days of pewter plates and sharp dinner knives have passed away.

How a Log Cabin Was Built, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.155

To return to our internal arrangements. A ladder of five rounds occupied the corner near the window. By this, when we got a floor above, we could ascend. Our chimney occupied most of the east end; there were pots and kettles opposite the window under the shelves, a gun on hooks over the north door, four split-bottom chairs, three three-legged stools, and a small eight by ten looking-glass sloped from the wall over a large towel and combcase. Our list of furniture was increased by a clumsy shovel and a pair of tongs, made with one shank straight, which was a certain source of pinches and blood blisters. We had also a spinning-wheel and such things as were necessary to work it. It was absolutely necessary to have three-legged stools, as four legs of anything could not all touch the floor at the same time.

How a Log Cabin Was Built, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.155

The completion of our cabin went on slowly. The season was inclement, we were weak-handedand weak-pocketed—in fact laborers were not to be had. We got our chimney up breast high as soon as we could, and got our cabin daubed as high as the joists outside. It never was daubed on the inside, for my sister, who was very nice, could not consent to "live right next to mud." My impression now is, that the window was not constructed till spring, for until the sticks and clay were put on the chimney we could have no need of a window; for the flood of light which always poured into the cabin from the fireplace would have extinguished our paper window, and rendered it as useless as the moon at noonday.

How a Log Cabin Was Built, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.156

We got a floor laid overhead as soon as possible, perhaps in a month; but when finished, the reader will readily conceive of its imperviousness to wind or weather, when we mention that it was laid of loose clapboards split from red oak, the stump of which may be seen beyond the cabin. That tree must have grown in the night, for it was so twisting that each board lay on two diagonally opposite corners; and a cat might have shaken every board on our ceiling.

How a Log Cabin Was Built, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.156

It may be well to inform the unlearned reader that "clapboards" are such lumber as pioneers split throughout; they resemble barrel-staves before they are shaved, but are split longer, wider, and thinner; of such our roof and ceiling were composed. "Puncheons" are planks made by splitting logs to about two and a half or three inches in thickness, and hewing them on one or both sides with the broadax; of such our floor, doors, tables, and stools were manufactured. The "eave-bearers" are those end logs which project over to receive the butting poles, against whichthe lower tier of clapboards rest to form the roof. The "trapping" is the roof timbers, composing the gable end and the ribs. The "trap logs" are those of unequal length above the eave-bearers, which form the gable ends, and upon which the ribs rest. The "weight poles" are small logs laid on the roof, which weigh down the course of clapboards on which they lie, and against which the course above is placed. The "knees" are pieces of heart timber placed above the butting poles, successively, to prevent the weight poles from rolling off.

The First Seminole War

Title: The First Seminole War

Author: James Parton

Date: 1822

Source: America, Vol.5, pp.277-288

Parton, in his "Life of Jackson," gives this most interesting and trustworthy account of the campaign General Andrew Jackson conducted against the Florida Seminoles in 1817-18. Parton was almost contemporary with the period, having been born in 1822.

The American invasion of Florida, then Spanish territory, was provoked, by depredations the Indians had committed at the instigation of the English traders, Arbuthnot and Ambrister, who were hanged by order of Jackson after a court-martial trial. The case aroused much controversy, the majority of the military committee of the House of Representatives condemning the action. It was approved by the House, however, on a vote of 103 to 62.

During the discussion the Spanish minister signed a treaty ceding Florida to the United States. Had Jackson failed in his campaign, it is unlikely that the treaty would have been negotiated.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.277–p.278

UPON the conclusion of peace with Great Britain the army was reduced to ten thousand men, commanded by two major-generals, one of whom was to reside at the North and command the troops stationed there, and the other to bear military sway at the South. The generals selected for these commands were General Jacob Brown for the Northern division, and General Andrew Jackson for the Southern, both of whom had entered the service at the beginning of the late war as generals of militia. General Jackson's visit to Washington on this occasion was in obedience to an order, couched in the language of an invitation, received from the Secretary of war soon after his return from New Orleans; the object of his visit being to arrange the posts and stations of the army.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.278

The feeling was general at the time that the disasters of the War of 1812 was chiefly due to the defenseless and unprepared condition of the country, and that it was the first duty of the Government, on the return of peace, to see to it that the assailable points were fortified. "Let us never be caught napping again"; "In time of peace prepare for war," were popular sayings then. On these and all other subjects connected with the defense of the country the advice of General Jackson was asked and given. His own duty, it was evident, was first of all to pacify, and if possible satisfy, the restless and sorrowful Indians in the Southwest. The vanquished tribe, it was agreed, should be dealt with forbearingly and liberally. The general undertook to go in person into the Indian country and remove from their minds all discontent. He did so.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.278–p.279

It is not possible to overstate his popularity in his own State. He was its pride, boast and glory. Tennesseeans felt a personal interest in his honor and success. His old enemies either sought reconciliation with him or kept their enmity to themselves. His rank in the army, too, gave him unequaled social eminence; and, to add to the other felicities of his lot, his fortune now rapidly increased, as the entire income of his estate could be added to his capital, the pay of a major-general being sufficient for the support of his family. He was forty-nine years old in 1816. He had riches, rank, power, renown, and all in full measure.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.279

But in 1817 there was trouble again among the Indians—the Indians of Florida, the allies of Great Britain during the War of 1812, commonly known by the name of Seminoles. Composed in part of fugitive Creeks, who scouted the treaty of Fort Jackson, they had indulged the expectation that on the conclusion of peace they would be restored by their powerful ally to the lands wrested from the Creeks by Jackson's conquering army in 1814. This poor remnant of tribes once so numerous and powerful had not a thought, at first, of attempting to regain the lost lands by force of arms. The best testimony now procurable confirms their own solemnly reiterated assertions that they long desired and endeavored to live in peace with the white settlers of Georgia. All their "talks," petitions, remonstrances, letters, of which a large number are still accessible, breathe only the wish for peace and fair dealing. The Seminoles were drawn at last into a collision with the United States by a chain of circumstances with which they had little to do, and the responsibility of which belongs not to them.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.279–p.280

The Government, in the absence of a general officer from the scene of hostilities, resolved upon ordering General Jackson to take command in person of the troops upon the frontiers of Georgia. On the 22d of January, General Jackson and his "guard" left Nashville amid the cheers of the entire population. The distance from Nashville to Fort Scott is about four hundred and fifty miles. In the evening of March 9th, forty-six days after leaving Nashville, he reached Fort Scott with eleven hundred hungry men. No tidings yet of the Tennessee troops under Colonel Hayne! There was no time to spend, however, in waiting or surmising. The general found himself at Fort Scott in command of two thousand men, and his whole stock of provisions one quart of corn and three rations of meat per man. There was no supply in his rear, for he had swept the country on his line of march of every bushel of corn and every animal fit for food. He had his choice of two courses only: to remain at Fort Scott and starve, or to go forward and find provisions. It is not necessary to say which of these alternatives Andrew Jackson selected. "Accordingly," he wrote, "having been advised by Colonel Gibson, quartermaster-general, that he would sail from New Orleans on the 12th of February with supplies, and being also advised that two sloops with provisions were in the bay, and an officer had been dispatched from Fort Scott in a large keel-boat to bring up a part of their loading, and deeming that the preservation of these supplies would be to preserve the army, and enable me to prosecute the campaign, I assumed the command on the morning of the 10th, ordered the live stock to be slaughtered and issued to the troops, with one quart of corn to each man, and the line of march to be taken up at twelve meridian."

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.281

It was necessary to cross the swollen river, an operation which consumed all the afternoon, all the dark night succeeding, and a part of the next morning. Five days' march along the banks of the Appalachicola past the scene of the massacre of Lieutenant Scott—brought the army to the site of the old Negro Fort on Prospect Bluff. On the way, however, the army, to its great joy, met the ascending boat-load of flour, when the men had their first full meal since leaving Fort Early, three weeks before. Upon the site of the Negro Fort, General Jackson ordered his aide, Lieutenant Gadsden, of the engineers, to construct a fortification, which was promptly done, and named by the general Fort Gadsden, in honor, as he said, of the "talents and indefatigable seal" of the builder….

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.281–p.282

On the 6th of April the army reached St. Marks, and halted in the vicinity of the fort. The general sent in to the Governor his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Gadsden, bearing a letter explanatory of his objects and purposes. He had come, he said, "to chastise a savage foe, who, combined with a lawless band of negro brigands, had been for some time past carrying on a cruel and unprovoked war against the citizens of the United States." He had already met and put to flight parties of the hostile Indians. He had received information that those Indians had fled to St. Marks and found protection within its walls; that both Indians and negroes had procured supplies of ammunition there; and that the Spanish garrison, from the smallness of its numbers, was unable to resist the demands of the savages.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.282

"To prevent the recurrence of so gross a violation of neutrality, and to exclude our savage enemies from so strong a hold as St. Marks, I deem it expedient to garrison that fortress with American troops until the close of the present war. This measure is justifiable on the immutable principle of self-defense, and cannot but be satisfactory, under existing circumstances, to his Catholic Majesty the King of Spain." [So added Jackson.]

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.282–p.283

The Governor replied that he had been made to understand General Jackson's letter only with the greatest difficulty, as there was no one within the fort who could properly translate it. He denied that the Indians and negroes had ever obtained supplies, succor, or encouragement from Fort St. Marks. On the contrary, they had menaced the fort with assault because supplies had been refused them. With regard to delivering up the fort entrusted to his care, he had no authority to do so, and must write on the subject to his Government. Meanwhile he prayed General Jackson to suspend his operations. "The sick your Excellency sent in," concluded the polite Governor, "are lodged in the Royal Hospital, and I have afforded them every aid which circumstances admit. I hope your Excellency will give me other opportunities of evincing the desire I have to satisfy you. I trust your Excellency will pardon my not answering you as soon as requested, for reasons which have been given you by your aide-de-camp. I do not accompany this with an English translation, as your Excellency desires, because there is no one in the fort capable thereof, but the before-named William Hambly proposes to translate it to your Excellency in the best manner he can."

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.283–p.284

This was delivered to General Jackson on the morning of the 7th of April. He instantly replied to it by taking possession of the fort! The Spanish flag was lowered, the Stars and Stripes floated from the flag-staff, and American troops took up their quarters within the fortress. The Governor made no resistance, and indeed could make none. When all was over, he sent to General Jackson a formal protest against his proceedings, to which the General briefly replied: "The occupancy of Fort St. Marks by my troops previous to your assenting to the measure became necessary from the difficulties thrown in the way of an amicable adjustment, notwithstanding my assurances that every arrangement should be made to your satisfaction, and expressing a wish that my movements against our common enemy should not be retarded by a tedious negotiation. I again repeat what has been reiterated to you through my aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Gadsden, that your personal rights and private property shall be respected, that your situation shall be made as comfortable as practicable while compelled to remain in Fort St. Marks, and that transports shall be furnished, as soon as they can be obtained to convey yourself, family, and command to Pensacola."

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.284

Alexander Arbuthnot, a Scotch trader among the Indians, was found within the fort, an inmate of the Governor's own quarters. It appears that on the arrival of General Jackson he was preparing to leave St. Marks. His horse, saddled and bridled, was standing at the gate. General Jackson had no sooner taken possession of St. Marks than Arbuthnot became a prisoner. "In Fort St. Marks," wrote General Jackson, "an inmate in the family of the Spanish commandant, an Englishman by the name of Arbuthnot was found. Unable satisfactorily to explain the object of his visiting this country, and there being a combination of circumstances to justify a suspicion that his views were not honest, he was ordered into close confinement."

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.284

For two days only the army remained at Fort St. Marks. Suwanee, the far-famed and dreaded Suwanee, the town of the great chief Boleck, or Bowlegs, the refuge of negroes, was General Jackson's next object. It was one hundred and seven miles from St. Marks, and the route lay through a flat and swampy wilderness, little known and destitute of forage. On the 9th of April, leaving a strong garrison at the fort, and supplying the troops with rations for eight days, the general again plunged into the forest—the white troops in advance, the Indians, under General McIntosh, a few miles in the rear.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.284–p.285

The army made slow progress, wading through extensive sheets of water; the horses starving for want of forage, and giving out daily in large numbers. Late in the afternoon of the third day the troops reached a "remarkable pond," which the Indian guides said was only six miles from Suwanee town. At sunset the lines were formed, and the whole army rushed forward.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.285

But the prey had been forewarned, A letter from Arbuthnot to his son had reached the place and had been explained to Bowlegs, who had been ever since employed in sending the women and children across the broad Suwanee into those inaccessible retreats which render Florida the best place in the world for such warfare as Indians wage. The troops reached the vicinity of the town, and in a few minutes drove out the enemy and captured the place. The pursuit was continued on the following morning by General Gaines; but the foe had vanished by a hundred paths, and were no more seen….

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.285–p.286

In the evening of April 17th the whole army encamped on the level banks of the Suwanee. In the dead of night an incident occurred which can here be related in the language of the same young Tennessee officer who has already narrated for us the capture of the chiefs and their execution. Fortunately for us, he kept a journal of the campaign. This journal, written at the time partly with a decoction of roots and partly with the blood of the journalist—for ink was not attainable—lay for forty years among his papers, and was copied at length by the obliging hand of his daughter for the readers of these pages.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.286

"About midnight of April 18th," wrote our journalist, "the repose of the army, then bivouacked on the plains of the old town of Suwanee, was suddenly disturbed by the deep-toned report of a musket, instantly followed by a sharp crack of the American rifle. The signal to arms was given, and where but a moment before could only be heard the measured tread of the sentinels and the low moaning of the long-leafed pines, now stood five thousand men, armed, watchful, and ready for action. The cause of the alarm was soon made known. Four men, two whites and two negroes, had been captured while attempting to enter the camp. They were taken in charge by the guard, and the army again sank to such repose as war allows her votaries. When morning came it was ascertained that the prisoners were Robert C. Ambrister, a white attendant named Peter B. Cook, and two negro servants—Ambrister being a nephew of the English governor, Cameron, of the Island of New Providence, an ex-lieutenant of British marines, and suspected of being engaged in the business of counseling and furnishing munitions of war to the Indians in furtherance of their contest with the United States.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.286

Ignorant of the situation of the American camp, he had blundered into it while endeavoring to reach Suwanee town to meet the Indians, being also unaware that the latter had been driven thence on the previous day by Jackson."

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.287

Ambrister was conducted to St. Marks and placed in confinement, together with his companions. The fact that through Arbuthnot the Suwanee people had escaped, thus rendering the last swift march comparatively fruitless, was calculated, it must be owned, to exasperate General Jackson.

Parton, First Seminole War, America, Vol.5, p.287–p.288

The Seminole War, so called, was over, for the time. On the 20th of April the Georgia troops marched homeward to be disbanded. On the 24th, General McIntosh and his brigade of Indians were dismissed. On the 25th General Jackson, with his Tennesseeans and regulars, was again at Fort St. Marks. It was forty-six days since he had entered Florida, and thirteen weeks since he left Nashville.

The Monroe Doctrine, 1823

Title: The Monroe Doctrine

Author: James Monroe

Date: 1823

Source: Harvard Classics, Vol.43, pp.288-296

The Monroe Doctrine, so-called, was a growth, the germinal seeds of which were planted in the virgin soil of the Republic. Rooted in the conviction that the United States should not become involved in European broils, it was brought to maturity by President Monroe in 1823 then, in a message to Congress, he definitely forbade foreign colonization and intervention in this hemisphere.

The colonization passage referred to a boundary dispute in the northwest between Russia, Great Britain and the United States. The intervention passage related to the proposed action of the Holy Alliance toward reimposing the Spanish yoke upon South American colonies then in revolt, the independence of which the United States had recognized.

The development of the historic doctrine may be traced in the accompanying extracts taken from his messages and addresses dating from March 4, 1817, to December 7, 1824.

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.288

DANGERS from abroad are not less deserving of attention. Experiencing the fortune of other nations, the United States may be again involved in war, and it may in that event be the object of the adverse party to overset our government, to break our Union, and demolish us as a nation. Our distance from Europe and the just, moderate and pacific policy of our government may form some security against these dangers, but they ought to be anticipated and guarded against…. (March 4, 1817.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.288–p.289

It was anticipated at an early stage that the contest between Spain and the colonies would become highly interesting to the United States. It was natural that our citizens should sympathize in events which affected their neighbors. It seemed probable also that the prosecution of the conflict along our coast and in contiguous countries would occasionally interrupt our commerce and otherwise affect the persons and property of our citizens. These anticipations have been realized. Such injuries have been received from persons acting under authority of both the parties, and for which redress has in most instances been withheld. Through every stage of the conflict the United States have maintained an impartial neutrality, giving aid to neither of the parties in men, money, ships, or munitions of war. They have regarded the contest not in the light of an ordinary insurrection or rebellion, but as a civil war between parties nearly equal, having as to neutral powers equal rights. Our ports have been open to both, and every article the fruit of our soil or of the industry of our citizens which either was permitted to take has been equally free to the other. Should the colonies establish their independence, it is proper now to state that this government neither seeks nor would accept from them any advantage in commerce or otherwise which will not be equally open to all other nations. The colonies will in that event become independent States, free from any obligation to or connection with us which it may not then be their interest to form on the basis of a fair reciprocity…. (December 2, 1817.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.289–p.290

By a circular note addressed by the ministers of Spain to the allied powers, with whom they are respectively accredited, it appears that the allies have undertaken to mediate between Spain and the South American provinces, and that the manner and extent of their interposition would be settled by a congress which was to have met at Aix-la-Chapelle in September last. From the general policy and course of proceeding observed by the allied powers in regard to this contest it is inferred that they will confine their interposition to the expression of their sentiments, abstaining from the application of force. I state this impression that force will not be applied with the greater satisfaction because it is a course more consistent with justice and likewise authorizes a hope that the calamities of the war will be confined to the parties only, and will be of shorter duration.

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.290

From the view taken of this subject, founded on all the information that we have been able to obtain, there is good cause to be satisfied with the course heretofore pursued by the United States in regard to this contest, and to conclude that it is proper to adhere to it, especially in the present state of affairs…. (November 16, 1818.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.290–p.291

This contest has from its commencement been very interesting to other powers, and to none more so than to the United States. A virtuous people may and will confine themselves within the limit of a strict neutrality; but it is not in their power to behold a conflict so vitally important to their neighbors without the sensibility and sympathy which naturally belong to such a case. It has been the steady purpose of this government to prevent that feeling leading to excess, and it is very gratifying to have it in my power to state that so strong has been the sense throughout the whole community of what was due to the character and obligations of the nation that very few examples of a contrary kind have occurred.

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.291

The distance of the colonies from the parent country and the great extent of their population and resources gave them advantages which it was anticipated at a very early period would be difficult for Spain to surmount. The steadiness, consistency, and success with which they have pursued their object, as evinced more particularly by the undisturbed sovereignty which Buenos Ayres has so long enjoyed, evidently give them a strong claim to the favorable consideration of other nations. These sentiments on the part of the United States have not been withheld from other powers, with whom it is desirable to act in concert. Should it become manifest to the world that the efforts of Spain to subdue these provinces will be fruitless, it may be presumed that the Spanish Government itself will give up the contest. In producing such a determination it can not be doubted that the opinion of friendly powers who have taken no part in the controversy will have their merited influence…. (December 7, 1819.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.291–p.292

No facts are known to this government to warrant the belief that any of the powers of Europe will take part in the contest, whence it may be inferred, considering all circumstances which must have weight in producing the result, that an adjustment will finally take place on the basis proposed by the colonies. To promote that result by friendly counsels with other powers, including Spain herself, has been the uniform policy of this government…. (November 14, 1820.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.292

This contest was considered at an early stage by my predecessor a civil war in which the parties were entitled to equal rights in our ports. This decision, the first made by any power, being formed on great consideration of the comparative strength and resources of the parties, the length of time, and successful opposition made by the colonies, and of all other circumstances on which it ought to depend, was in strict accord with the law of nations…. (March 5, 1821.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.292

It has long been manifest that it would he impossible for Spain to reduce these colonies by force, and equally so that no conditions short of their independence would be satisfactory to them. It may therefore be presumed, and it is earnestly hoped, that the government of Spain, guided by enlightened and liberal councils, will find it to comport with its interests and due to its magnanimity to terminate this exhausting controversy on that basis. To promote this result by friendly counsel with the government of Spain will be the object of the government of the United States…. (December 3, 1821.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.292–p.293

At the proposal of the Russian imperial government, made through the minister of the emperor residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the minister of the United States at St. Petersburg to arrange by amicable negotiation the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the northwest coast of this continent…. In the discussions to which this interest has given rise and in the arrangements by which they may terminate the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers.

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.293–p.294

The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellow-men on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy so to do. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense. With the movements in this hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective governments; and to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States….

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.294–p.295

Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the government de facto as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm and manly policy, meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none. But in regard to those continents circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can anyone believe that our southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition in any form with indifference…. (December 2, 1823.)

The Monroe Doctrine, America, Vol.5, p.295–p.296

…these new States are settling down under governments elective and representative in every branch, similar to our own. In this course we ardently wish them to persevere, under a firm conviction that it will promote their happiness. In this, their career, however, we have not interfered, believing that every people have a right to institute for themselves the government which, in their judgment, may suit them best. Our example is before them, of the good effect of which, being our neighbors, they are competent judges, and to their judgment we leave it, in the expectation that other powers will pursue the same policy. The deep interest which we take in their independence, which we have acknowledged, and in their enjoyment of all the rights incident thereto, especially in the very important one of instituting their own governments, has been declared, and is known to the world. Separated as we are from Europe by the great Atlantic Ocean, we can have no concern in the wars of the European governments nor in the causes which produce them. The balance of power between them, into whichever scale it may turn in its various vibrations, can not affect us. It is the interest of the United States to preserve the most friendly relations with every power and on conditions fair, equal and applicable to all. But in regard to our neighbors our situation is different. It is impossible for the European governments to interfere in their concerns, especially in those alluded to, which are vital, without affecting us; indeed, the motive which might induce such interference in the present state of the war between the parties, if a war it may be called, would appear to be equally applicable to us. It is gratifying to know that some of the powers with whom we enjoy a very friendly intercourse, and to whom these views have been communicated, have appeared to acquiesce in them. (December 7, 1824.)

Lafayette Revisits America

Title: Lafayette Revisits America

Author: Thurlow Weed

Date: 1824

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.25-33

At the time General Lafayette revisited America in 1824, Thurlow Weed was editor of the Rochester (New York) Daily Telegraph, and was laying the foundation of an extraordinary political career in which he is credited with "making" two Presidents of the United States, Harrison in 1840, and Taylor in 1848. He also was a dominating figure in the Conventions that nominated Clay in 1844, Winfield Scott in 1852, and Fremont in 1856. Establishing the Albany Evening Journal in 1830, Weed was its editor for thirty-three years and was an influential member of the so-called "political firm of Seward, Weed and Greeley."

The reception tendered Lafayette in Washington and elsewhere is described by Thomas H. Benton in his political reminiscences "Thirty Years' view," from which the following account is taken. Benton represented Missouri for thirty successive years in the United States Senate, and was a member of the reception committee which welcomed Lafayette to the national capital.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.25

GENERAL LE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, after an absence of thirty-nine years, revisited our country, on the invitation of Congress, as the nation's guest in 1824. He reached New York on the 15th of August, in the packet-ship "Cadmus," Captain Allyn, with his son and secretary. The Government had tendered him a United States frigate, but always simple and unostentatious, he preferred to come as an ordinary passenger in a packet-ship.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.25–p.26

There were no wires fifty years ago over which intelligence could pass with lightning speed, but the visit of Lafayette was expected, and the pulses and hearts of the people were quickened and warmed simultaneously through some mysterious medium throughout the whole Union. Citizens rushed from neighboring cities and villages to welcome the French nobleman, who, before he was twenty-one years old, had devoted himself and his fortune to the American colonies in their wonderful conflict with the mother country for independence; and who, after fighting gallantly by the side of Washington through the Revolutionary War, returned to France with the only reward he desired or valued—the gratitude of a free people. General Lafayette was now sixty-seven years of age, with some physical infirmities, but intellectually strong, and in manners and feeling cheerful, elastic, and accomplished.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.26–p.27

The General's landing on the Battery, his reception by the military under General Martin, his triumphant progress through Broadway, his first visit to the City Hall, awakened emotions which can not be described. I have witnessed the celebration of the completion of the Erie Canal and the mingling of the waters of Lake Erie with the Atlantic Ocean, the completion of the Croton Water Works celebration, the reception of the Prince of Wales, and other brilliant and beautiful pageants, but they all lacked the heart and soul which marked and signalized the welcome of Lafayette. The joy of our citizens was expressed more by tears than in any other way. It is impossible to imagine scenes of deeper, higher or purer emotion than the first meeting between General Lafayette and Colonel Marinus Willett, Colonel Ebenezer Stevens, Colonel Varick, Major Platt, General Anthony, Major Popham, Major Fairlee, and other officers of the Revolution, whom he had not seen for nearly forty years, and whom without a moment's hesitation he recognized and named.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.27

But the crowning glory of that series of honors and festivities was the fete at Castle Garden on the evening of the General's departure for Albany. The Castle was expensively, elaborately and gorgeously fitted up and adorned for the occasion. I remember that, even without the aid of gas, the illumination was exceedingly brilliant. There was a ball and supper; the occasion was graced by the intelligence, beauty and refinement of the metropolis. How many—or rather how few—of that then youthful, joyous throng remain to recall, with memories subdued and chastened by time and change, the raptures of that enchanting scene! .

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.27

The steamboat "James Kent," Commodore Wiswall, chartered by the city for the occasion, dropped down the river opposite Castle Garden, brilliantly illuminated, at 12 M., where she remained until half-past 2 A.M., when the General and his friends embarked.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.27–p.28

About three o'clock General Lafayette retired, and his friends were soon afterward in their berths. I rose at five o'clock. General Lafayette came on deck before six for the purpose of showing his son and secretary where Major Andre was arrested; but the view was shut off by a fog, in attempting to grope through which the steamer grounded on Oyster Bank, where she lay until nearly ten o'clock; so that instead of reaching West Point at half past six, it was nearly twelve when the multitude assembled there announced our approach by a discharge of cannon.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.28

As soon as the fog lifted, General Lafayette in the most enthusiastic language and manner pointed out Stony Point, and described the manner in which the British garrison was surprised and captured by "mad Anthony Wayne." As we approached the West Point wharf, cheers of citizens lining the banks echoed and reechoed from hill to hill, well-burnished muskets dazzled the eye, tall plumes nodded their greetings, the ear-piercing fife, the spirit-stirring drum, and the loud bugle sent forth their loftiest notes, while the reverberating cheers filled the air with welcomes. The general was received by Colonel Thayer, and ascended the hill in a landau, escorted by the officers of the post, followed by the Revolutionary officers and a long procession of citizens. He was received by the cadets from their parade ground, and escorted to his marquee, where they paid him the marching salute. From the marquee he proceeded to the quarters of Generals Brown and Scott, where he was presented to the ladies and partook of refreshments. From thence he was conducted to the library and introduced to the cadets. Dinner was served in the mess-room of the cadets, which had been splendidly decorated for the occasion….

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.28–p.29

The day was in all respects a happy one: it is the greenest in my memory. General Lafayette's happiness took every conceivable form of expression. He made an early visit to the ruins of old Fort Putnam, where he had been stationed. Almost every scene and object served to recall incidents of the Revolution, of which he spoke with the greatest enthusiasm. He pointed out the Robinson House, where General Washington, himself, and General Knox were breakfasting with Mrs. Arnold when the Commander-in-Chief received the first news of Arnold's treason. Early in the day a committee of citizens arrived from Newburg, where General Lafayette was expected to dine, and where the citizens of Orange County en masse anxiously awaited his arrival. But he was too much delighted with West Point to be hurried away. An early dinner had been ordered, so that the impatient thousands at Newburg might be gratified with a sight of the general before evening. The dinner, however, with the associations and remembrances it suggested, proved irresistible. Hour after hour passed, but the interest increased rather than diminished, and it was not until seven o'clock that the general could be prevailed to rise from the table. It was dark, therefore, when we reached Newburg.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.29–p.30

Upon landing, a scene of indescribable confusion ensued; troops were in line, but powerless to preserve order. The desire to see the nation's guest was uncontrollable. The huzzas of men mingled with the shrieks of women and the cries of children. All were eager to see, but everywhere good humor and kindness prevailed. The village was illuminated, and the occasion was honored by a ball and supper. The festivities of the evening, however, were saddened by the sudden death of Hector Seward (a cousin of the late Governor Seward), who received a fatal kick from an excited horse. Notwithstanding the excitement and fatigues of the day and of the preceding night, General Lafayette was as cheerful and buoyant at the ballroom and at the supper-table as the youngest and gayest of the revelers.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.30

The general reembarked at one o'clock A.M. At half past two our approach was announced by a discharge of canon from the bluff, just below the landing at Poughkeepsie. Large piles of seasoned wood, saturated with tar and turpentine, were kindled on that bluff, fed by hundreds of boys who had been entrusted with the duty, and were kept blazing high, filling the atmosphere with lurid flame and smoke until daylight. Soon after sunrise, a large concourse of the citizens of Poughkeepsie, with a military escort, arrived at the wharf. The general, on disembarking, was shown to a splendid barouche, and the procession moved to and through the village of Poughkeepsie, where congratulatory speeches were made and reciprocated. A large party sat down to a bountiful breakfast; and here, too, death has silenced tongues that were then eloquent….

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.30–p.31

The party reembarked at ten o'clock, when the steamer proceeded up the river to the then beautiful residence of Governor Morgan Lewis, where the party landed, proceeded to his fine old mansion, and partook of a sumptuous collation. About two o'clock the steamer glided through the placid waters until between four and five o'clock, when she reached Clermont, the manor-house of Chancellor Livingston, of Revolutionary memory. On landing the general was received by a large body of freemasons, and was escorted by a military company from Hudson to the beautiful lawn in front of the manor-house, where the general was warmly welcomed by the master of the lodge with an appropriate speech. The afternoon was uncommonly beautiful; the scene and its associations were exceedingly impressive. Dinner was served in a greenhouse or orangery, which formed a sort of balcony to the southern exposure of the manor-house. When the cloth was removed, and the evening came on, variegated lamps suspended from the orange-trees were lighted, producing a wonderfully brilliant and beautiful effect.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.31

But the grand event of the occasion was the ball, which was opened by General Lafayette, who gracefully led out the venerable and blind widow of General Montgomery—who fell in the assault of Quebec in 1775—amid the wildest enthusiasm of all present. While the festivities were progressing within, the assembled tenantry, who were "to the manor born," were feasted upon the lawn, where there was music and dancing. The party broke up and returned to the boat about 3 A.M. The steamer hauled out into the river, but did not get under way until sunrise.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.32–p.33

We reached Catskill at seven o'clock. A large pro cession, civic and military, awaited the general's arrival at the landing. General Lafayette and the Revolutionary officers were seated in open barouches, and the procession moved through the main street for more than a mile, affording the dense mass of men, women, and children the great happiness of seeing the compatriot and friend of Washington. Several beautiful arches, profusely dressed with flags, flowers, and evergreens, each one bearing the inscription, "Welcome, Lafayette," were thrown across the street. In the center of the village a brief address was made, to which the general responded. After this he was escorted in the same order to the boat, and at eleven o'clock he reached Hudson, where a hearty welcome awaited the general. Not only the citizens of Columbia, but many of the inhabitants of Berkshire County, Massachusetts, were present, whose acclamations, as General Lafayette was seen upon the main deck of the steamer, made the welkin ring. The ceremonies and festivities at Hudson consumed between three and four hours. A committee, consisting of the most distinguished citizens of Albany, awaited the general's arrival at Hudson, anxious that the steamer should reach Albany before dark, preparations having been made for a magnificent reception. But in this the Albanians were disappointed, for, on account of the low water above Coeyman's, the steamer's progress was so slow that it was quite dark when she reached Albany. What was lost, however, in one respect was gained in another, for between the illuminations and torches the procession, from Lydius Street landing to the Capitol, was alike brilliant and impressive.

Weed, Lafayette Revisits America, America, Vol.6, p.33

The excursion from New York to Albany occupied three days, and afforded to all who enjoyed it an interest and a happiness more complete and more touching than tongue or pen can describe.

Lafayette's Triumphal Tour in 1824

Title: Lafayette's Triumphal Tour in 1824

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1824

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.34-37

In the summer of this year General Lafayette, accompanied by his son, George Washington Lafayette, and under an invitation from the President, revisited the United States after a lapse of forty years. He was received with unbounded honor, affection, and gratitude by the American people. To the survivors of the Revolution, it was the return of a brother; to the new generation, born since that time, it was the apparition of an historical character, familiar from the cradle; and combining all the titles to love, admiration, gratitude, enthusiasm, which could act upon the heart and the imagination of the young and the ardent.

Benton, Lafayette's Triumphal Tour in 1824, America, Vol.6, p.34–p.35

He visited every State in the Union, doubled in number since, as the friend and pupil of Washington, he had spilt his blood, and lavished his fortune, for their independence. His progress through the States was a triumphal procession, such as no Roman ever led up—a procession not through a city, but over a continent—followed, not by captives in chains of iron, but by a nation in the bonds of affection. To him it was an unexpected and overpowering reception. His modest estimate of himself had not allowed him to suppose that he was to electrify a continent. He expected kindness, but not enthusiasm. He expected to meet with surviving friends—not to rouse a young generation. As he approached the harbor of New York he made inquiry of some acquaintance to know whether he could find a hack to convey him to a hotel? Illustrious man, and modest as illustrious! Little did he know that all America was on foot to receive him—to take possession of him the moment he touched her soil—to fetch and to carry him—to feast and applaud him—to make him the guest of cities, States, and the nation, as long as he could be detained.

Benton, Lafayette's Triumphal Tour in 1824, America, Vol.6, p.35–p.36

Many were the happy meetings which he had with old comrades, survivors for nearly half a century of their early hardships and dangers; and most grateful to his heart it was to see them, so many of them, exceptions to the maxim which denies to the beginners of revolutions the good fortune to conclude them (and of which maxim his own country had just been so sad an exemplification), and to see his old comrades not only conclude the one they began, but live to enjoy its fruits and honors. Three of his old associates he found ex-presidents (Adams, Jefferson and Madison), enjoying the respect and affection of their country, after having reached its highest honors. Another, and the last one that time would admit to the Presidency (Mr. Monroe), now in the Presidential chair, and inviting him to revisit the land of his adoption. Many of his early associates seen in the two Houses of Congress—many in the State governments, and many more in all the walks of private life, patriarchal sires, respected for their characters, and venerated for their patriotic services. It was a grateful spectacle, and the more impressive from the calamitous fate which he had seen attend so many of the revolutionary patriots of the Old World. But the enthusiasm of the young generation astonished and excited him, and gave him a new view of himself—a future glimpse of himself—and such as he would be seen in after ages. Before them, he was in the presence of posterity; and in their applause and admiration he saw his own future place in history, passing down to the latest times as one of the most perfect and beautiful characters which one of the most eventful periods of the world had produced….

Benton, Lafayette's Triumphal Tour in 1824, America, Vol.6, p.36

He was received in both Houses of Congress with equal honor; but the Houses did not limit themselves to honors: they added substantial rewards for long past services and sacrifices—two hundred thousand dollars in money, and twenty-four thousand acres of fertile land in Florida. These noble grants did not pass without objection—objection to the principle, not to the amount. The ingratitude of republics is the theme of any declaimer: it required a Tacitus to say, that gratitude was the death of republics, and the birth of monarchies; and it belongs to the people of the United States to exhibit an exception to that profound remark (as they do to so many other lessons of history), and show a young republic that knows how to be grateful without being unwise, and is able to pay the debt of gratitude without giving its liberties in the discharge of the obligation….

Benton, Lafayette's Triumphal Tour in 1824, America, Vol.6, p.37

Loaded with honors, and with every feeling of his heart gratified in the noble reception he had met in the country of his adoption, Lafayette returned to the country of his birth the following summer, still as the guest of the United States, and under its flag. He was carried back in a national ship of war, the new frigate "Brandywine"—a delicate compliment (in the name and selection of the ship) from the new President, Mr. Adams, Lafayette having wet with his blood the sanguinary battle-field which takes its name from the little stream which gave it first to the field, and then to the frigate. Mr. Monroe, then a subaltern in the service of the United States, was wounded at the same time. How honorable to themselves and to the American people, that nearly fifty years afterward, they should again appear together, and in exalted station; one as President, inviting the other to the great Republic, and signing the acts which testified a nation's gratitude; the other as a patriot hero, tried in the revolutions of two countries, and resplendent in the glory of virtuous and consistent fame.

The Spoils System at Work

Title: The Spoils System at Work

Author: Colonel Thomas Lorraine McKenney

Date: 1824

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.49-58

McKenney was the first United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs, having been placed in charge of the Bureau when it was organized in 1824. He held the position until 1829, when President Jackson ordered his removal in the manner herewith described. Despite his democratic principles, as expressed in the phrase "Let the people rule," Jackson favored the removal of the Indians from lands coveted by the white man. M'Kenney was disposed to treat the redskins fairly, and suffered the consequences.

Jackson's democracy accounts in part for his approval of the spoils system, whereby some 2,000 Federal office-holders were removed in the first year of his administration to make room for his friends "the people." Like the leaders of primitive societies, he depended on the unswerving loyalty of personal friends, in the circle of which the author of this extract does not seem to have been included.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.49

SOME time after General Jackson had been inaugurated, the Secretary of War, Major Eaton, inquired of me, if I had been to see the President? I said I had not. Had you not better go over? Why, sir? I asked—I have had no official business to call me there, nor have I any now; why should I go? You know, in these times—replied the Secretary, it is well to cultivate those personal relations, which will go far towards securing the good-will of one in power—and he wound up by more than intimating that the President had heard some things in disparagement of me, when I determined, forthwith, to go and see him, and ascertain what they were.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.49

On arriving at the door of the President's house, I was answered by the door-keeper, that the President was in, and having gone to report me, returned, saying the President would see me. On arriving at the door, it having been thrown open by the door-keeper, I saw the President very busily engaged writing, and with great earnestness; so much so, indeed, that I stood for some time, before he took his eyes off the paper, fearing to interrupt him, and not wishing to seem intrusive. Presently, he raised his eyes from the paper, and at the same time his spectacles from his nose, and looking at me, said—"Come in, sir, come in." You are engaged, sir? "No more so that I always am, and always expect to be"—drawing a long breath, and giving signs of great uneasiness.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.50–p.51

I had just said, I am here, sir, at the instance of the Secretary of War, when the door was thrown open, and three Members of Congress entered. They were received with great courtesy. I rose, saying, you are engaged, sir, I will call when you are more at leisure; and bowed myself out. On returning to my office, I addressed a note to the President, of the following import—"Colonel M'Kenney's respects to the President of the United States, and requests to be informed when it will suit his convenience to see him?" To which Major Donaldson replied, "The President will see Colonel M'Kenney to-day, at twelve o'clock." I was punctual, and found the President alone. I commenced, by repeating what I had said at my first visit, that I was there at the instance of the Secretary of War, who had more than intimated to me, that impressions of an unfavorable sort had been made upon him, in regard to me; and that I was desirous of knowing what the circumstances were, that had produced them.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.51

"It is true, sir," said the President, "I have been told things that are highly discreditable to you, and which have come to me from such sources, as to satisfy me of their truth."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.51

Very well, sir, will you do me the justice to let me know what these things are, that you have heard from such respectable sources?

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.51

"You know, Colonel M'Kenney, I am a candid man—"

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.51

I beg pardon, sir, I remarked, interrupting him, but I am not here to question that, but to hear charges which it appears have been made to you, affecting my character, either as an officer of the government, or a man.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.51

"Well, sir," he resumed, "I will frankly tell you what these charges are, and, sir, they are of a character which I can never respect."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.51

No doubt of that, sir, but what are they?

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.51–p.52

"Why, sir, I am told, and on the best authority, that you were one of the principal promoters of that vile paper, We the People'; as a contributor towards establishing it, and as a writer, afterwards, in which my wife Rachel was so shamefully abused. I am told, further, on authority no less respectable, that you took an active part in distributing, under the frank of your office, the 'coffin hand-bills'; and that in your recent travels, you largely and widely circulated the militia pamphlet."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

Here he paused, crossed his legs, shook his foot, and clasped his hands around the upper knee, and looked at me as though he had actually convicted, and prostrated me; when, after a moment's pause, I asked—

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

Well, sir, what else?

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

"Why, sir," he answered, "I think such conduct highly unbecoming in one who fills a place in the government such as you fill, and very derogatory to you, as it would be in any one who should be guilty of such practices."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

All this, I replied, may be well enough, but I request to know if this is all you have heard, and whether there are any more charges?

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

"Why, yes, sir, there is one more; I am told your office is not in the condition in which it should be."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

Well, sir, what more?

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

"Nothing, sir; but these are all serious charges, sir.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

Then, sir, these comprise all?

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

"They do, sir."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.52

Well, General, I answered, I am not going to reply to all this, or to any part of it, with any view of retaining my office, nor do I mean to reply at all, except under the solemnity of an oath—when I threw up my hand towards heaven, saying, the answers I am about to give to these allegations, I solemnly swear, shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. My oath, sir, is taken, and is no doubt recorded—

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.53

He interrupted me, by saying, "You are making quite a serious affair of it."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.53

It is, sir, what I mean to do, I answered.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.53

Now, sir, in regard to the paper called "We the People," I never did, directly or indirectly, either by my money, or by my pen, contribute towards its establishment, or its continuance. I never circulated one copy of it, more or less, nor did I subscribe for a copy of it, more or less; nor have I ever, to the best of my knowledge and belief, handled a copy of it, nor have I ever seen but two copies, and these were on the table of a friend, among other newspapers. So much for that charge.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.53–p.54

In regard to the "coffin hand-bills," I never circulated any, either under the frank of my office, or otherwise, and never saw but two; and am not certain that I ever saw but one, and that, some fool sent me, under cover, from Richmond, in Virginia, and which I found on my desk among other papers, on going to my office; and which, on seeing what it was, I tore up, and threw aside among the waste paper, to be swept out by my messenger. The other, which I took to be one of these bills, but which might have been an account of the hanging of some convict, I saw some time ago, pendent from a man's finger and thumb, he having a roll under his arm, as he crossed Broadway, in New York. So much for the coffin hand-bills. As to the "militia pamphlet," I have seen reference made to it in the newspapers, it is true, but I have never handled it—have never read it, or circulated a copy or copies of it, directly or indirectly. And now, sir, as to my office. That is my monument; its records are its inscriptions. Let it be examined, and I invite a commission for that purpose; nor will I return to it to put a paper in its place, should it be out of place, or in any other way prepare it for the ordeal; and, if there is a single flaw in it, or any just grounds for complaint, either on the part of the white or the red man, implicating my capacity—my diligence, or want of due regard to the interests of all having business with it, including the government, then, sir, you shall have my free consent to put any mark upon me you may think proper, or subject me to as much opprobrium as shall gratify those who have thus abused your confidence by their secret attempts to injure me.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.54

"Colonel M'Kenney," said the General, who had kept his eyes upon me during the whole of my reply, "I believe every word you have said, and am satisfied that those who communicated to me those allegations, were mistaken."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.54

I thank you, sir, I replied, for your confidence, but I am not satisfied. I request you to have my accusers brought up, and that I may be allowed to confront them in your presence.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.54

"No—no, sir, he answered, "I am satisfied; why then push the matter farther?" when, rising from his chair, he took my arm, and said, "Come, sir, come down, and allow me to introduce you to my family."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.54–p.55

I accompanied him, and was introduced to Mrs. Donaldson, Major Donaldson, and some others who were present, partook of the offering of a glass of wine, and retired.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

The next morning, I believe it was—or if not the next, some morning not far off—a Mr. R-b-s-n, a very worthy, gentlemanly fellow, and well known to me, came into my office.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

"You are busy, Colonel?" he said, as he entered.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

No, sir, not very, I replied; come in—I have learned to write and talk too, at the same time. Come in; sit down; I am glad to see you.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

Looking round the office, the entire walls of which I had covered with portraits of Indians, he asked, pointing to the one that hung over my desk, "Who is that?"

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

Red-Jacket, I answered.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

"And that?"

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

Shin-guab-O'Wassin, I replied; and so he continued. . . He then asked, "Who wrote the treaties with the Indians, and gave instructions to commissions, and, in general, carried on the correspondence of the office?"

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

These are within the circle of my duties, the whole being under a general supervision of the Secretary of War, I answered.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

"Well, then," after a pause, he said, "the office will not suit me."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55

What office? I asked.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.55–p.56

"This," he replied; "General Jackson told me, this morning, it was at my service; but before seeing the Secretary of War, I thought I would come and have a little chat with you, first."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.56

I rose from my chair, saying—Take it, my dear sir, take it. The sword of Damocles has been hanging over my head long enough.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.56

"No," said he, "it is not the sort of place for me. I prefer an auditor's office, where forms are established."

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.56

This worthy citizen had, in the fullness of his heart, doubtless, and out of pure affection for General Jackson, made that distinguished personage a present of the pair of pistols which General Washington had carried during the war of the Revolution….

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.56

The office of Indian Affairs had, in like manner, been proffered to others; and the only reason why I had not been, at a very early period after General Jackson's succession to the Presidency, summarily disposed of, was, that the Secretary of War, Major Eaton, opposed it….

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.56

. . . my chief clerk, Mr. Hambleton, came into my room one morning, soon after I had taken my seat at my table, and putting his hands upon it, leaned over. I looked up, and saw his eyes were full of tears! To my question—Is anything the matter, Mr. Hambleton? "Yes, sir—I am pained to inform you, that you are to be displaced to-day! . . . The President has appointed General Thompson, a Member of Congress, of Georgia . . .

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.56–p.57

. . . Two hours after, I heard walking, and earnest talking in the passage. They continued for half an hour. When they ceased, Mr. Hambleton came into my room, his face all dressed in smiles, saying, "It is not to be!"

"What is not to be?"

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.57

"You are not to go out. When General Thompson came to the Secretary this morning, with the President's reference to him, to assign him to your place, he was told, before he could act, he (the Secretary) must see the President. The result of the Secretary's interview with the President was, you were to be retained, and General Thompson is referred back to the President, for explanation, &c. Thompson is in a rage about it—and among other things said, 'It's a pretty business, indeed, that Eaton thinks he can command a frigate, and I can't manage a cockboat!'" .

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.57

I had at that time on hand the large work on the History, &c., of the North American Indians. . . I requested and obtained leave of absence, to go and look after this work, and for relaxation, and to better my health—and extended my journey to New York. On my return to Philadelphia, and on my way from the wharf to the hotel, I stopped at the post-office, and took from it a letter from Doctor Randolph, informing me that, from and after the first day of October next ensuing, my services in the Indian Department would not be required. Returning to Washington, I inquired of him what the grounds of my dismissal were.

McKenney, Spoils System at Work, America, Vol.6, p.58

"Why, sir," was his reply, "everybody knows your qualifications for the place, but General Jackson has been long satisfied that you are not in harmony with him, in his views in regard to the Indians." And thus closed my connection with the government.

Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry

Title: Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry

Author: Daniel Webster

Date: 1824

Source: America, Vol.4, pp.282-286

This estimate of Patrick Henry is contained in a record entitled "anecdotes from Mr. Jefferson's conversation," which Daniel Webster kept of his visit to Jefferson at Monticello in 1824. Evidently Webster quoted Jefferson verbatim, and it is apparent that Jefferson was outspoken in appraising his contemporaries.

At the time Jefferson discussed Patrick Henry with Webster, he (Jefferson) was in his eighty-first year and Patrick Henry had been dead twenty-five years. Webster was forty-two. Writing of their meeting, to James Monroe, Jefferson said "I am much gratified by the acquaintance made with Webster. He is likely to become of great weight in our government.

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.282

PATRICK HENRY was originally a bar-keeper. He was married very young, and going into some business, on his own account, was a bankrupt before the year was out. When I was about the age of fifteen, I left the school here, to go to the college of Williamsburgh. I stopped a few days at a friend's in the county of Louisa. There I first saw and became acquainted with Patrick Henry. Having spent the Christmas holidays there, I proceeded to Williamsburgh. Some question arose about my admission, as my preparatory studies had not been pursued at the school connected with that institution. This delayed my admission about a fortnight, at which time Henry appeared in Williamsburgh, and applied for a license to practise law, having commenced the study of it at or subsequently to the time of my meeting him in Louisa. There were four examiners, Wythe, Pendleton, Peyton Randolph, and John Randolph. Wythe and Pendleton at once rejected his application. The two Randolphs, by his importunity, were prevailed upon to sign the license; and having obtained their signatures, he applied again to Pendleton, and after much entreaty and many promises of future study, succeeded in obtaining his. He then turned out for a practising lawyer.

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.283–p.284

The first case which brought him into notice was a contested election, in which he appeared as counsel before a committee of the House of Burgesses. His second was the Parsons cause, already well known. These and similar efforts soon obtained for him so much reputation that he was elected a member of the legislature. He was as well suited to the times as any man ever was, and it is not now easy to say what we should have done without Patrick Henry. He was far before all in maintaining the spirit of the Revolution. His influence was most extensive with the members from the upper counties, and his boldness and their votes overawed and controlled the more cool or the more timid aristocratic gentlemen of the lower part of the State. His eloquence was peculiar, if indeed it should be called eloquence; for it was impressive and sublime, beyond what can be imagined. Although it was difficult when he had spoken to tell what he had said, yet, while he was speaking, it always seemed directly to the point. When he had spoken in opposition to my opinion, had produced a great effect, and I myself been highly delighted and moved, I have asked myself when he ceased: "What the d—l has he said?" I could never answer the inquiry. His person was of full size, and his manner and voice free and manly. His utterance neither very fast nor very slow. His speeches generally short, from a quarter to a half an hour. His pronunciation was vulgar and vicious, but it was forgotten while he was speaking.

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.284

He was a man of very little knowledge of any sort; he read nothing, and had no books. Returning one November from Albemarle court, he borrowed of me Hume's Essays, in two volumes, saying he should have leisure in the winter for reading. In the spring he returned them, and declared he had not been able to go further than twenty or thirty pages in the first volume. He wrote almost nothing—he could not write. The resolutions of '75, which have been ascribed to him, have by many been supposed to have been written by Mr. Johnson, who acted as his second in that occasion; but if they were written by Henry himself, they are not such as to prove any power of composition.

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.284–p.285

Neither in politics nor in his profession was he a man of business; he was a man for debate only. His biographer says that he read Plutarch every year. I doubt whether he ever read a volume of it in his life. His temper was excellent, and he generally observed decorum in debate. On one or two occasions I have seen him angry, and his anger was terrible; those who witnessed it, were not disposed to rouse it again. In his opinions he was yielding and practicable and not disposed to differ from his friends. In private conversation, he was agreeable and facetious, and, while in genteel society, appeared to understand all the decencies and properties of it; but, in his heart, he preferred low society, and sought it as often as possible. He would hunt in the pine woods of Fluvannah with overseers, and people of that description, living in a camp for a fortnight at a time without a change of raiment. I have often been astonished at his command of proper language; how he attained the knowledge of it, I never could find out, as he read so little and conversed little with educated men. After all, it must be allowed that he was our leader in the measures of the Revolution, in Virginia. In that respect more was due to him that any other person. If we had not had him we should probably have got on pretty well, as you did, by a number of men of nearly equal talents, but he left us all far behind. His biographer sent the sheets of his work to me as they were printed, and at the end asked my opinion. I told him it would be a question hereafter whether his work should be placed on the shelf of history or of panegyric. It is a poor book written in bad taste, and gives so imperfect an idea of Patrick Henry, that it seems intended to show off the writer more than the subject of the work. . .

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.285–p.286

When Congress met, Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee opened the subject with great ability and eloquence. So much so, that Paca and Chase, dele gates from Maryland, said to each other as they returned from the House: "We shall not be wanted here; those gentlemen from Virginia will be able to do everything without us." But neither Henry nor Lee were men of business, and having made strong and eloquent general speeches, they had done all they could.

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.286

It was thought advisable that two papers should be drawn up, one, an address to the people of England, and the other, an address, I think, to the King. Committees were raised for these purposes, and Henry was at the head of the first, and Lee of the second.

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.286

When the address to the people of England was reported, Congress heard it with utter amazement. It was miserably written and good for nothing. At length Governor Livingston, of New Jersey, ventured to break silence. After complimenting the author, he said he thought some other ideas might be usefully' added to his draft of the address. Some such paper had been for a considerable time contemplated, and he believed a friend of his had tried his hand in the composition of one. He thought if the subject were again committed, some improvement in the present draft might be made. It was accordingly recommitted, and the address which had been alluded to by Governor Livingston, and which was written by John Jay, was reported by the committee, and adopted as it now appears.

Webster, Jefferson's Estimate of Patrick Henry, America, Vol.4, p.286

It is, in my opinion, one of the very best state papers which the Revolution produced. . .

Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun, Pushmataha, 1824

Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun

Title: Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun

Author: Pushmataha

Date: 1824

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.8, pp.19-21

Pushmataha's name is sometimes spelled Pushmatahaw, the word meaning "The warrior's seat is finished." In 1824 he went to Washington "to brighten the chain of peace," where he was treated with great attention by President Monroe and John C. Calhoun, then secretary of war, to whom he made the speech here given, a copy being now preserved in the official records of the War Department. Soon afterward he died. One of his last requests was that he might be buried with military honors. The procession that followed his body to the Congressional Cemetery was estimated to be more than a mile in length, the sidewalks, stoops and windows of houses being thronged along the way, and minute guns being fired from the hill of the capitol. John Randolph, in a eulogy pronounced in the Senate, characterized him as "one of nature's nobility; a man who would have adorned any society." On his tombstone he is described as "a warrior of great distinction; he was wise in counsel, eloquent in an extraordinary degree, and, on all occasions and under all circumstances, the white man's friend." Andrew Jackson said he was "the greatest and the bravest Indian he had ever known." During a visit to Lafayette, who was then in Washington, Pushmataha, being accompanied by other Indians of his tribe, made the following speech:

"Nearly fifty snows have melted since you drew your sword as a companion of Washington. With him you fought the enemies of America. You mingled your blood with that of the enemy, and proved yourself a warrior. After you finished that war, you returned to your own country, and now you are come back to revisit the land where you are honored by a numerous and powerful people. You see everywhere the children of those by whose side you went to battle crowding around you and shaking your hand as the hand of a father. We have heard these things told in our distant villages, and our hearts longed to see you. We have come; we have taken you by the hand and are satisfied. This is the first time we have seen you; it will probably be the last. We have no more to say. The earth will part us for ever."

Pushmataha was taken ill just after this visit to Lafayette. On his death-bed he said to his Indian companions: "When you shall come to your home they will ask you, 'Where is Pushmataha?' and you will say to them: 'He is no more!' They will hear the tidings like the sound of the fall of a mighty oak in the stillness of the woods."

Born in 1765, died in 1824; a Chief of the Choctaws; had a notable career as a Warrior against the Osage Indians and in Mexico; served with the Americans in the War of 1812.

Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.19

Father, I have been here at the councilhouse for some time, but I have not talked. I have not been strong enough to talk. You shall hear me to-day. I belong to another district. You have, no doubt, heard of me. I am Pushmataha.

Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.19

Father, when in my own country, I often looked toward this council-house, and wanted to come here. I am in trouble. I will tell my distresses. I feel like a small child, not half as high as its father, who comes up to look in his father's face, hanging in the bend of his arm, to tell him his troubles. So, father, I hang in the bend of your arm, and look in your face; and now hear me speak.

Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.20

Father, when I was in my own country, I heard there were men appointed to talk to us. I would not speak there; I chose to come here, and speak in this beloved house; for Pushmataha can boast and say, and tell the truth, that none of his fathers, or grandfathers, or any Choctaw, ever drew bow against the United States. They have always been friendly. We have held the hands of the United States so long that our nails are long like birds' claws; and there is no danger of their slipping out.

Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.21

Father, I have come to speak. My nation has always listened to the applications of the white people. They have given of their country till it is very small. I came here, when a young man, to see my Father Jefferson. He told me, if ever we got in trouble, we must run and tell him. I am come. This is a friendly talk; it is like that of a man who meets another, and says: "How do you do ?" Another of my tribe shall talk further. He shall say what Pushmataha would say, were he stronger.

The Erie Canal Celebration and Other Canals

Title: The Erie Canal Celebration and Other Canals

Author: James Schouler

Date: 1825

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, pp.172-175

Schouler, Erie Canal Celebration and Other Canals, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.172

This year, 1825, was a remarkable one in the history of canal-building in the United States. The Erie Canal was completed by the autumn; never having been interrupted in its construction since the first spadeful of earth was lifted, eight years earlier, on the 4th of July; but pushed on incessantly by the Governor, whose good fortune it was to supervise both the beginning and end of an enterprise whose success was due, most of all, to his foresight and unflagging perseverance. In October, 1819, water was first let into the trench, and a large boat drawn by a horse from Utica to Rome and back again, thirty miles, in eight hours. Four years later Albany rejoiced over the passage of the first boat into the Hudson, all but the section between Lockport and Buffalo being then finished, besides the northern or Champlain Canal. In the culminating success and celebration, October 26, 1825, the whole State of New York bore a part. At ten in the forenoon the waters of Lake Erie were admitted at Buffalo, and a flotilla of canalboats, headed by the Seneca Chief, in which Clinton and other dignitaries were conveyed, moved along the unruffled surface of a highway 363 miles in length, day and night, passing safely into the stone aqueduct at Rochester, moored over Sunday at Utica, and by November 2d reaching Albany in safety….

Schouler, Erie Canal Celebration and Other Canals, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.173

From Albany the novel tour was resumed, under a steam tow, to New York harbor. On the bright, clear morning of November 4th, the ringing of the city bells, strains of martial music, and the boom of cannon announced to the world that the aquatic procession from Lake Erie was on its way to Sandy Hook. Ships at anchor saluted the modest flotilla, while steamboats and light craft bore down to bear it company to the sea. The Seneca Chief bore from Buffalo kegs painted green, adorned with gilded hoops, and filled with Lake Erie water. When Sandy Hook was reached, the procession stopt; and Clinton, lifting high in air one of these kegs, poured its contents into the sea, mingling for the first time the fresh and briny waters.

Schouler, Erie Canal Celebration and Other Canals, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.173

Through an artificial highway, forty feet wide and four deep, boats expressly built for the new canal traffic, carried thirty or forty tons, each capable of being drawn, unless heavily laden, by a single horse. A ton of flour, which it had cost $100 to convey from Buffalo to Albany overland, might now be sent for $10. All vessels, whether owned in or out of the State, were allowed to navigate the canal on paying the transit duties; nevertheless, the main traffic, which set in briskly between the West and the seaboard, enriched the State most of all. The debt created by the construction of the Erie and Champlain canals was $7,944,000; paying an interest of 6 1/2 per cent. The fund in 1826 applicable to discharge this debtamounted to $1,057,585; and the whole system more than repaid its original cost out of the profits in a brief space of years, for the tolls collected left a large surplus annually after providing interest on the loan and repairs.

Schouler, Erie Canal Celebration and Other Canals, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.174

The first faint omen of success in Clinton's enterprise had stirred other States to prosecuting the work of slack-water improvements. The oldest canals in the United States were in Massachusetts; the Middlesex Canal, which connected Boston Harbor with the Merrimack River, and was completed in 1808, being the first undertaking of the kind on this continent in any considerable magnitude. But it was the Erie Canal which gave the chief impulse to works of this character. Pennsylvania, threatened with the loss of her western trade by the great canal on one side and the National Road on the other, projected a system which, by uniting the Schuylkill, the Susquehanna, and the Alleghany rivers, might bring Philadelphia and Pittsburgh into closer relations. Ohio sought a water highway between Lake Erie and the Ohio River; the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was the favorite scheme in Virginia and Maryland. Many works were planned and begun during the excitement of these next few years, works which demanded a State and begged a national appropriation….

Schouler, Erie Canal Celebration and Other Canals, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.174

In this halcyon day of slack-water enterprises even ship-canals were discust; and whether to cut Cape Cod or the Isthmus of Panama are questions scarcely less interesting now than they were sixty years ago. Steamboats made an important factor in this new system of inland transportation; and had not railways checked the use of canals, steam would quite likely have become in time the usual motive power for canal-boats. Of manifold importance, now that Buffalo and Albany were united, the swift carriers which made Fulton's name immortal puffed up and down the Hudson, their first breeding-place, busier than ever. That monopoly for the use of the steamboat in New York waters which the Fulton and Livingston alliance had enjoyed under its thirty years' grant from the State Legislature, the highest tribunal now pronounced repugnant to the Federal Constitution and the power vested in Congress to regulate commerce. Thus, as some scholars lamented, the fortune of the great inventor of his age was scattered to the four winds of heaven. The Livingston and Clinton families, by an accidental association of services, gave to their State, as a last legacy, a cheap inland intercourse, worth more than any gold mine.

Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration

Title: Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration

Author: Samuel Goodrich

Date: 1825

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, pp.158-160

Goodrich, Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.158

The first time I ever saw Mr. Webster was on the 17th of June, 1825, at the laying of the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill Monument. I shall never forget his appearance has he strode across the open area, encircled by some fifty thousand persons—men and women—waiting for the "Orator of the Day," nor the shout that simultaneously burst forth, as he was recognized, carrying up to the skies the name of "Webster!" "Webster!" "Webster!"

Goodrich, Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.158

It was one of those lovely days in June, when the sun is bright, the air clear, and the breath of nature so sweet and pure as to fill every bosom with a grateful joy in the mere consciousness of existence. There were present long files of soldiers in their holiday attire; there were many associations, with their mottoed banners; there were lodges and grand lodges, in white aprons and blue scarfs; there were miles of citizens from the towns and the country round about; there were two hundred gray-haired men, remnants of the days of the Revolution; there was among them a stranger, of great mildness and dignity of appearance, on whom all eyes rested, and when his name was known, the air echoed with the cry—"Welcome, welcome, Lafayette!" Around all this scene was a rainbow of beauty such as New England alone can furnish.

Goodrich, Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.159

I have seen many public festivities and ceremonials, but never one, taken all together, of more general interest than this. Everything was fortunate: all were gratified; but the address was that which seemed uppermost in all minds and hearts. Mr. Webster was in the very zenith of his fame and of his powers. I have looked on many mighty men—King George, the "first gentleman in England"; Sir Astley Cooper, the Apollo of his generation; Peel, O'Connell, Palmerston, Lyndhurst—all nature's noblemen; I have seen Cuvier, Guizot, Arago, Lamartine—marked in their persons by the genius which has carried their names over the world; I have seen Clay, and Calhoun, and Pinckney, and King, and Dwight, and Daggett, who stand as high examples of personal endowment, in our annals, and yet not one of these approached Mr. Webster in the commanding power of their personal presence. There was a grandeur in his form, an intelligence in his deep dark eye, a loftiness in his expansive brow, a significance in his arched lip, altogether beyond those of any other human being I ever saw. And these, on the occasion to which I allude, had their full expression and interpretation.

Goodrich, Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.160

When he came to address the few scarred and time-worn veterans—some forty in number—who had shared in the bloody scene which all had now gathered to commemorate, he paused a moment, and, as he uttered the words "Venerable men," his voice trembled, and I could see a cloud pass over the sea of faces that turned upon the speaker. When at last, alluding to the death of Warren, he said:

Goodrich, Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.160

"But ah, him!—the first great martyr of this great cause. Him, the patriotic victim of his own self-devoting heart. Him, cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom: falling ere he saw the star of his country rise—how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name!" Here the eyes of the veterans around, little accustomed to tears, were filled to the brim, and some of them "sobbed aloud in their fulness of heart."

Goodrich, Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.160

I have never seen such an effect, from a single passage: a moment before, every bosom bent, every brow was clouded, every eye was dim. Lifted as by inspiration, every breast seemed now to expand, every gaze to turn above, every face to beam with a holy yet exulting enthusiasm. It was the omnipotence of eloquence, which, like the agitated sea, carries a host upon its waves, sinking and swelling with its irresistible undulations.

The Panama Mission

Title: The Panama Mission

Author: James Schouler

Date: 1825

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, pp.176-179

Schouler, The Panama Mission, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.176

Of foreign and international topics none at this time excited such deep interest as that of the Panama Congress. The project of holding a council of American republics at Panama to deliberate upon a continental policy and objects of common importance marks the high-water line of that zeal for the Spanish-American cause which under the impulse of Bolivar's splendid victories, on the one hand, and Bourbonism and the Holy Alliance on the other, had been lasht into a sort of frenzy which could not at once subside. Lafayette, on his visit, sent Bolivar a portrait of Washington, with a gold medal; and Washington, Lafayette, and Bolivar were now commemorated through America as the three liberators of mankind. Early, then in 1825 the new American States of Spanish origin planned themselves an assembly of deputies—a modern amphictyonic council, as it were, to meet like that of the old Grecian republics, at an isthmus; or perhaps as a conference of the great powers of America at their own Aix-la-Chapelle, where they might confederate for liberty, as had European monarchs for despotism. The meeting was set for October; and in April, through the Mexican minister at Washington, the United States, eldest sister of the American republics, received a verbal invitation to be present.

Schouler, The Panama Mission, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.177

Unexpected difficulties occurred, however, in procuring the sanction of Congress, or rather of the Senate, to this unique mission. An increasing minority in both Houses meant to thwart the adminstration at all hazards; and as the Senate was now constituted, eight or ten members of hostile disposition, who were only restrained by the favor with which their constituents appeared to regard the project, lent secret countenance, without committing themselves, to an opposition which by the aid of their votes would necessarily turn the scales….

Schouler, The Panama Mission, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.177

It was in vain to attempt thus to quench the popular passion in favor of the Panama mission. The very novelty, the rashness of the experiment captivated our American youth. While the Senate with closed doors deferred action upon the Macon report, the House, which sided with the Executive, called for the papers. Not to precipitate a public discussion in the other branch, the Senate yielded, many members against their better judgment; Macon's report was voted down, and the personsnominated (as to whose fitness there was no objection) were confirmed, after a session of fourteen hours, by a fair majority. The sum of $40,000 was next appropriated for outfit, salaries, and expenses by a bill which quickly passed both houses and received the President's signature.

Schouler, The Panama Mission, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.178

Incongruous under any aspect, the whole project proved abortive. To our delegates who were invited, England and the Netherlands added delegates on their part who were not, and the bubble blown out too far speedily burst. The Panama Congress met in June, and after a short session, thinly attended, adjourned to meet again in 1827 at the village of Tacubaya, near the City of Mexico. The United States had not been here represented; for of the two enjoys appointed and confirmed, Richard C. Anderson, our minister at Colombia, was attacked, while on his way to the isthmus from Bogota, by a malignant fever which terminated fatally; while John Sergeant, of Philadelphia, delayed by various impediments, had not undertaken to attend. Still imprest with the expediency of the mission, the President dispatched Sergeant to attend the adjourned meeting at Tacubaya; and Monroe having declined a commission, Poinsett, our minister resident of Mexico, was appointed to the vacancy caused by Anderson's death. Among other subjects, Clay instructed Poinsett to propose at this time the purchase of Texas. But the Tacubaya Congress did not assemble at all; and Sergeant, who was a man of dispassionate judgment, reported on his return home in the summer of 1827 the final collapse of a continental council, projected at least a hundred years too early. Close contact with the southern revolutionists had, at allevents, the good effect of dispelling that false medium which magnified pigmies into giants. Bolivar, the greatest of them, shrunk in comparison with Washington and Lafayette; and as revolution brought on counter-revolution, new dissensions arising in these volcanic republics, it was forced upon us that friendship but not brotherhood, encouragement but not alliance, was for the present our only honorable relation with Spanish-Americans; for their apprenticeship in the school of liberty was necessarily a long one. And this lesson was, after all, to the United States the only positive gain resulting from the Panama mission.

The Issue in the Revolution, Everett, 1825

The Issue in the Revolution

Title: The Issue in the Revolution

Author: Everett

Date: 1825

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.8, pp.196-203

From an address in Cambridge on the fiftieth anniversary of American Independence.

Born in 1794, died in 1865; made Professor of Greek at Harvard in 1819, elected to Congress in 1825; Governor of Massachusetts in 1836; Minister to England in 1841; President of Harvard in 1846; Secretary of State in 1852; Senator from Massachusetts in 1853.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.196

IT belongs to us with strong propriety to celebrate this day. The town of Cambridge and the county of Middlesex are filled with the vestiges of the Revolution; whithersoever we turn our eyes we behold some memento of its glorious scenes. Within the walls in which we are now assembled was convened the first provincial Congress after its adjournment at Concord. The rural magazine at Medford reminds us of one of the earliest acts of British aggression.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.196

The march of both divisions of the royal army on the memorable 19th of April was through the limits of Cambridge; in the neighboring towns of Lexington and Concord the first blood of the Revolution was shed; in West Cambridge the royal convoy of provisions was, the same day, gallantly surprised by the aged citizens who stayed to protect their homes while their sons pursued the foe.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.197

Here the first American army was formed; from this place, on the 17th of June, was detached the Spartan band that immortalized the heights of Charlestown and consecrated that day with blood and fire to the cause of American liberty. Beneath the venerable elm which still shades the southwestern corner of the common, General Washington first unsheathed his sword at the head of an American army, and to that seat was wont every Sunday to repair to join in supplications which were made for the welfare of his country.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.197

How changed is now the scene! The foe is gone! The din and the desolation of war are passed; science has long resumed her station in the shades of our vulnerable university, no longer glittering with arms; the anxious war council is no longer in session, to offer a reward for the discovery of the best mode of making saltpeter—an unpromising stage of hostilities when an army of twenty thousand men is in the field in front of the foe; the tall grass now waves in the trampled sallyport of some of the rural redoubts that form a part of the simple lines of circumvallation within which a half-armed American militia held the flower of the British army blockaded; the plow has done what the English batteries could not do—has leveled others of them with the earth; and the men, the great and good men, their warfare is over and they have gone quietly down to the dust they redeemed from oppression.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.198

At the close of a half century since the declaration of our independence we are assembled to commemorate that great and happy event. We come together, not because it needs, but because it deserves these acts of celebration. We do not meet each other and exchange our felicitations because we should otherwise fall into forgetfulness of this auspicious era, but because we owe it to our fathers and to our children to mark its return with grateful festivities.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.198

The major part of this assembly is composed of those who had not yet engaged in the active scenes of life when the Revolution commenced. We come not to applaud our own work but to pay a filial tribute to the deeds of our fathers. It was for their children that the heroes and sages of the Revolution labored and bled. They were too wise not to know that it was not personally their own cause in which they were embarked; they felt that they were engaging in an enterprise which an entire generation must be too short to bring to its mature and perfect issue.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.198

The most they could promise themselves was, that, having cast forth the seed of liberty, having shielded its tender germ from the stern blasts that beat upon it, having watered it with the tears of waiting eyes and the blood of brave hearts, their children might gather the fruit of its branches, while those who planted it should molder in peace beneath its shade.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.199

Nor was it only in this that we discern their disinterestedness, their heroic forgetfulness of self. Not only was the independence for which they struggled a great and arduous adventure, they struggled a great and arduous adventure, of which they were to encounter the risk and others to enjoy the benefits, but the oppressions which roused them had assumed in their day no worse form than that of a pernicious principle. No tolerable acts of oppression had ground them to the dust. They were not slaves rising in desperation from beneath the agonies of the lash, but free men, snuffing from afar "the tainted gale of tyranny."

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.199

The worse encroachments on which the British ministry had ventured might have been borne consistently with the practical enjoyment of many of the advantages resulting from good government. On the score of calculation alone that generation had much better have paid the duties on glass, painter's colors, stamped paper, and tea, than have plunged into the expenses of the Revolutionary War.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.199

But they thought not of shuffling off upon posterity the burden of resistance. They well understood the part which providence had assigned to them. They perceived that they were called to discharge a high and perilous office to the cause of freedom; that their hands were elected to strike the blow for which nearly two centuries of preparation—never remitted, the often unconscious—had been making on one side or the other of the Atlantic. They felt that the Colonies had now reached that stage in their growth when the difficult problem of colonial government must be solved—difficult I call it, for such it is to the statesman whose mind is not sufficiently enlarged for the idea that a wise colonial government must naturally and rightfully end in independence; that even a mild and prudent sway on the part of the mother country furnishes no reason for not severing the bands of the colonial subjection; and that when the rising State has passed the period of adolescence the only alternative which remains is that of a peaceable separation or a convulsive rupture.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.200

The British ministry, at that time weaker than it had ever been since the infatuated reign of James II., had no knowledge of political science but that which they derived from the text of official records. They drew their maxims, as it was happily said of one of them that he did his measures, from the file. They heard that a distant province had resisted the execution of an act of Parliament. Indeed, and what is the specific in cases of resistance?—a military force; and two more regiments are ordered to Boston. Again they hear that the general court of Massachusetts Bay has taken counsels subversive of the allegiance due to the Crown. A case of a refractory corporation; what is to be done? First try a mandamus, and if that fails seize the franchises into his majesty's hands.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.201

They never asked the great questions: whether nations, like men, have not their principles of growth; whether providence has assigned no laws to regulate the changes in the condition of that most astonishing of human things, a nation of kindred men. They did not inquire, I will not say whether it were rightful and expedient, but whether it were practicable, to give law across the Atlantic to a people who possessed within themselves every imaginable element of self-government—a people rocked in the cradle of liberty, brought up to hardship, inheriting nothing but their rights on earth and their hopes in heaven.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.201

But tho the rulers of Britain appear not to have caught a glimpse of the great principles involved in these questions, our fathers had asked and answered them. They perceived with the rapidity of intuition that the hour of separation had come; because a principle was assumed by the British government which put an instantaneous check to the further growth of liberty. Either the race of civilized man happily planted on our shores, at first slowly and painfully reared, but at length auspiciously multiplying in America, is destined never to constitute a free and independent State, or these measures must be resisted which go to bind it in a mild but abject colonial vassalage.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.202

A mighty question of political right was at issue between the two hemispheres. Europe and America in the face of mankind are going to plead the great cause on which the fate of popular government for ever is suspended. One circumstance, and one alone, exists to diminish the interest of the contention—the perilous inequality of the parties—an inequality far exceeding that which gives animation to a contest, and so great as to destroy the hope of an ably waged encounter.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.202

On the one side were arrayed the two houses of the British Parliament, the modern school of political eloquence, the arena where great minds had for a century and a half strenuously wrestled themselves into strength and power, and in better days the common and upright chancery of an empire on which the sun never set.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.202

Upon the other side rose up the colonial assemblies of Massachusetts and Virginia, and the Continental Congress of Philadelphia, composed of men whose training had been within a small provincial circuit; who had never before felt the inspiration which the consciousness of a station before the world imparts; who brought no power into the contest but that which they drew from their cause and their bosoms.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.202

It is by champions like these that the great principles of representative government, of chartered rights and constitutional liberty are to be discussed; and surely never in the annals of national controversy was exhibited a triumph so complete of the seemingly weaker party, a rout so disastrous of the stronger. Often as it has been repeated, it will bear another repetition; it never ought to be omitted in the history of constitutional liberty; it ought especially to be repeated this day; the various addresses, petitions, and appeals, the correspondence, the resolutions, the legislative and popular debates, from 1764 to the Declaration of Independence, present a maturity of political wisdom, a strength of argument, a gravity of style, a manly eloquence, and a moral courage, of which unquestionably the modern world affords no other example.

Everett, The Issue in the Revolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.203

This need of praise, substantially accorded at the time by Chatham, in the British Parliament, may well be repeated by us. For most of the venerated men to whom it is paid it is but a pious tribute to departed worth. The Lees and the Henrys, Otis, Quincy, Warren, and Samuel Adams, the men who spoke those words of thrilling power which raised and ruled the storm of resistance and rang like the voice of fate across the Atlantic, are beyond the reach of our praise.

Daniel Webster's First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, 17 June 1825

Webster's First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, 1825

Title: Webster's First Bunker Hill Monument Oration

Author: Daniel Webster

Date: 1825

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.9, pp.24-37

Delivered at the laying of the corner-stone of the monument on June 17, 1825. Abridged.

Born in 1782, died in 1852; Member of Congress from New Hampshire in 1813-17, and from Massachusetts in 1823-27; United States Senator from Massachusetts in 1827-41; defeated for the Presidency in 1836; an unsuccessful candidate for the Whig nomination afterward; Secretary of State in 1841; negotiated the Ashburton Treaty in 1842; again elected Senator in 1845; made his "Seventh of March Speech" in 1850; Secretary of State in 1850; again unsuccessful for the Whig nomination for President in 1852.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.24

THIS uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.24

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchers of our fathers. We are no ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.25

The Society whose organ I am was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought that for this object no time could be more propitious than the present prosperous and peaceful period; that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot; and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for His blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be presented, and that, springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain as long as heaven permits the works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.26

We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself can carry information of the events we commemorate where it has not already gone; and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.26

We wish that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come upon all nations, must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power are still strong. We wish that this column, rising toward heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object to the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden him who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.27

We still have among us some of those who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here, from every quarter of New England, to visit once more, and under circumstances so affecting—I had almost said so overwhelming—this renowned theater of their courage and patriotism.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.27

VENERABLE MEN! you have come down to us from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now where you stood fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else, how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon; you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.28

All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole, happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with a universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defense. All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.29

But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Reed, Pomeroy, Bridge!—our eyes seek for you in vain amid this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve that you have met the common fate of men. You lived at least long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

"Another morn,

Risen on mid-noon";

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.29

But, ah! Him! the first great martyr in

"Haste hither, Eve, and, worth thy sight, behold

Eastward among these trees what glorious Shape

Comes this way moving: Seems another morn

Risen on mid-noon."

this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit! Him! cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage!—how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name? Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may molder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.30

But the scene amid which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary army.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.30

VETERANS! you are the remnant of many a well-fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. VETERANS OF HALF A CENTURY! when in your youthful days you put everything at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive, at a moment of national prosperity such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met here to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers, and to receive the overflowings of a universal gratitude.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.31

But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, present themselves before you. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years and bless them! And when you shall here have exchanged your embraces, when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to give succor in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory, then look abroad upon this lovely land which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled; yea, look abroad upon the whole earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind!

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.32

Information of these events, circulating throughout the world, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me He has not forgotten the emotion which the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.32

Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy of the living. But, sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.32

Fortunate, fortunate man! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended, to the last extremity, by his lion-hearted valor, and within which the corner-stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McClary, Moore; and other early patriots fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you and yours for ever.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.33

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this structure. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give them this day to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, to Sullivan, and to Lincoln. We have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. "Serus in coelum redeas." Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, oh, very far distant be the day, when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy!

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.34

It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without a direct interference, either to wrest that country from its present masters, or to execute the system of pacification by force, and, with united strength, lay the neck of Christian and civilized Greek at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have mentioned should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any one who would hazard it.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.34

It is, indeed, a touching reflection that, while in the fulness of our country's happiness we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction in our undertaking to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence. Let her be assured that she is not forgotten in the world; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency can not extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.35

And now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. Let us endeavor to comprehend in all its magnitude, and to feel in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.35

We are not propagandists. Where other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing conditions, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves; and the duty incumbent on us is to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.36

These are excitements to duty; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us, authorize the belief, that popular governments, tho subject to occasional variations, in form perhaps not always for the better, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as other systems. We know, indeed, that in our country any other is impossible. The principle of free government adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it, immovable as its mountains.

Webster, The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.36

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those who established our liberty and our government are daily dropping from among us. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defense and preservation; and there is opened to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four States are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field which we are called to act. let our object be, OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of wisdom, of peace, and of liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration for ever!

The Duel Between Clay and John Randolph of Roanoke

Title: The Duel Between Clay and John Randolph of Roanoke

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1826

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, pp.192-204

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.192

It was Saturday, the first day of April, toward noon, the Senate not being that day in session, that Mr. Randolph came to my room at Brown's Hotel, and (without explaining the reason of the question) asked me if I was a blood-relation of Mrs. Clay? I answered that I was, and he immediately replied that that put an end to a request which he had wished to make of me; and then went on to tell me that he had just received a challenge from Mr. Clay, had accepted it, was ready to go out, and would apply to Col. Tatnall to be his second. Before leaving, he told me he would make my bosom the depository of a secret which he should commit to no other person: it was, that he did not intend to fire at Mr. Clay. He told it to me because he wanted a witness of his intention, and did not mean to tell it to his second or anybody else; and enjoined inviolable secrecy until the duel was over. This was the first notice I had of the affair. The circumstances of the delivery of the challenge I had from General Jesup, Mr. Clay's second, and they were so perfectly characteristic of Mr. Randolph that I give them in detail, and in the General's owns words:

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.193

"I accordingly informed Mr. Randolph that I was the bearer of a message from Mr. Clay in consequence of an attack which he had made upon his private as well as public character in the Senate; that I was aware no one had the right to question him out of the Senate for anything said in debate, unless he chose voluntarily to waive his privileges as a member of that body. Mr. Randolph replied, that the Constitution did protect him, but he would never shield himself under such a subterfuge as the pleading of his privileges as Senator from Virginia; that he did hold himself accountable to Mr. Clay; but he said that gentleman had first two pledges to redeem: one that he had bound himself to fight any member of the House of Representatives, who should acknowledge himself the author of a certain publication in a Philadelphia paper; and the other, that he stood pledged to establish certain facts in regard to a great man, whom he would not name; but, he added he could receive no verbal message from Mr. Clay—that any message from him must be in writing.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.193

"I replied that I was not authorized by Mr. Clay to enter into or receive any verbal explanations—that the inquiries I had made were for my own satisfaction and upon my own responsibility—that the only message of which I was the bearer was in writing. I then presented the note, and remarked that I knew nothing of Mr. Clay's pledges' but that if they existed as he (Mr. Randolph) understood them, and he was aware of them when he made the attack complained of, he could not avail himself of them—that by making the attack I thought he had waived them himself. He said he had not the remotest intention of taking advantageof the pledges referred to; that he had mentioned them merely to remind me that he was waiving his privilege, not only as a Senator from Virginia, but as a private gentleman; that he was ready to respond to Mr. Clay, and would be obliged to me if I would bear his note in reply; and that he would in the course of the day look out for a friend.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.194

"I declined being the bearer of his note, but informed him my only reason for declining was, that I thought he owed it to himself to consult his friends before taking so important step. He seized my hand, saying, 'You are right, sir. I thank you for the suggestion; but as you do not take my note, you must not be impatient if you should not hear from me to-day. I now think of only two friends, and there are circumstances connected with one of them which may deprive me of his services, and the other is in bad health—he was sick yesterday, and may not be out to-day.' I assured him that any reasonable time which he might find necessary to take would be satisfactory. I took leave of him; and it is due to his memory to say that his bearing was, throughout the interview, that of a high-toned, chivalrous gentleman of the old school."

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.194

These were the circumstances of the delivery of the challenge, and the only thing necessary to give them their character is to recollect that, with this prompt acceptance and positive refusal to explain, there was a perfect determination not to fire at Mr. Clay. That determination rested on two grounds; first, an entire unwillingness to hurt Mr. Clay; and, next, a conviction that to return the fire would be to answer, and would be an implied acknowledgment of Mr. Clay's right to make him answer. This he would not do, neither by implication nor in words. He denied the right of any person to question him out of the Senate for words spoken within it. He took a distinction between man and senator. As senator he had a constitutional immunity, given for a wise purpose, and which he would neither surrender nor compromise; as individual he was ready to give satisfaction for what was deemed an injury. He would receive, but not return a fire. It was as much as to say: Mr. Clay may fire at me for what has offended him; I will not, by returning the fire, admit his right to do so. This was a subtle distinction, and that in case of life and death, and not very clear to the common intellect; but to Mr. Randolph both clear and convincing….

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.195

The "two friends" alluded to were Colonel Tatnall and myself, and the circumstances which might disqualify one of the two were those of my relationship to Mrs. Clay, of which he did not know the degree, and whether or affinity or consanguinity—considering the first no obstacle, the other a complete bar to my appearing as his second—holding, as he did, with the tenacity of an Indian, to the obligations of blood, and laying but little stress on marriage connections. His affable reception and courteous demeanor to General Jesup were according to his own high breeding, and the decorum which belonged to such occasions. A duel in the circle to which he belonged was "an affair of honor"; and high honor, according to its code, must pervade every part of it. General Jesup had come upon an unpleasant business. Mr. Randolph determined to put him at his ease; and did it so effectually as to charm him into admiration. The whole plan of his conduct, down to contingent details, was cast in his mind instantly, as if by intuition, and never departed from. The acceptance, the refusal to explain, the determination not to fire, the first and second choice of a friend, and the circumstances which might disqualify one and delay the other, the additional cut, and the resolve to fall, if he fell, on the soil of Virginia—was all, to his mind, a single emanation, the flash of an instant. He needed no consultations, no deliberations to arrive at all these important conclusions. I dwell upon these small circumstances because they are characteristic, and show the man—a man who belongs to history, and had his own history, and should be known as he was. That character can only be shown in his own conduct, his own words and acts: and this duel with Mr. Clay illustrates it at many points.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.196

The acceptance of the challenge was in keeping with the whole proceeding—prompt in the agreement to meet, exact in protesting against the right to call him out, clear in the waiver of his constitutional privilege, brief and cogent in presenting the case as one of some reprehension—the case of a member of an administration challenging a Senator for words spoken in debate of that administration; and all in brief, terse, and superlatively decorous language.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.196

The afternoon of Saturday, the 8th of April, was fixt upon for the time; the right bank of the Potomac, within the State of Virginia, above the Little Falls bridge, was the place—pistols the weapons—distance ten paces; each party to be attended by two seconds and a surgeon, and myself at liberty to attend as a mutual friend. There was to be no practising with pistols, and there was none; and the words "one," "two," "three," "stop," after the word "fire," were, by agreement between the seconds, and for the humane purpose of reducing the result as near as possible to chance, to be given out in quick succession. The Virginia side of the Potomac was taken at the instance of Mr. Randolph. He went out as a Virginia Senator, refusing to compromise that character, and, if he fell in defense of its rights, Virginia soil was to him the chosen ground to receive his blood. There was a statute of the State against dueling within her limits; but, as he merely went out to receive a fire without returning it, he deemed that no fighting, and hence no breach of her statute. This reason for choosing Virginia could only be explained to me, as I was the depository of his secret.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.197

The week's delay which the second had contrived was about expiring. It was Friday evening, or rather night, when I went to see Mr. Clay for the last time before the duel. There had been some alienation between us since the time of the Presidential election in the House of Representatives, and I wished to give evidence that there was nothing personal in it. The family were in the parlor—company present—and some of it stayed late. The youngest child, I believe James, went to sleep on the sofa—a circumstance which availed me for a purpose the next day. Mrs. Clay was, as always since the death of her daughter, the picture of desolation, but calm, conversable, and without the slightest apparent consciousness of the impending event. When all were gone, and she also had left the parlor, I did what I came for, and said to Mr. Clay, that, notwithstanding our late political differences, my personal feelings toward him were the same as formerly, and that, in whatever concerned his life or honor my best wishes were with him. He exprest his gratification at the visit and the declaration, and said it was what he would have expected of me. We parted at midnight.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.198

Saturday, the 8th of April—the day for the duel—had come, and almost the hour. It was noon, and the meeting was to take place at 4:30 o'clock. I had gone to see Mr. Randolph before the hour, and for a purpose; and, besides, it was so far on the way, as he lived half way to Georgetown, and we had to pass through that place to cross the Potomac into Virginia at the Little Falls bridge. I had heard nothing from him on the point of not returning the fire since the first communication to that effect, eight days before. I had no reason to doubt the steadiness of his determination, but felt a desire to have fresh assurance of it after so many days' delay, and so near approach of the trying moment. I knew it would not do to ask him the question—any question which would imply a doubt of his word. His sensitive feelings would be hurt and annoyed at it.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.198

So I fell upon a scheme to get at the inquiry without seeming to make it. I told him of my visit to Mr. Clay the night before—of the late sitting—the child asleep—the unconscious tranquillity of Mrs. Clay; and added, I could not help reflecting how different all that might be the nextnight. He understood me perfectly, and immediately said, with a quietude of look and expression which seemed to rebuke an unworthy doubt, "I shall do nothing to disturb the sleep of the child or the repose of the mother," and went on with his employment—(his seconds being engaged in their preparations in a different room)—which was, making codicils to his will, all in the way of remembrance to friends; the bequests slight in value, but invaluable in tenderness of feeling and beauty of expression, and always appropriate to the receiver. To Mr. Macon he gave some English shillings, to keep the game when he played whist. His namesake, John Randolph Bryan, then at school in Baltimore, and since married to his niece, had been sent for to see him, but sent off before the hour for going out, to save the boy from a possible shock at seeing him brought back.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.199

He wanted some gold—that coin not being then in circulation, and only to be obtained by favor or purchase—and sent his faithful man, Johnny, to the United States Branch Bank to get a few pieces, American being the kind asked for….

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.199

He delivered me a sealed paper, which I was to open if he was killed—give back to him if he was not; also an open slip, which I was to read before I got to the ground. This slip was a request to feel in his left breeches pocket, if he was killed, and find so many pieces of gold—I believe nine—take three for myself, and give the same number to Tatnall and Hamilton each, to make seals to wear in remembrance of him. We were all three at Mr. Randolph's lodgings then, and soon sat out, Mr. Randolph and his seconds in a carriage, I following him on horseback.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.200

The preparations for the duel were finished; the parties went to their places, and I went forward to a piece of rising ground, from which I could see what passed and hear what was said. The faithful Johnny followed me close, speaking not a word, but evincing the deepest anxiety for his beloved master. The place was a thick forest, and the immediate spot a little depression, or basin, in which the parties stood. The principals saluted each other courteously as they took their stands. Col. Tatnall had won the choice of position, which gave to Gen. Jesup the delivery of the word. They stood on a line east and west—a small stump just behind Mr. Clay; a low gravelly bank rose just behind Mr. Randolph. This latter asked Gen. Jesup to repeat the word as he would give it; and while in the act of doing so, and Mr. Randolph adjusting the butt of his pistol to his hand, the muzzle pointing downward, and almost to the ground, it fired. Instantly Mr. Randolph turned to Col. Tatnall and said: "I protest against that hair trigger." Col. Tatnall took blame to himself for having sprung the hair. Mr. Clay had not then received his pistol. Senator Johnson, of Louisiana (Josiah), one of his seconds, was carrying it to him, and still several steps from him.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.200

This untimely fire, tho clearly an accident, necessarily gave rise to some remarks, and a species of inquiry, which was conducted with the utmost delicacy, but which, in itself, was of a nature to be inexpressibly painful to a gentleman's feelings. Mr. Clay stopped it with the generous remark that the fire was clearly an accident; and it was so unanimously declared. Another pistol was immediately furnished; and exchange of shots took place, and, happily, without effect upon the person. Mr. Randolph's bullet struck the stump behind Mr. Clay, and Mr. Clay's knocked up the earth and gravel behind Mr. Randolph, and in a line with the level of his hips, both bullets having gone so true and close that it was a marvel how they missed.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.201

The moment had come for me to interpose. I went in among the parties and offered my mediation; but nothing could be done. Mr. Clay said, with that wave of the hand with which he was accustomed to put away a trifle, "This is child's play!" and required another fire. Mr. Randolph also demanded another fire. The seconds were directed to reload. While this was doing I prevailed on Mr. Randolph to walk away from his post, and renewed to him, more pressingly than ever, my importunities to yield to some accommodation; but I found him more determined than I had ever seen him, and for the first time impatient, and seemingly annoyed and dissatisfied at what I was doing. The accidental fire of his pistol preyed upon his feelings. He was doubly chagrined at it, both as a circumstance susceptible in itself of an unfair interpretation, and as having been the immediate and controlling cause of his firing at Mr. Clay. He regretted this fire the instant it was over. He felt that it had subjected him to imputations from which he knew himself to be free—a desire to kill Mr. Clay, and a contempt for the laws of his beloved State; and the annoyances which he felt at these vexations circumstances revived his original determination, and decided him irrevocably to carry it out.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.202

It was in this interval that he told me whast he had heard since we parted. It was to this effect: That he had been informed by Col. Tatnall that it was proposed to give out the words with more deliberateness, so as to prolong the time for taking aim. This information grated harshly upon his feelings. It unsettled his purpose, and brought his mind to the inquiry (as he now told me, and as I found it exprest in the note which he had immediately written in pencil to apprize me of his possible change), whether, under these circumstances he might not "disable" his adversary? . . .

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.202

But he declared to me that he had not aimed at the life of Mr. Clay; that he did not level as high as the knees—not higher than the knee-band; "for it was no mercy to shoot a man in the knee"; that his only object was to disable him and spoil his aim. And then added, with a beauty of expression and a depth of feeling which no studied oratory can ever attain, and which I shall never forget, these impressive words: "I would not have seen him fall mortally, or even doubtfully wounded, for all the land that is watered by the King of Floods and all his tributary streams."

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.202

He left me to resume his post, utterly refusing to explain out of the Senate any thing that he had said in it, and with the positive declaration that he would not return the next fire. I withdrew a little way into the woods, and kept my eyes fixt on Mr. Randolph, who I then knew to be the only one in danger. I saw him receive the fire of Mr. Clay, saw the gravel knocked up in the same place, saw Mr. Randolph raise his pistol—discharge it in the air; heard him say, "I do not fire at you, Mr. Clay"; and immediately advancing and offering hishand. He was met in the same spirit. They met half way, shook hands, Mr. Randolph saying, jocosely, "You owe me a coat, Mr. Clay"—(the bullet had passed through the skirt of the coat, very near the hip)—to which Mr. Clay promptly and happily replied, "I am glad the debt is no greater." I had come up, and was prompt to proclaim what I had been obliged to keep secret for eight days. The joy of all was extreme at this happy termination of a most critical affair; and we immediately left, with lighter hearts than we brought.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.203

I stopt to sup with Mr. Randolph and his friends—none of us wanted dinner that day—and had a characteristic time of it. A runner came in from the bank to say that they had overpaid him, by mistake, 130 that day. He answered, "I believe it is your rule not to correct mistakes, except at the time, and at your counter." And with that answer the runner had to return. When gone, Mr. Randolph said, "I will pay it on Monday; people must be honest, if banks are not." He asked for the sealed paper he had given me, opened it, took out a check for $1,000 drawn in my favor, and with which I was requested to have him carried, if killed, to Virginia, and buried under his patrimonial oaks—not let him be buried at Washington, with an hundred hacks after him.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.203

He took the gold from his left breeches pocket, and said to us (Hamilton, Tatnall, and I), "Gentlemen, Clay's bad shooting sha'n't rob you of your seals. I am going to London, and will have them made for you"; which he did, and most characteristically, so far as mine was concerned. He went to the herald's office in London and inquired for the Benton family, of which I had oftentold him there was none, as we only dated on that side from my grandfather in North Carolina. But the name was found, and with it a coat of arms—among the quarterings a lion rampant. That is the family, said he; and had the arms engraved on the seal, the same which I have habitually worn; and added the motto, Factis non verbis; of which he was afterward accustomed to say the non should be changed into et.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.204

But, enough. I run into these details, not merely to relate an event, but to show character; and if I have not done it, it is not for want of material, but of ability to use it.

Benton, Duel Between Clay and Randolph, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.204

On Monday the parties exchanged cards, and social relations were formally and courteously restored. It was about the last high-toned duel that I have witnessed, and among the highest-toned that I have ever witnessed, and so happily conducted to a fortunate issue—a result due to the noble character of the seconds as well as to the generous and heroic spirit of the principals.

Death of Adams and Jefferson on the Same Day

Title: Death of Adams and Jefferson on the Same Day

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1826

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.5, pp.205-208

Benton, Death of Adams and Jefferson, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.205

Mr. John Adams and Mr. Jefferson—two of the most eminent political men of the Revolution, who, entering public life together, died on the same day—July 4th, 1826—exactly fifty years after they had both put their hands to that Declaration of Independence which placed a new nation upon the theater of the world. Doubtless there was enough of similitude in their lives and deaths to excuse the belief in the interposition of a direct providence, and to justify the feeling of mysterious reverence with which the news of their coincident demise was received throughout the country.

Benton, Death of Adams and Jefferson, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.205

The parallel between them was complete. Born nearly at the same time, Mr. Adams the elder, they took the same course in life—with the same success—and ended their earthly career at the same time, and in the same way: in the regular course of nature, in the repose and tranquillity of retirement, in the bosom of their families, and on the soil which their labors had contributed to make free.

Benton, Death of Adams and Jefferson, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.205

Born, one in Massachusetts, the other in Virginia, they both received liberal educations, embraced the same profession (that of the law), mixed literature and science with their legal studies and pursuits, and entered early into the ripening contest with Great Britain—first in their counties and States, and then on the broader field of the General Congress of the Confederated Colonies. They were both members of the Congress which declared Independence—both of the committee which reported the Declaration—both signed it—were both employed in foreign missions—both became Vice-Presidents—and both became Presidents. They were both working men; and, in the great number of efficient laborers in the cause of Independence which the Congresses of the Revolution contained, they were doubtless the two most efficient—and Mr. Adams the more so of the two. He was, as Mr. Jefferson styled him, "the Colossus" of the Congress—speaking, writing, counseling—a member of ninety different committees, and (during his three years' service) chairman of twenty-five—chairman also of the board of war and board of appeals: his soul on fire with the cause, left no rest to his head, hands, or tongue.

Benton, Death of Adams and Jefferson, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.206

Mr. Jefferson drew the Declaration of Independence, but Mr. Adams was "the pillar of its support, and its ablest advocate and defender," during the forty days it was before the Congress. In the letter which he wrote that night to Mrs. Adams (for, after all the labors of the day, and such a day, he could still write to her), he took a glowing view of the future, and used those expressions, "gloom" and "glory," which his son repeated in the paragraph of his message to Congress in relation to the deaths of the two ex-Presidents, which I have heard criticized by those who did not knowtheir historical allusion, and could not feel the force and beauty of their application. They were words of hope and confidence when he wrote them, and of history when he died. "I am well aware of the toil, and blood, and treasure, that it will cost to maintain this Declaration, and to support and defend these States; yet through all the gloom, I can see the rays of light and glory!" and he lived to see it—to see the glory—with the bodily, as well as with the mental eye. And (for the great fact will bear endless repetition) it was he that conceived the idea of making Washington commander-in-chief, and prepared the way for his unanimous nomination.

Benton, Death of Adams and Jefferson, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.207

In the division of parties which ensued the establishment of the federal government, Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson differed in systems of policy, and became heads of opposite divisions, but without becoming either unjust or unkind to each other. Mr. adams sided with the party discriminated as federal; and in that character became the subject of political attacks, from which his competitor generously defended him, declaring that "a more perfectly honest man never issued from the hands of his Creator"; and, tho opposing candidates for the Presidency, neither would have any thing to do with the election, which they considered a question between the systems of policy which they represented, and not a question between themselves.

Benton, Death of Adams and Jefferson, Great Epochs, Vol.5, p.207

Mr. Jefferson became the head of the party then called Republican—now Democratic; and in that character became the founder of the political school which has since chiefly prevailed in the United States. He was a statesman; that is to say, aman capable of conceiving measures useful to the country and to mankind—able to recommend them to adoption, and to administer them when adopted. I have seen many politicians—a few statesmen—and, of these few, he their preeminent head. He was a republican by nature and constitution, and gave proofs of it in the legislation of his State, as well as in the policy of the United States. He was no speaker, but a most instructive and fascinating talker; and the Declaration of Independence, even if it had not been sistered by innumerable classic productions, would have placed him at the head of political writers. I never saw him but once, when I went to visit him in his retirement; and then I felt, for four hours, the charms of his bewitching talk. I was then a young senator, just coming on the stage of public life—he a patriarchal statesman just going off the stage of natural life, and evidently desirous to impress some views of policy upon me—a design in which he certainly did not fail. I honor him as a patriot of the Revolution—as one of the Founders of the Republic—as the founder of the political school to which I belong; and for the purity of character which he possest in common with his compatriots, and which gives to the birth of the United States a beauty of parentage which the genealogy of no other nation can show.

Jackson's First Election as President

Title: Jackson's First Election as President

Author: James Parton

Date: 1828

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.3-11

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.3

The presidential campaign of 1824 was the least instructive one that ever occurred, because it was the most exclusively personal. But it was far from being the least exciting. The long lull in the political firmament had given every one a desire for a renewal of the old excitements, and there was everywhere an eager buzz of preparation. During the last three years of Mr. Monroe's second term the great topic of conversation throughout the country was, Who shall be our next President?

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.3

Five candidates were frequently mentioned, each of whom had devoted partizans: William H. Crawford, of Georgia, Secretary of the Treasury; John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State; John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War; Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives; De Witt Clinton, Governor of New York—all strong, able, and popular men. But the name of Jackson had no sooner been presented to the nation by the Legislature of Tennessee than it was discovered that his popularity was about to render him a most formidable competitor. To promote his Presidential prospects his friends caused him to be elected to the Senate of the United States. Pennsylvania soon seconded his nomination, and most of the Southern States showed a strong inclination to support him. Mr. Calhoun withdrew his own name in favor of the victor of New Orleans, and consented to stand for the Vice-Presidency. The prospects of General Jackson were further improved by Mr. Crawford being stricken with paralysis, which totally prostrated him, and, in effect, narrowed the contest to Adams and Jackson.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.4

John C. Calhoun was elected Vice-President by a great majority. He received 182 electoral votes out of 261. All New England voted for him except Connecticut and one electoral district of New Hampshire. General Jackson received thirteen electoral votes for the Vice-Presidency, and was the choice of two entire States for that office—Connecticut and Missouri.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.4

Mr. Adams was the choice of seven States, General Jackson of eleven States, Mr. Clay of three States, Mr. Crawford of three States. Still no majority. The population of the United States in 1820 was about nine and a half millions. The population of the three States which gave a majority for Mr. Clay was 1,212,337. The population of the three States which preferred Mr. Crawford was 1,497,029. The population of the seven States which gave a majority for Mr. Adams was 3,032,766. The population of the eleven States which voted for General Jackson was 3,757,756. It thus appears that General Jackson received more electoral votes, the vote of more States, and the votes of more people, than any other candidate. Add to these facts that General Jackson was thesecond choice of Kentucky, Missouri, and Georgia, and it must be admitted that he came nearer being elected by the people than any other candidate. He was, moreover, a gaining candidate; every month added to his strength.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.5

The result was not known in all its details when the time came for Senator Jackson to begin his journey to Washington in the fall of 1824. That he was confident, however, of being the successful candidate was indicated by Mrs. Jackson's accompanying him to the seat of government. They traveled in their own coach-and-four, I believe, on this occasion. The opposition papers, at least, said so, and descanted upon the fact as an evidence of aristocratic pretensions; considering it anti-democratic to employ four horses to draw a load that four horses sometimes could not tug a mile an hour, and were a month in getting to Washington.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.5

The people having failed to elect a President, it devolved upon the House of Representatives, voting by States, each State having one vote to elect one from the three candidates who had received the highest number of electoral votes. A majority of States being necessary to an election, some one candidate had to secure the vote of thirteen States. The great question was to be decided on the 9th of February, 1825.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.5

The result, when announced by the tellers, surprized almost every on—surprized many of the best-informed politicians who heard it. Upon the first ballot, Mr. Adams received the vote of thirteen States, which was a majority. Maryland and Illinois, which had given popular majorities for Jackson, voted for Adams. Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri, which had given popular majorities for Clay, voted for Adams. Crawford received the vote of four States—Delaware, North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. General Jackson, for whom eleven States had given an electoral majority, received the vote of but seven States in the House.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.6

Was General Jackson, indeed, so heartily acquiescent in his defeat as he seemed to be? He was disappointed and indignant, believing that he had been defrauded of the presidency by a corrupt bargain between Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay. In this belief General Jackson lived and died. His partizans took up the cry, and made it the chief ground of opposition to Mr. Adam's administration.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.6

General Jackson was renominated for the Presidency by the Legislature of Tennessee before Mr. Adams had served one year. The general resigned his seat in the Senate, and entered heartily into the schemes of his friends. His popularity, great as it was before, seemed vastly increased by his late defeat, and by the belief, industriously promulgated, that he had been cheated of the office to which the people desired to elevate him.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.6

The campaign of 1828 opened with a stunning flourish of trumpets. Louisiana, like New York, was a doubtful and troublesome State. In 1827 the Legislature of Louisiana, which had refused to recognize General Jackson's services in 1815, invited him to revisit New Orleans, and unite with it in the celebration of the 8th of January, 1828, on the scene of his great victory.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.6

The reception of General Jackson at New Orleans on this occasion was, I presume, the most stupendous thing of the kind that had ever oc-curred in the United States. Delegations from States as distant as New York were sent to New Orleans to swell the eclat of the demonstration. "The morning of the auspicious day," wrote an eye-witness, "dawned upon New Orleans. A thick mist covered the water and the land, and at ten o'clock began to rise into clouds; and when the sun at last appeared, it served only to show the darkness of the horizon threatening a storm in the north. It was at that moment the city became visible, with its steeples, and the forest of masts rising from the waters. At that instant, too, a fleet of steamboats was seen advancing toward the Pocahontas, which had now got under way, with twenty-four flags waving over her lofty decks. Two stupendous boats, lasht together, led the van. The whole fleet kept up a constant fire of artillery, which was answered from several ships in the harbor and from the shore. General Jackson stood on the back gallery of the Pocahontas, his head uncovered, conspicuous to the whole multitude, which literally covered the steamboats, the shipping, and the surrounding shores. The van which bore the Revolutionary soldiers and the remnant of the old Orleans Battalion passed the Pocahontas, and, rounding to, fell down the stream, while acclamations of thousands of spectators rang from the river to the woods and back to the river.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.7

"In this order the fleet, consisting of eighteen steamboats of the first class, passed close to the city, directing their course toward the field of battle. When it was first descried, some horsemen only, the marshals of the day, had reached the ground; but in a few minutes it seemed alive with a vast multitude, brought thither on horseback andin carriages, and poured forth from the steamboats. A line was formed by Generals Planche and Labaltat, and the committee repaired on board the Pocahontas, in order to invite the general to land and meet his brother soldiers and fellow citizens. I have no words to describe the scene which ensued." The festivities continued four days, at the expiration of which the general and his friends reembarked on board the Pocahontas and returned homeward.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.8

The campaign now set in with its usual severity. General Jackson was accused of every crime, offense, and impropriety that man was ever known to be guilty of. His whole life was subject to the severest scrutiny. Every one of his duels, fights, and quarrels was narrated at length. His connection with Aaron Burr was, of course, a favorite theme. The military executions which he had ordered were all recounted. John Binns, of Philadelphia, issued a series of handbills, each bearing the outline of a coffin-lid, upon which was printed an inscription recording the death of one of these victims. Campaign papers were first started this year. One, entitled We the People, and another, called The Anti-Jackson Expositor, were particularly prominent. The conduct of General Jackson in Florida during his governorship of that Territory was detailed.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.8

The number of electoral votes in 1828 was two hundred and sixty-one. One hundred and thirty-one was a majority. General Jackson received one hundred and seventy-eight; Mr. Adams, eighty-three. In all Tennessee, Adams and Rush obtained less than three thousand votes. In many towns every vote was cast for Jackson and Calhoun.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.9

A distinguished member of the North Carolina Legislature told me that he happened to enter a Tennessee village in the evening of the last day of the Presidential election of 1828. He found the whole male population out hunting, the object of the chase being two of their fellow citizens. He inquired by what crime these men had rendered themselves so obnoxious to their neighbors, and was informed that they had voted against General Jackson! The village, it appeared, had set its heart upon sending up a unanimous vote for the general, and these two voters had frustrated its desire. As the day wore on, the whisky flowed more and more freely, and the result was a universal chase after the two voters, with a view to tarring and feathering them. They fled to the woods, however, and were not taken.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.9

The news of General Jackson's election to the Presidency, I was informed by Major Lewis, created no more sensation at the Hermitage, so certain beforehand were its inmates of a result in accordance with their desires. Mrs. Jackson quietly said: "Well, for Mr. Jackson's sake, I am glad; for my own part, I never wished it."

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.9

The people of Nashville, greatly elated by the success of their general, resolved to celebrate it in the way in which they had long been accustomed to celebrate every important event in his career. A banquet unparalleled should be given in honor ofhis last triumph. The day appointed for this affair was the 23d of December, the anniversary of the night battle below New Orleans. General Jackson accepted the invitation to be present. Certain ladies of Nashville, meanwhile, were secretly preparing for Mrs. Jackson a magnificent wardrobe, suitable, as they thought, for the adornment of her person when, as mistress of the White House, she would be deemed the first lady in the nation. She was destined never to wear those splendid garments.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.10

For four or five years the health of Mrs. Jackson had been precarious. She had complained occasionally of an uneasy feeling about the region of the heart; and, during the late excitements, she had been subject to sharper pains and palpitation. She died December 22d, late in the evening. Her husband was shocked and grieved beyond expression. It was long, as I was assured by her favorite servant Hannah, before he would believe that she had really breathed her last.

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.10

The sad news reached Nashville early on the morning of the 23d, when already the committee of arrangements were busied with the preparations for the general's reception. "The table was well-nigh spread," said one of the papers, "at which all was expected to be hilarity and joy, and our citizens had sallied forth on the morning with spirits light and buoyant, and countenances glowing with animation and hope, when suddenly the scene is changed; congratulations are turned into expressions of condolence, tears are substituted for smiles, and sincere and general mourning pervades the community."

Parton, Jackson's First Election as President, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.10

General Jackson never recovered from the shockof his wife's death. He was never quite the same man afterward. It subdued his spirit and corrected his speech. Except on occasions of extreme excitement, few and far between, he never again used what is commonly called "profane language," not even the familiar phrase, "By the Eternal." There were times, of course, when his fiery passions asserted themselves; when he uttered wrathful words; when he wished even to throw off the robes of office, as he once said, that he might call his enemies to a dear account. He mourned deeply and ceaselessly the loss of his truest friend, and was often guided in his domestic affairs by what he supposed would have been her will if she had been there to make it known.

Nullification and its Overthrow

Title: Nullification and its Overthrow

Author: Theodore Roosevelt

Date: 1828—1832

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.20-30

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.20

The nullification movement in South Carolina, during the latter part of the third and early part of the fourth decades in the nineteenth century had nothing to do, except in the most distant way, with slavery. Its immediate cause was the high tariff; remotely it sprang from the same feelings which produced the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.20

Certain of the slave States, including those which raised hemp, indigo, and sugar, were high-tariff States; indeed, it was not till toward the close of the Presidency of Monroe that there had been much sectional feeling over the policy of protection. Originally, while we were a purely agricultural and mercantile people, free trade was the only economic policy which occurred to us as possible to be followed, the first tariff bill being passed in 1816. South Carolina then was inclined to favor the system, Calhoun himself supporting the bill, and, his subsequent denials to the contrary notwithstanding, distinctly advocating the policy of protection to native industries; while Massachusetts then and afterward stoutly opposed its introduction as hostile to her interests. However, the bill was passed, and Massachusetts had to submit to its operation.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.21

After 1816 new tariff laws were enacted about every four years, and soon the coast slave States, except Louisiana, realized that their working was hurtful to the interests of the planters. New England also changed her attitude; and when the protective tariff bill of 1828 came up, its opponents and supporters were sharply divided by sectional lines. But these lines were not such as would have divided the States on the question of slavery. The northeast and northwest alike favored the measure, as also did all the Southern States west of the Alleghanies, and Louisiana. It was therefore passed by an overwhelming vote, against the solid opposition of the belt of Southern coast States stretching from Virginia to Mississippi, and including these two.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.21

The States that felt themselves harmed by the tariff did something more than record their disapproval by the votes of their representatives in Congress. They nearly all, through their legislatures, entered emphatic protest against its adoption, as being most harmful to them and dangerous to the Union; and some accompanied their protests with threats as to what would be done if the obnoxious laws should be enforced.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.21

They certainly had grounds for discontent. In 1828 the tariff, whether it benefited the country as a whole or not, unquestionably harmed the South; and in a federal Union it is most unwise to pass laws which shall benefit one part of the community to the hurt of another part, when the latter receives no compensation. The truculent and unyielding attitude of the extreme; for cooler men than the South Carolinians might well have been exasperated at such an utterance as that of Henry Clay, when he stated that for the sake of the "American system"—by which title he was fond of styling a doctrine already ancient in medieval times—he would "defy the South, the President and the devil."

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.22

On the other hand, both the good and the evil effects of the tariff were greatly exaggerated. Some harm to the planter States was doubtless caused by it; but their falling back, as compared with the North, in the race for prosperity, was doubtless caused much more by the presence of slavery, as Dallas, of Pennsylvania, pointed out in the course of some very temperate and moderate remarks in the Senate. Clay's assertions as to what the tariff had done for the West were equally ill-founded, as Benton showed in a good speech, wherein he described picturesquely enough the industries and general condition of his portion of the country, and asserted with truth that its revived prosperity was due to its own resources, entirely independent of federal aid or legislation. He said: "I do not think we are indebted to the high tariff for our fertile lands and our navigable rivers; and I am certain we are indebted to these blessings for the prosperity we enjoy." . . .

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.23

It must be admitted that the tariff did some harm to the South, and that it was natural for the latter to feel resentment at the way in which it worked. But it must also be remembered that no law can be passed which does not distribute its benefits more or less unequally, and which does not, in all probability, work harm in some cases. Moreover the South was estopped from complaining of one section being harmed by a law that benefited, or was supposed to benefit, the country at large, by her position in regard to the famous embargo and non-intervention acts. These inflicted infinitely more damage and loss in New England than any tariff law could inflict on South Carolina, and, moreover, were put into execution on account of a quarrel with England forced on by the West and South contrary to the desire of the East….

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.23

Complain she did, however; and soon added threats to complaints, and was evidently ready to add acts to threats. Georgia, at first, took the lead in denunciation; but South Carolina soon surpassed her, and finally went to the length of advocating and preparing for separation from the Union; a step that produced a revulsion of feeling even among her fellow anti-tariff States. The South Carolinian statesmen now proclaimed the doctrine of nullification—that is, proclaimed that if any State deemed a Federal law improper, it could proceed to declare that law null and void so far as its own territory was concerned—and, as a corollary, that it had the right forcibly to prevent execution of this void law within its borders.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.23

This was proclaimed, not as an exercise of the right of revolution, which, in the last resort, be-longs, of course, to every community and class, but as a constitutional privilege. Jefferson was quoted as the father of the idea, and the Kentucky resolutions of 1798-99, which he drew, were cited as the precedent for the South Carolinian action.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.24

In both these last assertions the Nullifiers were correct. Jefferson was the father of nullification, and therefore of secession. He used the word "nullify" in the original draft which he supplied to the Kentucky Legislature, and tho that body struck it out of the resolutions which they passed in 1789, they inserted it in those of the following year. This was done mainly as an unscrupulous party move on Jefferson's part, and when his side came into power he became a firm upholder of the Union; and, being constitutionally unable to put a proper value on truthfulness, he even denied that his resolutions could be construed to favor nullification—tho they could by no possibility be construed to mean anything else.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.24

At this time it is not necessary to discuss nullification as a constitutional dogma; it is an absurdity too great to demand serious refutation. The United States has the same right to protect itself from death by nullification, secession, or rebellion that a man has to protect himself from death by assassination. Calhoun's hair-splitting and metaphysical disquisitions on the constitutionality of nullification have now little more practical interest than have the extraordinary arguments and discussions of the schoolmen of the Middle Ages.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.24

But at the time they were of vital interest, for they were words which it was known South Carolina was prepared to back up by deeds. Calhounwas Vice-President, the second officer in the Federal Government, and yet also the avowed leader of the most bitter disunionists. His State supported him by an overwhelming majority, altho even within its own borders there was an able opposition headed by the gallant and loyal family of the Draytons—the same family that afterward furnished the captain of Farragut's flagship, the glorious old Hartford. There was a strong sentiment in the other Southern States in his favor; the public men of South Carolina made speech after speech goading him on to take even more advanced ground.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.25

In Washington the current at first seemed to be all setting in favor of the Nullifiers; they even counted on Jackson's support, as he was a Southerner and a States'-rights man. But he was also a strong Unionist, and, moreover, at this time, felt very bitterly toward Calhoun, with whom he had just had a spit, and had in consequence remodeled his Cabinet, thrusting out all Calhoun's supporters, and adopting Van Buren as his political heir—the position which it was hitherto supposed the great Carolina separatist occupied.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.25

The first man to take up the gauntlet the Nullifiers had thrown down was Webster, in his famous reply to Hayne. He, of course, voiced the sentiment of the Whigs, and especially of the northeast, where the high tariff was regarded with peculiar favor, where the Union feeling was strong, and where there was a certain antagonism felt toward the South. The Jacksonian Democrats, whose strength lay in the West, had not yet spoken. They were, for the most part, neither ultra protectionists nor absolute free-traders; Jackson's early presidential utterances had given offense to the South by not condemning all high-tariff legislation, but at the same time had declared in favor of a much more moderate degree of protection than suited the Whigs.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.26

Only a few weeks after Webster's speech Jackson's chance came, and he declared himself in unmistakable terms. It was on the occasion of the Jefferson birthday banquet, April 13, 1830. An effort was then being made to have Jefferson's birthday celebrated annually; and the Nullifiers, rightly claiming him as their first and chief apostle, attempted to turn this particular feast into a demonstration in favor of nullification. Most of the speakers present were actively or passively in favor of the movement, and the toasts proposed strongly savored of the new doctrine. But Jackson, Benton, and a number of other Union men were in attendance also, and when it came to Jackson's turn he electrified the audience by proposing: "Our Federal Union; it must be preserved."

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.26

Calhoun at once answered with: "The Union; next to our liberty the most dear; may we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the States and distributing equally the benefit and burden of the Union." The issue between the President and the Vice-President was now complete, and the Jacksonian Democracy was squarely committed against nullification. Jackson had risen to the occasion as only a strong anda great man could rise, and his few, telling words, finely contrasting at every point with Calhoun's utterances, rang throughout the whole country, and will last as long as our government. One result, at least, the Nullifiers accomplished—they put an end to the Jefferson birthday celebrations….

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.27

The prime cause of irritation, the tariff, still remained; and in 1832, Clay, having entered the Senate after a long retirement from politics, put the finishing stroke to their anger by procuring the passage of a new tariff bill, which left the planter States almost as badly off as did the law of 1828. Jackson signed this, altho not believing that it went far enough in the reduction of duties.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.27

In the presidential election of 1832, Jackson defeated Clay by an enormous majority; Van Buren was elected Vice-President, there being thus a Northern man on the ticket. South Carolina declined to take part in the election, throwing away her vote. Again, it must be kept in mind that the slave question did not shape, or, indeed enter into this contest at all, directly, altho beginning to be present in the background as a source of irritation. In 1832 there was tenfold more feeling in the North against Masonry, and secret societies generally, than there was against slavery.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.27

A fortnight after the presidential election South Carolina passed her ordinance of nullification, directed against the tariff laws generally, and against those of 1828 and 1832 in particular. The ordinance was to take effect on February 1st; and if meantime the Federal Government should make any attempt to enforce the laws, the fact of such attempt was to end the continuance of South Carolina in the Union.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.28

Jackson promptly issued a proclamation against nullification, composed jointly by himself and the great Louisiana jurist and statesman, Livingston. It is one of the ablest, as well as one of the most important, of all American state papers. It is hard to see how any American can read it now without feeling his veins thrill. Some claim it as being mainly the work of Jackson others as that of Livingston; it is great honor for either to have had a hand in its production.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.28

In his annual message the President merely referred, in passing, to the Nullifiers, expressing his opinion that the action in reducing the duties, which the extinction of the public debt would permit and require, would put an end to the proceedings. As matters grew more threatening, however, South Carolina making every preparation for war and apparently not being conciliated in the least by the evident desire in Congress to meet her more than half way on the tariff question, Jackson sent a special message to both Houses. He had already sent General Scott to Charleston, and had begun the concentration of certain military and naval forces in or near the State boundaries….

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.28

Calhoun introduced a series of nullification resolutions into the Senate, and defended them strongly in the prolonged constitutional debate that followed. South Carolina meanwhile put off the date at which her decrees were to take effect, so that she might see what Congress would do. Beyond question, Jackson's firmness, and the way in which he was backed up by Benton, Webster, and their followers, was having some effect. He had openly avowed his intention, if matters went too far, of hanging Calhoun "higher than Haman." He unquestionably meant to imprison him, as well as the other South Carolina leaders, the instant that State came into actual collision with the Union; and to the end of his life regretted, and with reason, that he had not done so without waiting for anovert act of resistance. Some historians have treated this as if it were an idle threat; but such itcertainly was not. Jackson undoubtedly fully meant what he said, and would have acted promptly had the provocation occurred, and, moreover, he would have been sustained by the country….

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.30

Without doubt, the honors of the nullification dispute were borne off by Benton and Webster. The latter's reply to Hayne is, perhaps, the greatest single speech of the nineteenth century, and he deserve the highest credit for the stubbornness with which he stood by his colors to the last. There never was any question of Webster's courage; on the occasion when he changed front he was actuated by self-interest and ambition, not by timidity. Usually he appears as an advocate rather than an earnest believer in the cause he represents; but when it came to be a question of the Union, he felt what he said with the whole strength of his nature.

Roosevelt, Nullification and its Overthrow, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.30

An even greater meed of praise attaches to Benton for the unswerving fidelity which he showed to the Union in this crisis. Webster was a high-tariff man, and was backed up by all the sectional antipathies of the northeast in his opposition to the Nullifiers; Benton, on the contrary, was a believer in a low tariff, or in one for revenue merely, and his sectional antipathies were the other way. Yet, even when deserted by his chief, and when he was opposed to every senator from south of the Potomac and the Ohio, he did not flinch for a moment from his attitude of aggressive loyalty to the national Union. He had a singularly strong and upright character; this country has never had a statesman more fearlessly true to his convictions, when great questions were at stake, no matter what might be the cost to himself, or the pressure from outside—even when, as happened later, his own State was against him.

The Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828

Title: The Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1828

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.38-42

Senator Benton, the statesman-historian, from whose "Thirty Years' View" this account is taken, had not only become reconciled to General Jackson, with whom he had fought a spectacular duel fifteen years earlier, but had become a warm adherent of his in the campaign of 1828. This is particularly evidenced by his defense of "Old Hickory" against "the flippant and shallow statements" made by the French statesman De Tocqueville, in his great work on "Democracy in America," published in 1835. In taking his French contemporary to task for his misstatements regarding Jackson, Benton ingenuously pleads that his action was inspired by his high regard for M. de Tocqueville and his even higher regard for "the cause of Republican government," of which Jackson was such a stalwart champion.

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.38–p.39

GENERAL JACKSON and John Quincy Adams were the candidates; with Henry Clay (his Secretary of State), so intimately associated in the public mind, on account of the circumstances of the previous presidential election in the House of Representatives, that their names and interests were inseparable during the canvass. General Jackson was elected, having received 178 electoral votes to 83 received by Mr. Adams. Mr. Richard Rush of Pennsylvania was the vice-presidential candidate on the ticket of Mr. Adams, and received an equal vote with that gentleman: Mr. Calhoun was the vice-presidential candidate on the ticket with General Jackson, and received a slightly less vote—the deficiency being in Georgia, where the friends of George Washington Crawford, State Attorney-General, and a Calhoun adherent, still resented his believed connection with the "A. B. plot." In the previous election, he had been neutral between General Jackson and Mr. Adams; but was now decided on the part of the General, and received the same vote everywhere, except in Georgia. In this election there was a circumstance to be known and remembered. Mr. Adams and Mr. Rush were both from the non-slave holding—General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun from the slave holding States, and both large slave owners themselves—and both received a large vote (73 each) in the free States—and of which at least forty were indispensable to their election. There was no jealousy, or hostile, or aggressive spirit in the North at that time against the South!

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.39

The election of General Jackson was a triumph of democratic principle, and an assertion of the people's right to govern themselves.

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.39–p.40

That principle had been violated in the presidential election in the House of Representatives in the session of 1824-25; and the sanction, or rebuke, of that violation was a leading question in the whole canvass. It was also a triumph over the high protective policy, and the Federal internal improvement policy, and the latitudinous construction of the Constitution; and of the Democracy over the Federalists, then called National Republicans; and was the re-establishment of parties on principle, according to the landmarks of the early ages of the government. For although Mr. Adams had received confidence and office from Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe, and had classed with the Democratic party during the fusion of parties in the "era of good feeling," yet he had previously been Federal; and in the re-establishment of old party lines which began to take place after the election of Mr. Adams in the House of Representatives, his affinities, and policy, became those of his former party; and as a party with many individual exceptions, they became his supporters and his strength. General Jackson, on the contrary, had always been Democratic, so classing when he was a Senator in Congress, under the administration of the first Mr. Adams, and when party lines were most straightly drawn, and upon principle….

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.40

In the mean time I have some knowledge of General Jackson, and the American people, and the two presidential elections with which they honored the General, and will oppose it, that is, my knowledge, to the flippant and shallow statements of Monsieur de Tocqueville. "A man of violent temper." I ought to know something about that . . . and I can say that General Jackson had a good temper, kind and hospitable to everybody and a feeling of protection in it for the whole human race, and especially the weaker and humbler part of it. He had few quarrels on his own account; and probably the ones of which M. de Tocqueville had heard were accidental, against his will, and for the succor of friends….

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.40–p.41

"The majority of the enlightened classes always opposed him." A majority of those classes which M. de Tocqueville would chiefly see in the cities, and along the highways—bankers, brokers, jobbers, contractors, politicians and speculators—were certainly against him, and he was as certainly against them: but the mass of the intelligence of the country was with him, and sustained him in retrieving the country from the deplorable condition in which the "enlightened classes" had sunk it, and in advancing it to that state of felicity at home, and respect abroad, which has made it the envy and admiration of the civilized world, and the absorbent of populations of Europe.

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.41

I pass on. "Raised to the Presidency and maintained there solely by the recollection of the victory at New Orleans." Here recollection and military glare, reverse the action of their ever previous attributes, and become stronger, instead of weaker, upon the lapse of time. The victory at New Orleans was gained in the first week of the year 1815; . . . but it did not make Jackson President, or even bring him forward as a candidate. The same four years afterward, at the election of 1820—not even a candidate then. Four years still later, at the election of 1824, he became a candidate, and—was not elected; receiving but 99 electoral votes out of 261.

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.41–p.42

I pass on to the last disparagement. "A victory which was a very ordinary achievement, and only to be remembered where battles were rare." Such was not the battle at New Orleans. It was no ordinary achievement. . . It did what the marvelous victories of Champaubert, Montmirail, Chateau-Thierry, Vauchamp, and Montereau could not do—turned back the invader, and saved the soil of France from the iron hoof of the conqueror's horse!. . . And so the victory at New Orleans will remain in history as one of the great achievements of the world, in spite of the low opinion which the writer on American Democracy entertains of it….

Benton, Turbulent Presidential Election of 1828, America, Vol.6, p.42

Regard for M. de Tocqueville is the cause of this correction of his error: . . . The character of our country, and the cause of Republican government, require his errors to be corrected:

The First American Locomotive

Title: The First American Locomotive

Author: John Hazlehurst Boneval Latrobe

Date: 1830

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.66-70

Latrobe thus describes Peter Cooper's pioneer steam engine in his "Personal Recollections of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad," of which he was counsel for more than fifty years. This particular locomotive was not the first one placed on an American track, that distinction belonging to an English-built engine, which, however, was not a success. This was the first American locomotive to make a successful trip.

Among his diverse activities, Latrobe founded the Maryland Institute; invented the "Baltimore heater"; and was long identified with the American Colonization Society, to the presidency of which he succeeded Henry Clay in 1853. He also became president of the Maryland Historical Society; and wrote a "History of Mason Dixon's Line."

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.66

IN the beginning, no one dreamed of steam upon the road. Horses were to do the work; and even after the line was completed to Frederick, relays of horses trotted the cars from place to place….

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.66

. . . To ride in a railroad car in those days was, literally, to go thundering along, the roll of the wheels on the combined rail of stone and iron being almost deafening.

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.66

When steam made its appearance on the Liverpool and Manchester Railroad it attracted great attention here. But there was this difficulty about introducing an English engine on an American road. An English road was virtually a straight road. An American road had curves sometimes of as small radius as two hundred feet. . . For a brief season it was believed that this feature of the early American roads would prevent the use of locomotive engines. The contrary was demonstrated by a gentleman still living in an active and ripe old age, honored and beloved, distinguished for his private worth and for his public benefactions; one of those to whom wealth seems to have been granted by Providence that men might know how wealth could be used to benefit one s fellow-creatures.

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.67

The speaker refers to Mr. Peter Cooper of New York. Mr. Cooper was satisfied that steam might be adapted to the curved roads which he saw would be built in the United States; and he came to Baltimore, which then possessed the only one on which he could experiment, to vindicate his belief. He had another idea, which was, that the crank could be dispensed with in the change from a reciprocating to a rotary motion; and he built an engine to demonstrate both articles of his faith. The machine was not larger than the hand cars used by workmen to transfer themselves from place to place; and as the speaker now recalls its appearance, the only wonder is, that so apparently insignificant a contrivance should ever have been regarded as competent to the smallest results. But Mr. Cooper was wiser than many of the wisest around him. His engine could not have weighed a ton; but he saw in it a principle which the forty-ton engines of to-day have but served to develop and demonstrate.

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.67–p.68

The boiler of Mr. Cooper's engine was not as large as the kitchen boiler attached to many a range in modern mansions. It was of about the same diameter, but not much more than half as high. It stood upright in the car, and was filled, above the furnace, which occupied the lower section, with vertical tubes. The cylinder was but three-and-a-half inches in diameter, and speed was gotten up by gearing. No natural draught could have been sufficient to keep up steam in 90 small a boiler; and Mr. Cooper used therefore a blowing-apparatus, driven by a drum attached to one of the car wheels, over which passed a cord that in its turn worked a pulley on the shaft of the blower….

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.68

Mr. Cooper's success was such as to induce him to try a trip to Ellicott's Mills; and an open car, the first used upon the road, already mentioned, having been attached to his engine, and filled with the directors and some friends, the speaker among the rest, the first journey by steam in America was commenced. The trip was most interesting. The curves were passed without difficulty at a speed of fifteen miles an hour; the grades were ascended with comparative ease; the day was fine, the company in the highest spirits, and some excited gentlemen of the party pulled out memorandum books, and when at the highest speed, which was eighteen miles an hour, wrote their names and some connected sentences, to prove that even at that great velocity it was possible to do so. The return trip from the Mills—a distance of thirteen miles—was made in fifty-seven minutes. This was in the summer of 1830.

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.68–p.69

But the triumph of this Tom Thumb engine was not altogether without a drawback. The great stage proprietors of the day were Stockton & Stokes; and on this occasion a gallant gray of great beauty and power was driven by them from town, attached to another car on the second track—for the Company had begun by making two tracks to the Mills—and met the engine at the Relay House on its way back. From this point it was determined to have a race home; and, the start being even, away went horse and engine, the snort of the one and the puff of the other keeping time and tune. At first the gray had the best of it, for his steam would be applied to the greatest advantage on the instant, while the engine had to wait until the rotation of the wheels set the blower to work. The horse was perhaps a quarter of a mile ahead when the safety valve of the engine lifted and the thin blue vapor issuing from it showed an excess of steam. The blower whistled, the steam blew off in vapory clouds, the pace increased, the passengers shouted, the engine gained on the horse, soon it lapped him—the silk was plied—the race was neck and neck, nose and nose—then the engine passed the horse, and a great hurrah hailed the victory.

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.69–p.70

But it was not repeated; for just at this time, when the gray's master was about giving up, the band which drove the pulley, which drove the blower, slipped from the drum, the safety valve ceased to scream, and the engine for want of breath began to wheeze and pant. In vain Mr. Cooper, who was his own engineman and fireman, lacerated his hands in attempting to replace the band upon the wheel: in vain he tried to urge the fire with light wood; the horse gained on the machine, and passed it; and although the band was presently replaced, and steam again did its best, the horse was too far ahead to be overtaken, and came in the winner of the race. But the real victory was with Mr. Cooper, notwithstanding. He had held fast to the faith that was in him, and had demonstrated its truth beyond peradventure. All honor to his name….

Latrobe, First American Locomotive, America, Vol.6, p.70

In the Musee d'Artillerie at Paris there are preserved old cannon, cotemporary almost with Crecy and Poictiers. In some great museum of internal improvement, and some such will at some future day be gotten up, Mr. Peter Cooper's boiler should hold an equally prominent and far more honored place; for while the old weapons of destruction were ministers of man's wrath, the contrivance we have described was one of the most potential instruments in making available, in America, that vast system which unites remote peoples and promotes that peace on earth and good will to men which angels have proclaimed.

The Jackson-Calhoun Break

Title: The Jackson-Calhoun Break

Author: Jackson and Calhoun

Date: 1830

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.71-90

But for the publicity given this correspondence between President Andrew Jackson and Vice-President John C. Calhoun in 1830, growing out of the charge that Calhoun, as Secretary of War in Monroe's Cabinet twelve years previously, had recommended that General Jackson be reprimanded, if not punished, for his conduct of the Seminole War, Calhoun probably would have succeeded Jackson as President of the United States. The characters of the two men are clearly revealed in these diplomatic letters, which now and then promise a violent sequel.

The rupture between Jackson and Calhoun seems to have been instigated by William H. Crawford, a former Cabinet officer and Minister to France, who nursed Presidential aspirations. This breach was still further widened when Calhoun refused to support Jackson in an effort to reinstate Mrs. Eaton (Peggy O'Neill) in Washington society.

Their Diplomatic Correspondence

JACKSON TO CALHOUN—MAY 13, 1830

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.71–p.72

THAT frankness, which, I trust, has always characterized me through life, towards those with whom I have been in the habits of friendship, induces me to lay before you the enclosed copy of a letter from William H. Crawford, Esq., which was placed in my hands on yesterday. The submission, you will perceive, is authorized by the writer. The statements and facts it presents being so different from what I had heretofore understood to be correct, requires that it should be brought to our consideration. They are different from your letter to Governor Bibb, of Alabama, of the 13th May, 1818, where you state "General Jackson is vested with full power to conduct the war in the manner he may judge best," and different, too, from your letters to me at that time, which breathe throughout a spirit of approbation and friendship, and particularly the one in which you say, "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th ultimo, and to acquaint you with the entire approbation of the President of all the measures you have adopted to terminate the rupture with the Indians." My object in making this communication is to announce to you the great surprise which is felt, and to learn of you whether it be possible that the information given is correct; whether it can be, under all the circumstances of which you and I are both informed, that any attempt seriously to affect me was moved and sustained by you in the Cabinet council, when, as is known to you, I was but executing the wishes of the Government, and clothed with the authority to "conduct the war in the manner I might judge best."

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.72

You can, if you please, take a copy: the one enclosed you will please return to me.

THE CRAWFORD LETTER IN QUESTION, TO JOHN FORSYTH

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.72

I RECOLLECT having conversed with you at the time and place, and upon the subject, in that enclosure stated, but I have not a distinct recollection of what I said to you, but I am certain there is one error in your statement of that conversation to Mr.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.73

I recollect distinctly what passed in the Cabinet meeting, referred to in your letter to Mr.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.73–p.74–p.75

Mr. Calhoun's proposition in the Cabinet was, that General Jackson should be punished in some form, or reprehended in some form; I am not positively certain which. As Mr. Calhoun did not propose to arrest General Jackson, I feel confident that I could not have made use of that word in my relation to you of the circumstances which transpired in the Cabinet, as I have no recollection of ever having designedly misstated any transaction in my life, and most sincerely believe I never did. My apology for having disclosed what passed in a Cabinet meeting is this: In the summer after that meeting, an extract of a letter from Washington was published in a Nashville paper, in which it was stated that I had proposed to arrest General Jackson, but that he was triumphantly defended by Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Adams. This letter, I always believed, was written by Mr. Calhoun, or by his directions. It had the desired effect. General Jackson became extremely inimical to me, and friendly to Mr. Calhoun. In stating the arguments of Mr. Adams to induce Mr. Monroe to support General Jackson's conduct throughout, adverting to Mr. Monroe's apparent admission that if a young officer had acted so he might be safely punished, Mr. Adams said, that if General Jackson had acted so, that if he was a subaltern officer, shooting was too good for him. This, however, was said with a view of driving Mr. Monroe to an unlimited support of what General Jackson had done, and not with an unfriendly view to the General. Indeed, my own views on the subject had undergone a material change after the Cabinet had been convened. Mr. Calhoun made some allusion to a letter the General had written to the President, who had forgotten that he had received such a letter, but said, if he had received such an one, he could find it; and went directly to his cabinet, and brought the letter out. In it General Jackson approved of the determination of the Government to break up Amelia island and Galveztown, and gave it also as his opinion that the Floridas ought to be taken by the United States. He added, it might be a delicate matter for the Executive to decide; but if the President approved of it, he had only to give a hint to some confidential Member of Congress, say Johnny Ray, and he would do it, and take the responsibility of it on himself. I asked the President if the letter had been answered. He replied, no; for that he had no recollection of having received it. I then said that I had no doubt that General Jackson, in taking Pensacola, believed he was doing what the Executive wished. After that letter was produced, unanswered, I should have opposed the infliction of punishment upon the General, who had considered the silence of the President as a tacit consent; yet it was after this letter was produced and read, that Mr. Calhoun made his proposition to the Cabinet for punishing the General. You may show this letter to Mr. Calhoun, if you please. With the foregoing corrections of what passed in the Cabinet, your account of it to Mr.——— is correct. Indeed, there is but one inaccuracy in it, and one omission. What I have written beyond them is a mere amplification of what passed in the Cabinet. I do not know that I ever hinted at the letter of the General to the President; yet that letter had a most important bearing upon the deliberations of the Cabinet, at least in my mind, and possibly in the minds of Mr. Adams and the President; but neither expressed any opinion upon the subject. It seems it had none upon the mind of Mr. Calhoun, for it made no change in his conduct.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.75

CALHOUN TO JACKSON, MAY 29, 1830

IN answering your letter of the 13th instant, I to be distinctly understood, that however high my respect is for your personal character, and the exalted station which you occupy, I cannot recognize the right on your part to call in question my conduct on the interesting occasion to which your letter refers. I acted, on that occasion, in the discharge of a high official duty, and under responsibility to my conscience and my country only. In replying, then, to your letter, I do not place myself in the attitude of apologizing for the part I may have acted, or of palliating my conduct on the accusation of Mr. Crawford. My course, I trust, requires no apology; and if it did, I have too much self-respect to make it to any one in a case touching the discharge of my official conduct. I stand on very different ground. I embrace the opportunity which your letter offers, not for the purpose of making excuses, but as a suitable occasion to place my conduct in relation to an interesting public transaction in its proper light; and I am gratified that Mr. Crawford, though far from intending me a kindness, has afforded me such an opportunity.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.76

In undertaking to place my conduct in its proper light, I deem it proper to premise that it is very far from my intention to defend mine by impeaching yours. Where we have differed, I have no doubt that we differed honestly; and in claiming to act on honorable and patriotic motives myself, I cheerfully accord the same to you.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.76–p.77

I know not that I correctly understood your meaning; but, after a careful perusal, I would infer from your letter that you had learned for the first time, by Mr. Crawford's letter, that you and I placed different constructions on the orders under which you acted in the Seminole War; and that you had been led to believe, previously, by my letters to yourself and Governor Bibb, that I concurred with you in thinking that your orders were intended to authorize your attack on the Spanish posts in Florida. Under these impressions, you would seem to impute to me some degree of duplicity, or at least concealment, which required on my part explanation. I hope that my conception of your meaning is erroneous; but if it be not, and your meaning be such as I suppose, I must be permitted to express my surprise at the misapprehension, which, I feel confident, it will be in my power to correct by the most decisive proof, drawn from the public documents, and the correspondence between Mr. Monroe and yourself, growing out of the decision of the Cabinet on the Seminole affair, which passed through my hands at the time, and which I now have his permission to use, as explanatory of my opinion, as well as his, and the other members of his administration. To save you the trouble of turning to the file of your correspondence, I have enclosed extracts from the letters, which clearly prove that the decision of the Cabinet on the point that your orders did not authorize the occupation of St. Mark's and Pensacola, was early and fully made known to you, and that I, in particular, concurred in the decision….

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.77–p.78

I was the junior member of the Cabinet (Monroe's in 1818] and had been but a few months in the administration. As Secretary of War, I was more immediately connected with the questions whether you had transcended your orders, and, if so, what course ought to be pursued. I was of the impression that you had exceeded your orders, and had acted on your own responsibility; but I neither questioned your patriotism nor your motives. Believing that where orders were transcended, investigation, as a matter of course, ought to follow, as due in justice to the Government and the officer, unless there be strong reasons to the contrary. I came to the meeting under the impression that the usual course ought to be pursued in this case, which I supported by presenting fully and freely all the arguments that occurred to me. They were met by other arguments, growing out of a more enlarged view of the subject, as connected with the conduct of Spain and her officers, and the course of policy which honor and interest dictated to be pursued towards her, with which some of the members of the Cabinet were more familiar than myself, and whose duty it was to present that aspect of the subject, as it was mine to present that more immediately connected with the military operations. After deliberately weighing every question, when the members of the Cabinet came to form their final opinion, on a view of the whole ground, it was unanimously determined, as I understood, in favor of the course adopted, and which was fully made known to you by Mr. Monroe's letter of the 19th of July, 1818. I gave it my assent and support, as being that which, under all the circumstances, the public interest required to be adopted.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.78–p.79

I shall now turn to the examination of the version which Mr. Crawford has given of my course in this important deliberation, beginning with his "apology for having disclosed what took place in a Cabinet meeting." He says: "In the summer after the meeting, an extract of a letter from Washington was published in a Nashville paper, in which it was stated that I (Mr. Crawford) had proposed to arrest General Jackson, but that he was triumphantly defended by Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Adams. This letter, I always believed, was written by Mr. Calhoun, or by his direction. It had the desired effect; General Jackson became inimical to me, and friendly to Mr. Calhoun."

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.79

I am not at all surprised that Mr. Crawford should feel that he stands in need of an apology for betraying the deliberations of the Cabinet. It is, I believe, not only the first instance in our country, but one of a very few instances to be found in any country, or any age, that an individual has felt absolved from the high obligation which honor and duty impose on one situated as he was. It is not, however, my intention to comment on the morality of his disclosure; that more immediately concerns himself; and I leave him undisturbed to establish his own rules of honor and fidelity, in order to proceed to the examination of a question in which I am more immediately concerned—the truth of his apology.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.79–p.80

I desire not to speak harshly of Mr. Crawford. I sincerely commiserate his misfortune. I may be warm in political contests, but it is not in me to retain enmity, particularly towards the unsuccessful. In the political contest which ended in 1825, Mr. Crawford and myself took opposite sides; but whatever feelings of unkindness it gave rise to have long since passed away on my part. The contest ended in an entire change of the political elements of the country; and, in the new state of things which followed, I found myself acting with many of the friends of Mr. Crawford, to whom I had been recently opposed, and opposed to many of my 'friends, with whom I had, till then, been associated. In this new state of things, my inclination, my regard for his friends who were acting with me, and the success of the cause for which we were jointly contending,—all contributed to remove from my bosom every feeling towards him, save that of pity for his misfortune. I would not speak a harsh word, if I could avoid it; and it is a cause of pain to me that the extraordinary position in which he has placed me, compels me, in self-defense, to say anything which must, in its consequence, bear on his character.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.80

I speak in this spirit when I assert, as I do, that his apology has no foundation in truth. He offers no reason for charging me with so dishonorable an act as that of betraying the proceedings of the Cabinet, and that for the purpose of injuring one of my associates in the administration. The charge rests wholly on his suspicion, to which I oppose my positive assertion that it is wholly unfounded….

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.80

Comment is useless, I will not attempt to explain so gross a misstatement of the proceedings of the Cabinet, but will leave it to those friends of Mr. Crawford who have placed him in this dilemma to determine whether his false statement is to be attributed to an entire decay of memory, or to some other cause; and if the former, to exempt themselves from the responsibility of thus cruelly exposing a weakness which it was their duty to conceal….

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.81–p.82

On a review of this subject, it is impossible not to be struck with the time and mode of bringing on this correspondence. It is now twelve years since the termination of the Seminole War. Few events in our history have caused so much excitement, or been so fully discussed, both in and out of Congress. During a greater part of this long period, Mr. Crawford was a prominent actor on the public stage, seeing and hearing all that occurred, and without restraint, according to his own statement, to disclose freely all he knew; yet not a word is uttered by him in your behalf; but now, when you have triumphed over all difficulties, when you no longer require defense, he, for the first time, breaks silence, not to defend you, but to accuse one who gave you every support in your hour of trial in his power, when you were fiercely attacked, if not by Mr. Crawford himself, at least by some of his most confidential and influential friends. Nor is the manner less remarkable than the time. Mr. Forsyth, a Senator from Georgia, here in his place, writes to Mr. Crawford, his letter covering certain enclosures, and referring to certain correspondence and conversations in relation to my conduct in the Cabinet deliberation on the Seminole question. Mr. Crawford answers, correcting the statements alluded to in some instances, and confirming and amplifying in others; which answer he authorizes Mr. Forsyth to show me, if he pleased. Of all this, Mr. Forsyth gives me not the slightest intimation, though in the habit of almost daily intercourse in the Senate; and instead of showing me Mr. Crawford's letter, as he was authorized to do, I hear of it, for the first time, by having a copy put into my hand under cover of your letter of the 13th instant—a copy with important blanks, and unaccompanied with Mr. Forsyth's letter, with its enclosures, to which Mr. Crawford's is in answer….

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.82–p.83

I must be frank. I Feel that I am deprived of important rights by the interposition of your name, of which I have just cause to complain. It deprives me of important advantages, which would otherwise belong to my position. By the interposition of your name, the communication which would exist between Mr. Forsyth and myself, had he placed Mr. Crawford's letter in my hands, as he was authorized to do, is prevented, and I am thus deprived of the right which would have belonged to me in that case, and which he could not in justice withhold, of being placed in possession of all the material facts and circumstances connected with this affair. In thus complaining, it is not my intention to attribute to you any design to deprive me of so important an advantage. I know the extent of your public duties, and how completely they engross your attention. They have not allowed you sufficient time for reflection in this case, of which evidence is afforded by the ground that you assume in placing the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter in my hand, which you state was submitted by his authority. . . I have too much respect for your character to suppose you capable of participating in the slightest degree in a political intrigue. Your character is of too high and generous a cast to resort to such means, either for your own advantage or that of others. This the contrivers of the plot well knew; but they hoped through your generous attributes, through your lofty and jealous regard for your character, to excite feelings through which they expected to consummate their designs. Several indications forewarned me, long since, that a blow was meditated against me; I will not say from the quarter from which this comes; but in relation to this subject, more than two years since, I had a correspondence with the District Attorney for the Southern District of New York, on the subject of the proceedings of the Cabinet on the Seminole War, which, though it did not then excite particular attention, has since, in connection with other circumstances, served to direct my eye to what was going on.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.83

JACKSON'S REPLY TO CALHOUN

YOUR communication of the 29th instant was handed me this morning [May 30, 1830] just as I was going to church, and of course was not read until I returned.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.83–p.84

I regret to find that you have entirely mistaken my note of the 13th instant. There is no part of it which calls in question either your conduct or your motives in the case alluded to. Motives are to be inferred from actions, and judged of by our God. It had been intimated to me many years ago, that it was you, and not Mr. Crawford, who had been secretly endeavoring to destroy my reputation. These insinuations I indignantly repelled, upon the ground that you, in all your letters to me, professed to be my personal friend, and approved entirely my conduct in relation to the Seminole campaign. I had too exalted an opinion of your honor and frankness, to believe for one moment that you could be capable of such deception. Under the influence of these friendly feelings, (which I always entertained for you,) when I was presented with a copy of Mr. Crawford's letter, with that frankness which ever has, and I hope ever will characterize my conduct, I considered it due to you, and the friendly relations which had always existed between us, to lay it forthwith before you, and ask if the statements contained in that letter could be true. I repeat, I had a right to believe that you were my sincere friend, and, until now, never expected to have occasion to say of you, in the language of Caesar, Et tu Brute. The evidence which has brought me to this conclusion is abundantly contained in your letter now before me. In your and Mr. Crawford's dispute I have no interest whatever; but it may become necessary for me hereafter, when I shall have more leisure, and the documents at hand, to place the subject in its proper light; to notice the historical facts and references in your communication, which will give a very different view of this subject.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.85

It is due to myself, however, to state that the knowledge of the Executive documents and orders in my possession will show conclusively that I had authority for all I did, and that your explanation of my powers, as declared to Governor Bibb, shows your own understanding of them. Your letter to me of the 29th, handed to-day, and now before me, is the first intimation to me that you ever entertained any other opinion or view of them. Your conduct, words, actions and letters, I have ever thought, show this. Understanding you now, no further communication with you on this subject is necessary.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.85–p.86

CALHOUN TO JACKSON (AUGUST 25, 1830) IN CONCLUSION

I HAVE looked in vain in the course which you have pursued for the evidence of that frankness which you assured me, in submitting the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to me, has ever characterized your conduct towards those with whom you had been in habits of friendship. As connected with this point, let me call your attention to a fact which has not been explained, though in my opinion it ought to be. It now appears, that when Mr. Forsyth placed the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter in your hands, he also placed with it a copy of his letter referred to by Mr. Crawford. Why was it that a copy of this letter of Mr. Forsyth did not accompany Mr. Crawford's, when you placed a copy of the letter in my hands? Calling upon me in the spirit of frankness and friendship, as you informed me you did, I had a right to infer that every document connected with the charge, and in your possession, calculated to afford light, would be placed in my possession; and such, in fact, was my impression, but which I now find to be erroneous. It is with regret that I feel myself bound to state that Mr. Forsyth's letter, with the subsequent correspondence, has given an aspect to the affair very different from what I received from your first letter.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.86–p.87

You have stated some suggestions of the Marshal of the District, which were communicated to you, as the reason why you have agitated this old affair at this time. You have not stated what they were, to whom made, or by whom communicated, which, of course, leaves me in the dark as to their nature or character. But whatever they may be, the course you adopted, considering the friendly relation which I had reason to suppose existed between us, is well calculated to excite surprise. Instead of applying to the Marshal, in order to ascertain what he did say, and from whom he derived his information, and then submitting his statement to me, which course friendship, and the high opinion which you say you entertained for my character "for fair, open, and honorable conduct in all things," manifestly dictated, you applied for information, as to my conduct, to the man who, you knew, felt towards me the strongest enmity. I wish not to be understood that you had mere general information of his ill-will towards me. Your information was of the most specific character, and was of such a nature as ought to have made you distrust any statement of his, calculated to affect my reputation.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.87

Knowing the political machinations that were carrying on against me, and wishing to place me on my guard, a friend of mine placed in my hands, some time since, a copy of a letter written by Mr. Crawford to a Nashville correspondent of his in 1827. It constitutes one of the many means resorted to in order to excite your suspicion against me. In it Mr. Crawford makes an abusive attack upon me; but, not content with thus assailing my character in the dark, he offers to bring into the market the influence which Georgia might have on the presidential election, as a means whereby to depress my political prospects. To avoid the possibility of mistakes, I will give extracts from the letter itself, in full confirmation of what I have stated.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.87

Speaking of the presidential election, Mr. Crawford says that, "the only difficulty that this State (Georgia) has upon the subject, (your election,) is, that, if Jackson should be elected, Calhoun will come into power.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.87

Again:

"If you can ascertain that Calhoun will not be benefited by Jackson's election, you will do him a benefit by communicating the information to me. Make what use you please of this letter, and show it to whom you please."

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.87–p.88

That the letter was clearly intended for your inspection, cannot be doubted. The authority to his correspondent to make what use he pleased, and to show it to whom he pleased, with the nature of the information sought, whether I was to be benefited by your election, which could only be derived from yourself, leaves no doubt on that point; and I am accordingly informed that you saw the letter.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.88

A proposition of the kind, at that particular period, when the presidential election was most doubtful, and most warmly contested, needs no comment as to its object. To say nothing of its moral and political character, stronger proof could not be offered of the deepest enmity towards me on the part of the writer, which at least ought to have placed you on your guard against all attacks on me from that quarter. The letter will not be denied; but if, contrary to expectation, it should, I stand ready, by highly respectable authority, to maintain its authenticity.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.88–p.89

You well know the disinterested, open, and fearless course which myself and my friends were pursuing at this very period, and the weight of enmity which it drew down upon us from your opponents. Little did I then suspect that these secret machinations were carrying on against me at Nashville, or that such propositions could be ventured to be made to you, or, if ventured, without being instantly disclosed to me. Of this, however, I complain not, nor do I intend to recriminate; but I must repeat the expression of my surprise, that you should apply to an individual who you knew, from such decisive proof, to be actuated by the most inveterate hostility towards me, for information of my course in Mr. Monroe's Cabinet. It affords to my mind conclusive proof that you had permitted your feelings to be alienated by the artful movements of those who have made you the victim of their intrigue, long before the commencement of this correspondence.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.89

Instead of furnishing me with the information which I claimed, in order to a full understanding of this extraordinary affair, and which you could not justly withhold, you kindly undertake to excuse the individual to whom you supposed some allusion of mine to be made. I know not to whom you refer. I made no allusion to any one particular individual. But, be that as it may, you must excuse me if, on subjects which concern me, I should prefer my judgment to yours, and, of course, if I should not be satisfied with your opinion, as a substitute for the facts by which I might be able to form my own.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.89–p.90

After I had so fully demonstrated the candor and sincerity with which I have acted throughout this affair, I did not suppose that you would reiterate your former charges; but having done so, it only remains for me to repeat, in the most positive manner, the contradiction. I never for a moment disguised my sentiment on this or any other political subject. Why should I in this instance? I had violated no duty—no rule of honor, nor obligation of friendship. I did your motives full justice in every stage of the cabinet deliberation, and, after a full investigation, I entirely approved and heartily supported the final decision. In this course I was guided, it is true, not by feelings of friendship, but solely by a sense of duty. When our country is concerned, there ought to be room neither for friendship nor enmity.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.90

You conclude your letter by saying that you understand the matter now, that you feel no interest in this altercation, and that you would leave me and Mr. Crawford, and all concerned, to settle this affair in our own way, and that you now close the correspondence for ever.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.90

It is not for me to object to the manner you may choose to close the correspondence on your part. On my part, I have no desire to prolong it. The spectacle of the first and second officers of this great Republic engaged in a correspondence of this nature, has no attraction for me at any time, and is very far from being agreeable at this critical juncture of our affairs. My consolation is, that it was not of my seeking; and, as I am not responsible for its commencement, I feel no disposition to incur any responsibility for its continuance. Forced into it, to repel unjust and base imputations upon my character, I could not retire in honor while they continued to be reiterated.

Jackson-Calhoun Break, America, Vol.6, p.90

Having now fully vindicated my conduct, I will conclude the correspondence also, with a single remark, that I too well know what is due to my rights and self-respect, in this unpleasant affair, to permit myself to be diverted into an altercation with Mr. Crawford, or any other individual, whom you may choose to consider as concerned in this affair.

Pioneering Against Slavery

Title: Pioneering Against Slavery

Author: William Lloyd Garrison

Date: 1831

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.91-94

Garrison had been imprisoned for libel in expressing his anti-slavery views in his Baltimore publication. The Genius of Universal Emancipation, when, in 1831, he started The Liberator in Boston, without capital or subscribers. This paper, with which his name is inseparably associated, was published weekly for thirty-five years, until slavery was abolished in the United States. In that time he was constantly threatened with assassination, and the Georgia Legislature offered $5,000 reward for his prosecution and conviction in accordance with the laws of that State.

This organizer of the American Anti-Slavery Society was "egotistic, unpractical, uncompromising, courageous and zealous to the point of fanaticism. Being a pacificist he advocated a moral agitation only: he would not vote, repudiated the Constitution, and, besides denouncing slavery, sanctioned other reforms such as temperance and woman's rights.

Garrison, Pioneering Against Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.91

IN the month of August I issued proposals for publishing "The Liberator" in Washington City; but the enterprise, though hailed in different sections of the country, was palsied by public indifference. Since that time, the removal of the "Genius of Universal Emancipation" to the seat of government has rendered less imperious the establishment of a similar periodical in that quarter.

Garrison, Pioneering Against Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.91–p.92

During my recent tour for the purpose of exciting the minds of the people by a series of discourses on the subject of slavery, every place that I visited gave fresh evidence of the fact that a greater revolution in public sentiment was to be effected in the free States—and particularly in New-England—than at the South. I found contempt more bitter, opposition more active, detraction more relentless, prejudice more stubborn, and apathy more frozen, than among slave owners themselves. Of course, there were individual exceptions to the contrary. This state of things afflicted, but did not dishearten me. I determined, at every hazard, to lift up the standard of emancipation in the eyes of the nation, within sight of Bunker Hill and in the birth place of liberty. That standard is now unfurled; and long may it float, unhurt by the spoliations of time or the missiles of a desperate foe—yea, till every chain be broken, and every bondsman set free! Let southern oppressors tremble—let their secret abettors tremble—let their northern apologists tremble—let all the enemies of the persecuted blacks tremble.

Garrison, Pioneering Against Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.92

I deem the publication of my original prospectus unnecessary, as it has obtained a wide circulation. The principles therein inculcated will be steadily pursued in this paper, excepting that I shall not array myself as the political partisan of any man. In defending the great cause of human rights, I wish to derive the assistance of all religions and of all parties.

Garrison, Pioneering Against Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.92–p.93

Assenting to the "self-evident truth" maintained in the American Declaration of Independence, "that all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights—among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population. In Park Street Church, on the Fourth of July, 1829, in an address on slavery, I unreflectingly assented to the popular but pernicious doctrine of gradual abolition. I seize this opportunity to make a full and unequivocal recantation, and thus publicly to ask pardon of my God, of my country, and of my brethren the poor slaves, for having uttered a sentiment so full of timidity, injustice and absurdity. A similar recantation, from my pen, was published in the "Genius of Universal Emancipation" at Baltimore, in September, 1829. My conscience is now satisfied.

Garrison, Pioneering Against Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.93

I am aware, that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen;—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead.

Garrison, Pioneering Against Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.93–p.94

It is pretended, that I am retarding the cause of emancipation by the coarseness of my invective, and the precipitancy of my measures. The charge is not true. On this question my influence,—humble as it is,—is felt at this moment to a considerable extent, and shall be felt in coming years—not perniciously, but beneficially—not as a curse, but as a blessing; and posterity will bear testimony that I was right. I desire to thank God, that He enables me to disregard "the fear of man which bringeth a snare" and to speak His truth in its simplicity and power. And here I close with this fresh dedication:

Garrison, Pioneering Against Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.94

Oppression, I have seen thee face to face,

And met thy cruel eye and cloudy brow;

But thy soul-withering glance I fear not now—

For dread to prouder feelings doth give place

Of deep abhorrence! Scorning the disgrace

Of slavish knees that at thy footstool bow,

I also kneel—but with far other vow

Do hail thee and thy herd of hirelings base:—

I swear, while life-blood warms my throbbing veins,

Still to oppose and thwart, with heart and hand,

Thy brutalizing sway—till Afric's chains

Are burst, and Freedom rules the rescued land,—

Trampling Oppression and his iron rod:

Such is the vow I take—so help me God.

The Northwest Ordinance

Title: The Northwest Ordinance

Author: Nathan Dane

Date: 1830

Source: America, Vol.4, pp.140-145

In this letter written to Daniel Webster in 1830, Dane, who had been chairman of the Congressional committee which sponsored the celebrated Northwest Ordinance of 1787, contemporary with the Constitution, asserts his authorship of it and denies that it was based upon an earlier plan drawn up by Thomas Jefferson. It was a constitution of government for the Northwest Territory which, it nominated, was to be divided into not less than three nor more than five States. They are Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Jefferson would have named them Sylvania, Michigania, Chersonesus, Assenisipia, Mesopotamia, Illinoia, Washington, Polypotamia and Pelisipia.

It prohibited slavery and guaranteed, in addition to religious worship, the first permanent titles to property, completely republican, in Federal America. Its authorship also has been attributed to Manasseh Cutter, a Massachusetts lawyer, like Dane, who helped found Marietta, Ohio.

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.140–p.141

YOU recollect you ascribed to me the formation of the Ordinance of the Old Congress, of July 13, 1787. Since writing you last, I have seen Mr. Benton's speech on the subject, in the "National Intelligencer," of March 6, 1830, in which, I find, on no authority, he ascribes its formation in substance to Mr. Jefferson; that is, that Mr. Jefferson formed an ordinance in 1784, and he seems to infer from that the Ordinance of '87 was taken or copied. This inference of Benton's has not the least foundation, as thus appears: Mr. Jefferson's resolve, or plan (not ordinance), of April 23, 1784, is contained in two pages and a half; is a mere incipient plan, in no manner matured for practice, as may be seen. The Ordinance of July, 1787, contains eight pages; is in itself a complete system, and finished for practice; and, what is very material, there cannot be found in it more than twenty lines taken from Jefferson's plan, and these worded differently. In fact, his plan and this Ordinance are totally different, in size, in style, in form, and in principle. Mr. Benton's assertion, so groundless, extorts from me the above, and the following exposition, in defense of those who have long ascribed to me the formation….

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.141

1. As I am the only member of Congress living who had any concern informing or in passing this Ordinance, no living testimony is to be expected.

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.141

2. In the "North American Review" of July, 1826, pages 1 to 41, is a review of my "General Abridgment," etc., of American Law. In page 40, it is said, I "was the framer of the celebrated Ordinance of Congress, of 1787." At present it is enough to add this fact, stated in the Inaugural Discourse of Judge Story, page 58….

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.141

Generally, when persons have asked me questions respecting the Ordinance, I have referred to the Ordinance itself, as evidently being the work of a Massachusetts lawyer on the face of it. I now make the same reference, and to its style, found in my "Abridgment," etc.

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.141–p.142

3. When I mention the formation of this Ordinance, it is proper to explain. It consists of three parts. 1st, The titles to estates, real and personal, by deed, by will, and by descent; also personal, by delivery. These titles occupy the first part of the Ordinance, not a page, evidently selected from the laws of Massachusetts, except it omits the double share of the oldest son. These titles were made to take root in the first and early settlements, in 400,000 square miles. Such titles so taking root, we well know, are, in their nature, in no small degree permanent; so, vastly important. I believe these were the first titles to property, completely republican, in Federal America; being in no part whatever feudal or monarchical. 2d, It consists of the temporary parts that ceased with the territorial condition; which, in the age of a nation, soon pass away, and hence are not important. These parts occupy about four pages. They designate the officers, their qualifications, appointments, duties, oaths, etc., and a temporary legislature. Neither those parts, nor the titles, were in Jefferson's plan, as you will see. The 3d part, about three pages, consists of the six fundamental articles of compact, expressly made permanent, and to endure forever; so, the most important and valuable part of the Ordinance.

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.142–p.143

These, and the titles to estates, I have ever considered the parts of the Ordinance that give it its peculiar character and value; and never the temporary parts, of short duration. Hence, whenever I have written or spoken of its formation, I have mainly referred to these titles and articles; not to the temporary parts, in the forming of which, in part, in 1786, Mr. Pinckney, myself, and, I think, Smith, took a part. So little was done with the Report of 1786, that only a few lines of it were entered in the Journals. I think the files, if to be found, will show that Report was reformed, and temporary parts added to it, by the committee of '87; and that I then added the titles and six articles; five of them before the Report of 1787 was printed, and the sixth article after, as below.

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.143

4. As the slave article has ever principally attracted the public attention, I have, as you will see, ever been careful to give Mr. Jefferson and Mr. King their full credit in regard to it. I find in the Missouri contest, ten years ago, the slave-owners in Congress condemned the six articles generally; and Mr. Pinckney, one of the Committee of 1786, added, they were an attempt to establish a compact, where none could exist, for want of proper parties. This objection, and also the one stating the Ordinance was an usurpation, led me to add pages 442, beginning remarks, to page 450, in which I labored much to prove it was no usurpation, and that the articles of compact were valid. They may be referred to, as in them may be seen the style of the Ordinance, though written thirty-four years after that was. Slave-owners will not claim as Mr. Pinckney's work what he condemned. Careful to give Mr. J. and Mr. K. full credit in pages 443, 446, Vol. VII, I noticed Mr. Jefferson's plan of '84, and gave him credit for his attempt to exclude slavery after the year 1800. I may now add, he left it to take root about seventeen years; so his exclusion was far short of the sixth article in the Ordinance.

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.144–p.145

Page 446, I noticed the motion (Mr. King's) of March 16, 1785, and admitted it to be a motion to exclude slavery, as fully as in the sixth article. I now think I admitted too much. He moved to exclude slavery only from the States described in the Resolve of Congress, of April 23, 1784, Jefferson's Resolve, and to be added to it. It was very doubtful whether the word States, in that Resolve, included any more territory than the individual States ceded; and whether the word States included preceding territorial condition. Some thought his motion meant only future exclusion, as did Mr. Jefferson's plan clearly: therefore, in forming the Ordinance of '87, all about, States in his plan was excluded, as was nearly all his plan, as inspection will prove, and that Ordinance made, in a few plain words, to include "the territory of the United States northwest of the river Ohio"—all made, for the purposes of temporary government, one district; and the sixth article excludes slavery forever from "the said territory." One part of my claim to the slave article I now, for the first time, state. In April, 1820 (Missouri contest), search was made for the original manuscript of the Ordinance of '87. Daniel Bent's answer was, "that no written draft could be found"; but there was found, attached to the printed Ordinance, in my handwriting, the sixth article, as it now is,—that is, the slave article. So this article was made a part of the Ordinance solely by the care of him, who says Mr. Benton no more formed the Ordinance of '87 than he did. I have Bent's certificate, etc.

Dane, Northwest Ordinance, America, Vol.4, p.145

5. In pages 389, 390, Sec. 3, Vol. VII, I mention the Ordinance of '87 was framed, mainly, from the laws of Massachusetts. This appears on the face of it; meaning the titles to estates, and nearly all the six articles, the permanent and important parts of it, and some other parts; and, in order to take the credit of it to Massachusetts, I added, "this Ordinance (formed by the author, etc.) was framed," etc. I then had no idea it was ever claimed as the draft of any other person. Mr. Jefferson I never thought of. In the Missouri contest, Mr. Grayson was mentioned as the author; but, as he never was on any committee in the case, nor wrote a word of it, the mention of him was deemed an idle affair. We say, and properly, Mr. Jefferson was the author of the Declaration of Independence (or formed it, as you observe); yet he no more than collected the important parts, and put them together. If any lawyer will critically examine the laws and constitutions of the several States, as they were in 1787, he will find the titles, six articles, etc., were not to be found anywhere else so well as in Massachusetts, and by one who, in '87, had been engaged several years in revising her laws. See "North American Review" July, 1826, pages 40, 41. I have never claimed originality, except in regard to the clause against impairing contracts, and perhaps the Indian article, part of the third article, including, also, religion, morality, knowledge, schools, etc.

The Foote Resolution, Hayne, 1830

The Foote Resolution

Title: The Foote Resolution

Author: Hayne

Date: 1830

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.9, pp.3-23

Hayne was the first man to put forth conspicuously the doctrine of Nullification, by which was meant the right of a State to arrest the operation of a law of Congress, provided the State in convention should decide that the law was unconstitutional. The speech from which passages are here given was delivered in the Senate on January 21, 1830, and is the one to which Webster made his famous reply on January 26. Webster had already made a speech on the Foote resolution, so that Hayne's speech was a reply to Webster, as Webster's second speech was a reply to Hayne. Abridged. The following is the text of the resolution:

"Resolved, that the Committee on Public Lands be instructed to inquire and report the quantity of public lands remaining unsold within each State and Territory, and whether it be expedient to limit for a certain period the sales of the public lands to such lands only as have heretofore been offered for sale and are now subject to entry at the minimum price. And also, whether the office of surveyor-general and some of the land offices may not be abolished without detriment to the public interest; or whether it be expedient to adopt measures to hasten the sale and extend more rapidly the surveys of the public lands."

Samuel A. Foote, the author of this resolution, was a United States Senator from Connecticut (1827-1833). The effect of the resolution had been to arouse among senators from the West a belief that it was intended as a scheme to check migration to the West, thus hindering the growth of that section for the benefit of New England and other older sections of the North. Southern senators for similar reasons opposed it, but they also believed that Northern senators desired by this measure to limit public revenues and to centralize the government.

Born in 1791, died in 1840; United States Senator from South Carolina in 1823-32; Governor of South Carolina in 1832-34.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.3

SIR, let me tell the gentleman that the South repudiates the idea that a pecuniary dependence on the federal government is one of the legitimate means of holding the States together. A monied interest in the government is essentially a base interest: and just so far as it operates to bind the feelings of those who are subjected to it, to the government—just so far as it operates in creating sympathies and interests that would not otherwise exist—is it opposed to all the principles of free government, and at war with virtue and patriotism. Sir, the link which binds the public creditors, as such, to their country, binds them equally to all governments, whether arbitrary or free. In a free government this principle of abject dependence, if extended through all the ramifications of society, must be fatal to liberty. Already have we made alarming strides in that direction. The entire class of manufacturers, the holders of stocks, with their hundreds of millions of capital, are held to the government by the strong link of pecuniary interests; millions of people—entire sections of country, interested, or believing themselves to be so, in the public lands and the public treasure, are bound to the government by the expectation of pecuniary favors.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.4

If this system is carried much farther, no man can fail to see that every generous motive of attachment to the country will be destroyed; and it its place will spring up those low, groveling, base and selfish feelings which bind men to the footstool of a despot by bonds as strong and enduring as those which attach them to free institutions. Sir, I would lay the foundation of this government in the affections of the people—I would teach them to cling to it by dispensing equal justice, and above all, by securing the "blessings of liberty" to "themselves and to their posterity."

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.5

We are ready to make up the issue with the gentleman, as to the influence of slavery on individual and national character—on the prosperity and greatness, either of the United States or of particular States. Sir, when arraigned before the bar of public opinion, on this charge of slavery, we can stand up with conscious rectitude, plead not guilty, and put ourselves upon God and our country. Sir, we will not consent to look at slavery in the abstract. We will not stop to inquire whether the black man, as some philosophers have contended, is of an inferior race, nor whether his color and condition are effects of a curse inflicted for the offenses of his ancestors. We deal in no abstractions. We will not look back to inquire whether our fathers were guiltless in introducing slaves into this country. If an inquiry should ever be instituted in these matters, however, it will be found that the profits of the slave-trade were not confined to the South. Southern ships and Southern sailors were not the instruments of bringing slaves to the shores of America, nor did our merchants reap the profits of that "accursed traffic."

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.6

But, sir, we will pass over all this. If slavery, as it now exists in this country, be an evil, we of the present day found it ready made to our hands. Finding our lot cast among a people whom God had manifestly committed to our care, we did not sit down to speculate on abstract questions of theoretical liberty. We met it as a practical question of obligation and duty. We resolved to make the best of the situation in which providence had placed us, and to fulfil the high trusts which had devolved upon us as the owners of slaves, in the only way in which such a trust could be fulfilled without spreading misery and ruin throughout the land. We found that we had to deal with a people whose physical, moral and intellectual habits and character totally disqualified them from the enjoyment of the blessings of freedom. We could not send them back to the shores from whence their fathers had been taken; their numbers forbade the thought, even if we did not know that their condition here is infinitely preferable to what it possibly could be among the barren sands and savage tribes of Africa; and it was wholly irreconcilable with all our notions of humanity to tear assunder the tender ties which they had formed among us, to gratify the feelings of a false philanthropy.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.6

What a commentary on the wisdom, justice, and humanity of the Southern slave-owner is presented by the example of certain benevolent associations and charitable individuals elsewhere! Shedding weak tears over sufferings which had existence only in their own sickly imaginations, these "friends of humanity" set themselves systematically to work to seduce the slaves of the South from their masters. By means of missionaries and political tracts, the scheme was in a great measure successful. Thousands of these deluded victims of fanaticism were seduced into the enjoyment of freedom in our Northern cities. And what has been the consequence? Go to these cities now and ask the question. Visit the dark and narrow lanes, and obscure recesses which have been assigned by common consent as the abodes of those outcasts of the world—the free people of color. Sir, there does not exist on the face of the whole earth a population so poor, so wretched, so vile, so loathsome, so utterly destitute of all the comforts, conveniences, and decencies of life, as the unfortunate blacks of Philadelphia, and New York and Boston. Liberty has been to them the greatest of calamities, the heaviest of curses.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.7

Sir, I have had some opportunities of making comparison between the condition of the free negroes of the North and the slaves of the South, and the comparison has left not only an indelible impression of the superior advantages of the latter, but has gone far to reconcile me to slavery itself. Never have I felt so forcibly that touching description, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head," as when I have seen this unhappy race, naked and houseless, almost starving in the streets, and abandoned by all the world. Sir, I have seen, in the neighborhood of one of the most moral, religious and refined cities of the North, a family of free blacks driven to the caves of the rocks, and there obtaining a precarious existence from charity and plunder.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.8

When the gentleman from Massachusetts adopts and reiterates the old charge of weakness as resulting from slavery, I must be permitted to call for the proof of those blighting effects which he ascribes to it influence. I suspect that when the subject is closely examined, it will be found that there is not much force even in the plausible objection of the want of physical power in slave-holding States. The power of a country is compounded of its population and its wealth, and in modern times, where, from the very form and structure of society, by far the greater portion of the people must, even during the continuance of the most desolating wars, be employed in the cultivation of the soil and other peaceful pursuits, it may be well doubted whether slave-holding States, by reason of the superior value of their productions, are not able to maintain a number of troops in the field fully equal to what could be supported by States with a larger white population, but not possessed of equal resources.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.9

It is popular error to suppose that in any possible state of things the people of a country could ever be called out en masse, or that a half, or a third, or even a fifth part of the physical force of any country could ever be brought into the field. The difficulty is not to procure men, but to provide the means of maintaining them; and in this view of the subject it may be asked whether the Southern States are not a source of strength and power and not of weakness to the country—whether they have not contributed, and are not now contributing largely to the wealth and prosperity of every State in this Union. From a statement which I hold in my hand it appears that in ten years—from 1818 to 1827, inclusive—the whole amount of the domestic exports of the United States was $521,811,045. Of this, three articles (the product of slave labor)—viz., cotton, rice, and tobacco—amounted to $339,203,232, equal to about two-thirds of the whole. It is not true, as has been supposed, that the advantages of this labor are confined almost exclusively to the Southern States. Sir, I am thoroughly convinced that at this time the States north of the Potomac actually derive greater profits from the labor of our slave than we do ourselves. It appears from our public documents that in seven years, from 1821 to 1827 inclusive, the six Southern States exported $190,337,281, and imported only $55,646,301. Now the difference between these two sums (near $140,000,000) passed through the hands of the Northern merchants, and enabled them to carry on their commercial operations with all the world. Such part of these goods as found its way back to our hands came charged with the duties, as well as the profits of the merchant, the ship-owner, and a host of others, who found employment in carrying on these immense exchanges; and for such part as was consumed in the North we received in exchange Northern manufactures charged with an increased price to cover all the taxes which the Northern consumer has been compelled to pay on the imported article. It will be seen, therefore, at a glance how much slave labor has contributed to the wealth and prosperity of the United States, and how largely our Northern brethren have participated in the profits of that labor.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.10

There is a spirit which, like the father of evil, is constantly "walking to and fro about the earth, seeking whom it may devour": it is the spirit of false philanthropy. The persons whom it possesses do not indeed throw themselves into the flames, but they are employed in lighting up the torches of discord throughout the community. Their first principle of action is to leave their own affairs, and neglect their own duties, to regulate the affairs and duties of others. Theirs is the task to feed the hungry and clothe the naked of other lands, while they thrust the naked, famished, and shivering beggar from their own doors—to instruct the heathen while their own children want the bread of life.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.11

When this spirit infuses itself into the bosom of a statesman (if one so possessed can be called a statesman), it converts him at once into a visionary enthusiast. Then it is that he indulges in golden dreams of national greatness and prosperity. He discovers that "liberty is power," and, not content with vast schemes of improvement at home which it would bankrupt the treasury of the world to execute, he flies to foreign lands to fulfil obligations to "the human race," by inculcating the principles of "political and religious liberty," and promoting the "general welfare" of the whole human race. It is a spirit which has long been busy with the slaves of the South and is even now displaying itself in vain efforts to drive the government from its wise policy in relation to the Indians. It is this spirit which has filled the land with thousands of wild and visionary projects which can have no effect but to waste the energies and dissipate the resources of the country. it is the spirit of which the aspiring politician dexterously avails himself when, by inscribing on his banner the magical words, Liberty and Philanthropy, he draws to his support that class of persons who are ready to bow down at the very name of their idols.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.11

But, sir, whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the effect of slavery on national wealth and prosperity, if we may trust to experience, there can be not doubt that it has never yet produced any injurious effect on individual or national character. Look through the whole history of the country from the commencement of the Revolution down to the present hour; where are there to be found brighter examples of intellectual and moral greatness than have been exhibited by the sons of the South? From the Father of his Country down to the distinguished chieftain who has been elevated by a grateful people to the highest office in their gift, the interval is filled up by a long line of orators, of statesmen, and of heroes, justly entitled to rank among the ornaments of their country, and the benefactors of mankind. Look at "the Old Dominion," great and magnanimous Virginia, "whose jewels are her sons." Is there any State in this Union which has contributed so much to the honor and welfare of the country? Sir, I will yield the whole question—I will acknowledge the fatal effects of slavery upon character, if any one can say that for noble disinterestedness, ardent love of country, exalted virtue, and a pure and holy devotion to liberty, the people of the Southern States have ever been surpassed by any in the world.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.12

The senator from Massachusetts tells us that the tariff is not an Eastern measure, and treats it as if the East had no interest in it. The senator from Missouri insists it is not a Western measure, and that it has done no good to the West. The South comes in, and in the most earnest manner represents to you that this measure, which we are told "is of no value to the East or the West," is "utterly destructive of our interests." We represent to you that it has spread ruin and devastation through the land and prostrated our hopes in the dust. We solemnly declare that we believe the system to be wholly unconstitutional and a violation of the compact between the States and the Union; and our brethren turn a deaf ear to our complaints, and refuse to relieve us from a system "which not enriches them, but makes us poor indeed." Good God! Mr. President, has it come to this? Do gentlemen hold the feelings and wishes of their brethren at so cheap a rate that they refuse to gratify them at so small a price? Do gentlemen value so lightly the peace and harmony of the country that they will not yield a measure of this description to the affectionate entreaties and earnest remonstrances of their friends? Do gentlemen estimate the value of the Union at so low a price that they will not even make one effort to bind the States together with the cords of affection? And has it come to this? Is this the spirit in which this government is to be administered? If so, let me tell gentlemen the seeds of dissolution are already sown, and our children will reap the bitter fruit.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.13

What, sir, was the conduct of the South during the Revolution? Sir, I honor New England for her conduct in that glorious struggle. But great as is the praise which belongs to her I think at least equal honor is due to the South. They espoused the quarrel of their brethren with a generous zeal which did not suffer them to stop to calculate their interest in the dispute. Favorites of the mother country, possessed of neither ships nor seamen to create a commercial rivalship, they might have found in their situation a guaranty that their trade would be for ever fostered and protected by Great Britain. But trampling on all considerations either of interest or of safety, they rushed into the conflict, and fighting for principle, periled all in the sacred cause of freedom. Never was there exhibited in the history of the world higher examples of noble daring, dreadful suffering, and heroic endurance than by the Whigs of Carolina during the Revolution. The whole State, from the mountains to the sea, was overrun by an overwhelming force of the enemy. The fruits of industry perished on the spot where they were produced, or were consumed by the foe. The "plains of Carolina" drank up the most precious blood of her citizens! Black and smoking ruins marked the places which had been the habitations of her children! Driven from their homes into the gloomy and almost impenetrable swamps, even there the spirit of liberty survived, and South Carolina (sustained by the example of her Sumters and her Marions) proved by her conduct that the soil might be overrun, the spirit of her people was invincible.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.15

I come now to the War of 1812—a war which I well remember was called in derision (while its event was doubtful) the Southern War, and sometimes the Carolina War, but which is now universally acknowledged to have done more for the honor and prosperity of the country than all other events in our history put together. What, sir, were the objects of that war? "Free trade and sailors' rights!" It was for the protection of Northern shipping and New England seamen that the country flew to arms. What interest had the South in that contest? If they had sat down coldly to calculate the value of their interests involved in it, they would have found that they had everything to lose and nothing to gain. But, sir, with that generous devotion to country so characteristic of the South, they only asked if the rights of any portion of their fellow citizens had been invaded; and when told that Northern ships and New England seamen had been arrested on the common highway of nations, they felt that the honor of their country was assailed; and acting on that exalted sentiment "which feels a stain like a wound," they resolved to seek in open war for a redress of those injuries which it did not become freemen to endure.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.15

Sir, the whole South, animated as by a common impulse, cordially united in declaring and promoting that war. South Carolina sent to your councils, as the advocates and supporters of that war, the noblest of her sons. How they fulfilled that trust let a grateful country tell. Not a measure was adopted, not a battle fought, not a victory won which contributed in any degree to the success of that war to which Southern councils and Southern valor did not largely contribute.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.16

It will be recollected, sir, that our great causes of quarrel with Great Britain were her depredations on Northern commerce and the impressment of New England seamen. From every quarter we were called upon for protection. Importunate as the West is now represented to be on another subject, the importunity of the East on that occasion was far greater. I hold in my hands the evidence of the fact. Here are petitions, memorials, and remonstrances from all parts of New England, setting forth the injustice, the oppression, the depredations, the insults, the outrages committed by Great Britain against the unoffending commerce and seamen of New England, and calling upon Congress for redress.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.16

Well, sir, the war at length came, and what did we behold? The very men who had been for six years clamorous for war, and for whose protection it was waged, became at once equally clamorous against it. They had received a miraculous visitation; a new light suddenly beamed upon their minds, the scales fell from their eyes, and it was discovered that the war was declared from "subserviency to France"; that Congress, and the executive, "had sold themselves to Napoleon"; that Great Britain had, in fact, "done us no essential injury"; that she was "the bulwark of our religion"; that where "she took one of our ships, she protected twenty"; and that if Great Britain had impressed a few of our seamen, it was because "she could not distinguish them from her own." And so far did this spirit extend that a committee of the Massachusetts Legislature actually fell to calculation, and discovered to their infinite satisfaction, but to the astonishment of all the world beside, that only eleven Massachusetts sailors had ever been impressed.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.17

Never shall I forget the appeals that had been made to the sympathies of the South, in behalf of the "thousands of impressed Americans" who had been torn from their families and friends, and "immured in the floating dungeons of Britain." The most touching pictures were drawn of the hard condition of the American sailor, "treated like a slave," forced to fight the battles of his enemy, "lashed to the mast, to be shot at like a dog." But, sir, the very moment we had taken up arms in their defense, it was discovered that all these were mere "fictions of the brain"; and that the whole number in the State of Massachusetts was but eleven; and that even these had been "taken by mistake." Wonderful discovery! The secretary of state had collected authentic lists of no less than six thousand impressed Americans. Lord Castlereagh himself acknowledged sixteen hundred. Calculations on the basis of the number found on board of the Guerriere, the Macedonian, the Java, and other British ships (capture by the skill and gallantry of those heroes whose achievements are the treasured monuments of their country's glory), fixed the number at seven thousand; and yet, it seems, Massachusetts had lost but eleven! Eleven Massachusetts sailors taken by mistake! A cause of war, indeed! Their ships, too, the capture of which had threatened "universal bankruptcy," it was discovered that Great Britain was their friend and protector; "where she had taken one, she had protected twenty." Then was the discovery made that subserviency to France, hostility to commerce, "a determination on the part of the South and West to break down the Eastern States," and especially (as reported by a committee of the Massachusetts Legislature) "to force the sons of commerce to populate the wilderness," were the true causes of the war.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.18

But let us look a little further into the conduct of the peace party of New England at that important crisis. Whatever difference of opinion might have existed as to the causes of the war, the country had a right to expect that when once involved in the contest, all America would have cordially united in its support. Sir, the war effected in its progress a union of all parties at the South. But not so in New England; there, great efforts were made to stir up the minds of the people to oppose it. Nothing was left undone to embarrass the financial operations of the government, to prevent the enlistment of troops, to keep back the men and money of New England from the service of the Union—to force the president from his seat. Yes, sir "the island of Elba! or a halter!" were the alternatives they presented to the excellent and venerable James Madison.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.19

Sir, the war was further opposed by openly carrying on illicit trade with the enemy, by permitting that enemy to establish herself on the very soil of Massachusetts, and by opening a free trade between Great Britain and American with a separate custom-house. Yes, sir, those who can not endure the thought that we should insist on a free trade in time of profound peace, could without scruple claim and exercise the right of carrying on a free trade with the enemy in a time of war; and finally, by getting up the renowned "Hartford Convention," and preparing the way for an open resistance to the government, and a separation of the States. Sir, if I am asked for the proof of those things I fearlessly appeal to contemporary history, to the public documents of the country, to the recorded opinion and acts of public assemblies, to the declaration and acknowledgments, since made, of the executive and Legislature of Massachusetts herself.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.20

As soon as the public mind was sufficiently prepared for the measure, the celebrated Hartford Convention was got up; not as the act of a few unauthorized individuals, but by authority of the Legislature of Massachusetts; and, as has been shown by the able historian of that convention, in accordance with the views and wishes of the party of which it was the organ. Now, sir, I do not desire to call in question the motives of the gentlemen who composed that assembly—I knew many of them to be in private life accomplished and honorable men, and I doubt not there were some among them who did not perceive the dangerous tendency of their proceedings. I will even go further and say that if the authors of the Hartford Convention believed that "gross, deliberate, and palpable violations of the Constitution" had taken place, utterly destructive of their rights and interests, I should be the last man to deny their rights to resort to any constitutional measures for redress. But, sir, in any view of the case, the time when, and the circumstances under which that convention assembled, as well as the measures recommended, render their conduct, in my opinion, wholly indefensible.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.20

Who, then, Mr. President, are the true friends of the Union? Those who would confine the federal government strictly within the limits prescribed by the Constitution; who would preserve to the States and the people all powers not expressly delegated; who would make this a federal and not a national Union, and who, administering the government in a spirit of equal justice, would make it a blessing and not a curse. And who are its enemies? Those who are in favor of consolidation—who are constantly stealing power from the States and adding strength to the federal government. Who, assuming an unwarrantable jurisdiction over the States and the people, undertake to regulate the whole industry and capital of the country. But, sir, of all descriptions of men, I consider those as the worst enemies of the Union who sacrifice the equal rights which belong to every member of the Confederacy to combinations of interested majorities, for personal or political objects.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.21

Thus, it will be seen, Mr. President, that the South Carolina doctrine of '98—that it was promulgated by the fathers of the faith—that it was maintained by Virginia and Kentucky in the worst of times—that it constituted the very pivot on which the political revolution of that day turned—that it embraces the very principles, the triumph of which at that time saved the Constitution at its last gasp, and which New England statesmen were not unwilling to adopt, when they believed themselves to be the victims of unconstitutional legislation. Sir, as to the doctrine that the federal government is the exclusive judge of the extent as well as the limitations of its powers, it seems to me to be utterly subversive of the sovereignty and independence of the States. It makes but little difference, in my estimation, whether Congress or the Supreme Court is invested with this power. If the federal government, in all or any of its departments, is to prescribe the limits of its own authority, and the States are bound to submit to the decision, and are not to be allowed to examine and decide for themselves when the barriers of the Constitution shall be overleaped, this is practically "a government without limitation of powers." The States are at once reduced to mere petty corporations, and the people are entirely at your mercy.

Hayne, The Foote Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.22

I have but one more word to add. In all the efforts that have been made by South Carolina to resist the unconstitutional laws which Congress has extended over them, she has kept steadily in view the preservation of the Union by the only means by which she believes it can be long preserved—a firm, manly, and steady resistance against usurpation. The measures of the federal government have, it is true, prostrated her interests, and will soon involve the whole South in irretrievable ruin. But even this evil, great as it is, is not the chief ground of our complaints. It is the principle involved in the contest—a principle which, substituting the discretion of Congress for the limitations of the Constitution, brings the States and the people to the feet of the federal government, and leaves them nothing they can call their own. Sir, if the measures of the federal government were less oppressive, we should still strive against this usurpation. The South is acting on a principle she has always held sacred—resistance to unauthorized taxation. These, sir, are the principles which induced the immortal Hampden to resist the payment of a tax of twenty shillings. Would twenty shillings have ruined his fortune? No! but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle on which it was demanded, would have made him a slave. Sir, if in acting on these high motives—if, animated by that ardent love of liberty which has always been the most prominent trait in the Southern character—we should be hurried beyond the bounds of a cold and calculating prudence, who is there, with one noble and generous sentiment in his bosom, that would not be disposed, in the language of Burke, to exclaim: "You must pardon something to the spirit of liberty!"

Webster's Reply to Hayne

Title: Webster's Reply To Hayne

Author: Daniel Webster

Date: February, 1830

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.59-65

This greatest speech of his life was delivered by Daniel Webster in February, 1830. Western influences in Congress opposed to the leadership of Henry Clay were aligned with southern influences and interests voiced by John C. Calhoun and Robert Young Hayne. Hayne, a Senator from South Carolina, had addressed the Senate on the nature of the Union and the right of nullification. In his epochmaking reply, Webster successfully combated the theory of nullification and ably vindicated the nationalist view of the Union.

Shortly afterwards (in 1832) South Carolina adopted an ordinance of nullification, elected Hayne Governor, and the State prepared to resist the Federal power by force of arms. Happily a compromise was agreed to, and the ordinance was repealed. Prior to the speech by Hayne, Webster had been one of the most vigorous opponents of a greater national power.

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.59–p.60

THIS leads us to inquire into the origin of this Government and the source of its power. Whose agent is it? Is it the creature of the State Legislatures, or the creature of the people? . . . It is, sir, the people's Constitution, the people's Government; made for the people; made by the people; and answerable to the people. The people of the United States have declared that this Constitution shall be the supreme law. We must either admit the proposition, or dispute their authority. The States are, unquestionably, sovereign, so far as their sovereignty is not affected by this supreme law. But the State Legislatures, as political bodies, however sovereign, are yet not sovereign over the people. So far as the people have given power to the General Government, so far the grant is unquestionably good, and the Government holds of the people and not of the State Governments….

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.60–p.61

The people, then, sir, erected this Government. They gave it a Constitution; and in that Constitution they have enumerated the powers which they bestow on it, They have made it a limited Government. They have defined its authority. They have restrained it to the exercise of such powers as are granted; and all others, they declare, are reserved to the States or to the people. But, sir, they have not stopped here. If they had, they would have accomplished but half their work. No definition can be so clear as to avoid possibility of doubt; no limitation so precise, as to exclude all uncertainty. Who then shall construe this grant of the people? Who shall interpret their will, where it may be supposed they have left it doubtful? With whom do they repose this ultimate right of deciding on the powers of the Government? Sir, they have settled all this in the fullest manner. They have left it with the Government itself, in its appropriate branches. Sir, the very chief end, the main design, for which the whole Constitution was framed and adopted was, to establish a Government that should not be obliged to act through State agency, or depend on State opinion and State discretion. The people had had quite enough of that kind of government, under the Confederacy. Under that system, the legal action, the application of law to individuals, belonged exclusively to the States. Congress could only recommend; their acts were not of binding force, till the States had adopted and sanctioned them. Are we in that condition still? Are we yet at the mercy of State discretion, and State construction? Sir, if we are, then vain will be our attempt to maintain the Constitution under which we sit. But, sir, the people have wisely provided, in the Constitution itself, a proper, suitable mode and tribunal for settling questions of constitutional law. There are, in the Constitution, grants of powers to Congress, and restrictions on these powers. There are, also, prohibitions on the States. Some authority must, therefore, necessarily exist, having the ultimate jurisdiction to fix and ascertain the interpretation of these grants, restrictions, and prohibitions. The Constitution has, itself, pointed out, ordained and established that authority. How has it accomplished this great and essential end? By declaring, sir, that "the Constitution, and the laws of the United States made in pursuance thereof, shall be the supreme law of the land, anything in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding."

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.61–p.62

This, sir, was the first great step. By this, the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the United States is declared. The people so will it. No State law is to be valid which comes in conflict with the Constitution or any law of the United States. But who shall decide this question of interference? To whom lies the last appeal? This, sir, the Constitution itself decides also, by declaring "that the judicial power shall extend to all cases arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States." These two provisions, sir, cover the whole ground. They are, in truth, the key-stone of the arch. With these, it is a Constitution; without them, it is a Confederacy, In pursuance of these clear and express provisions, Congress established, at its very first session, in the Judicial Act, a mode for carrying them into full effect, and for bringing all questions of constitutional power to the final decision of the Supreme Court. It then, sir, became a Government. It then had the means of self-protection; and, but for this, it would, in all probability, have been now among things which are past. Having constituted the Government, and declared its powers, the people have farther said, that, since somebody must decide on the extent of these powers, the Government shall itself decide; subject, always, like other popular governments, to its responsibility to the people. And now, sir, I repeat, how is it that a State Legislature acquires any power to interfere? Who or what gives them the right to say to the people, "we, who are your agents and servants for one purpose, will undertake to decide that your other agents and servants, appointed by you for another purpose, have transcended the authority you gave them?" The reply would be, I think, not impertinent: "Who made you a judge over another's servants? To their own masters they stand or fall….

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.62–p.63

If, sir, the people, in these respects, had done otherwise than they have done, their Constitution could neither have been preserved, nor would it have been worth preserving. And, if its plain provisions shall now be disregarded, and these new doctrines interpolated in it, it will become as feeble and helpless a being as its enemies, whether early or more recent, could possibly desire. It will exist, in every State, but as a poor dependent on State permission. It must borrow leave to be; and will be no longer than State pleasure, or State discretion, sees fit to grant the indulgence, and to prolong its poor existence.

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.63

But, sir, although there are fears, there are hopes, also. The people have preserved this, their own chosen Constitution, for forty years, and have seen their happiness, prosperity and renown, grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength. They are now, generally, strongly attached to it. Overthrown by direct assault, it cannot be; evaded, undermined, nullified, it will not be, if we, and those who shall succeed us here, as agents and representatives of the people, shall conscientiously and vigilantly discharge the two great branches of our public trust, faithfully to preserve, and wisely to administer it.

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.63–p.64

I have thus stated the reasons of my dissent to the doctrines which have been advanced and maintained. I am conscious, sir, of having detained you and the Senate much too long. I was drawn into the debate with no previous deliberation, such as is suited to the discussion of so grave and important a subject. But it is a subject of which my heart is full, and I have not been willing to suppress the utterance of its spontaneous sentiments. I cannot, even now, persuade myself to relinquish it, without expressing, once more, my deep conviction, that, since it respects nothing less than the union of the States, it is of most vital and essential importance to the public happiness. I profess, sir, in my career, hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union.

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.64

It is to that Union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that Union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influence, these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and, although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness. I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind.

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.64–p.65

I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty, when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor, in the affairs of this Government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union should be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it shall be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that, I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise. God grant that, on my vision, never may be opened what lies behind.

Webster's Reply To Hayne, America, Vol.6, p.65

When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance, rather, behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as, What is all this worth? Nor those other words of delusion and folly, Liberty first, and Union afterwards: but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!

The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun

Title: The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1831

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.31-35

Benton, The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.31

With the quarrels of public men history has no concern, except as they enter into public conduct, and influence public events. In such case, and as the cause of such events, these quarrels belong to history, which would be an empty tale, devoid of interest or instruction, without the development of the causes, and consequences of the acts which it narrates. Division among chiefs has always been a cause of mischief to their country; and when so, it is the duty of history to show it. That mischief points the moral of much history, and has been made the subject of the greatest of poems:

"Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring

Of woes unnumbered—"

Benton, The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.31

About the beginning of March, in the year 1831, a pamphlet appeared in Washington City, issued by Mr. Calhoun, and addrest to the people of the United States, to explain the cause of a difference which had taken place between himself and General Jackson, instigated as the pamphlet alleged by Mr. Van Buren, and intended to make mischief between the first and second officers of the Government, and to effect the political destruction of himself (Mr. Calhoun) for the benefit of the contriver of the quarrel—the then Secretary of State; and indicated as a candidate for the presidential succession upon the termination of General Jackson's service. It was the same pamphlet of which Mr. Duncanson had received previous notice as being in print in his office, but the publication delayed for the maturing of the measures which were to attend its appearance; namely: the change in the course of the Telegraph; its attacks upon General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren; the defense of Mr. Calhoun; and the chorus of the affiliated presses, to be engaged "in getting up the storm which even the popularity of General Jackson could not stand."

Benton, The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.32

The pamphlet was entitled, "Correspondence between General Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun, President and Vice-President of the United States, on the subject of the course of the latter in the deliberations of the Cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the occurrences of the Seminole War"; and its contents consisted of a prefatory address, and a number of letters, chiefly from Mr. Calhoun himself, and his friends—the General's share of the correspondence being a few brief notes to ascertain if Mr. Crawford's statement was true? and, being informed that, substantially, it was, to decline any further correspondence with Mr. Calhoun, and to promise a full public reply when he had the leisure for the purpose and access to the proofs. His words were: "In your and Mr. Crawford's dispute I have no interest whatever; but it may become necessary for me hereafter, when I shall have more leisure, and the documents athand, to place the subject in its proper light—to notice the historical facts and references in your communication—which will give a very different view to the subject. Understanding you now, no further communication with you on this subject is necessary." And none further appears from General Jackson….

Benton, The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.33

But the General did what he had intimated he would—drew up a sustained reply, showing the subject in a different light from that in which Mr. Calhoun's letters had presented it; and quoting vouchers for all that he said. The case, as made out in the published pamphlet, stood before the public as that of an intrigue on the part of Mr. Van Buren to supplant a rival—of which the President was the dupe—Mr. Calhoun the victim—and the country the sufferer: and the modus operandi of the intrigue was, to dig up the buried proceedings of Mr. Monroe's Cabinet, in relation to a proposed court of inquiry on the General (at the instance of Mr. Calhoun), for his alleged, unauthorized, and illegal operations in Florida during the Seminole War. It was this case which the General felt himself bound to confront—and did; and in confronting which he showed that Mr. Calhoun himself was the sole cause of breaking their friendship; and, consequently, the sole cause of all the consequences which resulted from that breach.

Benton, The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.33

Up to that time—the date of the discovery of Mr. Calhoun's now admitted part in the proposed measure of the court inquiry—that gentleman had been the General's beau ideal of a statesman and a man—"the noblest work of God," as he publicly exprest it in a toast: against whom he would believe nothing, to whose friends he gave an equalvoice in the Cabinet, whom he consulted as if a member of his administration; and whom he actually preferred for his successor. This reply to the pamphlet, entitled "An exposition of Mr. Calhoun's course toward General Jackson," tho written above twenty years ago, and intended for publication, has never before been given to the public. Its publication becomes essential now. It belongs to a dissension between chiefs which has disturbed the harmony, and loosened the foundations of the Union; and of which the view, on one side, was published in pamphlet at the time, registered in the weeklies and annuals, printed in many papers, carried into the Congress debates, especially on the nomination of Mr. Van Buren; and so made a part of the public history of the times—to be used as historical material in after time. The introductory paragraph to the "Exposition" shows that it was intended for immediate publication, but with a feeling of repugnance to the exhibition of the chief magistrate as newspaper writer; which feeling in the end predominated, and delayed the publication until the expiration of his office—and afterward, until his death. But it was preserved to fulfil its original purpose, and went in its manuscript form to Mr. Francis P. Blair, the literary legatee of General Jackson; and by him was turned over to me (with trunks full of other papers to be used in this Thirty Years' View).

Benton, The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.34

It had been previously in the hands of Mr. Amos Kendall, as material for a life of Jackson, which he had begun to write, and was by him made known to Mr. Calhoun, who declined "furnishing any further information on the subject." It is in the fair round-hand writing of a clerk, slightly interlined in the General's hand, the narrative sometimes in the first and sometimes in the third person; vouchers referred to and shown for every allegation; and signed by the General in his own well-known hand. Its matter consists of three parts. 1. The justification of himself, under the law of nations and the treaty with Spain of 1795, for taking military possession of Florida in 1818. 2. The same justification, under the orders of Mr. Monroe and his Secretary at War (Mr. Calhoun). 3. The statement of Mr. Calhoun's conduct toward him (the General) in all that affair of the Seminole War, and in the movements in the Cabinet, and in the two Houses of Congress, to which it gave rise. All these parts belong to a life of Jackson, or a history of the Seminole war; but only the two latter come within the scope of this View.

Benton, The Rupture Between Jackson and Calhoun, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.35

From the rupture between General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun (beginning to open in 1830, and breaking out in 1831), dates calamitous events to this country, upon which history can not shut her eyes.

The Webster-Hayne Debate

Title: The Webster-Hayne Debate

Author: James Schouler

Date: 1831

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.36-41

Schouler, Webster-Hayne Debate, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.36

South Carolina nullification was now coming in sight, and a celebrated debate which belongs to the first session exposed its claims and its fallacies to the country. The arena selected for a first impression was the Senate, where the arch-heretic himself presided and guided the onset with his eye. Hayne, South Carolina's foremost Senator, was the chosen champion and the cause of his State, both in its right and wrong sides, could have found no abler exponent while Calhoun's official station kept him from the floor. It has been said that Hayne was Calhoun's sword and buckler, and that he returned to the contest refreshed each morning by nightly communions with the Vice-President, drawing auxiliary supplies from the well-stored arsenal of his powerful and subtle mind. Be this as it may, Hayne was a ready and copious orator, a highly-educated lawyer, a man of varied accomplishments, shining as a writer, speaker, and counselor, equally qualified to draw up a bill or to advocate it, quick to discern, and, tho brilliant, disposed to view things on the practical side.

Schouler, Webster-Hayne Debate, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.37

His person was flexible, about the medium height and well proportioned; his face pleasant and expressive, and tho serious, lighting up readily with a smile; his manners irresistibly cordial and easy, winning strangers at first sight. He turned readily from business to society, and pursued with equal zest the triumphs of the forum and ballroom. A graceful adaptiveness at all points to a life of distinction was his striking quality; rugged inequalities in his nature there were none. Gifted for a life of public eminence, nobly born, bearing a Revolutionary name pathetic in its memories, well fortified by wealth and marriage connections, dignified, never vulgar nor unmindful of the feelings of those with whom he mingled, Hayne moved in an atmosphere where lofty and chivalrous honor was the ruling sentiment. But it was the honor of a caste; and the struggling bread-winners of society, the great commonalty, he little studied or understood. This was the man to fire an aristocracy of fellow citizens ready to arm when their interests were in danger, and upon him it devolved to advance the cause of South Carolina, break down the tariff, and fascinate the Union with the new rattlesnake theories.

Schouler, Webster-Hayne Debate, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.37

The great debate, which culminated in Hayne's encounter with Webster, came about in a somewhat casual way. Senator Foote, of Connecticut, submitted a proposition inquiring into the expediency of limiting the sales of public lands to those already in the market. This seemed like an Eastern spasm of jealousy at the progress of the West. Benton was rising in renown as the advocate not only of Western settlers, but of a new theory that the public lands should be given away instead ofsold to them. He joined Hayne in using this opportunity to try to detach the West from the East, and restore the old cooperation of the West and the South against New England. the discussion took a wide range, going back to topics that had agitated the country before the Constitution was formed. It was of a partizan and censorious character, and drew nearly all the chief senators out. But the topic which became the leading feature of the whole debate and gave it an undying interest was that of nullification, in which Hayne and Webster came forth as chief antagonists….

Schouler, Webster-Hayne Debate, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.38

Hayne launched his confident javelin at the New England States. He accused them of a desire to check the growth of the West in the interests of protection. Webster replied to his speech the next day, and left not a shred of the charge, baseless as it was. Inflamed and mortified at this repulse, Hayne soon returned to the assault, primed with a two-days' speech, which at great length vaunted the patriotism of South Carolina and bitterly attacked New England, dwelling particularly upon her conduct during the late war. It was a speech delivered before a crowded auditory, and loud were the Southern exultations that he was more than a match for Webster. Strange was it, however, that in heaping reproaches upon the Hartford Convention he did not mark how nearly its leaders had mapped out the same line of opposition to the national Government that his State now proposed to take, both relying upon the arguments of the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798-99.

Schouler, Webster-Hayne Debate, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.38

Webster rose the next day in his seat to make his reply. He had allowed himself but a singlenight from eve to morn to prepare for a critical and crowning occasion. But his reply was gathered from the choicest arguments and the richest thoughts that had long floated through his brain while this crisis was gathering; and bringing these materials together in lucid and compact shape, he calmly composed and delivered before another crowded and breathless auditory a speech full of burning passages, which will live as long as the American Union, and the grandest effort of his life. Two leading ideas predominated in this reply, and with respect to either Hayne was not only answered but put to silence. First, New England was vindicated. As a pious son of Federalism, Webster went the full length of the required defense.

Schouler, Webster-Hayne Debate, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.39

Some of his historical deductions may be questioned; but far above all possible error on the part of her leaders, stood colonial and Revolutionary New England, and the sturdy, intelligent, and thriving people whose loyalty to the Union had never failed, and whose home, should ill befall the nation, would yet prove liberty's last shelter. Next, the Union was held up to view in all its strength, symmetry, and integrity, reposing in the ark of the Constitution, no longer an experiment, as in the days when Hamilton and Jefferson contended for shaping its course, but ordained and established by and for the people, to secure the blessings of liberty to all posterity. It was not a Union to be torn up without bloodshed; for nerves and arteries were interwoven with its roots and tendrils, sustaining the lives and interests of twelve millions of inhabitants. No hanging over the abyss of disunion, no weighing of the chances, no doubting as to what the Constitution was worth, no placing of liberty before Union, but "liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable." This was the tenor of Webster's speech, and nobly did the country respond to it….

Schouler, Webster-Hayne Debate, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.41

Massachusetts men, gloomy and downcast of late, now walked the avenue as tho the fife and drum were before them. Hayne's few but zealous partizans shielded him still, and South Carolina spoke with pride of him. His speech was indeed a powerful one from its eloquence and personalities. But his standpoint was purely local and sectional. The people read Webster's speech and marked him for the champion henceforth against all assaults upon the Constitution. An undefinable dread now went abroad that men were planning against the peace of the nation, that the Union was in danger; and citizens looked more closely after its safety and welfare. Webster's speech aroused the latent spirit of patriotism. Even Benton, whose connection with the debate made him at first belittle these grand utterances, soon felt the danger and repudiated the company of the nullifiers. He remained through his long public career a Southern Unionist, and a good type of the growing class of statesman devoted to slave interests who loved the Union as it was and doted upon its compromises.

How the Federal Union Worked to the Injury of the South

Title: How the Federal Union Worked to the Injury of the South

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1831

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.42-49

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.42

To show the working of the Federal Government is the design of this view—show how things are done under it and their effect; that the good may be approved and pursued, the evil condemned and avoided, and the machine of government be made to work equally for the benefit of the whole Union, according to the wise and beneficent intent of its founders. It thus becomes necessary to show its working in the two great Atlantic sections, originally sole parties to the Union—the North and the South—complained of for many years on one part as unequal and oppressive, and made so by a course of Federal legislation at variance with the objects of the confederation and contrary to the intent or the words of the Constitution.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.42

The writer of this view sympathized with that complaint; believed it to be, to much extent, well founded; saw with concern the corroding effect it had on the feelings of patriotic men of the South; and often had to lament that a sense of duty to his own constituents required him to give votes which his judgment disapproved and his feelings condemned. This complaint existed when he came into the Senate; it had, in fact, commencedin the first years of the Federal Government, at the time of the assumption of the State debts, the incorporation of the first national bank, and the adoption of the funding system; all of which drew capital from the South to the North.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.43

It continued to increase; and, at the period to which this chapter relates, it had reached the stage of an organized sectional expression in a voluntary convention of the Southern States. It had often been exprest in Congress, and in the State legislatures, and habitually in the discussions of the people; but now it took the more serious form of joint action, and exhibited the spectacle of a part of the States assembling sectionally to complain formally of the unequal, and to them, injurious operation of the common government, established by common consent for the common good, and now frustrating its object by departing from the purposes of its creation. The convention was called commercial, and properly, as the grievance complained of was in its root commercial, and a commercial remedy was proposed.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.43

It met at Augusta, Georgia, and afterward at Charleston, South Carolina; and the evil complained of and the remedy proposed were strongly set forth in the proceedings of the body, and in addresses to the people of the Southern and South-western States. The changed relative condition of the two sections of the country, before and since the Union, was shown in their general relative depression or prosperity since that event, and especially in the reversed condition of their respective foreign import trade. In the colonial condition the comparison was wholly in favor of the South; under the Union wholly against it. Thus, in the year 1760—only sixteen years before the Declaration of Independence—the foreign imports into Virginia were þ850,000 sterling, and into South Carolina þ555,000; while into New York they were only þ189,000, into Pennsylvania þ490,000; and into all the New England colonies collectively only þ561,000.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.44

These figures exhibit an immense superiority of commercial prosperity on the side of the South in its colonial state, sadly contrasting with another set of figures exhibited by the convention to show its relative condition within a few years after the Union. Thus, in the year 1821, the imports into New York had risen to $23,000,000—being about seventy times its colonial import at about an equal period before the adoption of the Constitution; and those of South Carolina stood at 3,000,000—which, for all practical purposes, may be considered the same that they were in 1760.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.44

Such was the difference—the reversed conditions—of the two sections, worked between them in the brief space of two generations—within the actual lifetime of some who had seen their colonial conditions. The proceedings of the convention did not stop there, but brought down the comparison (under this commercial aspect) to near the period of its own sitting—to the actual period of the highest manifestation of Southern discontent, in 1832—when it produced the enactment of the South Carolina nullifying ordinance. At that time all the disproportions between the foreign commerce of the two sections had inordinately increased. The New York imports (since 1821) had more than doubled; the Virginia had fallen off one-half; South Carolina two-thirds. The actual figuresstood: New York, fifty-seven millions of dollars; Virginia, half a million; South Carolina, one million and a quarter.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.45

This was a disheartening view, and rendered more grievous by the certainty of its continuation, the prospect of its aggravation, and the conviction that the South (in its great staples) furnished the basis for these imports; of which it received so small a share. To this loss of its import trade, and its transfer to the North, the convention attributed, as a primary cause, the reversed conditions of the two sections—the great advance of one in wealth and improvements—the slow progress and even comparative decline of the other; and, with some allowance for the operation of natural or inherent causes, referred the effect to a course of Federal legislation unwarranted by the grants of the Constitution and the objects of the Union, which subtracted capital from one section and accumulated it in the other:—protective tariff, internal improvements, pensions, national debt, two national banks, the funding system and the paper system; the multiplication of offices, profuse and extravagant expenditure, the conversion of a limited into an almost unlimited government; and the substitution of power and splendor for what was intended to be a simple and economical administration of that part of their affairs which required a general head.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.45

These were the points of complaint—abuses which had led to the collection of an enormous revenue, chiefly levied on the products of one section of the Union and mainly disbursed in another. So far as Northern advantages were the result of fair legislation for the accomplishment of the objects of the Union, all discontent or complaint was disclaimed. All knew that the superior advantages of the North for navigation would give it the advantage in foreign commerce; but it was not expected that these facilities would operate a monopoly on one side and an extinction on the other; nor was that consequence allowed to be the effect of these advantages alone, but was charged to a course of legislation not warranted by the objects of the Union, or the terms of the Constitution, which created it. To this course of legislation was attributed the accumulation of capital in the North, which had enabled that section to monopolize the foreign commerce which was founded upon Southern exports; to cover one part with wealth while the other was impoverished; and to make the South tributary to the North, and supplant to it for a small part of the fruits of their own labor.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.46

Unhappily there was some foundation for this view of the case; and in this lies the root of the discontent of the South and its dissatisfaction with the Union, altho it may break out upon another point. It is in this belief of an incompatibility of interest, from the perverted working of the Federal Government, that lies at the root of Southern discontent, and which constitutes the danger to the Union, and which statesmen should confront and grapple with; and not in any danger to slave property, which has continued to aggrandize in value during the whole period of the cry of danger, and is now of greater price than ever was known before; and such as our ancestors would have deemed fabulous….

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.46

What has been published in the South and adverted to in this view goes to show that an incompatibility of interest between the two sections, tho not inherent, has been produced by the working of the government—not its fair and legitimate, but its perverted and unequal working.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.47

This is the evil which statesmen should see and provide against. Separation is no remedy; exclusion of Northern vessels from Southern ports is no remedy; but is disunion itself—and upon the very point which caused the Union to be formed. Regulation of commerce between the States, and with foreign nations, was the cause of the formation of the Union. Break that regulation and the Union is broken; and the broken parts converted into antagonist nations, with causes enough of dissension to engender perpetual wars, and inflame incessant animosities. The remedy lies in the right working of the Constitution; in the cessation of unequal legislation; in the reduction of the inordinate expenses of the government; in its return to the simple, limited, and economical machine it was intended to be; and in the revival of fraternal feelings, and respect for each other's rights and just complaints; which would return of themselves when the real cause of discontent was removed.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.47

The conventions of August and Charleston proposed their remedy for the Southern depression, and the comparative decay of which they complained. It was a fair and patriotic remedy—that of becoming their own exporters, and opening a direct trade in their own staples between Southern and foreign ports. It was recommended—attempted—failed. Superior advantages for navigation in the North—greater aptitude of its people for commerce—established course of business—accumulated capital—continued unequal legislation in Congress; and increasing expenditures of the government, chiefly disbursed in the North, and defect of seamen in the South (for mariners can not be made of slaves), all combined to retain the foreign trade in the channel which had absorbed it; and to increase it there with the increasing wealth and population of the country, and the still faster increasing extravagance and profusion of the government. And now, at this period (1855), the foreign imports at New York are $195,000,000; at Boston, $58,000,000; in Virginia, $1,250,000; in South Carolina, $1,750,000.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.48

This is what the dry and naked figures show. To the memory and imagination it is worse; for it is a tradition of the colonies that the South had been the seat of wealth and happiness, of power and opulence; that a rich population covered the land, dispensing a baronial hospitality, and diffusing the felicity which themselves enjoyed; that all was life, and joy, and affluence then. And this tradition was not without similitude to the reality, as this writer can testify; for he was old enough to have seen (after the Revolution) the still surviving state of Southern colonial manners, when no traveler was allowed to go to a tavern, but was handed over from family to family through entire States; when holidays were days of festivity and expectation, long prepared for, and celebrated by master and slave with music and feasting, and great concourse of friends and relatives; when gold was kept in desks or chests (after the downfall of continental paper) and weighed in scales, and lent to neighbors for short terms without note, interest, witness, or security; and on bond and land security for long years and lawful usance: and when petty litigation was at so low an ebb that it required a fine of forty pounds of tobacco to make a man serve as constable.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.49

The reverse of all this was now seen and felt—not to the whole extent which fancy or policy painted—but to extent enough to constitute a reverse, and to make a contrast, and to excite the regrets which the memory of past joys never fails to awaken. A real change had come, and this change, the effect of many causes, was wholly attributed to one—the unequal working of the Federal Government—which gave all the benefits of the Union to the North, and all its burdens to the South. And that was the point on which Southern discontent broke out—on which it openly rested until 1835; when it was shifted to the danger of slave property.

Benton, How the Union Worked to the Injury of the South, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.49

Separation is no remedy for these evils, but the parent of far greater than either just discontent or restless ambition would fly from. To the South the Union is a political blessing; to the North it is both a political and a pecuniary blessing; to both it should be a social blessing. Both sections should cherish it, and the North most. The story of the boy that killed the goose that laid the golden egg every day, that he might get all the eggs at once, was a fable; but the Northern man who could promote separation by any course of wrong to the South would convert that fable into history—his own history—and commit a folly, in a mere profit and loss point of view, of which there is no precedent except in fable.

Garrison and His Liberator

Title: Garrison and His Liberator

Author: Goldwin Smith

Date: 1831

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.50-56

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.50

Emancipation immediate, unconditional, and without compensation—such was the platform on which Garrison had now taken his stand, and such were the doctrines which the Liberator, as soon as it got fairly under way, began to preach. The first article followed upon the belief in the utter wrongfulness and sinfulness of slavery, which was the necessary basis of the moral and religious movement, and in grasping which Garrison had grasped the sole and certain assurance of victory. If man could have no property in man, he could no more have property for a day than forever. The slave was at once entitled to his freedom; he was entitled to set himself free if he could by flight or by insurrection. If the slaves who were shipped in Mr. Todd's vessel had risen upon the crew, tumbled into the hold or even killed those who resisted, and carried the vessel into a free port, they would have been doing right in the eyes of all but the slaveowner and friends. For the same reason it was logical to protest against any condition not imposed in the interest of the slave. But conditions might be imposed in the slave's interest, to smooth and safeguard a transition which no reasonable man could believe to be free from peril. The policy of provisional apprenticeship was adopted for that purpose by the British Parliament, and tho without practical success, certainly without moral wrong.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.51

But in refusing to sanction compensation to the slave-owner, Garrison would surely have gone astray. What is or is not property in the eye of morality, morality must decide. What is or is not property in a particular community is decided by the law of that community. The law of the American community had sanctioned the holding property in slaves, and tho the slave was not bound by that law the community itself was. Men had been induced to invest their money in slaves under the guarantee of the public faith, and emancipation without compensation, so far as the republic was concerned, would have been breach of faith and robbery. The slave-owner had sinned no more in holding slaves than the State had sinned in sanctioning his possession, and if a sacrifice was to be made to public morality, equity demanded that it should be made by all alike.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.51

The British legislature, overriding extremist proposals, acted upon this principle; and it did right. What the conscience of the individual slave-owner might dictate to him was another affair. To declare that there should be no compensation, and thus to threaten a powerful body of proprietors with beggary, would have been to make the conflict internecine. After the Civil War it was sorrowfully recalled that the price of the slaves would have been about six hundred millions, which would have been a cheap redemption from a struggle which cost eight thousand millions of dollars, be-sides the blood and havoc. If the Liberator had been instrumental in preventing such a settlement a dark shade of responsibility would rest upon its pages.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.52

But it is not likely that the settlement ever could have taken place. Not the commercial interest alone of the slave-owner, but his political ambition and his social pride were bound up with the institution. If he had been willing to part with his crops of cotton and tobacco, he would not have been willing to part with his aristocracy. Nor would it have been easy, when the State had paid its money, to enforce the real fulfilment of the bargain. Even now, when the South has been humbled by defeat, it is not easy to make her obey the law. Nothing more than the substitution of serfage for slavery would probably have been the result. Any such scheme, however, would scarcely have been feasible for a government like that of the American republic. The redemption of the slaves in the West Indies had been conceived and carried into effect by the imperial government and Parliament, acting upon the dependencies with autocratic power. A czar conceived and carried into effect the emancipation of the serfs of Russia. But a measure of this kind could hardly have been conceived, much less could it have been carried into effect, amid the fluctuations of popular suffrage and the distractions of political party. It is probable that the conflict was really irrepressible, and doomed to end either in separation or civil war.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.52

The salutatory of the Liberator avowed that its editor meant to speak out without restraint. "I will be as harsh as truth and as uncompromisingas justice. On this subject I do not wish to think or speak or write with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard!"

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.53

This promise was amply kept. Some of Garrison's best friends, and of the best friends of his cause, complained of the severity of his language, and their complaint can not be set aside as unfounded. Railing accusations are a mistake, even when the delinquent is Satanic. Unmeasured and indiscriminate language can never be justified. Washington had inherited an evil kind of property and an imperfect morality in connection with it; but no one could have called him a man-stealer; and there were still owners of slaves to whom the name as little belonged. Citations of the controversial invective of Luther and Milton will avail us nothing; the age of Luther and Milton was in that respect uncivilized. A youth dealing with a subject on which his feelings are excited is sure to be unmeasured.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.53

However, it was to the conscience of the nation that Garrison was appealing; and an appeal to conscience is unavoidably severe. Nothing will warrant the appeal but that which necessitates severity. The voice of conscience herself within us is severe. In answer to the clergymen who shrank from him, or profest to shrink from him, on account of the violence of his language, Garrison might have pointed, not only to passages in the Hebrew prophets, but to passages in the discourses of Christ. He might have reminded them of the language in which they were themselves, every Sunday in the pulpit, warning men to turn from every sin but slavery. With no small force he pleaded that he had icebergs of indifference around him, and it would take a good deal of fire in himself to melt them. To hate and denounce the sin either in the abstract or as that of a class or community is not to hate or denounce the individual sinner. To an individual slave-owner who had shown any disposition to hear him, Garrison would have been all courtesy and kindness. We may be sure that he would have clasped at once to his heart any slave-owner who had repented. Having, to use his own figure, taken in his hand the trumpet of God, he resolved to blow a strong blast. He could not believe that there was a sin without a sinner, nor could he separate the sinner from the sin. There was much wrath but no venom in the man. If there had been venom in him it would have belied his countenance and deportment. Miss Martineau, not an uncritical observer, was profoundly imprest with the saint-like expression and the sweetness of his manner. In private and in his family he was all gentleness and affection. Let it be said, too, that he set a noble example to controversial editors in his fair treatment of his opponents. Not only did he always give insertion to their replies, but he copied their criticisms from other journals into his own. Fighting for freedom of discussion, he was ever loyal to his own principle.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.55

What is certain is that the Liberator, in spite of the smallness of its circulation, which was hardly enough to keep it alive, soon told. The South was moved to its center. The editorials probably would not have caused much alarm, as the slaves could not read. What was likely to cause more alarm was the frontispiece, which spoke plainly enough to the slave's eye. It represented an auction at which "slaves, horses, and other cattle" were being offered for sale, and a whipping-post at which a slave was being flogged. In the background was the Capitol at Washington, with a flag inscribed "Liberty" floating over the dome. There might have been added the motto of Virginia, Sic semper tyrannis, and perhaps some extracts from the republican orations with which the South was celebrating the victory of French liberty over Charles X.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.55

On seeing the Liberator the realm of slavery bestirred itself. A Vigilance Association took the matter in hand. First came fiery and bloodthirsty editorials; then anonymous threats; then attempts by legal enactment to prevent the circulation of the Liberator at the South. The Grand Jury of North Carolina found a true bill against Garrison for the circulation of a paper of seditious tendency, the penalty for which was whipping and imprisonment for the first offense, and death without benefit of clergy for the second. The General Assembly of Georgia offered a reward of five thousand dollars to any one who, under the laws of that State, should arrest the editor of the Liberator, bring him to trial, and prosecute him to conviction. The South reproached Boston with allowing a batter to be planted on her soil against the ramparts of Southern institutions.

Smith, Garrison and His Liberator, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.56

Boston felt the reproach, and showed that she would gladly have supprest the incendiary print and perhaps have delivered up its editor; but the law was against her, and the mass of the people, tho wavering in their allegiance to morality on the question of slavery, were still loyal to freedom of opinion. When a Southern Governor appealed to the Mayor of Boston to take proceedings, the Mayor of Boston could only shake his head and assure his Southern friend that Garrison's paper was of little account. The reward offered by the General Assembly of Georgia looked very like an incitement to kidnapping. Justice to the South requires it to be said that nothing of the kind was ever attempted, nor was the hand of a Southern government visible in any outrage committed against Abolitionists at the North, tho individual Southerners might take part, and the spirit of the Southern fire-eater was always there.

Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists

Title: Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists

Author: James G. Blaine

Date: 1831

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.65-73

Blaine, Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.65

With the settlement of the Missouri question, the anti-slavery agitation subsided as rapidly as it had arisen. This was a second surprize to thinking men. The result can, however, be readily explained. The Northern States felt that they had absolutely secured to freedom a large territory west and north of the Missouri. The Southern States believed that they had an implied and honorable understanding—outside and beyond the explicit letter of the law—that new States south of the Missouri line could be admitted with slavery if they desired. The great political parties then dividing the country accepted the result and for the next twenty years no agitation of the slavery question appeared in any political convention, or affected any considerable body of the people.

Blaine, Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.65

Within that period, however, there grew up a school of anti-slavery men far more radical and progressive than those who had resisted the admission of Missouri as a slave State. They formed what was known as the Abolition party, and they devoted themselves to the utter destruction of slavery by every instrumentality which they could lawfully employ. Acutely trained in the political as well as the ethical principles of the great controversy, they clearly distinguished between the powers which Congress might and might not exercise under the limitations of the Constitution. They began, therefore, by demanding the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and in all the national forts, arsenals, and dock-yards, where, without question or cavil, the exclusive jurisdiction belonged to Congress; they asked that Congress, under its constitutional authority to regulate commerce between the States, would prohibit the inter-State slave-trade; and they prayed that our ships sailing on the high seas should not be permitted by the government to carry slaves as part of their cargo, under the free flag of the United States, and outside the local jurisdiction that held them in bondage. They denied that a man should aid in executing any law whose enforcement did violence to his conscience and trampled under foot the Divine commands. Hence they would not assist in the surrender and return of fugitive slaves, holding it rather to be their duty to resist such violation of the natural rights of man by every peaceful method, and justifying their resistance by the truths embodied in the Declaration of Independence, and, still more impressively, by the precepts taught in the New Testament.

Blaine, Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.66

While encountering, on these issues, the active hostility of the great mass of the people in all sections of the Union, the Abolitionists challenged the respect of thinking men, and even compelled the admiration of some of their most pronounced opponents. The party was small in number, but itsmembership was distinguished for intellectual ability, for high character, for pure philanthropy, for unquailing courage both moral and physical, and for a controversial talent which has never been excelled in the history of moral reforms. It would not be practicable to give the names of all who were conspicuous in this great struggle, but the mention of James G. Birney, of Benjamin Lundy, of Arthur Tappan, of the brothers Lovejoy, of Gerrit Smith, of John G. Whittier, of William Lloyd Garrison, of Wendell Phillips, and of Gamaliel Bailey, will indicate the class who are entitled to be held in remembrance so long as the possession of great mental and moral attributes gives enduring and honorable fame.

Blaine, Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.67

Nor would the list of bold and powerful agitators be complete or just if confined to the white race. Among the colored men—often denied the simplest rights of citizenship in the States where they resided—were found many who had received the gift of tongues, orators by nature, who bravely presented the wrongs and upheld the rights of the opprest. Among these Frederick Douglas was especially and richly endowed not only with the strength, but with the graces of speech; and for many years, from the stump and from the platform, he exerted a wide and beneficial influence upon popular opinion.

Blaine, Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.67

In the early days of this agitation, the Abolitionists were a proscribed and persecuted class, denounced with unsparing severity by both the great political parties, condemned by many of the leading churches, libeled in the public press, and maltreated by furious mobs. In no part of the country did they constitute more than a handful of the population, but they worked against every discouragment with a zeal and firmness which bespoke intensity of moral conviction. They were in large degree recruited from the Society of Friends, who brought to the support of the organization the same calm and consistent courage which had always distinguished them in upholding before the world their peculiar tenets of religious faith. Caring nothing for prejudice, meeting opprobrium with silence, shaming the authors of violence by meek non-resistance, relying on moral agencies alone, appealing simply to the reason and the conscience of men, they arrested the attention of the nation by arraigning it before the public opinion of the world, and proclaiming its responsibility to the judgment of God….

Blaine, Three Northern Views of the Abolitionists, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.68

Profoundly opposed as were many citizens to a denial of the right of petition, very few wished to become identified with the cause of the Abolitionists. In truth it required no small degree of moral courage to take position in the ranks of that despised political sect forty-five years ago. Persecutions of a petty and social character were almost sure to follow, and not infrequently grievous wrongs were inflicted, for which, in the absence of a disposition among the people to see justice done, the law afforded no redress. Indeed, by an apparent contradiction not difficult to reconcile, many of those who fought bravely for the right of the Abolitionists to be heard in Congress by pe-tition, were yet enraged with them for continually and, as they thought, causelessly, raising and pressing the issue. They were willing to fight for the right of the Abolitionists to do a certain thing, and then willing to fight the Abolitionists for aimlessly and uselessly doing it. The men who were governed by these complex motives were chiefly Whigs. They felt that an increase of popular strength to the Abolitionists must be at the expense of the party which, continuing to make Clay its idol, was about to make Harrison its candidate. The announcement, therefore, on the eve of the national contest of 1840, that the Abolitionists had nominated James G. Birney of Michigan for President, and Francis J. Le Moyne of Pennsylvania for Vice-President, was angrily received by the Whigs, and denunciations of the movement were loud and frequent. The support received by these candidates was unexpectedly small, and showed little ground, in the judgment of the Whigs, for the course taken by the Abolitionists. Their strength was almost wholly confined to New England, western New York, and the Western Reserve of Ohio. It was plainly seen, that, in a large majority of the free States, the Abolitionists had as yet made no impression on the public opinion.

Calhoun's Views of Slavery, His Character, and His Personality

Title: Calhoun's Views of Slavery, His Character, and His Personality

Author: John S. Jenkins

Date: 1831

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.77-86

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.77

Calhoun's view was that slavery ought not to be considered, as it exists in the United States, in the abstract; but rather as a political institution, existing prior to the formation of the government and expressly recognized in the Constitution. The framers of that instrument regarded slaves as property, and admitted the right of ownership in them. The institution being thus acknowledged, he contended that the faith of all the States was pledged against any interference with it in the States in which it existed; and that in the District of Columbia, and in the territories from which slavery had not been excluded by the Missouri Compromise, being the common property of all the States, the owner of slaves enjoyed the same rights and was entitled to the same protection, if he chose to emigrate thither, or if already a resident, as if he were in one of the slave States—in other words, that upon common soil his right of property should be respected. Any interference with it, therefore, direct or indirect, immediate or remote, he felt bound to oppose, and did oppose to the very close of his life.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.78

He held, too, that it was desirable to continue the institution at the South; that it had been productive of more good than harm; and that "in no other condition, or in any other age or country, [had] the negro race ever attained so high an elevation in morals, intelligence, or civilization." Slavery, he was accustomed to say, existed in some form or another, in all civilized countries; and he was disposed to doubt the correctness of the sentiment contained in the Declaration of Independence, that all men are born free and equal. Natural rights, indeed, in every age, in every country, and under every form of government, have been, and are, regulated and controlled by political institutions. He considered the colored population as constituting an inferior race, and that slavery was not a degradation, but had the direct tendency to improve their moral, social, and intellectual condition. The situation of the slaves was an enviable one in comparison with that of the free negroes at the North, or with that of the operatives in the manufactories and the laboring classes generally in Great Britain. Of what value, except relatively, he asked—and asked, too, with a great deal of pertinence—were political rights, when he saw thousands of voters, in the Northern States, in the service of powerful monopolies or employed on public works, fairly driven to the polls with ballots in their hands?

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.78

The negro slave, he contended, felt and acknowledged his inferiority, and regarded his position as a proper and natural one. The two races in the Southern States were almost equal in numbers. They could not live upon terms of equality. "It may, in truth, be assumed as a maxim," was hislanguage, "that two races differing so greatly, and in so many respects, can not possibly exist together in the same country, where their numbers are nearly equal, without the one being subjected to the other. Experience has proved that the existing relation, in which the one is subjected to the other, in the slaveholding States, is consistent with the peace and safety of both, with great improvement to the inferior; while the same experience proves that . . . the abolition of slavery would (if it did not destroy the inferior by conflicts, to which it would lead) reduce it to the extremes of vice and wretchedness. In this view of the subject, it may be asserted, that what is called slavery is in reality a political institution, essential to the peace, safety, and prosperity of those States of the Union in which it exists."

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.79

Entertaining these views, it is not strange that Mr. Calhoun regarded the movements of the Abolitionists as being dictated by a false philanthropy, and that he thought them calculated, if persisted in, to jeopard the happiness and tranquillity of the slave States, and to endanger the peace of the Union; nor that he so often warned his fellow citizens of the Southern States against the designs openly avowed, or secretly cherished, which, if not early opposed or counteracted, would prove highly prejudicial to their interests and their welfare. Where so much was at stake, he thought it well to be wise in time….

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.79

No one ever saw Mr. Calhoun for the first time without being forcibly imprest with the conviction of his mental superiority. There was that in his air and in his appearance which carried with it the assurance that he was no common man. He hadnot Hyperion's curls, nor the front of Jove. Miss Martineau termed him, in her "Travels in America," the cast-iron man, "who looked as if he had never been born." In person he was tall and slender, and his frame appeared gradually to become more and more attenuated till he died. His features were harsh and angular in their outlines, presenting a combination of the Greek and the Roman. A serene and almost stony calm was habitual to them when in repose, but when enlivened in conversation or debate, their play was remarkable—the lights were brought out into bolder relief, and the shadows thrown into deeper shade.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.80

His countenance, when at rest, indicated abstraction or a preoccupied air, and a stranger on approaching him could scarcely avoid an emotion of fear; yet he could not utter a word before the fire of genius blazed from his eye and illuminated his expressive features. His individuality was stamped upon his acute and intelligent face, and the lines of character and thought were clearly and strongly defined. His forehead was broad, tolerably high, and compact, denoting the mass of brain behind it. Until he had passed the grand climacteric, he wore his hair short and brushed it back, so that it stood erect on the top of his head, like bristles on the angry boar, or "quills upon the fretful porcupine," but toward the close of his life he suffered it to grow long, and to fall in heavy masses over his temples. But his eyes were his most striking features: they were dark blue, large and brilliant; in repose glowing with a steady light, in action fairly emitting flashes of fire.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.80

His character was marked and decided, not prematurely exhibiting its peculiarities, yet formedand perfected at an early age. He was firm and prompt, manly and independent. His sentiments were noble and elevated, and everything mean or groveling was foreign to his nature. He was easy in his manners, and affable and dignified. His attachments were warm and enduring; he did not manifest his affection with enthusiastic fervor, but with deep earnestness and sincerity. He was kind, generous and charitable; honest and frank; faithful to his friends, but somewhat inclined to be unforgiving toward his enemies. He was attached to his principles and prejudices with equal tenacity; and when he had adopted an opinion, so strong was his reliance upon the correctness of his own judgment, that he often doubted the wisdom and sincerity of those who disagreed with him. He never shrank from the performance of any duty, however painful it might be—that it was a duty, was sufficient for him. He possest pride of character in no ordinary degree, and, withal, not a little vanity, which is said always to accompany true genius. His devotion to the South was not sectional so much as it was the natural consequence of his views with reference to the theory of the government; and his patriotism, like his fame, was coextensive with the Union.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.81

In private life he was fitted to be loved and respected. Like Jefferson, Madison, Marshall, and the younger Adams, he was simple in his habits. When at home, he usually rose at daybreak, and, if the weather admitted, took a walk over his farm. He breakfasted at half-past seven, and then retired to his office, which stood near his dwelling-house where he wrote till dinner time, or three o'clock. After dinner he read or conversed withhis family till sunset, when he took another walk. His tea hour was eight o'clock; he then joined his family again, and passed the time in conversation or reading till ten o'clock, when he retired to rest. As a citizen, he was without blemish; he wronged no one; and there were no ugly spots on his character to dim the brilliancy of his public career. His social qualities were endearing, and his conversational powers fascinating in the extreme. He loved to talk with the young; he was especially animated and instructive when engaged in conversation with them, and scarcely ever failed to inspire a sincere attachment in the breasts of those who listened to him. He frequently corresponded, too, with young men, and almost the last letter he wrote was addrest to a protege attending a law school in New York, and was replete with kind advice and with expressions of friendly interest.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.82

He conversed, perhaps with too great freedom. He prided himself on being unreserved in the expression of his opinions, and yet this was a fault in his character; for in the transaction of business, and in deciding and acting upon important political questions, he was ordinarily cautious and prudent. To his very frankness, therefore, may be attributed, not the misrepresentations, of which he was the victim. He often complained that he was not understood, but he sometimes forgot that those who would not comprehend him, might have been already prejudiced by some remark of his, made at the wrong time, or in the wrong presence.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.82

His disposition was reflective, and he spend hours at a time in earnest thought. But he was exceedingly fond of reading history and books of travel. Works on government, on the rise and fall of empires, on the improvement and decline of the race of mankind and the struggles and contests of one with another, always attracted his attention. Indeed, his whole life was one of study and thought.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.83

In his dress he was very plain, and rarely appeared in anything except a simple suit of black. His constitution was not naturally robust; but notwithstanding the ceasleless labors of his mind, by a strict attention to regimen and the avoidance of all stimulants, his life was prolonged almost to the allotted three-score and ten.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.83

To say that he possest a great mind would be only repeating a trite remark. It was one of extraordinary compass and power. His rivals and compeers were intellectual giants, and among them he occupied no subordinate position. The most prominent characteristics of his mind were its massiveness and solidity, its breadth and scope, the clearness of its perceptions, and the directness with which they were exprest. It was well balanced, because it was self-poised, and he did not often "o'er-step the modesty of nature."

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.83

He was neither metaphysical nor subtle, in the sense in which mere schoolmen use those terms. He had studied the philosophy as well as the rules of logic; or, if not that, the faculty of reasoning with accuracy was natural to him. He was capable of generalizing and of drawing nice distinctions. He was shrewd in argument, and quick to observe the weak points of an antagonist. Of dialectics he was a complete master, whether synthetically or analytically considered. But his great power lay in analysis. He could resolve a complex argument or an idea into its original parts with as muchfacility as the most expert mechanic could take a watch in pieces; and it was his very exquisiteness in this respect, that caused him to be regarded by many as sophistical and metaphysical.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.84

He was fond of tracing out the causes which led to an effect, and of considering the vast combinations of circumstances that produced a certain result, or what in politics he called a juncture or a crisis. In the readiness and rapidity with which he analyzed and classified his thoughts, he had no superior, if he had an equal, among the public men of his day. While at the law school in Litchfield, he accustomed himself to arrange the order of his thoughts, before taking part in a debate, not upon paper but in his mind, and to depend on his memory, which was peculiarly retentive. In this manner both his mind and memory were strengthened, and the former was made to resemble a storehouse full to overflowing, but with everything in its appropriate place.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.84

Like his life, his style was simple and pure, yet, for this very reason, often rising to an elevation of grandeur and dignity, which elaborate finish can never attain. It was modeled after the ancient classics, and distinguished for its clearness, directness, and energetic earnestness. His words were well chosen, and showed severe discipline in his early studies; but he never stopt to pick or cull them in the midst of a speech, for at such times his ideas seemed to come forth full draperied, like Minerva from the brain of Jupiter. He occasionally made use of a startling figure, or an antithetical expression, but there was no redundancy of ornament, tho—if that could be a blemish—there was a redundancy of thought….

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.85

As a statesman, his course was independent and high-minded. Principles he regarded as practical things, and he was firm in adhering to them, and bold and fearless in attacking error. He united the fiery ardor of Mirabeau to the steadiness of Malesherbes—the daring of Canning to the moderation of Liverpool. Few men possest a more happy faculty of ingratiating themselves into the favor of new acquaintances; but he never practised the arts of the demagog, and, as he used to say, he was "an object of as great curiosity to people outside of a circle of five miles in this State [South Carolina] as anywhere else." He was ambitious, but his ambition was of a lofty character. He was not indifferent to party obligations, but he thought they ought to be limited to matters of detail and minor questions of policy, and not extended to important principles….

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.85

"People do not understand liberty or majorities," he remarked. "The will of a majority is the will of a rabble. Progressive democracy is incompatible with liberty. Those who study after this fashion are yet in the hornbook, the a, b, c of governments. Democracy is leveling—this is inconsistent with true liberty. Anarchy is more to be dreaded than despotic power. It is the worst tyranny. The best government is that which draws least from the people, and is scarcely felt, except to execute justice, and to protect the people from animal violation of law."

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.86

These opinions undoubtedly indicate the existence of a morbid melancholy in the breast of their author—of a proneness to look upon the dark side of human nature—yet they were uttered in all sincerity.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.86

Possessing such exalted talents, the question may be asked, why Mr. Calhoun did not reach the Presidency; for his aspirations were often turned in that direction, tho he would sacrifice no principle to reach that high station. A late writer has enumerated three obstacles—his unconquerable independence, his incorruptible integrity, and the philosophical sublimity of his genius. That the first two contributed to this result is highly probable, but if by that other quality is meant an elevation of his genius entirely above the comprehension of the multitude, it is unjust to his character. He possest no such transcendental faculty or attribute. Truth, in its simplicity and beauty—as Mr. Calhoun present it—goes home to every heart.

Jenkins, Calhoun's Views of Slavery…, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.86

The death of Mr. Calhoun was a loss to the Union but to South Carolina the blow was peculiarly severe. For more than forty years she had trusted and confided in him, and she never found him faithless or remiss in his duty. He had received many honors at her hands, but not one was undeserved—she owed him a debt of gratitude which she could never repay. She has produced many distinguished men; yet his memory and fame will be dearer than those of her Lawrences, her Gadsdens, her Pinckneys, her Rutledges, or her Haynes. Her soil contains no nobler dust than that of John Caldwell Calhoun.

The Black Hawk War

Title: The Black Hawk War

Author: Reuben Gold Thwaites

Date: 1832

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.87-94

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.87

On Rock River, in Illinois, near its junction with the Mississippi, there was a considerable Sauk village, inhabited by a large band of active sympathizers with the British, and under the domination of Black Sparrow Hawk (commonly called Black Hawk), an ambitious, restless, and somewhat demagogic headman of the tribe. Altho himself "touching the quill" at both the treaty of 1804 and that with the Sauk and Foxes in May, 1816, he afterward denied the authority of the tribal chiefs to sign away the common lands, thereby ignoring his own earlier assent.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.87

When, in 1816, the Federal Government treated separately therefor with the Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi, and it was found that the lower Rock River was south of the prescribed boundary line, the majority of the Sacs and Foxes on that stream, under the Fox head-chief Keokuk, discreetly moved to the west of the Mississippi. But Black Hawk's "British band," as they were called—two hundred of them had fought under Tecumseh—continued to hold the old village site, where he himself was born, and where was the great cemetery of the tribe; quite ignoring the fact that their tribal rights in the territory were no longer recognized by the United States.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.88

White squatters, coveting land far beyond the frontier of legal entries, still some sixty miles eastward, began to annoy the Hawk as early as 1823, burning his lodges while he was absent on the hunt, destroying his crops, insulting his women, and now and then actually beating him and his people. Persistently advised by the tribal chiefs to abandon his town to the on-rushing tide of settlement, he nevertheless obstinately held his ground. In the spring of 1830 affairs had reached a crisis. When the British band returned from their winter's hunt they found their cemetery plowed over, for several squatters had now preempted the village site, the cemetery, and the extensive aboriginal planting grounds; yet a belt of forty miles of Indian lands still lay unsurveyed between this and the western line of regular settlement.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.88

The indignant Hawk now took his band overland by the great Sac trail, south of Lake Michigan, to consult with his friend the British military agent at Malden, in Canada, not far from detroit. He was there advised that the spirit of the treaty of 1804 had clearly been violated, and that if he persisted in repelling the squatters the Government's sense of fair play would surely support him; but the British official evidently had not carefully studied the trend of our Indian diplomacy. Thus fortified, Black Hawk returned to his village in the spring of 1831, his people in a starving condition, only to find white intruders more numerous and offensive than ever. he thereupon indiscreetly threatened them with force if they did not at once depart. This was construed as being a"bloody menace," and the Illinois militia were promptly called out by Governor John Reynolds in a flaming proclamation, to "repel the invasion of the British band." On June 25, the Hawk cowered before a demonstration made at his village by some seven hundred militiamen and regulars, and fled to the west of the Mississippi, humbly promising never to return without the express permission of the Federal Government.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.89

Black Hawk, now a man of some fifty-four years, a somewhat remarkable organizer and military tactician, and for one of his race broadminded and humane, was nevertheless too easily led by the advice of others. He was now beset by young Potawatomi hot-bloods from northeastern Illinois and along the western shore of Lake Michigan, scalp-hunters from the Winnebago and along the upper Rock River, and emissaries from the Ottawa and Chippewa, all of whom urged him to return and fight for his rights. Particularly was he influenced by a Winnebago soothsayer named White Cloud, who throughout was his evil genius. No crop had been raised, and the winter in Iowa was unusually harsh, so that by early spring the British band were menaced by famine.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.89

Driven to desperation, and relying on these proffers of intertribal assistance, the Hawk crossed the Mississippi at Yellow Banks, April 6, 1832, with five hundred warriors, mostly Sauk, accompanied by all their women, children, and domestic equipment. Their intention was to raise a crop at the Winnebago village at Prophet's Town, on Rock River, and then if practicable the bucks would take the warpath in the autumn.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.89

But the news of the "invasion" spread like wild-fire through the Illinois and Wisconsin settlements. Another fiery proclamation from Springfield summoned the people to arms, the United States was also called on for troops, those settlers who did not fly the country threw up log forts, and everywhere was aroused intense excitement and feverish preparation for bloody strife.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.90

In an incredibly short time, three hundred regulars and eighteen hundred horse and foot volunteers were on the march. The startled Hawk sent back a defiant message, and retreated up Rock River, making a brief stand at Stillman's Creek. here, finding that the promised assistance from other tribes was not forthcoming, he attempted to surrender on stipulation that he be allowed peacefully to withdraw to the west of the Mississippi. But his messengers, on approaching with their white flag the camp of twenty-five hundred half-drunken Illinois cavalry militia, were brutally slain. Accompanied by a mere handful of brave, the enraged Sac leader now ambushed and easily routed the large and boisterous party, whose members displayed rank cowardice; in their mad retreat they spread broadcast through the settlements that Black Hawk was backed by two thousand bloodthirsty warriors, bent on a campaign of universal slaughter. This created popular consternation throughout the West. The name of the deluded Black Hawk became everywhere coupled with stories of savage cruelty, and served as a household bugaboo. Meanwhile, so great was the alarm that the Illinois militia, originally hot to take the field, now, on flimsy excuses, promptly disbanded.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.90

Black Hawk himself was much encouraged by his easy victory at Stillman's Creek, and, ladenwith spoils from the militia camp, removed his women and children about seventy miles northeastward, to the neighborhood of Lake Koshkonong, near the headwaters of Rock River, a Wisconsin district girt about by great marshes and not then easily accessible to white troops. Thence descending with his braves to northern Illinois, where he had spasmodic help from small bands of young Winnebago and Potawatomi, the Hawk and his friends engaged in irregular hostilities along the Illinois-Wisconsin border, and made life miserable for the settlers and miners. In these various forays, with which, however, the Sac headman was not always connected, fully two hundred whites and nearly as many Indians, lost their lives. At the besieged blockhouse forts (particularly Plum River, in northern Illinois) there were numerous instances of romantic heroism on the part of the settlers, men and women alike; and several of the open fight, like one on the Peckatonica River, are still famous in local annals.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.91

Three weeks after the Stillman's Creek affair, a reorganized army of 3,200 Illinois militia was mobilized, being reenforced by regulars under General Atkinson and a battalion of two hundred mounted rangers from the lead region, enlisted by Major Henry Dodge, then commandant of Michigan militia west of Lake Michigan, and in later years governor of Wisconsin Territory. The entire army now in the field numbered about 4,000 effective men. Dodge's rangers, gathered from the mines and fields, were a free-and-easy set of fellows, destitute of uniforms, but imbued with the spirit of adventure and the customary frontiersmen's intense hatred of the Indians whom theyhad ruthlessly displaced. While disciplined to the extent of obeying orders whenever sent into the teeth of danger, these Rough Riders of 1832 swung through the country with small regard for the rules of the manual, and presented a striking contrast to the habits and appearance of the regulars.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.92

As the new army slowly but steadily moved up Rock River, Black Hawk retired toward his Lake Koshkonong base. The pursuit becoming too warm, however, he retreated hastily across country, with women and children and all the paraphernalia of the British band, to the Wisconsin River, in the neighborhood of Prairie du Sac; on his way crossing the site of the present Madison, where he was caught up with by his pursuers, now more swift in their movements. On reaching the rugged bluffs overlooking the bluffs overlooking the Wisconsin, he sought again to surrender; but there chanced to be no interpreter among the whites, and the unfortunate suppliant was misunderstood. The battle of Wisconsin Heights followed (July 21), without appreciable loss on either side. Here the Sauk leader displayed much skill in covering the flight of his people across the broad, island-strewn river.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.92

A portion of the fugitives, chiefly women and children, escaped on a raft down the Wisconsin, but near Prairie du Chien were mercilessly fired upon by a detachment from the garrison of Fort Crawford, and fifteen killed. The remainder, led by Black Hawk and some Winnebago guides, pushed across through a rough, forbidding country, to the junction of the Bad Ax with the Mississippi, losing many along the way, who died of wounds and starvation. The now sadly depleted and almost famished crew reached the Mississippi on the firstof August, and attempted to cross the river to the habitat of the Sioux, fondly hoping that their troubles would then be over. But only two or three canoes were obtainable, and the work was not only slow, but, owing to the swift current, accompanied by some loss of life.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.93

In the afternoon the movement was detected by the crew of the Warrior, a government supply steamer carrying a detachment of soldiers from Fort Crawford. A third time the Hawk sought to surrender, but his white signal was fired at, under pretense that it was a savage ruse, and round after round of canister swept the wretched camp. The next day (August 2) the troops, who had been delayed for three days in crossing Wisconsin River, were close upon their heels, and arrived on the heights overlooking the beach. The Warrior thereupon renewed its attack, and caught between two galling fires the poor savages soon succumbed. Black Hawk fled inland to seek an asylum at the Dells of the Wisconsin with his false friends, the Winnebago, who had guided the white army along his path; fifty of his people remained on the east bank and were taken prisoners by the troops; some three hundred miserable starvelings, largely noncombatants, reached the west shore through the hail of metal, only to be waylaid by Sioux, dispatched by army officials to intercept them, and half of their number were slain. Of the band of a thousand Sacs who had entered Illinois in April, not much over a hundred and fifty lived to tell of the Black Hawk War, one of the most discreditable punitive expeditions in the long and checkered history of American relations with the aborigines.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.94

As for the indiscreet but honest Black Hawk, in many ways one of the most interesting of North American Indians, he was promptly surrendered (August 27) by the Winnebago to the Indian agency at Prairie du Chien. Imprisoned first at Jefferson Barracks, and then at Fortress Monroe, exhibited to throngs of curiosity-seeking people in the Eastern States, and obliged to sign articles of perpetual peace, he was finally turned over for safe-keeping to his hated and hating rival, the Fox chief Keokuk. In 1834 his autobiography was published—a book probably authentic for the most part, but the stilted style is no doubt that of his white editor.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.94

Dying in 1838 (October 3) upon a small reservation in Iowa, Black Hawk's grave was rifled by a traveling physician, who utilized the bones for exhibition purposes. Two years later the skeleton was, on the demand of indignant sympathizers, surrendered to the State of Iowa; but in 1853 the box containing it was destroyed by a fire at Iowa City, then the capital of that commonwealth.

Thwaites, The Black Gold Thwaites, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.94

With all his faults, and these were chiefly racial, Black Hawk was preeminently a patriot. A year before his death he made a speech to a party of whites who were making him a holiday hero, and thus forcibly defended his motives: "Rock River was a beautiful country. I liked my town, my corn-fields, and the home of my people. I fought for them." No poet could have penned for him a more touching epitaph.

The Overthrow of the United States Bank

Title: The Overthrow of the United States Bank

Author: Theodore Roosevelt

Date: 1832

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.95-107

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.95

Jackson's attack upon the Bank was a move undertaken mainly on his own responsibility, and one which, at first, most of his prominent friends were alarmed to see him undertake. Benton alone supported him from the beginning. Captain and lieutenant alike intensely appreciated the joy of battle; they cared for a fight because it was a fight, and the certainty of a struggle, such as would have daunted weaker or more timid men, simply offered to them an additional inducement to follow out the course they had planned. Benton's thorough-going support was invaluable to Jackson. the President sorely needed a friend in the Senate who would uphold him through thick and thin, and who yet commanded the respect of all his opponents by his strength, ability, and courage. To be sure, Benton's knowledge of financial economics was not always profound; but, on the other hand, a thorough mastery of the laws of finance would have been, in this fight, a very serious disadvantage to any champion of Jackson….

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.95

The struggle first became important when the question of the recharter of the Bank was raised, toward the end of Jackson's first term, the present charter still having three years to run. This charter had in it many grave faults; and there might well be a question as to whether it should be renewed. The Bank itself, beyond doubt, possest enormous power; too much power for its own or outsider's good. Its president, Biddle, was a man of some ability, but conceited to the last degree, untruthful, and to a certain extent unscrupulous in the use he made of the political influence of the great moneyed institution over which he presided. Some of the financial theories on which he managed the Bank were wrong; yet, on the whole, it was well conducted, and under its care the monetary condition of the country was quiet and good, infinitely better than it had been before, or than, under the auspices of the Jacksonian Democracy, it afterward became….

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.96

Jackson, in his first annual message, in 1829, had hinted that he was opposed to the recharter of the Bank, then a question of the future and not to arise for four or five years. At the same time he had called in question the constitutionality and expediency of the Bank's existence, and had criticized as vicious its currency system. The matter of constitutionality had been already decided by the Supreme Court, the proper tribunal, and was, and had been for years, an accepted fact; it was an absurdity to call it in question. As regards the matter of expediency, certainly the Jacksonians failed signally to put anything better in its place. Yet it was undeniable that there were grave defects in the currency system.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.97

The President's message roused but little interest, and what little it did rouse was among the Bank's friends. At once these began to prepare the way for the recharter by an active and extensive agitation in its favor. The main bank was at Philadelphia, but it had branches everywhere, and naturally each branch bank was a center of opposition to the President's proposed policy. As the friends of the Bank were greatly interested, and as the matter did not immediately concern those who afterward became its foes, the former, for the time, had it all their own way, and the drift of public opinion seemed to be strongly in its favor.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.97

Early in 1831 Benton asked leave to introduce a resolution against the recharter of the Bank; his purpose being merely to give formal notice of war against it, and to attempt to stir up a current of feeling counter to that which then seemed to be generally prevailing in its favor. In his speech he carefully avoided laying stress upon any such abstract point as that of constitutionality, and dwelt instead upon the questions that would affect the popular mind; assailing the Bank "as having too much power over the people and the government, over business and politics, and as too much disposed to exercise that power to the prejudice of the freedom and equality which should prevail in a republic, to be allowed to exist in our country." The force of such an argument in a popular election will be acknowledged by all practical politicians….

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.97

The advocates of the Bank were still in the majority in both houses of Congress, and soon beganpreparations for pushing through a bill for the recharter. The issue began to become political. Webster, Clay, and most of the other anti-administration men were for the Bank; and so when the convention of the National Republicans, who soon afterward definitely assumed the name of Whigs, took place, they declared heartily in its favor, and nominated for the Presidency its most enthusiastic supporter, Henry Clay. The Bank itself unquestionably preferred not to be dragged into politics; but Clay, thinking he saw a chance for a successful stroke, fastened upon it, and the convention that nominated him made the fight against Jackson on the ground that he was hostile to the Bank. Even had this not already been the case no more certain method of insuring his hostility could have been adopted.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.98

Still, however, many of Jackson's supporters were also advocates of recharter; and the bill for that purpose commanded the majority in Congress. Benton took the lead in organizing the opposition, not with the hope of preventing its passage, but "to attack incessantly, assail at all points, display the evil of the institution, rouse the people, and prepare them to sustain the veto." In other words, he was preparing for an appeal to the people, and working to secure an anti-Bank majority in the next Congress….

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.98

Webster made the great argument in favor of the recharter bill. Benton took the lead in opposition, stating, what was probably true—that the bill was brought up so long before the charter expired for political reasons, and criticizing it as premature; a criticism unfortunately applicable with even greater force to Jackson's message. Hisspeech was largely mere talking against time, and he wandered widely from the subject. Among other things he invoked the aid of the principle of State's rights, because the Bank then had power to establish branches in any State, whether the latter liked it or not, and free from State taxation. But in spite of all that Benton could do the bill passed both Houses, the Senate voting in its favor by twenty-eight ayes against twenty nays.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.99

Jackson, who never feared anything, and was more than ready to accept the fight which was in some measure forced on him, yet which in some degree he had courted, promptly vetoed the bill in a message which stated some truths forcibly and fearlessly, which developed some very queer constitutional and financial theories, and which contained a number of absurdities, evidently put in, not for the benefit of the Senate, but to influence voters at the coming Presidential election. The leaders of the opposition felt obliged to make a show of trying to pass the bill over the veto in order to get a chance to answer Jackson. Webster again opened the argument. Clay made the fiercest onslaught, assailing the President personally, besides attacking the veto power, and trying to discredit its use. But the Presidential power of veto is among the best features of our government, and Benton had no difficulty in making a good defence of it.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.99

The debate concluded with a sharp and undignified interchange of personalities between the Missouri and Kentucky Senators, Clay giving Benton the lie direct, and the latter retorting in kind. Each side, of course, predicted the utter ruin of the country, if the other prevailed. Benton said that, if the Bank conquered, the result would be the establishment of an oligarchy, and then of a monarchy, and finally the death of the republic by corruption. Webster stated as his belief that, if the sentiments of the veto message received general approbation, the Constitution could not possibly survive its fiftieth year. Webster, however, in that debate, showed to good advantage. Benton was no match for him, either as a thinker or as a speaker; but with the real leader of the Whig party, Henry Clay, he never had much cause to fear comparison.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.100

All the State banks were of course rabidly in favor of Jackson; and the Presidential election of 1832 was largely fought on the bank issue. In Pennsylvania, however, the feeling for the Bank was only less strong than that for Jackson; and accordingly that Boeotian community sapiently cast its electoral votes for the latter, while instructing its senators and representatives to support the former. But the complete and hopeless defeat of Clay by Jackson sealed the fate of the Bank. Jackson was not even content to let it die naturally by the lapse of its charter. His attitude toward it so far had been one for which much could be said; indeed, very good grounds can be shown for thinking his veto proper. But of the impropriety of his next step there could be no possible question. Congress had passed a resolution declaring its belief in the safety of the United States deposits in the Bank; but the President, in the summer of 1833, removed these deposits and placed them in certain State banks. He experienced some difficulty in getting a secretary of the treasurywho would take such as step; finally he found one in Taney.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.101

The Bank memorialized Congress at once; and the anti-administration majority in the Senate forthwith took up the quarrel. They first rejected Jackson's nominations for Bank directors, and then refused to confirm Taney himself. Two years later Jackson made the latter Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in which position he lived to do even more mischief than he had time or opportunity to accomplish as secretary of the treasury….

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.101

Clay introduced a resolution directing the return of the deposits; Benton opposed it; it passed by a vote of twenty-eight to eighteen, but was lost in the House. Clay then introduced a resolution demanding to know from the President whether the paper alleged to have been published by his authority as having been read to the Cabinet, in relation to the removal of the deposits, was genuine or not; and, if it was, asking for a copy. Benton opposed the motion, which nevertheless passed. But the President refused to accede to the demand. Meanwhile the new departure in banking, inaugurated by the President, was working badly. One of the main grounds for removing the deposits was the allegation that they were used to debauch politics. this was never proved against the old United States Bank; but under Jackson's administration, which corrupted the public service in every way, the deposits became fruitful sources of political reward and bribery.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.102

Clay then introduced his famous resolution censuring the President for his action, and supported it in a long and fiery speech; a speech which, like most of Clay's, was received by his followers at the time with rapture, but in which this generation fails to find the sign of that remarkable ability with which his own contemporaries credited the great Kentuckian. He attacked Jackson with fierce invective, painting him as an unscrupulous tyrant, who was inaugurating a revolution in the government of the Union. But he was outdone by Calhoun, who, with continual interludes of complacent references to the good already done by the Nullifiers, assailed Jackson as one of a band of artful, corrupt, and cunning politicians, and drew a picture even more lurid than Clay's of the future of the country, and the danger of impending revolution. webster's speeches were more self-contained in tone. Benton was the only Jacksonian senator who could contend with the great Nullifier and the two great Whigs; and he replied at length, and in much the same style as they had spoken.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.102

The Senate was flooded with petitions in favor of the Bank, which were presented with suitable speeches by the leading Whigs. Benton ridiculed the exaggerated tone of alarm in which these petitions were drawn, and declared that the panic, excitement, and suffering existing in business circles throughout the country were due to the deliberate design of the Bank, and afforded a fresh proof that the latter was a dangerous power.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.103

The resolution of censure was at last passed by a vote of twenty-six to twenty, and Jackson, in a fury, sent in a written protest against it, which the Senate refused to receive. The excitement all over the country was intense throughout the struggle. The suffering, which was really caused by the President's act, but which was attributed by his supporters to the machinations of the Bank, was very real; even Benton admitted this, altho contending that it was not a natural result of the policy pursued, but had been artificially excited—or, as he very clumsily phrased it, "tho fictitious and forged, yet the distress was real, and did an immensity of damage." Neither Jackson nor Benton yielded an inch to the outside pressure; the latter was the soul of the fight in Congress, making over thirty speeches during the struggle….

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.103

Webster, in an effort to make the best of untoward circumstances, brought in a bill to recharter the Bank for a short period, at the same time doing away with some of the features that were objectionable in the old charter. This bill might have passed, had it not been opposed by the extreme Bank men, including Clay and Calhoun. In the course of the debate over it Benton delivered a very elaborate and carefully studied speech in favor of hard money and a currency of the precious metals; a speech which is to this day well worth careful reading. Some of his financial theories were crude and confused; but on the main question he was perfectly sound. Both he and Jackson deserve great credit for having done much to impress the popular mind with the benefit of hard, that is to say, honest money. Benton was the strongest hard-money man then in publiclife, being indeed, popularly nicknamed "Old Bullion." He thoroughly appreciated that a metallic currency was of more vital importance to the laboring men and to men of small capital generally than to any of the richer classes….

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.104

Benton continued his speeches. The panic was now subsiding; there had not been time for Jackson's ruinous policy of making deposits in numerous State banks, and thereby encouraging wild inflation of credit, to bear fruit and, as it afterward did, involve the whole country in financial disaster. Therefore Benton was able to exult greatly over the favorable showing of affairs in the report of the secretary of the treasury. He also procured the passage of a gold currency law, which, however, fixt the ratio of value between gold and silver at sixteen to one; an improper proportion, but one which had prevailed for three centuries in the Spanish-American countries, from which he copied it. In consequence of this law gold, long banished, became once more a circulating medium of exchange.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.104

The Bank of the United States afterward was turned into the State Bank of Pennsylvania; it was badly managed and finally became insolvent. The Jacksonians accepted its downfall as a vindication of their policy; but in reality it was due to causes not operative at the time of the great struggle between the President and the Senate over its continued existence. Certainly by no possible financial policy could it have produced such widespread ruin and distress as did the system introduced by Jackson.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.105

Long after the Bank controversy had lost all practical bearing it continued to be agitated by the chief parties to it, who still felt sore from the various encounters. Jackson assailed it again in his message; a friendly committee of the Senate investigated it and reported in its favor, besides going out of their way to rake up charges against Jackson and Benton. The latter replied in a long speech, and became involved in personalities with the chairman, Tyler of Virginia. Neither side paid attention to any but the partizan aspect of the question, and the discussions were absolutely profitless.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.105

The whole matter was threshed over again and again, long after nothing but chaff was left, during the debates on Benton's expunging resolution. The original resolution of censure may have been of doubtful propriety; but it was passed, was entered on the record, and had become a part of the journal of the Senate. It would have been perfectly proper to pass another resolution condemning or reversing the original one, and approving the course of the President; but it was in the highest degree improper to set about what was in form falsifying the record. Still, Benton found plenty of precedents in the annals of other legislative bodies for what he proposed to do, and the country, as a whole, backed him up heartily. He was further stimulated by the knowledge that there was probably no other legislative act in which Jackson took such intense interest, or which could so gratify his pride; the mortification to Clay and Calhoun would be equally great. Benton's motion failed more than once, but the complexion of the Senate was rapidly changed by the various Statessubstituting Democratic for Whig or anti-Jackson senators. Some of the changes were made, as in Virginia, by senators refusing to vote for the expunging resolution, as required by the State legislatures, and then resigning their seats, pursuant to a ridiculous theory of the ultra Democrats, which, if carried out, would completely nullify the provision for a six years' senatorial term.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.106

Finally, at the very close of Jackson's administration, Benton found himself with a fair majority behind him, and made the final move. His speech was of course mainly filled with a highly colored account of the blessings wrought for the American people by Andrew Jackson, and equally of course the latter was compared at length to a variety of ancient Roman worthies. The final scene in the Senate had an element of the comic about it. the expungers held a caucus and agreed to sit the session out until the resolution was passed; and, with prudent forethought, Benton, well aware that when hungry and tired his followers might show less inflexibility of purpose, provided in an adjoining committee-room "an ample supply of cold hams, turkeys, rounds of beef, pickles, wines, and cups of hot coffee," wherewith to inspirit the faint-hearted.

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.106

Fortified by the refreshments, the expungers won a complete victory. If the language of Jackson's admirers was overdrawn and strained to the last degree in lauding him for every virtue that he had or had not, it must be remembered that his opponents went quite as far wrong on the other side in their denunciations and extravagant prophecies of gloom. Webster made a very dignified and forcible speech in closing the argument againstthe resolution, but Calhoun and Clay were much less moderate—the latter drawing a vivid picture of a rapidly approaching reign of lawless military violence, and asserting that his opponents had "extinguished one of the brightest and purest lights that ever burned at the altar of civil liberty." As a proper finale Jackson, to show his appreciation, gave a great dinner to the expungers and their wives, Benton sitting at the head of the table. Jackson and Benton solemnly thought that they were taking part in a great act of justice, and were amusingly unable to see the comic side of their acts. They probably really believed most of their own denunciations of the Bank, and very possibly thought that the wickedness of its followers might tempt them to do any desperate deed. At any rate they enjoyed posing alike to themselves and to the public as persons of antique virtue, who had risked both life and reputation in a hazardous but successful attempt to save the liberties of the people from the vast and hostile forces of the autocratic "money power."

Rooseveltt, Overthrow of the U.S. Bank, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.107

The best verdict on the expunging resolution was given by Webster when he characterized the whole affair as one which, if it were not regarded as a ruthless violation of a sacred instrument, would appear to be little elevated above the character of a contemptible farce.

The Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi as in Lake Itasca

Title: The Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi as in Lake Itasca

Author: Henry R. Schoolcraft

Date: 1832

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.114-120

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.114

Proceeding directly south from this spot a short distance, we entered the Mississippi, which was found to flow in with a broad channel and rapid current. This channel Lieutenant Allen estimated to be but one hundred yards long, at which distance we entered into a beautiful little lake of pellucid water and a picturesque margin, spreading transversely to our track, to which I gave the name of Irving. Ozawindib held his way directly south through this body of water, striking the river again on its opposite shore. We had proceeded but half a mile above this lake, when it was announced The ultimate source of the Mississippi has since been determined as Elk Lake, which lies just beyond Itasca and was discovered in 1872 by Julius Chambers, a New York journalist. There are several lakes, however, which could be called sources, the others being Bemidji, Cass, Fishing, Leech, Mud, and Winnibigashish, which are described as "lying among hills of drift and boulders in the midst of pine forests and marshes."that we had reached the primary forks of the Mississippi. We were now in latitude 47° 28' 46". Up to this point the river had carried its characteristics in a remarkable manner. Of the two primary streams before us, the one flowing from the west, or the Itascan fork, contributes by far the largest volume of water, possessing the greatest velocity and breadth of current. The two streams enter each other at an acute angle, which varies but little from the south.

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.115

Ozawindib hesitated not a moment which branch to ascend, but shooting his canoe out of the stronger current of the Itascan fork, entered the other. His wisdom in this movement was soon apparent. He had not only entered the shallower and stiller branch, but one that led more directly to the base of the ultimate summit of Itasca. This stream soon narrowed to twenty feet. We could distinctly descry the moving sands at its bottom; but its diminished velocity was apparent from the intrusion of aquatic plants along its shores. It was manifest also from the forest vegetation that we were advancing into regions of a more Alpine flora. The branches of the larches, spruce, and gray pines were clothed with lichens and floating moss to their very tops, denoting an atmosphere of more than the ordinary humidity. Clumps of gray willows skirted the margin of the stream.

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.115

It was found that the river had made its utmost northing in Queen Anne's Lake. From the exit from that point the course was nearly due south, and from this moment to our arrival at the ultimate forks, which can not exceed a mile and a half or two miles, it was evident why the actual source of this celebrated river had so long eluded scrutiny. We were ascending at every curve so far south as to carry the observer out of every old line of travel or commerce in the fur trade (the sole interest here) and into a remote elevated region, which is never visited indeed, except by Indian hunters, and is never crossed, even by them, to visit the waters of the Red River—the region in immediate juxtaposition north. This semi-Alpine plateau, or height of land for which we were now pushing directly, is called in the parlance of the fur trade Hauteurs de Terre. It was evident that we were ascending to this continental plateau by steps, denoted by a series of rapids, presenting step by step, in regular succession, wide-spread areas of flat surface spotted with almost innumerable lakes, small and large, and rice-ponds and lagoons. . .

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.116

It was now seven o'clock P.M., and we had been in our canoe sixteen hours, and traveled fifty-five miles. It was not easy to find ground dry enough to encamp on, and while we were searching for it, rain commenced. We had pushed through the ample borders of the Scirpus lacustris and other aquatic plants, to a point of willows, alders, and spruce and tamarack, with pinus banksiana in the distance. The ground was low and wet, the foot sinking into a carpet of green moss at every tread. The lower branches of the trees were dry and dead, exhibiting masses of flowing gray moss. Dampness, frigidity, and gloom marked the dreary spots, and when a camp-fire had been kindled it threw its red glare around on strange masses of thickets and darkness, which might have well employed the pencil of a Michelangelo….

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.116

With every aid, however, from the tent and the tea-kettle, and our cook's art in spitting ducks, the night here, in a gloomy and damp thicket, just elevated above the line of the river flags, and quite in the range of the frogs and lizards, proved to be one of the most dreary and forlorn. It was felt that we were no longer on the open Mississippi, but were winding up a close and very serpentine tributary, nowhere over thirty feet wide, which unfolded itself in a savanna, or bog, bordered closely with lagoons and rice-ponds. Indian sagacity, it was clear, had led Ozawindib up this tributary as the best, shortest, and easiest possible way of reaching to, and surmounting the Itasca plateau, but it required a perpetual use of hand, foot, paddle, and pole; nor was there a gleam of satisfaction to be found in anything but the most intense onward exertion….

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.117

At five o'clock the next morning (12th) we were on our feet, and resumed the ascent. The day was rainy and disagreeable. There was little strength of current, but quite a sufficient depth of water; the stream was excessively tortuous. Owing to the sudden bends, we often frightened up the same flocks of brant, ducks, and teals again and again, who did not appear to have been in times past much subjected to these intrusions….

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.117

We toiled all day without intermission from day-break till dark. The banks of the river are fringed with a species of coarse marshland grass. Clumps of willows fringe the stream. Rush and reed occupy spots favorable to their growth. The forest exhibits the larch, pine, and tamarack. Moss attaches to everything. Water-fowls seem alone to exult in their seclusion. After we had proceeded for an hour above Lake Plantagenet, an Indian in the advance canoe fired at and killed a deer. Althofairly shot, the animal ran several hundred yards. It then fell dead. The man who had killed it brought the carcass to the banks of the river. The dexterity with which he skinned and cut it up excited admiration….

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.118

At length, at half-past five o'clock in the evening, we came to the base of the highlands of the Itasca or Hauteurs de Terre summit. The flanks of this elevation revealed themselves in a high, naked precipice of the drift and boulder stratum, on the immediate margin of the stream which washed against it. Our pilot, Ozawindib, was at the moment in the rear; halting a few moments for him to come up, he said that we were within a few hundred yards of the Naiwa rapids, and that the portage around them commenced at this escarpment. We had seen no rocks of any species, in place, thus far….

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.118

The next morning (13th) a dense fog prevailed. We had found the atmosphere warm, but charged with water and vapors, which frequently condensed into showers. The evenings and nights were, however, cool, at the precise time of the earth hiding the sun's disk. It was five o'clock before we could discern objects with sufficient distinctness to venture to embark. We found the channel of the river strikingly diminished on getting above the Naiwa. Its width is that of a mere brook, running in a valley half a mile wide. The water is still and pond-like, the margin being encroached on by aquatic plants….

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.118

I had now traced this branch of the Mississippi to its source, and was at the south base of the intercontinental highlands, which give origin to the longest and principal branch of the Missis-sippi. To reach its source it was necessary to ascend and cross these. Of their height, and the difficulty of their ascent, we knew nothing. This only was sure, from the representation of the natives, that it could be readily done, carrying the small bark canoes we had thus far employed. The chief said it was thirteen opugidjiwenun, or putting-down-places, which are otherwise called onwaybees, or rests. From the roughness of the path, not more than half a mile can be estimated to each onwaybee. Assawa Lake is shown, by barometric measurement, to be 1,532 feet above the Gulf. Having followed out this branch to its source, its very existence in our geography becomes a new fact….

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.119

The elevated parts of the route were sufficiently open, with often steep ascents. Over these syenite and granite, quartz and sandstone boulders were scattered. Every step we made in crossing these sandy and diluvial elevations seemed to inspire new ardor in completing the traverse. The guide had called the distance, as we computed it, about six or six and a half miles. We had been four hours upon it, now clambering up steeps, and now brushing through thickets, when he told us we were ascending the last elevation, and I kept close to his heels, soon outwent him on the trail, and got the first glimpse of the glittering nymph we had been pursuing. On reaching the summit this wish was gratified. At a depression of perhaps a hundred feet below, cradled among the hills, the lake spread out its elongated volume, presenting a scene of no common picturesqueness and rural beauty. In a short time I stood on its border, the whole cortege of canoes and pedestrians following; andas each one came he deposited his burden on a little open plat, which constituted the terminus of the Indian trail. In a few moments a little fire threw up its blaze, and the pan of pigieu, or pine pitch, was heated to mend the seams of the bark canoes. When this was done, they were instantly put into the lake, with their appropriate baggage; and the little flotilla of five canoes was soon in motion, passing down one of the most tranquil and pure sheets of water of which it is possible to conceive. There was not a breath of wind. We often rested to behold the scene. It is not a lake overhung by rocks. Not a precipice is in sight, or a stone, save the pebbles and boulders of the drift era, which are scattered on the beach. The waterfowl, whom we disturbed in their seclusion, seemed rather loath to fly up.

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.120

The diluvial hills enclosing the basin, at distances of one or two miles, are covered with pines. From these elevations the lands slope gently down to the water's edge, which is fringed with a mixed foliage of deciduous and evergreen species. After passing some few miles down its longest arm, we landed at an island, which appeared to be the only one in the lake. I immediately had my tent pitched, and while the cook exerted his skill to prepare a meal, scrutinized its shores for crustacea, while Dr. Houghton sought to identify its plants.

Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.120

I inquired of Ozawindib the Indian name of this lake; he replied Omushkos, which is the Chippewa name of the Elk. Having previously got an inkling of some of their mythological and necromantic notions of the origin and mutations of the country, which permitted the use of a female name for it, I denominated it Itasca.

Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago

Title: Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago

Author: Washington Irving

Date: 1832

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.114-122

on the margin of a stream. The master of the house received uscivilly, but could offer us no accommodation, for sickness prevailed in his family. He appeared himself to be in no very thriving condition, for tho bulky in frame, he had a sallow, unhealthy complexion, and a whiffling double voice, shifting abruptly from a treble to a thorough-bass. Finding his log house was a mere hospital, crowded with invalids, we ordered our tent to be pitched in the farmyard….

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.114

In the often vaunted regions of the Far West, several hundred miles beyond the Mississippi, extends a vast tract of uninhabited country, where there is neither to be seen the log house of the white man, nor the wigwam of the Indian. It consists of great grassy plains, interspersed with forests and groves, and clumps of trees, and watered by the Arkansas, the grand Canadian, the Red River, and their tributary streams. Over these fertile and verdant wastes still roam the elk, the buffalo, and the wild horse, in all their native freedom. These, in fact, are the hunting-grounds of the various tribes of the Far West. Hither repair the Osage, the Creek, the Delaware and other tribes that have linked themselves with civilization, and live within the vicinity of the white settlements. Here resort also the Pawnees, the Comanches, and other fierce and as yet independent tribes, the nomads of the prairies, or the inhabitants of the skirts of the Rocky Mountains.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.114

The regions I have mentioned form a debatable ground of these warring and vindictive tribes; none of them presume to erect a permanent habitation within its borders. Their hunters and "Braves" repair thither in numerous bodies during the season of game, throw up their transient hunting-camps, consisting of light bowers covered with bark and skins, commit sad havoc among the innumerable herds that graze the prairies, and having loaded themselves with venison and buffalo meat, warily retire from the dangerous neighborhood. These expeditions partake, always, of a warlike character; the hunters are all armed for action, offensive and defensive, and are bound to incessant vigilance. Should they, in their excursions, meet the hunters of an adverse tribe, savage conflicts take place. Their encampments, too, are always subject to be surprized by wandering war-parties, and their hunters, when scattered in pursuit of game, to be captured or massacred by lurking foes. Moldering skulls and skeletons, bleaching in some dark ravine or near the traces of a hunting-camp, occasionally mark the scene of a foregone act of blood, and let the wanderer know the dangerous nature of the region he is traversing, a tract of country which had not as yet been explored by white men.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.115

It was early in october, 1832, that I arrived at Fort Gibson, a frontier post of the Far West, situated on the Neosho, or Grand River, near its confluence with the Arkansas. I had been traveling for a month past, with a small party from St. Louis, up the banks of the Missouri, and along the frontier line of agencies and missions that extends from the Missouri to the Arkansas. Our party was headed by one of the commissioners appointed by the Government of the United States to superintend the settlement of the Indian tribes migrating from the east to the west of the Mississippi. In the discharge of his duties, he was thus visiting the various outposts of civilization….

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.116

The long-drawn notes of a bugle at length gave the signal for departure. The rangers filed off in a straggling line of march through the woods; we were soon on horseback and following on, but were detained by the irregularity of the packhorses. They were unaccustomed to keep the line, and straggled from side to side among the thickets, in spite of all the pesting and bedeviling of Tonish; who, mounted on his gallant gray, with a long rifle on his shoulder, worried after them, bestowing a superabundance of dry blows and curses.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.116

We soon, therefore, lost sight of our escort, but managed to keep on their track, threading lofty forests, and entangled thickets, and passing by Indian wigwams and negro huts, until toward dusk we arrived at a frontier farmhouse, owned by a settler of the name of Berryhill. It was situated on a hill, below which the rangers had encamped in a circular grove, on the margin of a stream. The master of the house received uscivilly, but could offer us no accommodation, for sickness prevailed in his family. He appeared himself to be in no very thriving condition, for tho bulky in frame, he had a sallow, unhealthy complexion, and a whiffling double voice, shifting abruptly from a treble to a thorough-bass. Finding his log house was a mere hospital, crowded with invalids, we ordered our tent to be pitched in the farmyard….

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.117

On the following morning (October 11), we were on the march by half-past seven o'clock, and rode through deep, rich bottoms of alluvial soil, overgrown with redundant vegetation, and trees of an enormous size. Our route lay parallel to the west bank of the Arkansas, on the borders of which river, near the confluence of the Red Fork, we expected to overtake the main body of rangers. For some miles the country was sprinkled with Creek villages and farmhouses; the inhabitants of which appeared to have adopted, with considerable facility, the rudiments of civilization, and to have thriven in consequence. Their farms were well stocked, and their houses had a look of comfort and abundance.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.117

We met with numbers of them returning from one of their grand games of ball, for which their nation is celebrated. Some were on foot, some on horseback; the latter, occasionally, with gayly-drest females behind them. They are a well-made race, muscular and closely knit, with well-turned thighs and legs. They have a Gypsy fondness for brilliant colors and gay decorations, and are bright and fanciful objects when seen at a distance on the prairies. One had a scarlet handkerchief bound round his head, surmounted with atuft of black feathers like a cock's tail; another had a white handkerchief, with red feathers; while a third, for want of a plume, had stuck in his turban a brilliant bunch of sumach….

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.118

The trail kept on like a straggling footpath, over hill and dale, through brush and brake, and tangled thicket, and open prairie. In traversing the wilds, it is customary for a party, either of horse or foot, to follow each other in single file like Indians; so that the leaders break the way for those who follow, and lessen their labor and fatigue. In this way, also, the number of a party is concealed, the whole leaving but one narrow well-trampled-track to mark their course….

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.118

We were overshadowed by lofty trees, with straight, smooth trunks, like stately columns; and as the glancing rays of the sun shoe through the transparent leaves, tinted with the many-colored hues of autumn, I was reminded of the effect of sunshine among the stained windows and clustering columns of a Gothic cathedral. Indeed, there is a grandeur and solemnity in our spacious forests of the West, that awaken in me the same feeling I have experienced in those vast and venerable piles, and the sound of the wind sweeping through them supplies occasionally the deep breathings of the organ.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.118

About noon the bugle sounded to horse, and we were again on the march, hoping to arrive at the encampment of the rangers before night; as the old Osage had assured us it was not above ten or twelve miles distant. In our course through a forest, we passed by a lonely pool, covered with the most magnificent water-lilies I had ever beheld; among which swam several wood-ducks, oneof the most beautiful of water-fowl, remarkable for the gracefulness and brilliancy of its plumage.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.119

After proceeding some distance farther, we came down upon the banks of the Arkansas, at a place where tracks of numerous horses, all entering the water, showed where a party of Osage hunters had recently crossed the river on their way to the buffalo range. After letting our horses drink in the river, we continued along its bank for a space, and then across prairies, where we saw a distant smoke, which we hoped might proceed from the encampment of the rangers. Following what we supposed to be their trail, we came to a meadow in which were a number of horses grazing; they were not, however, the horses of the troop.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.119

A little farther on we reached a straggling Osage village, on the banks of the Arkansas. Our arrival created quite a sensation. A number of old men came forward and shook hands with us all severally; while the women and children huddled together in groups, staring at us wildly, chattering and laughing among themselves. We found that all the young men of the village had departed on a hunting expedition, leaving the women and children and old men behind. Here the Commissioner made a speech from on horseback; informing his hearers of the purport of his mission, to promote a general peace among the tribes of the West, and urging them to lay aside all warlike and bloodthirsty notions, and not to make any wanton attacks upon the Pawnees. This speech being interpreted by Beatte, seemed to have a most pacifying effect upon the multitude, who promised faithfully, that, as far as in them lay, the peace should not be disturbed; and indeedtheir age and sex gave some reason to trust that they would keep their word….

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.120

The Indians that I have had an opportunity of seeing in real life are quite different from those described in poetry. They are by no means the stoics that they are represented; taciturn, unbending, without a tear or a smile. Taciturn, they are, it is true, when in company with white men, whose good-will they distrust, and whose language they do not understand; but the white man is equally taciturn under like circumstances. When the Indians are among themselves, however, there can not be greater gossips. Half their time is taken up in talking over their adventures in war and hunting, and in telling whimsical stories. They are great mimics and buffoons, also, and entertain themselves excessively at the expense of the whites with whom they have associated, and who have supposed them imprest with profound respect for their grandeur and dignity. They are curious observers, noting everything in silence, but with a keen and watchful eye; occasionally, exchanging a glance or a grunt with each other when anything particularly strikes them; but reserving all comments until they are alone. Then it is that they give full cope to criticism, satire, mimicry, and mirth.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.120

In the course of my journey along the frontier, I have had repeated opportunities of noticing their excitability and boisterous merriment at their games; and have occasionally noticed a group of Osages sitting round a fire until a late hour of the night, engaged in the most animated and lively conversation; and at times making the woods resound with peals of laughter. As to tears, they have themin abundance, both real and affected; at times they make a merit of them. No one weeps more bitterly or profusely at the death of a relative or friend; and they have stated times when they repair to howl and lament at their graves. I have heard doleful wailings at daybreak, in the neighboring Indian villages, made by some of the inhabitants, who go out at that hour into the fields to mourn and weep for the dead: at such times, I am told, the tears will stream down their cheeks in torrents.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.121

As far as I can judge, the Indian of poetical fiction is, like the shepherd of pastoral romance, a mere personification of imaginary attributes. . .

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.121

It was a bright sunny morning, with a pure transparent atmosphere that seemed to bathe the very heart with gladness. Our march continued parallel to the Arkansas, through a rich and varied country; sometimes we had to break our way through alluvial bottoms matted with redundant vegetation, where the gigantic trees were entangled with grape-vines, hanging like cordage from their branches; sometimes we coasted along sluggish brooks, whose feebly trickling current just served to link together a succession of glassy pools, imbedded like mirrors in the quiet bosom of the forest, reflecting its autumnal foliage and patches of the clear blue sky. Sometimes we scrambled up broken and rocky hills, from the summits of which we had wide views stretching on one side over distant prairies diversified by groves and forests, and on the other ranging along a line of blue and shadowy hills beyond the waters of the Arkansas.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.121

The appearance of our troop was suited to the country; stretching along in a line of upward of half a mile in length, winding among brakes andbushes, and up and down the defiles of the hills—the men in every kind of uncouth garb, with long rifles on their shoulders, and mounted on horses of every color. The pack-horses, too, would incessantly wander from the line of march to crop the surrounding herbage, and were banged and beaten back by Tonish and his half-breed compeers, with volleys of mongrel oaths….

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.122

After a march of about fifteen miles west we encamped in a beautiful peninsula, made by the windings and doublings of a deep, clear, and almost motionless brook, and covered by an open grove of lofty and magnificent trees. Several hunters immediately started forth in quest of game before the noise of the camp should frighten it from the vicinity. Our man, Beatte, also took his rifle and went forth alone, in a different course from the rest.

Irving, Beyond the Mississippi Eighty Years Ago, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.122

For my own part, I laid on the grass under the trees, and built castles in the clouds, and indulged in the very luxury of rural repose. Indeed, I can scarcely conceive a kind of life more calculated to put both mind and body in a healthful tone. A morning's ride of several hours diversified by hunting incidents; an encampment in the afternoon under some noble grove on the borders of a stream; an evening banquet of venison, fresh killed, roasted, or broiled on the coals; turkeys just from the thickets, and wild honey from the trees; and all relished with an appetite unknown to the gourmets of the cities. And at night—such sweet sleeping in the open air, or waking and gazing at the moon and stars, shining between the trees!

An Argument Upholding Slavery

Title: An Argument Upholding Slavery

Author: Thomas Roderic Dew

Date: 1832

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.95-103

Professor Thomas Roderic Dew taught political economy, history and metaphysics at William and Mary College from 1827 to 1836, when he was made president of that historic Virginia institution. His essay on slavery, written after the debates in the Virginia constitutional convention and the events of the Nat Turner insurrection had aroused much sentiment in favor of emancipation, aided greatly in quieting the discussion. It served to counteract the anti-slavery sentiment dating back to Thomas Jefferson, and it did much to determine the Virginian attitude toward slavery.

Preceding this influential utterance, Dr. Dew's "Lectures on the Restrictive System," published in 1829, when feeling ran high between protectionists and free-traders on the subject of the tariff, were largely responsible for the adoption of the compromise of 1832.

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.95

IT is said slavery is wrong, in the abstract at least, and contrary to the spirit of Christianity. To this we answer…that any question must be determined by its circumstances, and if, as really is the case, we cannot get rid of slavery without producing a greater injury to both the masters and slaves, there is no rule of conscience or revealed law of God which can condemn us. . . If slavery had commenced even contrary to the laws of God and man, and the sin of its introduction rested upon our hands, and it was even carrying forward the nation by slow degrees to final ruin—yet if it were certain that an attempt to remove it would only hasten and heighten the final catastrophe. . . then, we would not only not be found to attempt the extirpation, but we would stand guilty of a high offense in the sight of both God and man, if we should rashly make the effort. But the original sin of introduction rests not on our heads, and we shall soon see that all those dreadful calamities which the false prophets of our day are pointing to, will never in all probability occur.

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.96–p.97

With regard to the assertion that slavery is against the spirit of Christianity, we are ready to admit the general assertion, but deny most positively that there is anything in the Old or New Testament, which would go to show that slavery, when once introduced, ought at all events to be abrogated, or that the master commits any offense in holding slaves. The children of Israel themselves were slave holders, and were not condemned for it. . . When we turn to the New Testament, we find not one single passage at all calculated to disturb the conscience of an honest slave holder. No one can read it without seeing and admiring that the meek and humble Saviour of the world in no instance meddled with the established institutions of mankind—he came to save a fallen world, and not to excite the black passions of men and array them in deadly hostility against each other. From no one did he turn away; his plan was offered alike to all—to the monarch and the subject, the rich and the poor—the master and the slave. He was born in the Roman world, a world in which the most galling slavery existed, a thousand times more cruel than the slavery in our own country—and yet he nowhere encourages insurrection—he nowhere fosters discontent—but exhorts always to implicit obedience and fidelity. What a rebuke does the practice of the Redeemer of mankind imply upon the conduct of some of his nominal disciples of the day, who seek to destroy the contentment of the slaves, to rouse their most deadly passions, to break up the deep foundations of society, and to lead on to a night of darkness and confusion! .

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.97

2dly. But it is further said that the moral effects of slavery are of the most deleterious and hurtful kind; and as Mr. Jefferson has given the sanction of his great name to this charge, we shall proceed to examine it with all that respectful deference to which every sentiment of so pure and philanthropic a heart is justly entitled.

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.97–p.98

"The whole commerce between master and slave," says he, "is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions—the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it, for man is an imitative animal—this quality is the germ of education in him. . . "Now we boldly assert that the fact does not bear Mr. Jefferson out in his conclusions. He has supposed the master in a continual passion—in the constant exercise of the most odious tyranny, and the child, a creature of imitation, looking on and learning. But is not this master sometimes kind and indulgent to his slaves? Does he not mete out to them, for faithful service, the reward of his cordial approbation? Is it not his interest to do it? And when thus acting humanely, and speaking kindly, where is the child, the creature of imitation, that he does not look on and learn? We may rest assured, in this intercourse between a good master and his servant, more good than evil may be taught the child; the exalted principles of morality and religion may thereby be sometimes indelibly inculated upon his mind, and instead of being reared a selfish contracted being, with nought but self to look to—he acquires a more exalted benevolence, a greater generosity and elevation of soul, and embraces for the sphere of his generous actions a much wider field. Look to the slave holding population of our country, and you everywhere find them characterized by noble and elevated sentiment, by humane and virtuous feelings. We do not find among them that cold, contracted, calculating selfishness, which withers and repels everything around it, and lessens or destroys all the multiplied enjoyments of social intercourse. Go into our national councils, and ask for the most generous, the most disinterested, the most conscientious, and the least unjust and oppressive in their principles, and see whether the slave holder will be past-by in the selection….

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.98–p.99

Is it not a fact, known to every man in the South, that the most cruel masters are those who have been unaccustomed to slavery? It is well known that northern gentlemen who marry southern heiresses, are much severer masters than southern gentlemen. And yet, if Mr. Jefferson's reasoning were correct, they ought to be much milder: in fact, it follows from his reasoning, that the authority which the father is called on to exercise over his children, must be seriously detrimental; and yet we know that this is not the case; that on the contrary, there is nothing which so much humanizes and softens the heart, as this very authority; and there are none, even among those who have no children themselves, so disposed to pardon the follies and indiscretion of youth, as those who have seen most of them, and suffered greatest annoyance. There may be many cruel relentless masters, and there are unkind and cruel fathers too; but both the one and the other make all those around them shudder with horror. We are disposed to think that their example in society tends rather to strengthen than weaken the principle of benevolence and humanity.

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.99–p.100

Let us now look a moment to the slave, and contemplate his position. Mr. Jefferson has described him as hating, rather than loving his master, and as losing, too, all that "amor patriae" which characterizes the true patriot. We assert again, that Mr. Jefferson is not borne out by the fact. We are well convinced that there is nothing but the mere relations of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, which produce a closer tie, than the relation of master and servant. We have no hesitation in affirming that throughout the whole slave holding country, the slaves of a good master are his warmest, most constant, and most devoted friends; they have been accustomed to look up to him as their supporter, director and defender. Every one acquainted with southern slaves, knows that the slave rejoices in the elevation and prosperity of his master; and the heart of no one is more gladdened at the successful debut of young master or miss on the great theater of the world, than that of either the young slave who has grown up with them, and shared in all their sports, and even partaken of all their delicacies—or the aged one who has looked on and watched them from birth to manhood, with the kindest and most affectionate solicitude, and has ever met from them, all the kind treatment and generous sympathies of feeling tender hearts. Judge Smith in his able speech on Foote's Resolutions in the Senate said, in an emergency he would rely upon his own slaves for his defense—he would put arms into their hands, and he had no doubt they would defend him faithfully. In the late Southampton insurrection, we know that many actually convened their slaves, and armed them for defense, although slaves were here the cause of the evil which was to be repelled. . . A merrier being does not exist on the face of the globe than the negro slave of the United States. Even Captain Hall himself, with his thick "crust of prejudice," is obliged to allow that they are happy and contented, and the master much less cruel than is generally imagined. Why then, since the slave is happy, and happiness is the great object of all animated creation, should we endeavor to disturb his contentment by infusing into his mind a vain and indefinite desire for liberty—a something which he cannot comprehend, and which must inevitably dry up the very sources of his happiness….

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.101

3dly. It has been contended that slavery is unfavorable to a republican spirit: but the whole history of the world proves that this is far from being the case. In the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, where the spirit of liberty glowed with most intensity, the slaves were more numerous than the freemen. . . In modern times, too, liberty has always been more ardently desired by slave holding communities. . . Burke says, "it is because freedom is to them not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege." Another, and perhaps more efficient cause of this, is the perfect spirit of equality so prevalent among the whites of all the slave holding states. . . The menial and low offices being all performed by the blacks, there is at once taken away the greatest cause of distinction and separation of the ranks of society. The man to the North will not shake hands familiarly with his servant, and converse, and laugh, and dine with him, no matter how honest and respectable he may be. But go to the South, and you will find that no white man feels such inferiority of rank as to be unworthy of association with those around him. Color alone is here the badge of distinction, the true mark of aristocracy, and all who are white are equal in spite of the variety of occupation….

Dew, An Argument Upholding Slavery, America, Vol.6, p.102–p.103

4thly. Insecurity of the whites, arising from plots, insurrections, &c., among the blacks. This is the evil, after all, let us say what we will, which really operates most powerfully upon the schemers and emancipating philanthropists of those sections where slaves constitute the principal property. Now, if we have shown, as we trust we have, that the scheme of deportation is utterly impracticable, and that emancipation, with permission to remain, will produce all these horrors in still greater degree, it follows that this evil of slavery, allowing it to exist in all its latitude, would be no argument of legislative action, and therefore we might well rest contented with this issue; but as we are anxious to exhibit this whole subject in its true bearings, and as we do believe that this evil has been most strangely and causelessly exaggerated, we have determined to examine it a moment, and point out its true extent. It seems to us that those who insist most upon it commit the enormous error of looking upon every slave in the whole slave-holding country as actuated by the most deadly enmity to the whites, and possessing all that reckless, fiendish temper, which would lead him to murder and assassinate the moment the opportunity occurs. This is far from being true; the slave, as we have already said, generally loves the master and his family; and few indeed there are, who can coldly plot the murder of men, women and children; and if they do, there are fewer still who can have the villainy to execute. We can sit down and imagine that all the negroes in the South have conspired to rise on a certain night, and murder all the whites in their respective families; we may suppose the secret to be kept, and that they have the physical power to exterminate; and yet, we say the whole is morally impossible. No insurrection of this kind can ever occur where the blacks are as much civilized as they are in the United States. . . his whole education and course of life are at war with such fell deeds. Nothing, then, but the most subtle and poisonous principles, sedulously infused into his mind, can break his allegiance, and transform him into the midnight murderer. Any man who will attend to the history of the Southampton massacre, must at once see, that the cause of even the partial success of the insurrectionists, was the very circumstance that there was no extensive plot, and that Nat, a demented fanatic, was under the impression that heaven had enjoined him to liberate the blacks, and had made its manifestations by loud noises in the air, an eclipse, and by the greenness of the sun. It was these signs which determined him, and ignorance and superstition, together with implicit confidence in Nat, determined a few others, and thus the bloody work began….

Improving Transportation

Title: Improving Transportation

Author: Frances Anne Kemble

Date: 1832

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.104-110

In 1832 Fanny Kemble, celebrated in a former generation as an English actress-author, toured this country with her father, Charles Kemble, and met with an enthusiastic reception. She recorded her impressions in "A Journal of a Residence in America" (Henry Holt), first published in 1835. From it is taken the accompanying account of her journey by boat and stage from New York City to Utica via the Delaware River. Her writing is spirited and clever, though somewhat deficient in maturity of judgment. Married and divorced in this country, she retained her maiden name and for many years was a stage favorite. Her grandson, Owen Wister, is a well-known American author.

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.104

THE steamboat was very large and commodious as all these conveyances are. . . These steamboats have three stories; the upper one is, as it were, a roofing or terrace on the leads of the second, a very desirable station when the weather is neither too foul, nor too fair; a burning sun being, I should think, as little desirable there, as a shower of rain. The second floor or deck, has the advantage of the ceiling above, and yet, the sides being completely open, it is airy, and allows free sight of the shores on either hand. Chairs, stools and benches are the furniture of these two decks. The one below, or third floor, downwards, in fact, the ground floor, being the one near the water, is a spacious room completely roofed and walled in, where the passengers take their meals, and resort if the weather is unfavorable. At the end of this room, is a smaller cabin for the use of the ladies, with beds and sofa, and all the conveniences necessary, if they should like to be sick; whither I came and slept till breakfast time.

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.105

Vigne's account of the pushing, thrusting, rushing, and devouring on board a western steamboat at meal times, had prepared me for rather an awful spectacle; but this, I find, is by no means the case in these civilized parts, and everything was conducted with perfect order, propriety and civility. The breakfast was good, and was served and eaten with decency enough….

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.105–p.106

At about half past ten, we reached the place where we leave the river, to proceed across a part of the State of New Jersey, to the Delaware . . . Oh, these coaches! English eye hath not seen, English ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of Englishmen to conceive the surpassing clumsiness and wretchedness of these leathern inconveniences. They are shaped something like boats, the sides being merely leathern pieces, removable at pleasure, but which in bad weather are buttoned down to protect the inmates from the wet. There are three seats in this machine, the middle one having a movable leathern strap, by way of a dossier, runs between the carriage doors, and lifts away, to permit the egress and ingress of the occupants of the other seats. . . For the first few minutes, I thought I must have fainted from the intolerable sensation of smothering which I experienced. However, the leathers having been removed, and a little more air obtained, I took heart of grace, and resigned myself to my fate. Away wallopped the four horses, trotting with their front, and galloping with their hind legs: and away went we after them, bumping, thumping, jumping, jolting, shaking, tossing and tumbling, over the wickedest road, I do think, the cruellest, hard-heartedest road that ever wheel rumbled upon. Through bog and marsh and ruts, wider and deeper than any Christian ruts I ever saw, with the roots of trees protruding across our path, their boughs every now and then giving us an affectionate scratch through the windows; and, more than once, a half-demolished trunk or stump lying in the middle of the road lifting us up, and letting us down again, with most awful variations of our poor coach body from its natural position. Bones of me! what a road! Even my father's solid proportions could not keep their level, but were jerked up to the roof and down again every three minutes. Our companions seemed nothing dismayed by these wondrous performances of a coach and four, but laughed and talked incessantly, the young ladies, at the very top of their voices, and with the national nasal twang. . .

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.106–p.107

The few cottages and farm-houses which we passed reminded me of similar dwellings in France and Ireland; yet the peasantry here have not the same excuse for disorder and dilapidation, as either the Irish or French. The farms had the same desolate, untidy, untended look; the gates broken, the fences carelessly put up, or ill repaired; the farming utensils sluttishly scattered about a littered yard, where the pigs seemed to preside by undisputed right; house-windows broken, and stuffed with paper or clothes; dishevelled women, and barefooted, anomalous looking human young things. None of the stirring life and activity which such places present in England and Scotland; above all, none of the enchanting mixture of neatness, order, and rustic elegance and comfort, which render so picturesque the surroundings of a farm, and the various belongings of agricultural labor in my own dear country. The fences struck me as peculiar; I never saw any such in England. They are made of rails of wood placed horizontally, and meeting at obtuse angles, so forming a zigzag wall of wood, which runs over the country like the herringbone seams of a flannel petticoat. At each of the angles, two slanting stakes, considerably higher than the rest of the fence, were driven into the ground, crossing each other at the top, so as to secure the horizontal rails in their position….

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.107–p.108

At the end of fourteen miles we turned into a swampy field, the whole fourteen coachfuls of us, and by the help of heaven, bag and baggage were packed into the coaches which stood on the railway ready to receive us. The carriages were not drawn by steam, like those on the Liverpool railway, but by horses, with the mere advantage in speed afforded by iron ledges, which, to be sure, compared with our previous progress through the ruts, was considerable. Our coachful got into the first carriage of the train, escaping, by way or especial grace, the dust which one's predecessors occasion. This vehicle had but two seats, in the usual fashion; each of which held four of us. The whole inside was lined with blazing scarlet leather, and the windows shaded with stuff curtains of the same refreshing color; which with full complement of passengers, on a fine, sunny, American summer's day, must make as pretty a little miniature held as may be, I should think. . . This railroad is an infinite blessing; 'tis not yet finished, but shortly will be so, and then the whole of that horrible fourteen miles will be performed in comfort and decency, in less than half the time. In about an hour and a half, we reached the end of our railroad part of the journey, and found another steamboat waiting for us, when we all embarked on the Delaware. . . At about four o'clock, we reached Philadelphia, having performed the journey between that and New York (a distance of a hundred miles,) in less than ten hours, in spite of bogs, ruts and all other impediments….

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.108–p.109

We proceeded by canal to Utica, which distance we performed in a day and a night, starting at two from Schenectady, and reaching Utica the next day at about noon. I like traveling by the canal boats very much. Ours was not crowded, and the country through which we passed being delightful, the placid moderate gliding through it, at about four miles and a half an hour, seemed to me infinitely preferable to the noise of wheels, the rumble of a coach, and the jerking of bad roads, for the gain of a mile an hour. The only nuisances are the bridges over the canal, which are so very low, that one is obliged to prostrate oneself on the deck of the boat, to avoid being scraped off it; and this humiliation occurs, upon an average, once every quarter of an hour….

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.109

The valley of the Mohawk, through which we crept the whole sunshining day, is beautiful from beginning to end; fertile, soft, rich, and occasionally approaching sublimity and grandeur, in its rocks and hanging woods. We had a lovely day, and a soft blessed sunset, which, just as we came to a point where the canal crosses the river, and where the curved and wooded shores on either side recede, leaving a broad smooth basin, threw one of the most exquisite effects of light and color, I ever remember to have seen, over the water, and through the sky. . . We sat in the men's cabin until they began making preparations for bed, and then withdrew into a room about twelve feet square, where a whole tribe of women were getting to their beds. Some half undressed, some brushing, some curling, some washing, some already asleep in their narrow cribs, but all within a quarter of an inch of each other; it made one shudder….

Kemble, Improving Transportation, America, Vol.6, p.109–p.110

At Utica we dined; and after dinner I slept profoundly. The gentlemen, I believe, went out to view the town, which, twenty years ago, was not, and now is a flourishing place, with fine-looking shops, two or three hotels, good broad streets, and a body of lawyers, who had a supper at the house where we were staying, and kept the night awake with champagne, shouting, toasts, and clapping of hands: so much for the strides of civilization through the savage lands of this new world….

Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States

Title: Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States

Author: Alexander Hamilton

Date: 1832

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.118-124

In response to a request from President Washington, Alexander Hamilton, as Secretary of the Treasury, on February 23, 1791, gave this famous opinion as to the constitutionality of the Bank of the United States—an opinion which Washington adopted in signing the bill which created the bank, but with which Jackson differed decidedly in abolishing the bank in 1832. Feeling ran so high in this bank war that the Senate passed a resolution censuring Jackson, a hitherto unheard-of proceeding.

In 1819 the question of the constitutionality of the bank came before the United States Supreme Court in the case of McCullough vs. Maryland. Chief Justice Marshall's decision, regarded as one of his ablest, supported that of Hamilton in strongly affirming the constitutionality of the bank. Hamilton's doctrine of the unimplied powers of the Constitution was the first triumph of that principle which has done more than anything else to strengthen the power of the National Government.

Alexander Hamilton's Opinion

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.118

THE Secretary of the Treasury [Hamilton] having perused with attention the papers containing the opinions of the Secretary of State [Thomas Jefferson] and the Attorney-General [Edmund Randolph] concerning the constitutionality of the bill for establishing a national bank, proceeds, according to the order of the President [Washington], to submit the reasons which have induced him to entertain a different opinion.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.118

It will naturally have been anticipated, that in performing this task he would feel uncommon solicitude. Personal considerations alone, arising from the reflection that the measure originated with him, would be sufficient to produce it. The sense which he has manifested of the great importance of such an institution to the successful administration of the department under his particular care, and an expectation of serious ill consequences to result from a failure of the measure, do not permit him to be without anxiety on public accounts. But the chief solicitude arises from a firm persuasion, that principles of construction like those espoused by the Secretary of State and the Attorney-General would be fatal to the just and indispensable authority of the United States.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.119

In entering upon the argument, it ought to be premised that the objections of the Secretary of State and the Attorney-General are founded on a general denial of the authority of the United States to erect corporations. The latter, indeed, expressly admits, that if there be anything in the bill which is not warranted by the Constitution, it is the clause of incorporation.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.119

Now it appears to the Secretary of the Treasury that this general principle is inherent in the very definition of government, and essential to every step of the progress to be made by that of the United States, namely: That every power vested in a government is in its nature sovereign, and includes, by force of the term, a right to employ all the means requisite and fairly applicable to the attainment of the ends of such power, and which are not precluded by restrictions and exceptions specified in the Constitution, or not immoral, or not contrary to the essential ends of political society.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.120

This principle, in its application to government in general, would be admitted as an axiom; and it will be incumbent upon those who may incline to deny it, to prove a distinction, and to show that a rule which, in the general system of things, is essential to the preservation of the social order, is inapplicable to the United States.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.120

The circumstance that the powers of sovereignty are in this country divided between the National and State governments, does not afford the distinction required. It does not follow from this, that each of the portion of powers delegated to the one or to the other, is not sovereign with regard to its proper objects. It will only follow from it, that each has sovereign power as to certain things, and not as to other things. To deny that the Government of the United States has sovereign power, as to its declared purposes and trusts, because its power does not extend to all cases, would be equally to deny that the State governments have sovereign power in any case, because their power does not extend to every case. The tenth section of the first article of the Constitution exhibits a long list of very important things which they may not do. And thus the United States would furnish the singular spectacle of a political society without sovereignty, or of a people governed, without government.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.120–p.121

If it would be necessary to bring proof to a proposition so clear, as that which affirms that the powers of the Federal Government, as to its objects, were sovereign, there is a clause of its Constitution which would be decisive. It is that which declares that the Constitution, and the laws of the United States made in pursuance of it, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority, shall be the supreme law of the land. The power which can create the supreme law of the land in any case, is doubtless sovereign as to such case.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.121

This general and indisputable principle puts at once an end to the abstract question, whether the United States have power to erect a corporation; that is to say, to give a legal or artificial capacity to one or more persons, distinct from the natural. For it is unquestionably incident to sovereign power to erect corporations, and consequently to that of the United States, in relation to the objects intrusted to the management of the government. The difference is this: where the authority of the government is general, it can create corporations in all cases; where it is confined to certain branches of legislation, it can create corporations only in those cases.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.121

Here, then, as far as concerns the reasonings of the Secretary of State and the Attorney-General, the affirmative of the constitutionality of the bill might be permitted to rest. It will occur to the President, that the principle here advanced has been untouched by either of them.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.121–p.122

For a more complete elucidation of the point, nevertheless, the arguments which they had used against the power of the government to erect corporations, however foreign they are to the great and fundamental rule which has been stated, shall be particularly examined. And after showing that they do not tend to impair its force, it shall also be shown that the power of incorporation, incident to the government in certain cases, does fairly extend to the particular case which is the object of the bill.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.122

The first of these arguments is, that the foundation of the Constitution is laid on this ground: "That all powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States, or to the people." Whence it is meant to be inferred, that Congress can in no case exercise any power not included in those enumerated in the Constitution. And it is affirmed, that the power of erecting a corporation is not included in any of the enumerated powers.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.122

The main proposition here laid down, in its true signification, is not to be questioned. It is nothing more than a consequence of this republican maxim, that all government is a delegation of power. But how much is delegated in each case is a question of fact, to be made out by fair reasoning and construction, upon the particular provisions of the Constitution, taking as guides the general principles and general ends of governments.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.122–p.123

It is not denied that there are implied, as well as express powers, and that the former are as effectually delegated as the latter. And for the sake of accuracy it shall be mentioned that there is another class of powers, which may be properly denominated resulting powers. It will not be doubted that if the United States should make a conquest of any of the territories of its neighbors, they would possess sovereign jurisdiction over the conquered territory. This would be rather a result from the whole mass of the powers of the government, and from the nature of political society, than a consequence of either of the powers specially enumerated….

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.123

The proposed bank is to consist of an association of persons, for the purpose of creating a joint capital, to be employed chiefly and essentially in loans. So far the object is not only lawful, but it is the mere exercise of a right which the law allows to every individual. The Bank of New York, which is not incorporated, is an example of such an association. The bill proposes, in addition, that the government shall become a joint proprietor in this undertaking, and that it shall permit the bills of the company, payable on demand, to be receivable in its revenues; and stipulates that it shall not grant privileges, similar to those which are to be allowed to this company, to any others. All this is incontrovertibly within the compass of the discretion of the government. The only question is, whether it has a right to incorporate this company, in order to enable it the more effectually to accomplish ends which are in themselves lawful.

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.123–p.124

To establish such a right, it remains to show the relation of such an institution to one or more of the specified powers of the government. Accordingly it is affirmed that it has a relation, more or less direct, to the power of collecting taxes, to that of borrowing money, to that of regulating trade between the States, and to those of raising and maintaining fleets and armies. To the two former the relation may be said to be immediate; and in the last place it will be argued, that it is clearly within the provision which authorizes the making of all needful rules and regulations concerning the property of the United States, as the same has been practiced upon by the government….

Hamilton, Constitutionality of U.S. Bank., America, Vol.6, p.124

The constitutionality of all this would not admit of a question, and yet it would amount to the institution of a bank, with a view to the more convenient collection of taxes. For the simplest and most precise idea of a bank is, a deposit of coin, or other property, as a fund for circulating a credit upon it, which is to answer the purpose of money. That such an arrangement would be equivalent to the establishment of a bank, would become obvious, if the place where the fund to be set apart was kept should be made a receptacle of the moneys of all other persons who should incline to deposit them there for safekeeping; and would become still more so, if the officers charged with the direction of the fund were authorized to make discounts at the usual rate of interest, upon good security. To deny the power of the government to add these ingredients to the plan, would be to refine away all government….

The Black Hawk War

Title: The Black Hawk War

Author: Black Hawk

Date: 1832

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.125-148

Having sided with the British in the War of 1812, Black Hawk, the celebrated chief of the Sac Indians, remained, until his death in 1838, a confirmed enemy of the United States. What is known as the Black Hawk War of 1832 was occasioned by the whites occupying lands vacated by the Sacs and Foxes in the upper Mississippi Valley. This account was taken from Black Hawk's autobiography.

The Indians were defeated by General Dodge, near the Wisconsin River; and by General Atkinson, whom Black Hawk calls the White Beaver in his autobiography, at the Bad Axe River, after which he surrendered. The Keokuk mentioned here was a Sac and Fox chief, after whom Keokuk was named.

Black Hawk and nine other Sac warriors were held as hostages, and, after being exhibited in several cities, were confined in Fortress Monroe until 1833. Later Black Hawk was permitted to accompany his tribe to a reservation near Fort Des Moines (Iowa) where he died at 71.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.125

CONCEIVING that the peaceable disposition of Keokuk and his people had been in a great measure the cause of our having been driven from our village, I ascribed their present feelings to the same cause, and immediately went to work to recruit all my own band, and making preparations to ascend Rock River, I made my encampment on the Mississippi, where Fort Madison had stood. I requested my people to rendezvous at that place, sending out soldiers to bring in the warriors, and stationed my sentinels in a position to prevent any from moving off until all were ready.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.125–p.126

My party having all come in and got ready, we commenced our march up the Mississippi; our women and children in canoes, carrying such provisions as we had, camp equipage, &c. My braves and warriors were on horseback, armed and equipped for defense. The prophet came down and joining us below Rock River, having called at Rock Island on his way down, to consult the war chief, agent and trader; who, he said, used many arguments to dissuade him from going with us, requesting him to come and meet us and turn us back. They told him also there was a war chief on his way to Rock Island with a large body of soldiers.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.126

The prophet said he would not listen to this talk, because no war chief would dare molest us so long as we were at peace. That we had a right to go where we pleased peaceably, and advised me to say nothing to my braves and warriors until we encamped that night. We moved onward until we arrived at the place where General Gaines had made his encampment the year before, and encamped for the night. The prophet then addressed my braves and warriors. He told them to "follow us and act like braves, and we have nothing to fear and much to gain. The American war chief may come, but will not, nor dare not interfere with us so long as we act peaceably. We are not yet ready to act otherwise. We must wait until we ascend Rock River and receive our reenforcements, and we will then be able to withstand any army."

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.126–p.127

That night the White Beaver, General Atkinson, with a party of soldiers passed up in a steamboat. Our party became alarmed, expecting to meet the soldiers at Rock River, to prevent us going up. On our arrival at its mouth, we discovered that the steamboat had passed on.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.127

I was fearful that the war chief had stationed his men on some high bluff, or in some ravine, that we might be taken by surprise. Consequently, on entering Rock River we commenced beating our drums and singing, to show the Americans that we were not afraid.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.127

Having met with no opposition, we moved up Rock River leisurely for some distance, when we were overtaken by an express from White Beaver, with an order for me to return with my band and recross the Mississippi again. I sent him word that I would not, not recognizing his right to make such a demand, as I was acting peaceably, and intended to go to the prophet's village at his request, to make corn.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.127–p.128

The express returned. We moved on and encamped some distance below the prophet's village. Here another express came from the White Beaver, threatening to pursue us and drive us back, if we did not return peaceably. This message roused the spirit of my band, and all were determined to remain with me and contest the ground with the war chief, should he come and attempt to drive us. We therefore directed the express to say to the war chief "if he wished to fight us he might come on." We were determined never to be driven, and equally so, not to make the first attack, our object being to act only on the defensive. This we conceived to be our right.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.128

Soon after the express returned, Mr. Gratiot, sub-agent for the Winnebagoes, came to our encampment. He had no interpreter, and was compelled to talk through his chiefs. They said the object of his mission was to persuade us to return. But they advised us to go on—assuring us that the further we event up Rock River the more friends we would meet, and out situation would be bettered. They were on our side and all of their people were our friends. We must not give up, but continue to ascend Rock River, on which, in a short time, we would receive reenforcements sufficiently strong to repulse any enemy. They said they would go down with their agent, to ascertain the strength of the enemy, and then return and give us the news. They had to use some stratagem to deceive their agent in order to help us….

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.128–p.129

Having ascertained that White Beaver would not permit us to remain where we were, I began to consider what was best to be done, and concluded to keep on up the river, see the Pottowattomies and have a talk with them. Several Winnebago chiefs were present, whom I advised of my intentions, as they did not seem disposed to render us any assistance. I asked them if they had not sent us wampum during the winter, and requested us to come and join their people and enjoy all the rights and privileges of their country. They did not deny this; and said if the white people did not interfere, they had no objection to our making corn this year, with our friend the prophet, but did not wish us to go any further up.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.129

The next day I started with my party to Kishwacokee. That night, I encamped a short distance above the prophet's village. After all was quiet in our camp I sent for my chiefs, and told them that we had been deceived. That all the fair promises that had been held out to us through Neapope were false. But it would not do to let our party know it. We must keep it secret among ourselves, move on to Kishwacokee, as if all was right, and say something on the way to encourage our people. I will then call on the Pottowattomies, hear what they say, and see what they will do.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.129–p.130

We started the next morning, after telling our people that news had just come from Milwaukee that a chief of our British Father would be there in a few days. Finding that all our plans were defeated, I told the prophet that he must go with me, and we would see what could be done with the Pottowattomies. On our arrival at Kishwacokee an express was sent to the Pottowattomie villages. The next day a deputation arrived. I inquired if they had corn in their villages. They said they had a very little and could not spare any. I asked them different questions and received very unsatisfactory answers. This talk was in the presence of all my people. I afterwards spoke to them privately, and requested them to come to my lodge after my people had gone to sleep. They came and took seats. I asked them if they had received any news from the British on the lake. They said no. I inquired if they had heard that a chief of our British Father was coming to Milwaukee to bring us guns, ammunition, goods and provisions. They said no. I told them what news had been brought to me, and requested them to return to their village and tell the chiefs that I wished to see them and have a talk with them.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.130–p.131

After this deputation started, I concluded to tell my people that if White Beaver came after us, we would go back, as it was useless to think of stopping or going on without more provisions and ammunition. I discovered that the Winnebagoes and Pottowattomies were not disposed to render us any assistance. The next day the Pottowattomie chiefs arrived in my camp. I had a dog killed, and made a feast. When it was ready, I spread my medicine bags, and the chiefs began to eat. When the ceremony was about ending, I received news that three or four hundred white men on horseback had been seen about eight miles off. I immediately started three young men with a white flag to meet them and conduct them to our camp, that we might hold a council with them and descend Rock River again. I also directed them, in case the whites had encamped, to return, and I would go and see them. After this party had started I sent five young men to see what might take place. The first party went to the camp of the whites, and were taken prisoners. The last party had not proceeded far before they saw about twenty men coming toward them at full gallop. They stopped, and, finding that the whites were coming toward them in such a warlike attitude, they turned and retreated, but were pursued, and two of them overtaken and killed. The others made their escape. When they came in with the news, I was preparing my flags to meet the war chief. The alarm was given. Nearly all my young men were absent ten miles away. I started with what I had left, about forty, and had proceeded but a short distance, before we saw a part of the army approaching. I raised a yell, saying to my braves, "Some of our people have been killed. Wantonly and cruelly murdered! We must avenge their death!"

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.131

In a little while we discovered the whole army coming towards us at a full gallop. We were now confident that our first party had been killed. I immediately placed my men behind a cluster of bushes, that we might have the first fire when they had approached close enough. They made a halt some distance from us. I gave another yell, and ordered my brave warriors to charge upon them, expecting that they would all be killed. They did charge. Every man rushed towards the enemy and fired, and they retreated in the utmost confusion and consternation before my little but brave band of warriors.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.131–p.132

After following the enemy for some distance, I found it useless to pursue them further, as they rode so fast, and returned to the encampment with a few braves, as about twenty-five of them continued in pursuit of the flying enemy. I lighted my pipe and sat down to thank the Great Spirit for what he had done. I had not been meditating long, when two of the three young men I had sent with the flag to meet the American war chief, entered. My astonishment was not greater than my joy to see them living and well. I eagerly listened to their story, which was as follows:

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.132

"When we arrived near the encampment of the whites, a number of them rushed out to meet us, bringing their guns with them. They took us into their camp, where an American who spoke the Sac language a little told us that his chief wanted to know how we were, where we were going, where our camp was, and where was Black Hawk? We told him that we had come to see his chief, that our chief had directed us to conduct him to our camp, in case he had not encamped, and in that event to tell him that he, Black Hawk, would come to see him; he wished to hold a council with him, as he had given up all intention of going to war."

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.132–p.133

This man had once been a member of our tribe, having been adopted by me many years before and treated with the same kindness as was shown to our young men, but like the caged bird of the woods, he yearned for freedom, and after a few years residence with us an opportunity for escape came and he left us. On this occasion he would have respected our flag and carried back the message I had sent to his chief, had he not been taken prisoner, with a comrade, by some of my braves who did not recognize him, and brought him into camp. They were securely tied with cords to trees and left to meditate, but were occasionally buffeted by my young men when passing near them. When I passed by him there was a recognition on the part of us both, but on account of former friendship I concluded to let him go, and some little time before the sun went down I released him from his captivity by untying the cords that bound him and accompanied him outside of our lines so that he could escape safely. His companion had previously made a desperate effort to escape from his guards and was killed by them.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.133

They continued their story:

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.133–p.134

"At the conclusion of this talk a party of white men came in on horseback. We saw by their countenances that something had happened. A general tumult arose. They looked at us with indignation, talked among themselves for a moment, when several of them cocked their guns and fired at us in the crowd. Our companion fell dead. We rushed through the crowd and made our escape. We remained in ambush but a short time, before we heard yelling like Indians running an enemy. In a little while we saw some of the whites in full speed. One of them came near us. I threw my tomahawk and struck him on the head which brought him to the ground; I ran to him and with his own knife took off his scalp. I took his gun, mounted his horse, and brought my friend here behind me. We turned to follow our braves, who were chasing the enemy, and had not gone far before we overtook a white man, whose horse had mired in a swamp. My friend alighted and tomahawked the man, who was apparently fast under his horse. He took his scalp, horse and gun. By this time our party was some distance ahead. We followed on and saw several white men lying dead on the way. After riding about six miles we met our party returning. We asked them how many of our men had been killed. They said none after the Americans had retreated. We inquired how many whites had been killed. They replied that they did not know, but said we will soon ascertain, as we must scalp them as we go back. On our return we found ten men, besides the two we had killed before we joined our friends. Seeing that they did not yet recognize us, it being dark, we again asked how many of our braves had been killed? They said five. We asked who they were? They replied that the first party of three who went out to meet the American war chief, had all been taken prisoners and killed in the encampment, and that out of a party of five, who followed to see the meeting of the first party with the whites, two had been killed. We were now certain that they did not recognize us, nor did we tell who we were until we arrived at our camp. The news of our death had reached it some time before, and all were surprised to see us again."

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.134–p.135

The next morning I told the crier of my village to give notice that we must go and bury our dead. In a little while all were ready. A small deputation was sent for our absent warriors, and the remainder started to bury the dead. We first disposed of them and then commenced an examination in the enemy's deserted encampment for plunder. We found arms and ammunition and provisions, all of which we were sadly in want of, particularly the latter, as we were entirely without. We found also a variety of saddle bags, which I distributed among my braves, a small quantity of whisky and some little barrels that had contained this bad medicine, but they were empty. I was surprised to find that the whites carried whisky with them, as I had understood that all the pale faces, when acting as soldiers in the field, were strictly temperate.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.135

The enemy's encampment was in a skirt of woods near a run, about half a day's travel from Dixon's ferry. We attacked them in the prairie, with a few bushes between us, about sundown, and I expected that my whole party would be killed. I never was so much surprised in all the fighting I have seen, knowing, too, that the Americans generally shoot well, as I was to see this army of several hundreds retreating, without showing fight, and passing immediately through their encampment, I did think they intended to halt there, as the situation would have forbidden attack by my party if their number had not exceeded half of mine, as we would have been compelled to take the open prairie while they could have picked trees to shield themselves from our fire.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.135–p.136

I was never so much surprised in my life as I was in this attack. An army of three or four hundred men, after having learned that we were suing for peace, to attempt to kill the flag-bearers that had gone unarmed to ask for a meeting of the war chiefs of the two contending parties to hold a council, that I might return to the west side of the Mississippi, to come forward with a full determination to demolish the few braves I had with me, to retreat when they had ten to one, was unaccountable to me. It proved a different spirit from any I had ever before seen among the pale faces. I expected to see them fight as the Americans did with the British during the last war, but they had no such braves among them.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.136

At our feast with the Pottowattomies I was convinced that we had been imposed upon by those who had brought in reports of large reenforcements to my band and resolved not to strike a blow; and in order to get permission from White Beaver to return and recross the Mississippi, I sent a flag of peace to the American war chief, who was reported to be close by with his army, expecting that he would convene a council and listen to what we had to say. But this chief, instead of pursuing that honorable and chivalric course, such as I have always practiced, shot down our flag-bearer and thus forced us into war with less than five hundred warriors to contend against three or four thousand soldiers.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.136–p.137

The supplies that Neapope and the prophet told us about, and the reenforcements we were to have, were nevermore heard of, and it is but justice to our British Father to say were never promised, his chief having sent word in lieu of the lies that were brought to me, "for us to remain at peace as we could accomplish nothing but our own ruin by going to war."

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.137

What was now to be done? It was worse than folly to turn back and meet an enemy where the odds were so much against us and thereby sacrifice ourselves, our wives and children to the fury of an enemy who had murdered some of our brave and unarmed warriors when they were on a mission to sue for peace.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.137

Having returned to our encampment, and found that all our young men had come in, I sent out spies to watch the movements of the army, and commenced moving up Kishwacokee with the balance of my people. I did not know where to go to find a place of safety for my women and children, but expected to find a good harbor about the head of Rock River. I concluded to go there, and thought my best route would be to go round the head of Kishwacokee, so that the Americans would have some difficulty if they attempted to follow us.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.137

On arriving at the head of Kishwacokee, I was met by a party of Winnebagoes, who seemed to rejoice at our success. They said they had come to offer their services, and were anxious to join us. I asked them if they knew where there was a safe place for our women and children. They told us that they would send two old men with us to guide us to a good safe place.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.138

I arranged war parties to send out in different directions, before I proceeded further. The Winnebagoes went alone. The war parties having all been fitted out and started, we commenced moving to the Four Lakes, the place where our guides were to conduct us. We had not gone far before six Winnebagoes came in with one scalp. They said they had killed a man at a grove, on the road from Dixon's to the lead mines. Four days after, the party of Winnebagoes who had gone out from the head of Kishwacokee, overtook us, and told me that they had killed four men and taken their scalps: and that one of them was Keokuk's father, (the agent). They proposed to have a dance over their scalps. I told them that I could have no dancing in my camp, in consequence of my having lost three young braves; but they might dance in their own camp, which they did. Two days after, we arrived in safety at the place where the Winnebagoes had directed us. In a few days a great number of our warriors came in. I called them all around me, and addressed them.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.138

told them: "Now is the time, if any of you wish to come into distinction, and be honored with the medicine bag! Now is the time to show your courage and bravery, and avenge the murder of our three braves!"

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.138–p.139

Several small parties went out, and returned again in a few days, with success—bringing in provisions for our people. In the meantime, some spies came in, and reported that the army had fallen back to Dixon's ferry; and others brought news that the horsemen had broken up their camp, disbanded, and returned home.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.139

Finding that all was safe, I made a dog feast, preparatory to leaving my camp with a large party, (as the enemy were stationed so far off). Before my braves commenced feasting, I took my medicine bags, and addressed them in the following language:

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.139

"Braves and Warriors: These are the medicine bags of our forefather, Mukataquet, who was the father of the Sac nation. They were handed down to the great war chief of our nation, Nanamakee, who has been at war with all the nations of the plains, and have never yet been disgraced! I expect you all to protect them!"

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.139–p.140

After the ceremony was over and our feasting done I started, with about two hundred warriors following my great medicine bags. I directed my course toward sunset and dreamed, the second night after we started, that there would be a great feast prepared for us after one day's travel. I told my warriors my dream in the morning and we started for Moscohocoynak, (Apple River). When we arrived in the vicinity of a fort the white people had built there we saw four men on horseback. One of my braves fired and wounded a man when the others set up a yell as if a large force were near and ready to come against us. We concealed ourselves and remained in this position for some time watching to see the enemy approach, but none came. The four men, in the meantime, ran to the fort and gave the alarm. We followed them and attacked their fort. One of their braves, who seemed more valiant than the rest, raised his head above the picketing to fire at us when one of my braves, with a well-directed shot, put an end to his bravery. Finding that these people could not be killed without setting fire to their houses and fort I thought it more prudent to be content with what flour, provisions, cattle and horses we could find than to set fire to their buildings, as the light would be seen at a distance and the army might suppose we were in the neighborhood and come upon us with a strong force. Accordingly we opened a house and filled our bags with flour and provisions, took several horses and drove off some of their cattle.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.140–p.141

We started in a direction toward sunrise. After marching a considerable time I discovered some white men coming towards us. I told my braves that we would go into the woods and kill them when they approached. We concealed ourselves until they came near enough and then commenced yelling and firing and made a rush upon them. About this time their chief, with a party of men, rushed up to rescue the men we had fired upon. In a little while they commenced retreating and left their chief and a few braves who seemed willing and anxious to fight. They acted like men, but were forced to give way when I rushed upon them with my braves. In a short time the chief returned with a larger party. He seemed determined to fight, and anxious for a battle. When he came near enough I raised the yell and firing commenced from both sides. The chief, who seemed to be a small man, addressed his warriors in a loud voice, but they soon retreated, leaving him and a few braves on the battlefield. A great number of my warriors pursued the retreating party and killed a number of their horses as they ran. The chief and his few braves were unwilling to leave the field. I ordered my braves to rush upon them, and had the mortification of seeing two of my chiefs killed before the enemy retreated.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.141

This young chief deserves great praise for his courage and bravery, but fortunately for us, his army was not all composed of such brave men.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.141

During this attack we killed several men and about forty horses and lost two young chiefs and seven warriors. My braves were anxious to pursue them to the fort, attack and burn it, but I told them it was useless to waste our powder as there was no possible chance of success if we did attack them, and that as we had run the bear into his hole we would there leave him and return to our camp.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.141–p.142

On arriving at our encampment we found that several of our spies had returned, bringing intelligence that the army had commenced moving. Another party of five came in and said they had been pursued for several hours, and were attacked by twenty-five or thirty whites in the woods; that the whites rushed in upon them as they lay concealed and received their fire without seeing them. They immediately retreated while we reloaded. They entered the thicket again and as soon as they came near enough we fired. Again they retreated and again they rushed into the thicket and fired. We returned their fire and a skirmish ensued between two of their men and one of ours, who was killed by having his throat cut. This was the only man we lost, the enemy having had three killed; they again retreated.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.142

Another party of three Sacs had come in and brought two young white squaws, whom they had given to the Winnebagoes to take to the whites. They said they had joined a party of Pottowattomies and went with them as a war party against the settlers of Illinois….

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.142

Learning that the army had commenced moving, and fearing that they might come upon and surround our encampment, I concluded to remove our women and children across the Mississippi, that they might return to the Sac nation again. Accordingly, on the next day we commenced moving, with five Winnebagoes acting as our guides, intending to descend the Wisconsin.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.142–p.143

Neapope, with a party of twenty, remained in our rear, to watch for the enemy, while we were proceeding to the Wisconsin, with our women and children. We arrived, and had commenced crossing over to an island, when we discovered a large body of the enemy coming towards us. We were now compelled to fight, or sacrifice our wives and children to the fury of the whites. I met them with fifty warriors, (having left the balance to assist oar women and children in crossing) about a mile from the river, when an attack immediately commenced. I was mounted on a fine horse, and was pleased to see my warriors so brave. I addressed them in a loud voice, telling them to stand their ground and never yield it to the enemy. At this time I was on the rise of a hill, where I wished to form my warriors, that we might have some advantage over the whites. But the enemy succeeded in gaining this point, which compelled us to fall into a deep ravine, from which we continued firing at them and they at us, until it began to grow dark. My horse having been wounded twice during this engagement, and fearing from his loss of blood that he would soon give out, and finding that the enemy would not come near enough to receive our fire, in the dusk of the evening, and knowing that our women and children had had sufficient time to reach the island in the Wisconsin, I ordered my warriors to return, by different routes, and meet me at the Wisconsin, and was astonished to find that the enemy were not disposed to pursue us.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.143–p.144

In this skirmish with fifty braves, I defended and accomplished my passage over the Wisconsin, with a loss of only six men, though opposed by a host of mounted militia. I would not have fought there, but to gain time for our women and children to cross to an island. A warrior will duly appreciate the embarrassments I labored under—and whatever may be the sentiments of the white people in relation to this battle, my nation, though fallen, will award to me the reputation of a great brave in conducting it.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.144

The loss of the enemy could not be ascertained by our party; but I am of the opinion that it was much greater, in proportion, than mine. We returned to the Wisconsin and crossed over to our people.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.144

Here some of my people left me, and descended the Wisconsin, hoping to escape to the west side of the Mississippi, that they might return home. I had no objection to their leaving me, as my people were all in a desperate condition, being worn out with traveling and starving. Our only hope to save ourselves was to get across the Mississippi. But few of this party escaped. Unfortunately for them, a party of soldiers from Prairie du Chien were stationed on the Wisconsin, a short distance from its mouth, who fired upon our distressed people. Some were killed, others drowned, several taken prisoners, and the balance escaped to the woods and perished with hunger. Among this party were a great many women and children….

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.144–p.145

Myself and band having no means to descend the Wisconsin, I started over a rugged country, to go to the Mississippi, intending to cross it and return to my nation. Many of our people were compelled to go on foot, for want of horses, which, in consequence of their having had nothing to eat for a long time, caused our march to be very slow. At length we arrived at the Mississippi, having lost some of our old men and little children, 'who perished on the way with hunger.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.145

We had been here but a little while before we saw a steamboat (the "Warrior,") coming. I told my braves not to shoot, as I intended going on board, so that we might save our women and children. I knew the captain (Throckmorton) and was determined to give myself up to him. I then sent for my white flag. While the messenger was gone, I took a small piece of white cotton and put it on a pole, and called to the captain of the boat, and told him to send his little canoe ashore and let me come aboard. The people on board asked whether we were Sacs or Winnebagoes. I told a Winnebago to tell them that we were Sacs, and wanted to give ourselves up! A Winnebago on the boat called out to us "to run and hide, that the whites were going to shoot!" About this time one of my braves had jumped into the river, bearing a white flag to the boat, when another sprang in after him and brought him to the shore. The firing then commenced from the boat, which was returned by my braves and continued for some time. Very few of my people were hurt after the first fire, having succeeded in getting behind old logs and trees, which shielded them from the enemy's fire….

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.145–p.146

After the boat left us, I told my people to cross if they could, and wished; that I intended going into the Chippewa country. Some commenced crossing, and such as had determined to follow them, remained; only three lodges going with me. Next morning, at daybreak, a young man overtook me, and said that all my party had determined to cross the Mississippi—that a number had already got over safe, and that he had heard the white army last night within a few miles of them. I now began to fear that the whites would come up with my people and kill them before they could get across. I had determined to go and join the Chippewas; but reflecting that by this I could only save myself, I concluded to return, and die with my people, if the Great Spirit would not give us an—other victory. During our stay in the thicket, a party of whites came close by us, but passed on without discovering us.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.146

Early in the morning a party of whites being in advance of the army, came upon our people, who were attempting to cross the Mississippi. They tried to give themselves up; the whites paid no attention to their entreaties, but commenced slaughtering them. In a little while the whole army arrived. Our braves, but few in number, finding that the enemy paid no regard to age or sex, and seeing that they were murdering helpless women and little children, determined to fight until they were killed. As many women as could, commenced swimming the Mississippi, with their children on their backs. A number of them were drowned, and some shot before they could reach the opposite shore….

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.146–p.147

After hearing this sorrowful news, I started with my little party to the Winnebago village at Prairie La Cross. On my arrival there I entered the lodge of one of the chiefs, and told him that I wished him to go with me to his father, that I intended giving myself up to the American war chief and die, if the Great Spirit saw proper. He said he would go with me. I then took my medicine bag and addressed the chief. I told him that it was "the soul of the Sac nation—that it never had been dishonored in any battle, take it, it is my life—dearer than life—and give it to the American chief!" He said he would keep it, and take care of it, and if I was suffered to live, he would send it to me.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.147

During my stay at the village, the squaws made me a white dress of deer skin. I then started with several Winnebagoes, and went to their agent, at Prairie du Chien, and gave myself up.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.147

On my arrival there, I found to my sorrow, that a large body of Sioux had pursued and killed a number of our women and children, who had got safely across the Mississippi. The whites ought not to have permitted such conduct, and none but cowards would ever have been guilty of such cruelty, a habit which has always been practiced on our nation by the Sioux.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.147

The massacre, which terminated the war, lasted about two hours. Our loss in killed was about sixty, besides a number that was drowned. The loss of the enemy could not be ascertained by my braves, exactly; but they think that they killed about sixteen during the action.

Black Hawk War, America, Vol.6, p.147–p.148

I was now given up by the agent to the commanding officer at Fort Crawford, the White Beaver having gone down the river. We remained here a short time, and then started for Jefferson Barracks . . . from which we were later transferred to Fortress Monroe.

Why the United States Bank Was Closed

Title: Why the United States Bank Was Closed

Author: Andrew Jackson

Date: July 10,1832

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.111-117

Throughout his first administration, President Jackson had sought to abolish the United States Bank as an "iniquitous institution." His opportunity came at the beginning of his second administration when, on July 10, 1832, he sent this message to Congress, giving his reasons for vetoing the bill to renew the charter. The next step was to remove Federal deposits from the Bank. This his Secretary of the Treasury, Duane, refused to do. Consequently Jackson removed him, and appointed Roger B. Taney, who was more tractable, but whose appointment was held up by the Senate. Subsequently Taney was made Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Following Jackson's message, we publish, for comparison, the opinion of Alexander Hamilton as to the constitutionality of the United States Bank. It was given in 1791, but is appropriately presented in conjunction with the dissenting view of Jackson forty-one years later.

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.111–p.112

A BANK of the United States is in many respects convenient for the Government and useful to the people. Entertaining this opinion, and deeply impressed with the belief that some of the powers and privileges possessed by the existing Bank are unauthorized by the Constitution, subversive of the rights of the States, and dangerous to the liberties of the people, I felt it my duty, at an early period of my administration, to call the attention of Congress to the practicability of organizing an institution combining all its advantages, and obviating these objections. I sincerely regret that, in the act before me, I can perceive none of those modifications of the Bank charter which are necessary, in my opinion, to make it compatible with justice, with sound policy, or with the Constitution of our country.

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.112

Every monopoly, and all exclusive privileges, are granted at the expense of the public, which ought to receive a fair equivalent. The many millions which this act proposes to bestow on the stockholders of the existing Bank must come directly or indirectly out of the earnings of the American people. It is due to them, therefore, if their Government sell monopolies and exclusive privileges, that they should at least exact for them as much as they are worth in open market. The value of the monopoly in this case may be correctly ascertained. The twenty-eight millions of stock would probably be at an advance of fifty per cent, and command in market at least forty-two millions of dollars, subject to the payment of the present bonus. The present value of the monopoly, therefore, is seventeen millions of dollars, and this the act proposes to sell for three millions, payable in fifteen annual instalments of two hundred thousand dollars each.

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.112–p.113

It is not conceivable how the present stockholders can have any claim to the special favor of the Government. The present corporation has enjoyed its monopoly during the period stipulated in the original contract. If we must have such a corporation, why should not the Government sell out the whole stock, and thus secure to the people the full market value of the privileges granted? Why should not Congress create and sell twenty-eight millions of stock, incorporating the purchasers with all the powers and privileges secured in this act, and putting the premium upon the sales into the Treasury.

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.113

It has been urged as an argument in favor of rechartering the present Bank, that the calling in its loans will produce great embarrassment and distress. The time allowed to close its concerns is ample; and if it has been well managed, its pressure will be light, and heavy only in case its management has been bad. If, therefore, it shall produce distress, the fault will be its own: and it would furnish a reason against renewing a power which has been so obviously abused. But will there ever be a time when this reason will be less powerful? To acknowledge its force is to admit that the Bank ought to be perpetual; and, as a consequence, the present stockholders, and those inheriting their rights as successors, be established a privileged order, clothed both with great political power and enjoying immense pecuniary advantages from their connection with the Government. The modifications of the existing charter, proposed by this act, are not such, in my views, as make it consistent with the rights of the States or the liberties of the people.

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.113–p.114

Is there no danger to our liberty and independence in a Bank that in its nature has so little to bind it to our country. The president of the Bank has told us that most of the State banks exist by its forbearance. Should its influence become concentered, as it may under the operation of such an act as this, in the hands of a self-elected directory, whose interests are identified with those of the foreign stockholders, will there not be cause to tremble for the purity of our elections in peace, and for the independence of our country in war. Their power would be great whenever they might choose to exert it; but if this monopoly were regularly renewed every fifteen or twenty years, on terms proposed by themselves, they might seldom in peace put forth their strength to influence elections or control the affairs of the nation. But if any private citizen or public functionary should interpose to curtail its powers, or prevent a renewal of its privileges, it cannot be doubted that he would be made to feel its influence.

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.114

Should the stock of the Bank principally pass into the hands of the subjects of a foreign country, and we should unfortunately become involved in a war with that country, what would be our condition? Of the course which would be pursued by a bank almost wholly owned by the subjects of a foreign power, and managed by those whose interests, if not affections, would run in the same direction, there can be no doubt. All its operations within would be in aid of the hostile fleets and armies without. Controlling our currency, receiving our public moneys, and holding thousands of our citizens in dependence, it would be more formidable and dangerous than the naval and military power of the enemy….

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.115

It is maintained by the advocates of the Bank, that its constitutionality, in all its features, ought to be considered as settled by precedent, and by the decision of the Supreme Court. To this conclusion I cannot assent. Mere precedent is a dangerous source of authority, and should not be regarded as deciding questions of constitutional power, except where the acquiescence of the people and the States can be considered as well settled. So far from this being the case on this subject, an argument against the Bank might be based on precedent. One Congress, in 1791, decided in favor of a bank; another, in 1811, decided against it. One Congress, in 1815, decided against a bank; another, in 1816, decided in its favor. Prior to the present Congress, therefore, the precedents drawn from that source were equal. If we resort to the States, the expressions of legislative, judicial, and executive opinions against the Bank have been probably to those in its favor as four to one. There is nothing in precedent, therefore, which, if its authority were admitted, ought to weigh in favor of the act before me.

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.115–p.116

If the opinion of the Supreme Court covered the whole ground of this act, it ought not to control the coordinate authorities of this Government. The Congress, the Executive, and the Court, must each for itself be guided by its own opinion of the Constitution. Each public officer, who takes an oath to support the Constitution, swears that he will support it as he understands it, and not as it is understood by others. It is as much the duty of the House of Representatives, of the Senate, and of the President to decide upon the constitutionality of any bill or resolution which may be presented to them for passage or approval as it is of the supreme judges when it may be brought before them for judicial decision….

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.116

It cannot be necessary to the character of the Bank as a fiscal agent of the Government that its private business should be exempted from that taxation to which all the State banks are liable; nor can I conceive it proper that the substantive and most essential powers reserved by the States shall be thus attacked and annihilated as a means of executing the powers delegated to the general government. It may be safely assumed that none of those sages who had an agency in forming or adopting our Constitution, ever imagined that any portion of the taxing power of the States, not prohibited to them nor delegated to Congress, was to be swept away and annihilated as a means of executing certain powers delegated to Congress….

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.116–p.117

Suspicions are entertained, and charges are made, of gross abuse and violation of its charter. An investigation unwillingly conceded, and so restricted in time as necessarily to make it incomplete and unsatisfactory, disclosed enough to excite suspicion and alarm. In the practices of the principal bank partially unveiled, in the absence of important witnesses, and in numerous charges confidently made, and as yet wholly uninvestigated, there was enough to induce a majority of the committee of investigation, a committee which was selected from the most able and honorable members of the House of Representatives, to recommend a suspension of further action upon the bill, and a prosecution of the inquiry. As the charter had yet four years to run, and as a renewal now was not necessary to the successful prosecution of its business, it was to have been expected that the Bank itself, conscious of its purity, and proud of its character, would have withdrawn its application for the present, and demanded the severest scrutiny into all its transactions. In their declining to do so, there seems to be an additional reason why the functionaries of the Government should proceed with less haste and more caution in the renewal of their monopoly….

Jackson, Why The U.S. Bank Was Closed, America, Vol.6, p.117

I have now done my duty to my country. If sustained by my fellow citizens, I shall be grateful and happy; if not, I shall find in the motives which impel me ample grounds for contentment and peace. In the difficulties which surround us and the dangers which threaten our institutions there is cause for neither dismay nor alarm. For relief and deliverance let us firmly rely on that kind Providence which, I am sure, watches with peculiar care over the destinies of our republic, and on the intelligence and wisdom of our countrymen. Through His abundant goodness, and their patriotic devotion, our liberty and Union will be preserved.

Slave-Breaking in the South

Title: Slave-Breaking in the South

Author: Frederick Douglass

Date: 1833

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.149-155

Douglass, whose father was a white man, was the most conspicuous of the fugitive slaves. He escaped from bondage in 1838, and worked as a day laborer in New York City and New Bedford, Mass. He made the most of his ability to read and write, and, developing an aptitude for oratory, he became a noted lecturer under the auspices of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

This account, purporting to be his experience as a slave, is taken from his "Autobiography," published in 1845. Following its publication Douglass lectured successfully in England, and while abroad his freedom was purchased. The Civil War served as his stepping-stone to a number of public offices, including that of Minister to Haiti.

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.149

MASTER THOMAS at length said he would stand it no longer. I had lived with him nine months, during which time he had given me a number of severe whippings, all to no good purpose. He resolved to put me out, as he said, to be broken; and, for this purpose, he let me for one year to a man named Edward Covey. Mr. Covey was a poor man, a farm-renter. He rented the place upon which he lived, as also the hands with which he till it. Mr. Covey had acquired a very high reputation for breaking young slaves and this reputation was of immense value to him. It enabled him to get his farm tilled with much less expense to himself than he could have had it done without such a reputation. Some slaveholders thought it not much loss to allow Mr. Covey to have their slaves one year, for the sake of the training to which they were subjected, without any other compensation. He could hire young help with great ease, in consequence of this reputation. Added to the natural good qualities of Mr. Covey, he was a professor of religion—a pious soul—a member and a class-leader in the Methodist church. All of this added weight to his reputation as a "nigger-breaker." I was aware of all the facts, having been made acquainted with them by a young man who had lived there. I nevertheless made the change gladly; for I was sure of getting enough to eat, which is not the smallest consideration to a hungry man.

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.150–p.151

I left Master Thomas's house, and went to live with Mr. Covey, on the 1st of January, 1833. I was now, for the first time in my life, a field hand. In my new employment, I found myself even more awkward than a country boy appeared to be in a large city. I had been at my new home but one week before Mr. Covey gave me a very severe whipping, cutting my back, causing the blood to run, and raising ridges on my flesh as large as my little finger. The details of this affair are as follows: Mr. Covey sent me, very early in the morning of one of our coldest days in the month of January, to the woods, to get a load of wood. He gave me a team of unbroken oxen. He told me which was the in-hand ox, and which the off-hand one. He then tied the end of a large rope around the horns of the in-hand ox, and gave me the other end of it, and told me, if the oxen started to run, that I must hold on upon the rope. I had never driven oxen before, and of course I was very awkward. I, however, succeeded in getting to the edge of the woods with little difficulty; but I had got a very few rods into the woods, when the oxen took fright, and started full tilt, carrying the cart against trees, and over stumps, in the most frightful manner. I expected every moment that my brains would be dashed out against the trees. After running thus for a considerable distance, they finally upset the cart, dashing it with great force against a tree, and threw themselves into a dense thicket. How I escaped death, I do not know. There I was, entirely alone, in a thick wood, in a place new to me. My cart was upset and shattered, my oxen were entangled among the young trees, and there was none to help me. After a long spell of effort, I succeeded in getting my cart righted, my oxen disentangled, and again yoked to the cart. I now proceeded with my team to the place where I had, the day before, been chopping wood, and loaded my cart pretty heavily, thinking in this way to tame my oxen. I then proceeded on my way home.

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.151–p.152

I had now consumed one half of the day. I got out of the woods safely, and felt out of danger. I stopped my oxen to open the woods gate; and just as I did so, before I could get hold of my ox-rope, the oxen again started, rushed through the gate, catching it between the wheel and the body of the cart, tearing it to pieces, and coming within a few inches of crushing me against the gate-post. Thus twice, in one short day, I escaped death by the merest chance. On my return, I told Mr. Covey what had happened, and how it happened. He ordered me to return to the woods again immediately. I did so, and he followed on after me. Just as I got into the woods, he came up and told me to stop my cart, and that he would teach me how to trifle away my time, and break gates. He then went to a large gum-tree, and with his ax cut three large switches, and, after trimming them up neatly with his pocket-knife, he ordered me to take off my clothes. I made him no answer, but stood with my clothes on. He repeated his order. I still made him no answer, nor did I move to strip myself. Upon this he rushed at me with the fierceness of a tiger, tore off my clothes, and lashed me till he had worn out his switches, cutting me so savagely as to leave the marks visible for a long time after. This whipping was the first of a number just like it, and for similar offenses.

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.152–p.153

I lived with Mr. Covey one year. During the first six months of that year, scarce a week passed without his whipping me. I was seldom free from a sore back. My awkwardness was almost always his excuse for whipping me. We were worked fully up to the point of endurance. Long before day we were up, our horses fed, and by the first approach of day we were off to the field with our hoes and plowing teams. Mr. Covey gave us enough to eat, but scarce time to eat it. We were often less than five minutes taking our meals. We were often in the field from the first approach of day till its last lingering ray had left us; and at saving-fodder time, midnight often caught us in the field binding blades.

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.153

Covey would be out with us. The way he used to stand it was this. He would spend the most of his afternoons in bed. He would then come out fresh in the evening, ready to urge us on with his words, example, and frequently with the whip. Mr. Covey was one of the few slaveholders who could and did work with his hands. He was a hard-working man. He knew by himself just what a man or a boy could do. There was no deceiving him. His work went on in his absence almost as well as in his presence; and he had the faculty of making us feel that he was ever present with us. This he did by surprising us. He seldom approached the spot where we were at work openly, if he could do it secretly. He always aimed at taking us by surprise. Such was his cunning, that we used to call him, among ourselves, "the snake."

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.153–p.154

When we were at work in the cornfield, he would sometimes crawl on his hands and knees to avoid detection, and all at once he would rise nearly in our midst, and scream out, "Ha, ha! Come, come! Dash on, dash on!" this being his mode of attack, it was never safe to stop a single minute. His comings were like a thief in the night. He appeared to us as being ever at hand. He was under every tree, behind every stump, in every bush, and at every window, on the plantation. He would sometimes mount his horse, as if bound to St. Michael's, a distance of seven miles, and in half an hour afterwards you would see him coiled up in the corner of the wood-fence, watching every motion of the slaves. He would, for this purpose, leave his horse tied up in the woods. Again, he would sometimes walk up to us, and give us orders as though he was upon the point of starting on a long journey, turn his back upon us, and make as though he was going to the house to get ready; and, before he would get half way thither, he would turn short and crawl into a fence-corner, or behind some tree, and there watch us till the going down of the sun.

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.154–p.155

Mr. Covey's "forte" consisted in his power to deceive. His life was devoted to planning and perpetrating the grossest deceptions. Every thing he possessed in the shape of learning or religion, he made conform to his disposition to deceive. He seemed to think himself equal to deceiving the Almighty. He would make a short prayer in the morning, and a long prayer at night; and, strange as it may seem, few men would at times appear more devotional than he. The exercises of his family devotions were always commenced with singing; and, as he was a very poor singer himself, the duty of raising the hymn generally came upon me. He would read his hymn, and nod at me to commence. I would at times do so; at others, I would not. My noncompliance would almost always produce much confusion. To show himself independent of me, he would start and stagger through with his hymn in the most discordant manner. In this state of mind, he prayed with more than ordinary spirit. Poor man! such was his disposition, and success at deceiving, I do verily believe that he sometimes deceived himself into the solemn belief, that he was a sincere worshipper of the most high God….

Douglass, Slave-Breaking in the South, America, Vol.6, p.155

If at any one time of my life more than another, I was made to drink the bitterest dregs of slavery, that time was during the first six months of my stay with Mr. Covey. We were worked in all weathers. It was never too hot or too cold; it could never rain, blow, hail or snow, too hard for us to work in the field. Work, work, work, was scarcely more the order of the day than of the night. The longest days were too short for him, and the shortest nights too long for him. I was somewhat unmanageable when I first went there, but a few months of this discipline tamed me. Mr. Covey succeeded in breaking me. I was broken in body, soul and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a brute!

The First Anti-Slavery Convention

Title: The First Anti-Slavery Convention

Author: John G. Whittier

Date: 1833

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.156-166

Whittier was pre-eminently the poet of the anti-slavery conflict. There is almost no phase of the subject and no episode in the struggle for its abolition which did not inspire his muse. His prose writings against slavery were also numerous—he was a vigorous polemic—and some twenty of his papers, including an interesting account of his association with William Lloyd Garrison in forming the American Anti-Slavery Society, may be found in his prose works, published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

In a pamphlet, originally entitled "Justice and Expediency," Whittier refers to his report of the anti-slavery convention of 1833 as his first venture in authorship. He attended the convention as a delegate, at the age of twenty-six, and this particular version of the event was written in 1874. His active participation in politics virtually ceased with the development of antislavery opinion in the North.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.156

IN THE gray twilight of a chill day of late November, forty years ago, a dear friend of mine, residing in Boston, made his appearance at the old farm-house in East Haverhill. He had been deputed by the abolitionists of the city, William L. Garrison, Samuel E. Sewall, and others, to inform me of my appointment as a delegate to the convention about to be held in Philadelphia for the formation of an American Anti-slavery Society, and to urge upon me the necessity of my attendance.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.156–p.157–p.158

Few words of persuasion, however, were needed. I was unused to traveling, my life had been spent on a secluded farm; and the journey, mostly by stagecoach, at that time was really a formidable one. Moreover, the few abolitionists were everywhere spoken against, their persons threatened, and in some instances a price set on their heads by Southern legislators. Pennsylvania was on the borders of slavery, and it needed small effort of imagination to picture to one s self the breaking up of the convention and maltreatment of its members. This latter consideration I do not think weighed much with me, although I was better prepared for serious danger than for anything like personal indignity. I had read Governor Trumbull's description of the tarring and feathering of his hero MacFingal, when, after the application of the melted tar, the feather bed was ripped open and shaken over him, until

"Not Maia's son, with wings for ears,

Such plumes about his visage wears,

Nor Milton's six-winged angel gathers

Such superfluity of feathers";

and, I confess, I was quite unwilling to undergo a martyrdom which my best friends could scarcely refrain from laughing at. But a summons like that of Garrison's bugle-blast could scarcely be unheeded by one who, from birth and education, held fast the traditions of that earlier abolitionism which, under the lead of Benezet and Woolman, had effaced from the Society of Friends every vestige of slave-holding. I had thrown myself, with a young man's fervid enthusiasm, into a movement which commended itself to my reason and conscience, to my love of country and my sense of duty to God and my fellow men. My first venture in authorship was the publication at my own expense, in the spring of 1833, of a pamphlet entitled "Justice and Expediency," on the moral and political evils of slavery, and the duty of emancipation. Under such circumstances I could not hesitate, but prepared at once for my journey. It was necessary that I should start on the morrow; and the intervening time, with a small allowance of sleep, was spent in providing for the care of the farm and homestead during my absence.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.158–p.159

So the next morning I took the stage for Boston, stopping at the ancient hostelry known as the Eastern Stage Tavern; and on the day following, in company with William Lloyd Garrison, I left for New York. At that city we were joined by other delegates, among them David Thurston, a Congregational minister from Maine. On our way to Philadelphia we took, as a matter of necessary economy, a second-class conveyance, and found ourselves, in consequence, among rough and hilarious companions, whose language was more noteworthy for strength than refinement. Our worthy friend the clergyman bore it awhile in painful silence, but at last felt it his duty to utter words of remonstrance and admonition. The leader of the young roisterers listened with ludicrous mock gravity, thanked him for his exhortation, and, expressing fears that the extraordinary effort had exhausted his strength, invited him to take a drink with him. Father Thurston buried his grieved face in his coat-collar, and wisely left the young reprobates to their own devices.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.159

On reaching Philadelphia, we at once betook ourselves to the humble dwelling on Fifth Street occupied by Evan Lewis, a plain, earnest man and lifelong abolitionist, who had been largely interested in preparing the way for the convention….

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.159–p.160

We found about forty members assembled in the parlors of our friend Lewis, and after some general conversation Lewis Tappan was asked to preside over an informal meeting preparatory to the opening of the convention. A handsome, intellectual-looking man, in the prime of life, responded to the invitation, and in a clear, well-modulated voice, the firm tones of which inspired hope and confidence, stated the objects of our preliminary council, and the purpose which had called us together, in earnest and well-chosen words. In making arrangements for the convention, it was thought expedient to secure, if possible, the services of some citizen of Philadelphia, of distinction and high social standing, to preside over its deliberations. Looking round among ourselves in vain for some titled civilian or doctor of divinity, we were fain to confess that to outward seeming we were but "a feeble folk," sorely needing the shield of a popular name. A committee, of which I was a member, was appointed to go in search of a president of this description. We visited two prominent gentlemen, known as friendly to emancipation and of high social standing. They received us with the dignified courtesy of the old school, declined our proposition in civil terms, and bowed us out with a cool politeness equaled only by that of the senior Winkle towards the unlucky deputation of Pickwick and his unprepossessing companions. As we left their doors, we could not refrain from smiling in each other's faces at the thought of the small inducement our proffer of the presidency held out to men of their class. Evidently, our company was not one for respectability to march through Coventry with.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.160

On the following morning we repaired to the Adelphi Building, on Fifth Street, below Walnut, which had been secured for our use. Sixty-two delegates were found to be in attendance. Beriah Green, of the Oneida (New York) Institute, was chosen president, a fresh-faced, sandy-haired, rather common-looking man, but who had the reputation of an able and eloquent speaker. He had already made himself known to us as a resolute and self-sacrificing abolitionist. Lewis Tappan and myself took our places at his side as secretaries, on the elevation at the west end of the hall.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.160–p.161

Looking over the assembly, I noticed that it was mainly composed of comparatively young men, some in middle age, and a few beyond that period. They were nearly all plainly dressed, with a view to comfort rather than elegance. Many of the faces turned towards me wore a look of expectancy and suppressed enthusiasm All had the earnestness which might be expected of men engaged in an enterprise beset with difficulty and perhaps with peril. The fine, intellectual head of Garrison, prematurely bald, was conspicuous. The sunny-faced young man at his side, in whom all the beautitudes seemed to find expression, was Samuel J. May, mingling in his veins the best blood of the Sewalls and Quincys, a man so exceptionally pure and large-hearted, so genial, tender, and loving, that he could be faithful to truth and duty without making an enemy.

"The de'il wad look into his face,

And swear he couldna wrang him."

That tall, gaunt, swarthy man, erect, eagle-faced, upon whose somewhat martial figure the Quaker coat seemed a little out of place, was Lindley Coates, known in all Eastern Pennsylvania as a stern enemy of slavery. That slight, eager man, intensely alive in every feature and gesture, was Thomas Shipley, who for thirty years had been the protector of the free colored people of Philadelphia, and whose name was whispered reverently in the slave cabins of Maryland as the friend of the black man, one of a class peculiar to old Quakerism, who in doing what they felt to be duty and walking as the Light within guided them knew no fear and shrank from no sacrifice. Braver men the world has not known….

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.161–p.162

Committees were chosen to draft a constitution for a national Anti-slavery Society, nominate a list of officers, and prepare a declaration of principles to be signed by the members….

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.162

The committee on the constitution made their report, which after discussion was adopted. It disclaimed any right or intention of interfering, otherwise than by persuasion and Christian expostulation, with slavery as it existed in the States, but affirming the duty of Congress to abolish it in the District of Columbia and Territories, and to put an end to the domestic slave-trade….

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.162

The committee on the declaration of principles, of which I was a member, held a long session discussing the proper scope and tenor of the document. But little progress being made, it was finally decided to intrust the matter to a sub-committee, consisting of William L. Garrison, S. J. May, and myself; and, after a brief consultation and comparison of each other's views, the drafting of the important paper was assigned to the former gentleman. We agreed to meet him at his lodgings in the house of a colored friend early the next morning. It was still dark when we climbed up to his room, and the lamp was still burning by the light of which he was writing the last sentence of the declaration. We read it carefully, made a few verbal changes, and submitted it to the large committee, who unanimously agreed to report it to the convention.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.162

The paper was read to the convention by Dr. Atlee, chairman of the committee, and listened to with the profoundest interest.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.163

Commencing with a reference to the time, fifty-seven years before, when, in the same city of Philadelphia, our fathers announced to the world their Declaration of Independence,—based on the self-evident truths of human equality and rights,—and appealed to arms for its defense, it spoke of the new enterprise as one without which that of our fathers is incomplete," and as transcending theirs in magnitude, solemnity, and probable results as much as moral truth does physical force." It spoke of the difference of the two in the means and ends proposed, and of the trifling grievances of our fathers compared with the wrongs and sufferings of the slaves, which it forcibly characterized as unequaled by any others on the face of the earth. It claimed that the nation was bound to repent at once, to let the oppressed go free, and to admit them to all the rights and privileges of others; because, it asserted, no man has a right to enslave or imbrute his brother; because liberty is inalienable; because there is no difference in principle between slave-holding and man-stealing, which the law brands as piracy; and because no length of bondage can invalidate man's claim to himself, or render slave laws anything but "an audacious usurpation.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.163–p.164

It maintained that no compensation should be given to planters emancipating slaves, because that would be a surrender of fundamental principles. "Slavery is a crime, and is, therefore, not an article to be sold"; because slave-holders are not just proprietors of what they claim; because emancipation would destroy only nominal, not real, property; and because compensation, if given at all, should be given to the slaves.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.164

It declared any "scheme of expatriation" to be "delusive, cruel, and dangerous." It fully recognized the right of each State to legislate exclusively on the subject of slavery within its limits, and conceded that Congress, under the present national compact, had no right to interfere, though still contending that it had the power, and should exercise it, "to suppress the domestic slave-trade between the several states," and "to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and in those portions of our territory which the Constitution has placed under its exclusive jurisdiction."

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.164

After clearly and emphatically avowing the principles underlying the enterprise, and guarding with scrupulous care the rights of persons and states under the Constitution, in prosecuting it, the declaration closed with these eloquent words:—

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.164–p.165

"We also maintain that there are at the present time the highest obligations resting upon the people of the free States to remove slavery by moral and political action, as prescribed in the Constitution of the United States. They are now living under a pledge of their tremendous physical force to fasten the galling fetters of tyranny upon the limbs of millions in the Southern States; they are liable to be called at any moment to suppress a general insurrection of the slaves; they authorize the slave-holder to vote on three-fifths of his slaves as property, and thus enable him to perpetuate his oppression; they support a standing army at the South for its protection; and they seize the slave who has escaped into their territories, and send him back to be tortured by an enraged master or a brutal driver. This relation to slavery is criminal and full of danger. It must be broken up.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165

"These are our views and principles,—these our designs and measures. With entire confidence in the overruling justice of God, we plant ourselves upon the Declaration of Independence and the truths of divine revelation as upon the everlasting rock.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165

"We shall organize anti-slavery societies, if possible, in every city, town, and village in our land.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165

"We shall send forth agents to lift up the voice of remonstrance, of warning, of entreaty and rebuke.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165

"We shall circulate unsparingly and extensively anti-slavery tracts and periodicals.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165

"We shall enlist the pulpit and the press in the cause of the suffering and the dumb.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165

"We shall aim at a purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165

"We shall encourage the labor of freemen over that of the slaves, by giving a preference to their productions; and "We shall spare no exertions nor means to bring the whole nation to speedy repentance….

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.165–p.166

The reading of the paper was followed by a discussion which lasted several hours. A member of the Society of Friends moved its immediate adoption. "We have," he said, "all given it our assent: every heart here responds to it. It is a doctrine of Friends that these strong and deep impressions should be heeded." The convention, nevertheless, deemed it important to go over the declaration carefully, paragraph by paragraph. During the discussion one of the spectators asked leave to say a few words. A beautiful and graceful woman, in the prime of life, with a face beneath her plain cap as finely intellectual as that of Madame Roland, offered some wise and valuable suggestions, in a clear, sweet voice, the charm of which I have never forgotten. It was Lucretia Mott, of Philadelphia. The president courteously thanked her, and encouraged her to take a part in the discussion. On the morning of the last day of our session the declaration, with its few verbal amendments, carefully engrossed on parchment, was brought before the convention. Samuel J. May rose to read it for the last time. His sweet, persuasive voice faltered with the intensity of his emotions as he repeated the solemn pledges of the concluding paragraphs. After a season of silence, David Thurston, of Maine, rose as his name was called by one of the secretaries, and affixed his name to the document. One after another passed up to the platform, signed, and retired in silence. All felt the deep responsibility of the occasion: the shadow and forecast of a lifelong struggle rested upon every countenance.

Whittier, First Anti-Slavery Convention, America, Vol.6, p.166

Our work as a convention was now done.

State's Right to Leave the Union (Nullification), J. C. Calhoun "Force Bill" Speech, 1833

A State's Right to Leave the Union, 1833

Title: A State's Right to Leave the Union

Author: John C. Calhoun

Date: 1833

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.167-173

Calhoun who had resigned from the Vice Presidency and had entered the United States Senate from South Carolina in 1832, made this speech at a time in 1833 when the Senate was debating a bill to enforce the collection of import duties in South Carolina, commonly called the Force Bill. It is a tribute to his statemanship that Calhoun, after asserting that "the great conservative principle" of union is nullification, sought to avert the clash over slavery between the North and South by checking all discussion of the issue. Nevertheless, Calhoun, as Secretary of State in the Tyler Cabinet, was chiefly instrumental in bringing about the annexation of Texas, in order to extend slave territory, thus practically necessitating a war which he dreaded.

Calhoun loved the Union, but he believed the only way to preserve it was to reduce its strength almost to the vanishing point.

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.167

THE great question at issue is, where is the paramount power? Where the sovereignty in this complex, but beautiful and admirable system (if well understood) is lodged? for where the sovereignty is, there too must be the paramount power. A few plain, simple and incontrovertible positions will determine this point. That the people of the States, as constituting separate communities, formed the Constitution, is as unquestionable as any historical fact whatever. It stands upon the most durable and unquestionable record—as much so as the records of any court in the universe; and that the Union, of which the constitutional compact is the bond, is a union between States, and not between a mere mass of individuals, rests on authority not less high—on the Constitution itself, which expressly declares, in the article of ratification, that it shall be binding between the States ratifying the same-words more explicit, we would say technical, could not be devised; yet, as certain as these facts are, they cannot be admitted without admitting the doctrines for which South Carolina contends. They, by the most certain and direct deduction, conclusively will show where the paramount power of the system is—where its sovereign authority resides.

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.168

No one will pretend that the sovereignty is in the government. To make that assertion would be to go back to the Asiatic idea of government—it is scarcely European, as the most intelligent writers in that section of the globe long since traced sovereignty to a higher source. No, the sovereignty is not in the government, it is in the people. Any other conception is utterly abhorrent to the ideas of every American. There is not a particle of sovereignty in the Government. If, then, it be in the people, which cannot be denied, unless by extinguishing the lights of political science for more than two thousand years, the only possible question that can remain is, in what people? In the people of the United States collectively, as a mass of individuals, or in the people of the twenty-four States, as forming distinct political communities, confederated in this Union?

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.168–p.169

The facts already published decide this question, and prove the sovereignty to be in the people of the several States. No such community ever existed as the people of the United States, forming a collective body of individuals in one nation; and the idea that they are so united by the present Constitution, as a social compact, as alleged by the proclamation, is utterly false and absurd. To call the Constitution the social compact, is the greatest possible abuse of language. No two things are more dissimilar; there is not an expression in the whole science of politics more perfectly definite in its meaning than the social compact. It means that association of individuals, founded on the implied assent of all its members, which precedes all Government, and from which Government or the constitutional compact springs; and yet, the President, in the daring attempt to put down our Federal system, has ventured to confound things so totally dissimilar. The sovereignty, then, is in the people of the several States, united in this Federal Union. It is not only in them, but in them unimpaired; not a particle resides in the Government; not one particle in the American people collectively.

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.169

The people of the States have, indeed, delegated a portion of their sovereignty to be exercised conjointly by a General Government, and have retained the residue to be exercised by their respective State Governments. But to delegate is not to part with or to impair power. The delegated power in the agent is as much the power of the principal as if it remained in the latter, and may, as between him and his agent, be controlled or resumed at pleasure. Now mark the consequence.

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.170

No one can deny that the act of the sovereign binds the citizen or subject. The latter is not individually responsible for the act of the political community of which he is a member, and to which he owes allegiance. The community only is responsible. This is a principle universally recognized; but without regarding a principle so obvious—formed upon the highest sense of justice—this bill proposes to make the citizen of South Carolina individually responsible for the sovereign acts of the State to which he owes his allegiance! An outrage, more than barbarian, upon the fundamental principle of political institutions, as has ever been recognized by all people so far advanced in civilization as to be formed into political communities. None can doubt that the convention of the people of South Carolina is the true organ of her sovereignty. According to our American ideas, sovereignty, instead of lying dormant in the mass of individuals composing a State, and instead of being capable of being called into action by a revolutionary movement only, has a known, organic and peaceable means of action. That means is a convention of the people. Through its instrumentality all of our constitutions, State and Federal, were formed and ratified. Through the same authentic voice the people of South Carolina spoke in her late ordinance; which, as far as her citizens are concerned, is not less obligatory than the Constitution itself.

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.170–p.171

It is to see that, under this aspect of the subject, this bill presents a question infinitely beyond that of the tariff or its constitutionality, of nullification, or whether the Supreme Court is the tribunal appointed by the Constitution to decide questions in controversy between the State and Federal Governments. It sweeps away the whole of these questions. It may be admitted, to illustrate this idea, that the tariff is constitutional; that the Supreme Court is the authority appointed by the Constitution to judge questions in conflict between the State and Federal Governments; and yet this bill cannot be justified. High as the authority of the court may be, its powers are but delegated powers; it makes a part of the Government itself; and, like every other portion of the Government, is destitute of the least particle of sovereign power. As delegated powers may be resumed by the sovereign delegating the same, such a resumption may be a breach of compact—a violation of the faith of the State; but, even in that case, the State, as a community, and not its citizens individually, is liable. The State, as a community, can break no law. It can, as a sovereign body, be subject to none. It may pledge its faith; it may delegate its powers; it may break the one and resume the other; but the remedy, in such cases, is not hostile enactments; not law, by which the citizens individually are made responsible—as the bill most absurdly and preposterously proposes; but open force—war itself—unless there be some provision of a remedial and peaceful character provided in the compact.

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.172

The illustrious men who framed our Constitution were too wise and patriotic to admit of the introduction of force; in constituting a Federal system, they had too profound a knowledge of the human heart, too deep an insight into history, not to perceive that the introduction of force into such a system must necessarily lead to a military despotism. The fabric is too delicate to stand its rude shock. They devised, as a substitute, a far more effectual and peaceful means—one much more consonant to the advanced progress of political science and civilization. He alluded to the provision by which all contests for power between the Federal Government and the States may be virtually decided in a convention of the States. That is the true, wise, and constitutional means of terminating this controversy. Let the States be convened in convention; let the stockholders, if he might be permitted so to express himself, of this great political partnership be called together, that all conflicts of power between the directors and any portion of the stockholders may be determined in conformity to the provisions prescribed in the charter of association.

Calhoun, A State's Right to Leave the Union, America, Vol.6, p.172–p.173

If, then, in a case supposed, (where, for the sake of the argument, the constitutionality of the tariff is conceded, and with the same view the authority claimed for the Supreme Court acknowledged,) there would be no right to pass this bill of pains and penalties on the citizens of South Carolina for adhering to their allegiance to the State, how much stronger must be the objection to its passage when we advert to the fact, that it is not a case of resumption of power delegated to the Government, but the defense of reserved powers against unconstitutional encroachment. So far from conceding the constitutionality of the tariff or the powers claimed for the Supreme Court, not only the State of South Carolina, but all the Southern States, believe it to be not only unconstitutional, but highly oppressive; and that the Supreme Court, so far from being the tribunal appointed to decide political controversies, is limited by the Constitution itself to cases arising in law and equity, and, of course, where the parties are amenable to its process.

Chicago as a Growing Village

Title: Chicago as a Growing Village

Author: Patrick Shirreff

Date: 1833

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.174-179

Shirreff was a Scotch farmer who, in 1833, visited this country for the purpose of studying the adaptability of its various sections to agricultural emigration. His written reports deal primarily with this subject, but comment generally on the country and its inhabitants.

Chicago, which is an Indian word meaning wild onion—a plant which formerly flourished in that vicinity—was laid out as a town in 1830, and was incorporated in 1833. Its first settler was Jean Baptiste Point de Saible, a mulatto refugee who came from Haiti about 1779, and whose cabin-store was acquired in 1804 by John Kinzie, the first white man of American birth to make his home there.

At the time of which this article tells (1833), the Indians sold a large tract of land in the vicinity, agreeing to move across the Mississippi. This they did two years later; and the Fort Dearborn mentioned, being no longer necessary, was abandoned in 1897 and later demolished.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.174

CHICAGO is situated Lake Michigan, at the confluence of the Chicago River, a small stream, affording the advantages of a canal to the inhabitants for a limited distance. At the mouth of the river is Fort Dearborn, garrisoned by a few soldiers, and one of the places which has been long held to keep the Indian tribes in awe. The entrance from the lake to the river is much obstructed by sand banks, and an attempt is making to improve the navigation.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.174–p.175

Chicago consists of about 150 wood houses, placed irregularly on both sides of the river, over which there is a bridge. This is already a place of considerable trade, supplying salt, tea, coffee, sugar and clothing to a large tract of country to the south and west; and when connected with the navigable point of the river Illinois, by a canal or railway, cannot fail of rising to importance. Almost every person I met regarded Chicago as the germ of an immense city, and speculators have already bought up, at high prices, all the building ground in the neighborhood. Chicago will, in all probability, attain considerable size, but its situation is not so favorable to growth as many other places in the Union. The country south and west of Chicago has a channel of trade to the south by New Orleans; and the navigation from' Buffalo by Lake Huron is of such length, that perhaps the produce of the country to the south of Chicago will find an outlet to Lake Erie by the waters of the rivers Wabash and Mamee. A canal has been in progress for three years, connecting the Wabash and Mamee, which flows into the west end of Lake Erie; and there can be little difficulty in connecting the Wabash with the Illinois, which, if effected, will materially check the rise of Chicago.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.175–p.176

At the time of visiting Chicago, there was a treaty in progress with the Pottowatamy Indians, and it was supposed nearly 8000 Indians, of all ages, belonging to different tribes, were assembled on the occasion, a treaty being considered a kind of general merrymaking, which lasts several weeks; and animal food, on the present occasion, was served out by the States government. The forests and prairies in the neighborhood were studded with the tents of the Indians, and numerous herds of horses were browsing in all directions.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.176

Some of the tribes could be distinguished by their peculiarities. The Sauks and Foxes have their heads shaven, with exception of a small tuft of hair on the crown. Their garments seemed to vary according to their circumstances, and not to their tribes. The dress of the squaws was generally blue cloth, and sometimes printed cotton, with ornaments in the ears, and occasionally also in the nose. The men generally wore white blankets, with a piece of blue cloth round their loins; and the poorest of them had no other covering, their arms, legs and feet being exposed in nakedness. A few of them had cotton trousers, and jackets of rich patterns, loosely flowing, secured with a sash; boots, and handkerchiefs or bands of cotton, with feathers in the head-dress, their appearance reminding me of the costume of some Asiatic nations. The men are generally without beards, but in one or two instances I saw tufts of hair on the chin, which seemed to be kept with care, and this was conspicuously so among the well-dressed portion. The countenances of both sexes were frequently bedaubed with paint of different kinds, including red, blue and white.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.176–p.177

In the forenoon of my arrival, a council had been held, without transacting business, and a race took place in the afternoon. The spectators were Indians, with exception of a few travelers, and their small number showed the affair excited little interest. The riders had a piece of blue cloth round their loins, and in other respects were perfectly naked, having the whole of their bodies painted of different hues. The race horses had not undergone a course of training. They were of ordinary breed, and, according to British taste at least, small, coarse and ill-formed.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.177

Intoxication prevailed to a great extent among both sexes. When under the influence of liquor, they did not seem unusually loquacious, and their chief delight consisted in venting low shouts, resembling something between the mewing of a cat and the barking of a dog. I observed a powerful Indian, stupefied with spirits, attempting to gain admittance to a shop, vociferating in a noisy manner; as soon as he reached the highest step, a white game gave him a push, and he fell with violence on his back in a pool of mud. He repeated his attempt five or six times in my sight, and was uniformly thrown back in the same manner. Male and female Indians were looking on and enjoying the sufferings of their countryman. The inhuman wretch who thus tortured the poor Indian, was the vender of the poison which had deprived him of his senses.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.177–p.178

Besides the assemblage of Indians, there seemed to be a general fair at Chicago. Large wagons drawn by six or eight oxen, and heavily laden with merchandise, were arriving from, and departing to, distant parts of the country. There was also a kind of horsemarket, and I had much conversation with a dealer from the State of New York, having serious intentions of purchasing a horse to carry me to the banks of the Mississippi, if one could have been got suitable for the journey. The dealers attempted to palm colts on me for aged horses, and seemed versed in all the trickery which is practiced by their profession in Britain.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.178

A person showed me a model of a threshing-machine and a churn, for which he was taking orders, and said he furnished the former at $30, or L.6, 10s. sterling. There were a number of French descendants, who are engaged in the fur-trade, met in Chicago, for the purpose of settling accounts with the Indians. They were dressed in broadcloths and boots, and boarded in the hotels. They are a swarthy scowling race, evidently tinged with Indian blood, speaking the French and English languages fluently, and much addicted to swearing and whisky.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.178

The hotel at which our party was set down, was so disagreeably crowded, that the landlord could not positively promise beds, although he would do everything in his power to accommodate us. The house was dirty in the extreme, and confusion reigned throughout, which the extraordinary circumstances of the village went far to extenuate. I contrived, however, to get on pretty well, having by this time learned to serve myself in many things, carrying water for washing, drying my shirt, wetted by the rain of the preceding evening, and brushing my shoes. The table was amply stored with substantial provisions, to which justice was done by the guests, although indifferently cooked, and still more so served up.

Shirreff, Chicago as a Growing Village, America, Vol.6, p.178–p.179

When bed-time arrived, the landlord showed me to an apartment about ten feet square, in which there were two small beds already occupied, assigning me in a corner a dirty pallet, which had evidently been recently used, and was lying in a state of confusion. Undressing for the night had become a simple proceeding, and consisted in throwing off shoes, neckcloth, coat and vest, the two latter being invariably used to aid the pillow, and I had long dispensed with a nightcap. I was awakened from a sound sleep towards morning, by an angry voice uttering horrid imprecations, accompanied by a demand for the bed I occupied. A lighted candle, which the individual held in his hand, showed him to be a French trader, accompanied by a friend, and as I looked on them for some time in silence, their audacity and brutality of speech increased. At length I lifted my head from the pillow, leaned on my elbow, and with a steady gaze, and the calmest tone of voice, said,—"Who are you that address me in such language?" The countenance of the angry individual fell, and he subduedly asked to share my bed. Wishing to put him to a farther trial, I again replied,—"If you will ask the favor in a proper manner, I shall give you an answer." He was now either ashamed of himself, or felt his pride hurt, and both left the room without uttering a word. Next morning, the individuals who slept in the apartment with me, discovered that the intruders had acted most improperly towards them, and the most noisy of the two entered familarly into conversation with me during breakfast, without alluding to the occurrence of the preceding evening.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Andrew Jackson, 1833

Jacksons' Farewell Address

Title: Jacksons' Farewell Address

Author: Andrew Jackson

Date: 1833

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.8, pp.204-212

On retiring from the presidency in 1837, Jackson spent the remainder of his life at The Hermitage, his home, near Nashville, Tennessee, where he died in 1845. Abridged.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.204

THE necessity of watching with jealous anxiety for the preservation of the Union was earnestly pressed upon his fellow citizens by the Father of his Country in his farewell address. He has there told us that "while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who, in any quarter, may endeavor to weaken its bonds"; and he has cautioned us in the strongest terms against the formation of parties on geographical discriminations as one of the means which might disturb our Union, and to which designing men would be likely to resort.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.205

The lessons contained in this invaluable legacy of Washington to his countrymen should be cherished in the heart of every citizen to the latest generation; and perhaps at no period of time could they be more usefully remembered than at the present moment. For when we look upon the scenes that are passing around us, and dwell upon the pages of his parting address, his paternal counsels would seem to be not merely the offspring of wisdom and foresight, but the voice of prophecy foretelling events and warning us of the evil to come. Forty years have passed since that imperishable document was given to his countrymen. The federal Constitution was then regarded by him as an experiment, and he so speaks of it in his address; but an experiment upon the success of which the best hopes of his country depended, and we all know that he was prepared to lay down his life, if necessary, to secure to it a full and fair trial. The trial has been made. It has succeeded beyond the proudest hopes of those who framed it. Every quarter of this widely extended nation has felt its blessings and shared in the general prosperity produced by its adoption.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.206

But amid this general prosperity and splendid success, the dangers of which he warned us are becoming every day more evident, and the signs of evil are sufficiently apparent to awaken the deepest anxiety in the bosom of the patriot. We behold systematic efforts publicly made to sow the seeds of discord between different parts of the United States, and to place party divisions directly upon geographical distinctions; to excite the South against the North, and the North against the South, and to force into the controversy the most delicate and exciting topics upon which it is impossible that a large portion of the Union can ever speak without strong emotions. Appeals, too, are constantly made to sectional interests, in order to influence the election of the chief magistrate, as if it were desired that he should favor a particular quarter of the country instead of fulfilling the duties of his station with impartial justice to all; and the possible dissolution of the Union has at length become an ordinary and familiar subject of discussion.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.206

Has the warning voice of Washington been forgotten? or have designs already been formed to sever the Union? Let it not be supposed that I impute to all of those who have taken an active part in these unwise and unprofitable discussions a want of patriotism or of public virtue. The honorable feeling of State pride and local attachments find a place in the bosoms of the most enlightened and pure. But while such men are conscious of their own integrity and honesty of purpose they ought never to forget that the citizens of other States are their political brethren; and that, however mistaken they may be in their views, the great body of them are equally honest and upright with themselves. Mutual suspicions and reproaches may in time create mutual hostility, and artful and designing men will always be found who are ready to foment these fatal divisions and to inflame the natural jealousies of different sections of the country. The history of the world is full of such examples, and especially the history of republics.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.207

What have you to gain by division and dissension? Delude not yourselves with the belief that a breach once made may be afterward repaired. If the Union is once severed, the line of separation will grow wider and wider, and the controversies which are now debated and settled in the halls of legislation will then be tried in fields of battle and be determined by the sword. Neither should you deceive yourselves with the hope that the first line of separation would be the permanent one, and that nothing but harmony and concord would be found in the new associations formed upon the dissolution of this Union. Local interests would still be found there, and unchastened ambition. And if the recollection of common dangers, in which the people of these United States stood side by side against the common foe; the memery of victories won by their united valor; the prosperity and happiness they have enjoyed under the present Constitution; the proud name they bear as citizens of this great Republic,—if these recollections and proofs of common interest are not strong enough to bind us together as one people, what tie will hold this Union dissevered?

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.208

The first line of separation would not last for a single generation; new fragments would be torn off; new leaders would spring up; and this great and glorious Republic would soon be broken into a multitude of petty States armed for mutual aggressions, loaded with taxes to pay armies and leaders, seeking aid against each other from foreign powers, insulted and trampled upon by the nations of Europe, until, harassed with conflicts, and humbled and debased in spirit, they would be ready to submit to the absolute dominion of any military adventurer, and to surrender their liberty for the sake of repose. It is impossible to look on the consequences that would inevitably follow the destruction of this government, and not feel indignant when we hear cold calculations about the value of the Union and have so constantly before us a line of conduct so well calculated to weaken its ties.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.208

There is too much at stake to allow pride or passion to influence your decision. Never for a moment believe that the great body of the citizens of any State or States can deliberately intend to do wrong. They may, under the influence of temporary excitement or misguided opinions, commit mistakes; they may be misled for a time by the suggestions of self-interest; but in a community so enlightened and patriotic as the people of the United States, argument will soon make them sensible of their errors, and, when convinced, they will be ready to repair them. If they have no higher or better motives to govern them, they will at least perceive that their own interest requires them to be just to others as they hope to receive justice at their hands.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.209

But in order to maintain the Union unimpaired, it is absolutely necessary that the laws passed by the constituted authorities should be faithfully executed in every part of the country, and that every good citizen should at all times stand ready to put down, with the combined force of the nation, every attempt at unlawful resistance, under whatever pretext it may be made or whatever shape it may assume. Unconstitutional or oppressive laws may no doubt be passed by Congress, either from erroneous views or the want of due consideration; if they are within reach of judicial authority, the remedy is easy and peaceful, and if, from the character of the law, it is an abuse of power not within the control of the judiciary, then free discussion and calm appeals to reason and to the justice of the people will not fail to redress the wrong. But until the law shall be declared void by the courts or repealed by Congress, no individual or combination of individuals can be justified in forcibly resisting its execution. It is impossible that any government can continue to exist upon any other principles. It would cease to be a government, and be unworthy of the name, if it had not the power to enforce the execution for its own laws within its own sphere of action.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.210

It is true that cases may be imagined disclosing such a settled purpose of usurpation and oppression on the part of the government as would justify an appeal to arms. These, however, are extreme cases, which we have no reason to apprehend in a government where the power is in the hands of a patriotic people; and no citizen who loves his country would in any case whatever resort to forcible resistance unless he clearly saw that the time had come when a freeman should prefer death to submission; for if such a struggle is once begun, and the citizens of one section of the country be arrayed in arms against those of another in doubtful conflict, let the battle result as it may, there will be an end of the Union, and with it an end of the hopes of freedom. The victory of the injured would not secure to them the blessings of liberty; it would avenge their wrongs, but they would themselves share in the common ruin.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.210

But the Constitution can not be maintained, nor the Union preserved, in opposition to public feeling, by the mere exertion of the coercive powers confided to the general government. The foundations must be laid in the affections of the people; in the security it gives to life, liberty, character, and property, in every quarter of the country; and in the fraternal attachments which the citizens of the several States bear to one another, as members of one political family mutually contributing to promote the happiness of each other. Hence the citizens of every State should studiously avoid everything calculated to wound the sensibility or offend the just pride of the people of other States; and they should frown upon any proceedings within their own borders likely to disturb the tranquillity of their political brethren in other portions of the Union.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.211

You have no longer any cause to fear danger from abroad; your strength and power are well known throughout the civilized world, as well as the high and gallant bearing of your sons. It is from within, among yourselves, from cupidity, from corruption, from disappointed ambition, and inordinate thirst for power, that factions will be formed and liberty endangered. It is against such designs, whatever disguise the actors may assume, that you have especially to guard yourselves. You have the highest of human trusts committed to your care. Providence has showered on this favored land blessings without number, and has chosen you, as the guardians of freedom, to preserve it for the benefit of the human race. May he who holds in his hands the destinies of nations make you worthy of the favors he has bestowed, and enable you, with pure hearts, and pure hands, and sleepless vigilance, to guard and defend to the end of time the great charge he has committed to your keeping.

Jacksons' Farewell Address, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.212

My own race is nearly run; advanced age and failing health warn me that before long I must pass beyond the reach of human events and cease to feel the vicissitudes of human affairs. I thank God that my life has been spent in a land of liberty, and that he has given me a heart to love my country with the affection of a son. And filled with gratitude for your constant and unwavering kindness, I bid you a last and affectionate farewell.

Principles of Executive Government

Title: Principles of Executive Government

Author: Andrew Jackson

Date: 1834

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.180-188

This protest was made to the United States Senate by President Jackson in 1834, as a result of its censure of him for his action in attempting to abolish the United States Bank. Never before had a President been subjected to such a Senatorial proceeding. Three years later, however, the resolution of censure was by vote expunged from the Congressional Record.

Jackson, in his often-assailed bank policy, seems to have been nearer right in some respects than his critics. He was vain of his integrity—proud of the position he occupied—and was little inclined to brook either criticism or questioning. His decisions were often determined by his manipulating friends, known as the "Kitchen Cabinet," who shrewdly used his force and popularity. The Senate refused to memorialize the accompanying protest.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.180

IT appears by the published journal of the Senate that on the 26th of December last a resolution was offered by a member of the Senate, which after a protracted debate was on the 28th day of March last modified by the mover and passed by the votes of twenty-six Senators out of forty-six who were present and voted, in the following words, viz.:

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.180

Resolved, That the President, in the late executive proceedings in relation to the public revenue, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the Constitution and laws, but in derogation of both.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.180–p.181

Having had the honor, through the voluntary suffrages of the American people, to fill the office of the President of the United States during the period which may be presumed to have been referred to in this resolution, it is sufficiently evident that the censure it inflicts was intended for myself. Without notice, unheard and untried, I thus find myself charged on the records of the Senate, and in a form hitherto unknown in our history, with the high crime of violating the laws and Constitution of my country.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.181

It can seldom be necessary for any department of the Government, when assailed in conversation or debate or by the strictures of the press or of popular assemblies, to step out of its ordinary path for the purpose of vindicating its conduct or of pointing out any irregularity or injustice in the manner of the attack; but when the Chief Executive Magistrate is, by one of the most important branches of the Government in its official capacity, in a public manner, and by its recorded sentence, but without precedent, competent authority, or just cause, declared guilty of a breach of the laws and Constitution, it is due to his station, to public opinion, and to a proper self-respect that the officer thus denounced should promptly expose the wrong which has been done.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.181

In the present case, moreover, there is even a stronger necessity for such a vindication. By an express provision of the Constitution, before the President of the United States can enter on the execution of his office he is required to take an oath or affirmation in the following words:

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.181–p.182

I do solemnly swear (or affirm,) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and will do the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.182

The duty of defending so far as in him lies the integrity of the Constitution would indeed have resulted from the very nature of his office, but by thus expressing it in the official oath or affirmation, which in this respect differs from that of any other functionary, the founders of our Republic have attested their sense of its importance and have given to it a peculiar solemnity and force. Bound to the performance of this duty by the oath I have taken, by the strongest obligations of gratitude to the American people, and by the ties which unite my every earthly interest with the welfare and glory of my country, and perfectly convinced that the discussion and passage of the above-mentioned resolution were not only unauthorized by the Constitution, but in many respects repugnant to its provisions and subversive of the rights secured by it to other coordinate departments, I deem it an imperative duty to maintain the supremacy of that sacred instrument and the immunities of the department intrusted to my care by all means consistent with my own lawful powers, with the rights of others, and with the genius of our civil institutions. To this end I have caused this my solemn protest against the aforesaid proceedings to be placed on the files of the executive department and to be transmitted to the Senate.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.182–p.183

It is alike due to the subject, the Senate, and the people that the views which I have taken of the proceedings referred to, and which compel me to regard them in the light that has been mentioned, should be exhibited at length, and with the freedom and firmness which are required by an occasion so unprecedented and peculiar.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.183–p.184

Under the Constitution of the United States the powers and functions of the various departments of the Federal Government and their responsibilities for violation or neglect of duty are clearly defined or result by necessary inference. The legislative power is, subject to the qualified negative of the President, vested in the Congress of the United States, composed of the Senate and House of Representatives; the executive power is vested exclusively in the President, except that in the conclusion of treaties and in certain appointments to office he is to act with the advice and consent of the Senate; the judicial power is vested exclusively in the Supreme and other courts of the United States, except in cases of impeachment, for which purpose the accusatory power is vested in the House of Representatives and that of hearing and determining in the Senate. But although for the special purposes which have been mentioned there is an occasional intermixture of the powers of the different departments, yet with these exceptions each of the three great departments is independent of the others in its sphere of action, and when it deviates from that sphere is not responsible to the others further than it is expressly made so in the Constitution. In every other respect each of them is the coequal of the other two, and all are the servants of the American people, without power or right to control or censure each other in the service of their common superior, save only in the manner and to the degree which that superior has prescribed.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.184–p.185

The responsibilities of the President are numerous and weighty. He is liable to impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanors, and on due conviction to removal from office and perpetual disqualification; and notwithstanding such conviction, he may also be indicted and punished according to law. He is also liable to the private action of any party who may have been injured by his illegal mandates or instructions in the same manner and to the same extent as the humblest functionary. In addition to the responsibilities which may thus be enforced by impeachment, criminal prosecution, or suit at law, he is also accountable at the bar of public opinion for every act of his Administration. Subject only to the restraints of truth and justice, the free people of the United States have the undoubted right, as individuals or collectively, orally or in writing, at such times and in such language and form as they may think proper, to discuss his official conduct and to express and promulgate their opinions concerning it. Indirectly also his conduct may come under review in either branch of the Legislature, or in the Senate when acting in its executive capacity, and so far as the executive or legislative proceedings of these bodies may require it, it may be exercised by them. These are believed to be the proper and only modes in which the President of the United States is to be held accountable for his official conduct.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.185

Tested by these principles, the resolution of the Senate is wholly unauthorized by the Constitution, and in derogation of its entire spirit. It assumes that a single branch of the legislative department may for the purposes of a public censure, and without any view to legislation or impeachment, take up, consider, and decide upon the official acts of the Executive. But in no part of the Constitution is the President subjected to any such responsibility, and in no part of that instrument is any such power conferred on either branch of the Legislature….

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.185–p.186

It is due to the high trust with which I have been charged, to those who may be called to succeed me in it, to the representatives of the people whose constitutional prerogative has been unlawfully assumed, to the people and to the States, and to the Constitution they have established that I should not permit its provisions to be broken down by such an attack on the executive department without at least some effort "to preserve, protect, and defend" them. With this view, and for the reasons which have been stated, I do hereby solemnly protest against the aforementioned proceedings of the Senate as unauthorized by the Constitution, contrary to its spirit and to several of its express provisions, subversive of that distribution of the powers of government which it has ordained and established, destructive of the checks and safeguards by which those powers were intended on the one hand to be controlled and on the other to be protected, and calculated by their immediate and collateral effects, by their character and tendency, to concentrate in the hands of a body not directly amenable to the people a degree of influence and power dangerous to their liberties and fatal to the Constitution of their choice.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.186–p.187–p.188

The resolution of the Senate contains an imputation upon my private as well as upon my public character, and as it must stand forever on their journals, I can not close this substitute for that defense which I have not been allowed to present in the ordinary form without remarking that I have lived in vain if it be necessary to enter into a formal vindication of my character and purposes from such an imputation. In vain do I bear upon my person enduring memorials of that contest in which American liberty was purchased; in vain have I since periled property, fame, and life in defense of the rights and privileges so dearly bought; in vain am I now, without a personal aspiration or the hope of individual advantage, encountering responsibilities and dangers from which by mere inactivity in relation to a single point I might have been exempt, if any serious doubts can be entertained as to the purity of my purposes and motives. If I had been ambitious, I should have sought an alliance with that powerful institution which even now aspires to no divided empire. If I had been venal, I should have sold myself to its designs. Had I preferred personal comfort and official ease to the performance of my arduous duty, I should have ceased to molest it. In the history of conquerors and usurpers never in the fire of youth nor in the vigor of manhood could I find an attraction to lure me from the path of duty, and now I shall scarcely find an inducement to commence their career of ambition when gray hairs and a decaying frame, instead of inviting to toil and battle, call me to the contemplation of other worlds, where conquerors cease to be honored and usurpers expiate their crimes. The only ambition I can feel is to acquit myself to Him to whom I must soon render an account of my stewardship, to serve my fellowmen, and live respected and honored in the history of my country. No; the ambition which leads me on is an anxious desire and a fixed determination to return to the people unimpaired the sacred trust they have confided to my charge; to heal the wounds of the Constitution and preserve it from further violation; to persuade my countrymen, so far as I may, that it is not in a splendid government supported by powerful monopolies and aristocratical establishments that they will find happiness or their liberties protection, but in a plain system, void of pomp, protecting all and granting favors to none, dispensing its blessings, like the dews of Heaven, unseen and unfelt save in the freshness and beauty they contribute to produce. It is such a government that the genius of our people requires; such an one only under which our States may remain for ages to come united, prosperous, and free. If the Almighty Being who has hitherto sustained and protected me will but vouchsafe to make my feeble powers instrumental to such a result, I shall anticipate with pleasure the place to be assigned me in the history of my country, and die contented with the belief that I have contributed in some small degree to increase the value and prolong the duration of American liberty.

Jackson, Principles of Executive Government, America, Vol.6, p.188

To the end that the resolution of the Senate may not be hereafter drawn into precedent with the authority of silent acquiescence on the part of the executive department, and to the end also that my motives and views in the Executive proceedings denounced in that resolution may be known to my fellow-citizens, to the world, and to all posterity, I respectfully request that this message and protest may be entered at length on the journals of the Senate.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Henry Clay, 1834

Clays' Attack on Jackson

Title: Clays' Attack on Jackson

Author: Henry Clay

Date: 1834

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.9, pp.87-94

This article is taken from a speech made in the United States Senate, on April 30, 1834.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.87

NEVER, Mr. President, have I known or read of an administration which expires with so much agony, and so little composure and resignation, as that which now unfortunately has the control of public affairs in this country. It exhibits a state of mind, feverish, fretful, and fidgety, bounding recklessly from one desperate expedient to another, without any sober or settled purpose. Ever since the dog-days of last summer, it has been making a succession of the most extravagant plunges, of which the extraordinary cabinet paper, a sort of appeal from a descending cabinet to the people, was the first; and the protest, a direct appeal from the Senate to the people, is the last and the worst.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.87

A new philosophy has sprung up within a few years past, called phrenology. There is, I believe, something in it, but not quite as much as its ardent followers proclaim. According to its doctrines, the leading passion, propensity, and characteristics of every man are developed in his physical conformation, chiefly in the structure of his head. Gall and Spurzheim, its founders, or most eminent propagators, being dead, I regret that neither of them can examine the head of our illustrious chief magistrate. But if it could be surveyed by Doctor Caldwell, of Transylvania University, I am persuaded that he would find the organ of destructiveness prominently developed.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.88

Except an enormous fabric of executive power for himself, the president has built up nothing, constructed nothing, and will leave no enduring monument of his administration. He goes for destruction, universal destruction; and it seems to be his greatest ambition to efface and obliterate every trace of the wisdom of his predecessors. He has displayed this remarkable trait throughout his whole life, whether in private walks or in the public service. He signally and gloriously exhibited that peculiar organ when contending against the enemies of his country, in the Battle of New Orleans. For that brilliant exploit, no one has ever been more ready than myself to award him all due honor. At the head of our armies was his appropriate position, and most unfortunate for his fame was the day when he entered on the career of administration as the chief executive officer. He lives by excitement, perpetual, agitating excitement, and would die in a state of perfect repose and tranquillity. He has never been without some subject of attack, either in individuals, or in masses, or in institutions.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.88

I, myself, have been one of his favorites, and I do not know but that I have recently recommended myself to his special regard. During his administration this has been his constant course. The Indians and Indian policy, internal improvements, the colonial trade, the Supreme Court, Congress, the banks, have successively experienced the attacks of his haughty and imperious spirit. And if he tramples the bank in the dust, my word for it, we shall see him quickly in chase of some new subject of his vengeance. This is the genuine spirit of conquerors and of conquest. It is said by the biographer of Alexander the Great that, after he had completed his Asiatic conquests, he seemed to sigh because there were no more worlds for him to subdue; and, finding himself without further employment for his valor or his arms, he turned within himself to search the means to gratify his insatiable thirst of glory. What sort of conquest he achieved of himself, the same biographer tragically records.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.89

Already has the president singled out and designated, in the Senate of the United States, the new object of his hostile pursuit; and the protest, which I am now to consider, is his declaration of war. What has provoked it? The Senate, a component part of the Congress of the United States, at its last adjournment, left the Treasury of the United States in the safe custody of the persons and places assigned by law to keep it. Upon reassembling, it found the treasure removed; some of its guardians displaced; all, remaining, brought under the immediate control of the president's sole will; and the president having free and unobstructed access to the public money. The Senate believes that the purse of the nation is, by the Constitution and laws, intrusted to the exclusive legislative care of Congress. It has dared to avow and express this opinion, in a resolution adopted on the twenty-eighth of March last. That resolution was preceded by a debate of three month's duration, in the progress of which the able and zealous supporters of the executive in the Senate were attentively heard. Every argument which their ample resources, or those of the members of the executive, could supply was listened to with respect, and duly weighed. After full deliberation, the Senate expressed its conviction that the executive had violated the Constitution and laws. It cautiously refrained in the resolution from all examination into the motives or intention of the executive; it ascribed no bad ones to him; it restricted itself to a simple declaration of its solemn belief that the Constitution and laws had been violated. This is the extent of the offense of the Senate. This is what it has done to excite the executive indignation and to bring upon it the infliction of a denunciatory protest.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.90

But, I would ask, in what tone, temper, and spirit does the president come to the Senate? As a great State culprit who has been arraigned at the bar of justice, or sentenced as guilty? Does he manifest any of those compunctious visitings of conscience which a guilty violator of the Constitution and laws of the land ought to feel? Does he address himself to a high court with the respect, to say nothing of humility, which a person accused or convicted would naturally feel? No, no. He comes as if the Senate were guilty, as if he were in the judgment-seat, and the Senate stood accused before him. He arraigns the Senate; puts it upon trial; condemns it; he comes as if he felt himself elevated far above the Senate, and beyond all reach of the law, surrounded by unapproachable impunity. He who professes to be an innocent and injured man gravely accuses the Senate, and modestly asks it to put upon its own record his sentence of condemnation! When before did the arraigned or convicted party demand of the court which was to try, or had condemned him, to enter upon their records a severe denunciation of their own conduct? The president presents himself before the Senate, not in the garb of suffering innocence, but in imperial and royal costume—as a dictator, to rebuke a refractory Senate; to command it to record his solemn protest; to chastise it for disobedience.

"The hearts of princes kiss obedience,

So much they love it; but to stubborn spirits

They swell, and grow as terrible as storms."

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.91

The president exhibits great irritation and impatience at the presumptuousness of a resolution, which, without the imputation of any bad intention or design, ventures to allege that he has violated the Constitution and laws. His constitution and official infallibility must not be questioned. To controvert it is an act of injustice, inhumanity, and calumny. He is treated as a criminal, and, without summons, he is prejudged, condemned, and sentenced. Is the president scrupulously careful of the memory of the dead, or the feelings of the living, in respect to violations of the Constitution? If a violation by him implies criminal guilt, a violation by them can not be innocent and guiltless.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.92

And how has the president treated the memory of the immortal Father of his Country?—that great man, who, for purity of purpose and character, wisdom and moderation, unsullied virtue and unsurpassed patriotism, is without competition in past history or among living men, and whose equal we scarcely dare hope will ever be again presented as a blessing to mankind. How has he been treated by the president? Has he not again and again pronounced that, by approving the bill chartering the first Bank of the United States, Washington violated the Constitution of his country? That violation, according to the president, included volition and design, was prompted by improper motives, and was committed with an unlawful intent. It was the more inexcusable in Washington, because he assisted and presided in the convention which formed the Constitution. If it be unjust to arraign, try unheard, and condemn as guilty, a living man filling an exalted office, with all the splendor, power, and influence which that office possesses, how much more cruel is it to disturb the sacred and venerated ashes of the illustrious dead, who can raise no voice and make no protest against the imputation of high crime!

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.93

What has been the treatment of the president toward that other illustrious man, yet spared to us, but who is lingering upon the very verge of eternity? Has he abstained from charging the Father of the Constitution with criminal intent in violating the Constitution? Mr. Madison, like Washington, assisted in the formation of the Constitution; was one of its ablest expounders and advocates; and was opposed, on constitutional ground, to the first Bank of the United States. But yielding to the force of circumstances, and especially to the great principle, that the peace and stability of human society require that a controverted question, which has been finally settled by all the departments of government by long acquiescence, and by the people themselves, should not be open to perpetual dispute and disturbance, he approved the bill chartering the present Bank of the United States. Even the name of James Madison, which is but another for purity, patriotism, profound learning, and enlightened experience, can not escape the imputations of his present successor.

Clays' Attack on Jackson, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.93

And, lastly, how often has he charged Congress itself with open violations of the Constitution? Times almost without number. During the present session he has sent in a message, in regard to the land bill, in which he has charged it with an undisguised violation. A violation so palpable that it is not even disguised, and must, therefore, necessarily imply a criminal intent. Sir, the advisers of the president, whoever they are, deceive him and themselves. They have vainly supposed that, by an appeal to the people, and an exhibition of the wounds of the president, they could enlist the sympathies and the commiseration of the people—that the name of Andrew Jackson would bear down the Senate and all opposition. They have yet to learn, what they will soon learn, that even a good and responsible name may be sued so frequently, as an indorser, that its credit and the public confidence in its solidity have been seriously impaired. They mistake the intelligence of the people, who are not prepared to see and sanction the president putting forth indiscriminate charges of a violation of the Constitution against whomsoever he pleases, and exhibiting unmeasured rage and indignation when his own infallibility is dared to be questioned.

Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail

Title: Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail

Author: Amos Kendall

Date: 1835

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.189-194

Appointed Postmaster-General by Jackson in 1835, the year in which this letter was addressed to the postmaster at New York, Amos Kendall had ably filled many public offices, and during the Jackson administration was extremely influential. He aided in shaping Jackson's anti-bank policy, was a special treasury agent to conduct negotiations with State banks, and is credited with having written several of Jackson's state papers. He was a prominent member of what was known as Jackson's "Kitchen Cabinet," a group of advisers who are supposed to have influenced "Old Hickory" more than did the members of the Cabinet themselves.

For the first time in its history, Kendall cleared the Postoffice Department of debt, and introduced numerous salutary reforms. Later he became associated with S. F. B. Morse in the ownership and management of the Morse electric telegraph patents, bringing about their commercial success and amassing a fortune.

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.189

IT was right to propose to the Anti-Slavery Society voluntarily to desist from attempting to send their publications into the Southern States by public mails; and their refusal to do so, after they were apprised that the entire mails were put in jeopardy by them, is but another evidence of the fatuity of the counsels by which they are directed.

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.189–p.190

After mature consideration of the subject, and seeking the best advice within my reach, I am confirmed in the opinion, that the Postmaster-General has no legal authority, by any order or regulation of his department, to exclude from the mails any species of newspapers, magazines or pamphlets. Such a power vested in the head of this department would be fearfully dangerous, and has been properly withheld. Any order or letter of mine directing or officially sanctioning the step you have taken, would therefore be utterly powerless and void, and would not in the slightest degree relieve you from its responsibility.

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.190

But to prevent any mistake in your mind, or in that of the abolitionists, or of the public, in relation to my position and views, I have no hesitation in saying, that I am deterred from giving any order to exclude the whole series of abolition publications from the Southern mails only by a want of legal power; and that if I were situated as you are, I would do as you have done.

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.190–p.191

Postmasters may lawfully know in all cases the contents of newspapers, because the law expressly provides that they shall be so put up that they may be readily examined; and if they know those contents to be calculated and designed to produce, and if delivered, will certainly produce the commission of the most aggravated crimes upon the property and persons of their fellow citizens, it cannot be doubted that it is their duty to detain them, if not even to hand them over to the civil authorities. The Postmaster-General has no legal power to prescribe any rule for the government of postmasters in such cases, nor has he ever attempted to do so. They act in each case upon their own responsibility, and if they improperly detain or use papers sent to their offices for transmission or delivery, it is at their peril and on their heads falls the punishment….

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.191

From the specimens I have seen of anti-slavery publications, and the concurrent testimony of every class of citizens except the abolitionists, they tend directly to produce in the South, evils and horrors surpassing those usually resulting from foreign invasion or ordinary insurrection. From their revolting pictures and fervid appeals addressed to the senses and passions of the blacks they are calculated to fill every family with assassins and produce at no distant day an exterminating servile war. So aggravated is the character of those papers that the people of the Southern States with an unanimity never witnessed except in cases of extreme danger, have evinced, in public meetings and by other demonstrations, a determination to seek defense and safety in putting an end to their circulation by any means, and at any hazard. Lawless power is to be resisted; but power which is exerted in palpable self-defense, is not lawless. That such is the power whose elements are now agitating the South, the united people of that section religiously believe; and so long as that shall be their impression, it will require the array of armies to carry the mails in safety through their territories, if they continue to be used as the instrument of those who are supposed to seek their destruction.

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.191–p.192

As a measure of great public necessity, therefore, you and the other postmasters who have assumed the responsibility of stopping these inflammatory papers, will, I have no doubt, stand justified in that step before your country and all mankind.

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.192

But perhaps the legal right of the abolitionists to make use of the public mails in distributing their insurrectionary papers throughout the Southern States, is not so clear as they seem to imagine. When those States became independent they acquired a right to prohibit the circulation of such papers within their territories; and their power over the subject of slavery and all its incidents, was in no degree diminished by the adoption of the Federal Constitution. It is still as undivided and sovereign as it was when they were first emancipated from the dominion of the king and Parliament of Great Britain. In the exercise of that power, some of those States have made the circulation of such papers a capital crime; others have made it a felony punishable by confinement in the penitentiary; and perhaps there is not one among them which has not forbidden it under heavy penalties. If the abolitionists or their agents were caught distributing their tracts in Louisiana, they would be legally punished with death; if they were apprehended in Georgia, they might be legally sent to the penitentiary; and in each of the slaveholding States they would suffer the penalties of their respective laws.

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.192–p.193

Now, have these people a legal right to do by the mail carriers and postmasters of the United States, acts, which if done by themselves or their agents, would lawfully subject them to the punishment due to felons of the deepest dye? Are the officers of the United States compelled by the Constitution and laws, to become the instruments and accomplices of those who design to baffle and make nugatory the constitutional laws of the States—to fill them with sedition, murder and insurrection—to overthrow those institutions which are recognized and guaranteed by the Constitution itself?

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.193

And is it entirely certain, that any existing law of the United States would protect mail carriers and postmasters against the penalties of the State laws, if they shall knowingly carry, distribute or hand out any of these forbidden papers? If a State by a constitutional law declare any specific act to be a crime, how are officers of the United States who may be found guilty of that act, to escape the penalties of the State law? It might be in vain for them to plead that the post office law made it their duty to deliver all papers which came by mail. In reply to this argument it might be alleged, that the post office law imposes penalties on postmasters for "improperly" detaining papers which come by the mail, and that the detention of the papers in question is not improper, because their circulation is prohibited by valid State laws. Ascending to a higher principle, it might be plausibly alleged, that no law of the United States can protect from punishment any man, whether a public officer or citizen, in the commission of an act which the State, acting within the undoubted sphere of her reserved rights, has declared to be a crime….

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.193–p.194

Upon these grounds a postmaster may well hesitate to be the agent of the abolitionists in sending their incendiary publications into States where their circulation is prohibited by law, and much more may postmasters residing in those States refuse to distribute them. Whether the arguments here suggested be sound or not, of one 'hing there can be no doubt. If it shall ever be settled by the authority of Congress, that the post office establishment may be legally, and must be actually employed as an irresponsible agent to enable misguided fanatics or reckless incendiaries to stir up with impunity insurrection and servile war in the Southern States, those States will of necessity consider the General Government as an accomplice in the crime—they will look upon it identified in a cruel and unconstitutional attack as their unquestionable rights and dearest interests, and they must necessarily treat it as a common enemy in their means of defence. Ought the postmaster or the department, by thrusting these papers upon the Southern States now, in defiance of their laws, to hasten a state of things so deplorable?

Kendall, Transmitting Anti-Slavery Mail, America, Vol.6, p.194

I do not desire to be understood as affirming that the suggestion here thrown out, ought, without the action of higher authority, to be considered as the settled construction of the law, or regarded by postmasters as the rule of their future action. It is only intended to say, that in a sudden emergency, involving principles so grave and consequences so serious, the safest course for postmasters and the best for the country, is that which you have adopted.

The Last Seminole War

Title: The Last Seminole War

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1835

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.255-262

At the time of the last "Seminole War (1835-42) Thomas H. Benton was a United States Senator, and no one was better qualified to record the events of "the most desperate and costly of our Indian wars . . . and the last serious obstruction offered by the redskins to the national plan of transferring them bodily to the west side of the Mississippi." In his "Thirty Years' View," Benton gives this account of the tragic stand made by Osceola and his Seminoles for the hunting-grounds of their ancestors.

Osceola was born in Georgia in 1804, and died at Fort Moultrie, South Carolina, where he was a prisoner, in 1838. He was the son of an English trader and an Indian woman. It took seven years and cost some $30,000,000 to subjugate the Seminoles, following their massacre of Major Dade and his command of a hundred men, on December 28, 1835, as here described.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.255

THIS was one of the most troublesome, expensive and unmanageable Indian wars in which the United States had been engaged; and from the length of time it continued the amount of money it cost, and the difficulty of obtaining results, it became a convenient handle of attack upon the [Jackson] administration; and in which party spirit, in pursuit of its object, went the length of injuring both individual and national character. It continued about seven years—as long as the Revolutionary War—cost some thirty millions of money—and baffled the exertions of several generals; recommenced when supposed to be finished; and was only finally terminated by changing military campaigns into an armed occupation by settlers. All the opposition presses and orators took hold of it, and made its misfortunes the common theme of invective and declamation.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.256

Its origin was charged to the oppressive conduct of the administration—its protracted length to their imbecility—its cost to their extravagance—its defeats to the want of foresight and care. The Indians stood for an innocent and persecuted people. Heroes and patriots were made of their chiefs. Our generals and troops were decried; applause was lavished upon a handful of savages who could thus defend their country; and corresponding censure upon successive armies which could not conquer them. All this going incessantly into the Congress debates and the party newspapers, was injuring the administration at home, and the country abroad; and, by dint of iteration and reiteration, stood a good chance to become history, and to be handed down to posterity.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.256–p.257

At the same time the war was one of flagrant and cruel aggression on the part of these Indians. Their removal to the west of the Mississippi was part of the plan for the general removal of all the Indians, and every preparation was complete for their departure by their own agreement, when it was interrupted by a horrible act. It was the 28th day of December, 1835, that the United States agent in Florida, and several others, were suddenly massacred by a party under Osceola, who had just been at the hospitable table with them: at the same time the sutler and others were attacked as they sat at the table; the same day two expresses were killed; and to crown these bloody deeds, the same day witnessed the destruction of Major Dade's command of 112 men, on its march from Tampa Bay to Withlacootchee. All these massacres were surprises, the result of concert, and executed as such upon unsuspecting victims. The agent (Mr. Thompson) and some friends were shot from the bushes while taking a walk near his house; the sutler and his guests were shot at the dinner table; the express riders were waylaid, and shot in the road; Major Dade's command was attacked on the march, by an unseen foe, overpowered, and killed nearly to the last man. All these deadly attacks took place on the same day and at points wide apart—showing that the plot was as extensive as it was secret, and cruel as it was treacherous; for not a soul was spared in either of the four relentless attacks.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.257–p.258

It was two days after the event that an infantry soldier of Major Dade's command appeared at Fort King, on Tampa Bay, from which it had marched six days before, and gave information of what had happened. The command was on the march, in open pine woods, tall grass all around, and a swamp on the left flank. The grass concealed a treacherous ambuscade. The advanced guard had passed, and was cut off. Both the advance and the main body were attacked at the same moment, but divided from each other. A circle of fire enclosed each—fire from an invisible foe. To stand was to be shot down; to advance was to charge upon concealed rifles. But it was the only course—was bravely adopted—and many savages, thus sprung from their coverts, were killed. The officers, courageously exposing themselves, were rapidly shot—Major Dade early in the action. At the end of an hour successive charges had roused the savages from the grass (which seemed to be alive with their naked and painted bodies, yelling and leaping), and driven beyond the range of shot.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.258

But the command was too much weakened for a further operation. The wounded were too numerous to be carried along; too precious to be left behind to be massacred. The battle-ground was maintained, and a small band had conquered respite from attack: but to advance or retreat was equally impossible. The only resource was to build a small pen of pine logs, cut from the forest, collect the wounded and the survivors into it, as into a little fort, and repulse the assailants as long as possible. This was done till near sunset—the action having begun at ten in the morning.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.258–p.259

By that time every officer was dead but one, and he desperately wounded, and helpless on the ground. Only two men remained without wounds, and they red with the blood of others, spirted upon them, or stained in helping the helpless. The little pen was filled with the dead and the dying. The firing ceased. The expiring lieutenant told the survivors he could do no more for them, and gave them leave to save themselves as they could. They asked his advice. He gave it to them; and to that advice we are indebted for the only report of that bloody day's work. He advised them all to lay down among the dead—to remain still—and take their chances of being considered dead. This advice was followed. All became still, prostrate and motionless; and the savages, slowly and cautiously approaching, were a long time before they would venture within the ghastly pen, where danger might still lurk under apparent death.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.259

A squad of about forty negroes—fugitives from the Southern States, more savage than the savage—were the first to enter. They came in with knives and hatchets, cutting throats and splitting skulls wherever they saw a sign of life. To make sure of skipping no one alive, all were pulled and handled, punched and kicked; and a groan or movement, an opening of the eye, or even the involuntary contraction of a muscle, was an invitation to the knife and the tomahawk. Only four of the living were able to subdue sensations, bodily and mental, and remain without sign of feeling under this dreadful ordeal; and two of these received stabs, or blows—as many of the dead did. Lying still until the search was over, and darkness had come on, and the butchers were gone, these four crept from among their dead comrades and undertook to make their way back to Tampa Bay—separating into two parties for greater safety.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.260

The one that came in first had a narrow escape. Pursuing a path the next day, an Indian on horse-back, and with a rifle across the saddle-bow, met them full in the way. To separate, and take the chance of a divided pursuit, was the only hope for either: and they struck off into opposite directions. The one to the right was pursued; and very soon the sharp crack of a rifle made known his fate to the one that had gone to the left. To him it was a warning, that his comrade being dispatched, his own turn came next. It was open pine woods, and a running, or standing, man visible at a distance. The Indian on horseback was already in view. Escape by flight was impossible. Concealment in the grass, or among the palmettos, was the only hope; and this was tried. The man lay close: the Indian rode near him. He made circles around, eying the ground far and near. Rising in his stirrups to get a wider view, and seeing nothing, he turned the head of his horse and galloped off—the poor soldier having been almost under the horse's feet. This man, thus marvelously escaping, was the first to bring in the sad report of the Dade defeat—followed soon after by two others with its melancholy confirmation.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.260–p.261

And these were the only reports ever received of that completest of defeats. No officer survived to report a word. All were killed in their places—men and officers, each in his place, no one breaking ranks or giving back: and when afterward the ground was examined, and events verified by signs, the skeletons in their places, and the bullet holes in trees and logs, and the little pen with its heaps of bones, showed that the carnage had taken place exactly as described by the men. And this was the slaughter of Major Dade and his command of 108 out of 112; as treacherous, as barbarous, as perseveringly cruel as ever was known. One single feature is some relief to the sadness of the picture, and discriminates this defeat from most others suffered at the hands of Indians. There were no prisoners put to death; for no man surrendered. There were no fugitives slain in vain attempts at flight; for no one fled. All stood, and fought, and fell in their places, returning blow for blow while life lasted. It was the death of soldiers, showing that steadiness in defeat which is above courage in victory.

Benton, Last Seminole War, America, Vol.6, p.261–p.262

And this was the origin of the Florida Indian war: and a more treacherous, ferocious, and cold-blooded origin was never given to any Indian war. Yet such is the perversity of party spirit that its author—the savage Osceola—has been exalted into a hero-patriot; our officers, disparaged and ridiculed; the administration loaded with obloquy. And all this by our public men in Congress, as well as by writers in the daily and periodical publications. The future historian who should take these speeches and publications for their guide (and they are too numerous and emphatic to be overlooked), would write a history discreditable to our arms, and reproachful to our justice. It would be a narrative of wickedness and imbecility on our part—of patriotism and heroism on the part of the Indians: those Indians whose very name (Seminole—wild), define them as the fugitives from all tribes, and made still worse than fugitive Indians by a mixture with fugitive negroes, some of whom became their chiefs.

The Death of Lafayette, Sargent S. Prentiss, 1835

The Death of Lafayette

Title: The Death of Lafayette

Author: Sargent S. Prentiss

Date: 1835

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.8, pp.218-221

This account is from a speech made at Jackson, Mississippi, in August, 1835. Prentiss was born in 1808 and died in 1850. He was elected to Congress from Mississippi in 1838.

Prentiss, Death of Lafayette, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.218

DEATH who knocks with equal hand at the door of the cottage and the palace gate, has been busy at his appointed work. Mourning prevails throughout the land, and the countenances of all are shrouded in the mantle of regret. Far across the wild Atlantic, amid the pleasant vineyards in the sunny land of France, there, too, is mourning; and the weeds of sorrow are alike worn by prince and peasant. Against whom has the monarch of the tomb turned his remorseless dart that such widespread sorrow prevails? Hark, and the agonized voice of Freedom, weeping for her favorite son, will tell you in strains sadder than those with which she "shrieked when Kosciusko fell," that Lafayette—the gallant and the good—has ceased to live.

Prentiss, Death of Lafayette, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.218

The friend and companion of Washington is no more. He who taught the eagle of our country, while yet unfledged, to plume his young wing and mate his talons with the lion's strength, has taken his flight far beyond the stars, beneath whose influence he fought so well. Lafayette is dead! The gallant ship, whose pennon has so often bravely streamed above the roar of battle and the tempest's rage, has at length gone slowly down in the still and quiet waters. Well mightest thou, O Death, now recline beneath the laurels thou hast won; for never since, as the grim messenger of Almighty Vengeance, thou camest into this world, did a more generous heart cease to heave beneath thy chilling touch, and never will thy insatiate dart be hurled against a nobler breast! Who does not feel at the mournful intelligence, as if he had most something cheering from his own path through life; as if some bright star, at which he had been accustomed frequently and fondly to gaze, had been suddenly extinguished in the firmament?

Prentiss, Death of Lafayette, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.219

How came he here? Born to a high name and a rich inheritance, educated at a dissipated and voluptuous court, married to a young and beautiful woman,—how came he to break through the blandishments of love and the temptations of pleasure and thus be found fighting the battles of strangers, far away in the wilds of America? It was because, from his infancy, there had grown up in his bosom a passion more potent than all others; the love of liberty. Upon his heart a spark from the very altar of Freedom had fallen and he watched and cherished it with more than vestal vigilance. This passionate love of liberty, this fire which was thenceforth to glow unquenched and undimmed, impelled him to break asunder the ties both of pleasure and affection. He heard that a gallant people had raised the standard of revolt against oppression and he hastened to join them. It was to him the crusade of Liberty; and like a knight of the Holy Cross, he had enlisted in the ranks of those who had sworn to rescue her altars from the profane touch of the tyrant.

Prentiss, Death of Lafayette, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.220

More congenial to him by far were the hardships, the dangers, and the freedom of the American wilds than the ease, the luxury, and the slavery of his native court. He exchanged the voice of love for the savage yell and the hostile shout; the gentle strains of the harp and lute for the trumpet and drum, and the still more terrible music of clashing arms. Nor did he come alone or empty-handed. The people in whose cause he was about to peril his life and his fortune were too poor to afford him even the means of conveyance, and his own court threw every obstacle in the way of the accomplishment of his wishes. Did this dampen his ardor? Did this chill his generous aspiration? No; it added new vigor to each.

Prentiss, Death of Lafayette, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.220

Here we can not but pause to contemplate two wonderful men, belonging to the same age and to the same nation; Napoleon and Lafayette. Their names excite no kindred emotions; their fates no kindred sympathies. Napoleon—the child of Destiny—the thunderbolt of war—the victor in a hundred battles—the dispenser of thrones and dominions; he who scaled the Alps and reclined beneath the Pyramids, whose word was fate and whose wish was law. Lafayette—the volunteer of Freedom—the advocate of human rights—the defender of civil liberty—the patriot and the philanthropist—the beloved of the good and the free. Napoleon—the vanquished warrior, ignobly flying from the field of Waterloo, the wild beats, ravaging all Europe in his wrath, hunted down by the banded and affrighted nations and caged far away upon an ocean-girded rock. Lafayette—a watchword by which men excite each other to deeds of worth and noble daring; whose home has become the mecca of freedom; toward which the pilgrims of Liberty turn their eyes from every quarter of the globe. Napoleon was the red and fiery comet, shooting wildly through the realms of space and scattering pestilence and terror among the nations. Lafayette was the pure and brilliant planet, beneath whose grateful beams the mariner directs his bark and the shepherd tends his flocks. Napoleon died and a few old warriors—the scattered relics of Marengo and of Austerlitz—bewailed their chief. Lafayette is dead and the tears of a civilized world attest how deep is the mourning for his loss. Such is, and always will be, the difference of feeling toward a benefactor and a conqueror of the human race.

The Mobbing of Garrison in the Streets of Boston

Title: The Mobbing of Garrison in the Streets of Boston

Author: William Lloyd Garrison

Date: October, 1835

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.195-199

This incident, described in "The Life of Garrison, Told by His Children," illustrates the kind of persecution to which pioneer abolitionists were subjected, even in New England. The Boston mob was roused to action by a meeting of the Boston Anti-Slavery Society, in October, 1835, at which, it was rumored, the English abolitionist, Thompson, was to speak. Garrison's life had been threatened repeatedly; and at one time the State of Georgia offered $5,000 for his attest and prosecution.

His earlier tribulations came about through his zeal as editor of the "Liberator," which he founded in Boston in 1831, and by his publication of "Thoughts on African Colonization," denouncing the moderate opponents of slavery. Later on Garrison went so far as to denounce the United States Constitution as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." His own account of the mobbing is a good example of his vigorous style of writing.

William Lloyd Garrison's Own Account

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.195

IT was apparent that the multitude would not disperse until I had left the building; and as egress out of the front door was impossible, the Mayor and his assistants, as well as some of my friends, earnestly besought me to effect my escape in the rear of the building….

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.195

Preceded by my faithful and beloved friend, Mr. J—— R—— C——

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.195–p.196

dropped from a back window onto a shed, and narrowly escaped falling headlong to the ground. We entered into a carpenter's shop, through which we attempted to get into Wilson's Lane, but found our retreat cut off by the mob. They raised a shout as soon as we came in sight, but the workmen promptly closed the door of the shop, kept them at bay for a time, and thus kindly afforded me an opportunity to find some other passage.

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.196

I told Mr. C. it would be futile to attempt to escape—I would go out to the mob, and let them deal with me as they might elect; but he thought it was my duty to avoid them as long as possible. We then went upstairs, and, finding a vacancy in one corner of the room, I got into it, and he and a young lad piled up some boards in front of me to shield me from observation. In a few minutes several ruffians broke into the chamber, who seized Mr. C. in a rough manner, and led him out to the view of the mob, saying, "This is not Garrison, but Garrison's and Thompson's friend, and he says he knows where Garrison is, but won't tell." Then a shout of exultation was raised by the mob, and what became of him I do not know; though, as I was immediately discovered, I presume he escaped.

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.196–p.197

On seeing me, three or four of the rioters, uttering a yell, furiously dragged me to the window, with the intention of hurling me from that height to the ground; but one of them relented, and said—"Don't let us kill him outright." So they drew me back, and coiled a rope about my body—probably to drag me through the streets. I bowed to the mob, and, requesting them to wait patiently until I could descend, went down upon a ladder that was raised for that purpose. I fortunately extricated myself from the rope, and was seized by two or three powerful men, to whose firmness, policy and muscular energy I am probably indebted for my preservation.

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.197

They led me along bareheaded (for I had lost my hat), through a mighty crowd, ever and anon shouting "He sha'n't be hurt!! You sha'n't hurt him! Don't hurt him! He is an American," etc., etc. This seemed to excite sympathy among many in the crowd, and they reiterated the cry, "He sha'n't be hurt!" I was thus conducted through Wilson's Lane into State Street, in the rear of the City Hall, over the ground that was stained with the blood of the first martyrs in the cause of liberty and independence, by the memorable massacre of 1770—and upon which was proudly unfurled, only a few years since, with joyous acclamations, the beautiful banner presented to the gallant Poles by the young men of Boston!

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.197

Orders were now given to carry me to the Mayor's office in the City Hall. As we approached the south door, the Mayor attempted to protect me by his presence; but as he was unassisted by any show of authority or force, he was quickly thrust aside—and now came a tremendous rush on the part of the mob to prevent my entering the hall. For a moment the conflict was dubious—but my sturdy supporters carried me safely up to the Mayor's room….

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.197–p.198

Having had my clothes rent asunder, one individual kindly lent me a pair of pantaloons another, a coat—a third, a stock—a fourth, a cap as a substitute for my lost hat. After a consultation of fifteen or twenty minutes, the Mayor and his advisers came to the singular conclusion, that the building would be endangered by my continuing in it, and that the preservation of my life depended upon committing me to jail, ostensibly as a disturber of the peace! A hack was got in readiness at the door to receive me—and, supported by Sheriff Parkman and Ebenezer Bailey, Esq. (the Mayor leading the way), I succeeded in getting into it without much difficulty, as I was not readily identified in my new garb.

Mobbing of Garrison in Streets of Boston, America, Vol.6, p.198–p.199

Now came a scene that baffles the power of description. As the ocean, lashed into fury by the spirit of the storm, seeks to whelm the adventurous bark beneath its mountain waves—so did the mob, enraged by a series of disappointments, rush like a whirlwind upon the frail vehicle in which I sat, and endeavored to drag me out of it. Escape seemed a physical impossibility. They clung to the wheels—dashed open the doors—seized hold of the horses—and tried to upset the carriage. They were, however, vigorously repulsed by the police—a constable sprang in by my side—the doors were closed—and the driver, lustily using his whip upon the bodies of his horses and the heads of the rioters, happily made an opening through the crowd, and drove at a tremendous speed for Leverett Street. But many of the rioters followed even with superior swiftness, and repeatedly attempted to arrest the progress of the horses. To reach the jail by a direct course was found impracticable; and after going in a circuitous direction, and encountering many "hairbreadth 'scapes," we drove up to this new and last refuge of liberty and life, when another bold attempt was made to seize me by the mob—but in vain. In a few moments I was locked up in a cell, safe from my persecutors, accompanied by two delightful associates, a good conscience and a cheerful mind.

How Texas Became Independent

Title: How Texas Became Independent

Author: Theodore Roosevelt

Date: 1836

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.136-142

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.136

Far more important than any other matters was the acknowledgment of the independence of Texas; and in this, as well as in the troubles with Mexico which sprang from it, slavery again played a prominent part, altho not nearly so important at first as has commonly been represented. Doubtless the slaveholders worked hard to secure additional territory out of which to form new slave States; but Texas and California would have been in the end taken by us had there not been a single slave in the Mississippi Valley. The greed for the conquest of new lands which characterized the Western people had nothing whatever to do with the fact that some of them owned slaves. Long before there had been so much as the faintest foreshadowing of the importance which the slavery question was to assume, the West had been eagerly pressing on to territorial conquest, and had been chafing and fretting at the restraint put upon it, and at the limits set to its strivings by the treaties established with foreign powers. The first settlers beyond the Alleghanies, and their immediate successors, who moved down along the banks of the Ohio, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee, and thence out to the Mississippi itself, were not generally slaveholders; but they were all as anxious to wrest the Mississippi Valley from the control of the French as their descendants were to overrun the Spanish lands lying along the Rio Grande. In other words, slavery had very little to do with Western aggressions of Mexican territory, however it might influence the views of Southern statesmen as to lending support to the Western schemes.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.137

The territorial boundaries of all the great powers originally claiming the soil of the West—France, Spain, and the United States—were very ill-defined, there being no actual possession of the lands in dispute, and each power making a great showing on its own map. If the extreme views of any one were admitted, its adversary, for the time being, would have had nothing. Thus before the treaty of 1819 with Spain our nominal boundaries and those of the latter power in the West overlapped each other; and the extreme Western men persisted in saying that we had given up some of the territory which belonged to us because we had consented to adopt a middle line of division, and had not insisted upon being allowed the full extent of our claims.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.137

Benton always took this view of it, insisting that we had given up our rights by the adoption of this treaty. Many Southerners improved on this idea, and spoke of the desirability of "reannexing" the territory we had surrendered—endeavoring by the use of this very inappropriate word to give a color of right to their proceedings. As a matter of fact it was inevitable, as well as in the highest degree desirable for the good of humanity at large, that the American people should ultimately crowd out the Mexicans from their sparsely populated northern provinces. But it was quite as desirable that this should not be done in the interests of slavery.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.138

American settlers had begun to press into the outlying Spanish province of Texas before the treaty of 1819 was ratified. Their numbers went on increasing, and at first the Mexican Government, having achieved independence of Spain, encouraged their incoming. But it soon saw that their presence boded danger, and forbade further immigration; without effect, however, as the settlers and adventurers came thronging in as fast as ever. The Americans had brought their slaves with them, and when the Mexican government issued a decree liberating all slaves, they refused to be bound by it; and this decree was among the reasons alleged for their revolt. It has been represented as the chief if not the sole cause of the rebellion; but in reality it was not the cause at all; it was merely one of the occasions.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.138

Long before slavery had bene abolished in Mexico, and before it had become an exciting question in the United States, the infant colony of Texas, when but a few months old, had made an abortive attempt at insurrection. Any one who has ever been on the frontier, and who knows anything whatever of the domineering, masterful spirit and bitter race prejudices of the white frontiersmen, will acknowledge at once that it was out of the question that the Texans should long continue under Mexican rule; and it would have been a great misfortune if they had. It was out of the question to expect them to submit to the mastery of the weaker race, which they were supplanting. Whatever might be the pretexts alleged for revolt, the real reasons were to be found in the deeply-marked difference of race, and in the absolute unfitness of the Mexicans then to govern themselves, to say nothing of governing others. During the dozen years that the American colony in Texas formed part of Mexico, the government of the latter went through revolution after revolution—republic, empire, and military dictatorship following one another in bewildering succession. A state of things like this in the central government, especially when the latter belonged to a race alien in blood, language, religion, and habits of life, would warrant any community in determining to shift for itself. Such would probably have been the result even on people as sober and peaceable as the Texan settlers were warlike, reckless, and overbearing.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.139

But the majority of those who fought for Texan independence were not men who had already settled in that territory, but, on the contrary, were adventurers from the States, who had come to help their kinsmen and to win for themselves, by their own prowess, homes on what was then Mexican soil. It may as well be frankly admitted that the conduct of the American frontiersmen all through this contest can be justified on no possible plea of international morality or law. Still, we can not judge them by the same standard we should apply to the dealings between highly civilized powers of approximately the same grade of virtue and intelligence. Two nations may be contemporaneous so far as mere years go, and yet, for all that, may be existing among surroundings which practically are centuries apart. The nineteenth century on the banks of the Thames, the Seine, and the Rhine, or even of the Hudson and the Potomac, was one thing; the nineteenth century in the valley of the Rio Grande was another and quite a different thing.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.140

The conquest of Texas should properly be classed with conquests like those of the Norse sea-rovers. The virtues and faults alike of the Texans were those of a barbaric age. They were restless, brave, and eager for adventure, excitement, and plunder; they were warlike, resolute, and enterprising; they had all the marks of a young and hardy race, flushed with the pride of strength and self-confidence. On the other hand, they showed again and again the barbaric vices of boastfulness, ignorance, and cruelty; and they were utterly careless of the rights of others, looking upon the possessions of all weaker races as simply their natural prey.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.140

A band of settlers entering Texas was troubled by no greater scruples of conscience than, a thousand years before, a ship-load of Knut's followers might have felt at landing in England; and when they were engaged in warfare with the Mexicans they could count with certainty upon assist-ance from their kinsfolk who had been left behind, and for the same reasons that had enabled Rolf's Norsemen on the seacoast of France to rely confidently on Scandinavian help in their quarrels with their Karling over-lords. The great Texan hero, Houston, who drank hard and fought hard, who was mighty in battle and crafty in council, with his reckless, boastful courage, and his thirst for changes and risks of all kinds, his propensity for private brawling, and his queerly blended impulses for good and evil, might, with very superficial alterations of character, stand as the type of an old-world Viking—plus the virtue of a deep and earnestly patriotic attachment to his whole country. Indeed, his career was as picturesque and romantic as that of Harold Hardraada himself, and, to boot, was much more important in its results.

Roosevelt, How Texas Became Independent, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.141

Thus, the Texan struggle for independence stirred up the greatest sympathy and enthusiasm in the United States. The administration remained nominally neutral, but obviously sympathized with the Texans, permitting arms and men to be sent to their help, without hindrance, and indeed doing not a little discreditable bullying in the diplomatic dealing with Mexico, which that unfortunate community had her hands too full to resent. Still we did not commit a more flagrant breach of neutrality than, for instance, England was at the same time engaged in committing in reference to the civil wars in Spain. The victory of San Jacinto, in which Houston literally annihilated a Mexican force twice the strength of his own, virtually decided the contest; and the Senate at once passed a resolution recognizing the independence of Texas. Calhoun wished that body to go farther, and forthwith admit Texas as a State into the Union; but Benton and his colleagues were not prepared to take such a step at so early a date, altho intending, of course, that in the end she should be admitted. There was little opposition to the recognition of Texan independence, altho a few members of the Lower House, headed by Adams, voted against it. While a cabinet officer, and afterward as President, Adams had done all that he could to procure by purchase or treaty the very land which was afterward the cause of our troubles with Mexico.

Houston's Seizure of Texas

Title: Houston's Seizure of Texas

Author: Horace Greeley

Date: 1836

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.154-157

Greeley, Houston's Seizure of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.154

Sam Houston, born in Rockbridge County, Virginia, in 1793, had early migrated to Tennessee, settling very near the reserved lands of the Cherokee Indians, to whom he speedily absconded, living there years among them. More than twenty years later—naving, meantime, been a gallant soldier in the War of 1812, an Indian agent, a lawyer, district attorney, major-general of militia, member of Congress, and Governor of Tennessee—he abruptly separated from his newly-married wife, and repaired again to the Cherokees, now settled west of the Missisippi, by whom he was welcomed and made achief. After living with them three years longer as a savage, he suddenly left them again, returned to civilization—of the Arkansas pattern—set out from Little Rock, with a few companions of like spirit, for the new country to which adventurers and lawless characters throughout the Southwest were silently tending. A Little Rock journal, noticing his departure for Texas, significantly said: "We shall doubtless hear of his raising his falg there shortly." The guess was a perfeclty safe one.

Greeley, Houston's Seizure of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.154

Houston and other restless spirits of his sort were pushed into Texas expressly to seize upon the first opportunity to foment a revolution, expel the Mexican authorities, and prepare the region for speedy annexation to this country, as a new makeweight in Mr. Calhoun's scheme of a perpetual balance of power between the free and the slave States. Houston had scarcely reached Nacodoches, near the eastern boundary of Texas, when he was elected therefrom a delegate to a convention called to frame a constitution for that country as a distinct State, which met April 1, 1833, and did its predestined work. Texas proclaimed her entire independence of Mexico, March 2, 1836. War, of course, ensued—in fact, was already beginning—and Houston soon succeeded Austin in the command of the insurgent forces.

Greeley, Houston's Seizure of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.155

On the 10th, Houston repaired to camp at Gonzales, where 374 poorly-armed, ill-supplied men, were mustered to dispute the force, 5,000 strong, with which Santa Anna had already crossed the Rio Grande and advanced to the frontier fort, known as the Alamo, held by Col. Travis, with 185 men, who were captured and all put to death. Houston, of course, retreated, hoping to be joined by Colonel Fannin, who held Goliad with 500 men, and several pieces of artillery, whereas Houston had not one. But Fannin, while on his way to join Houston, was intercepted and surrounded by a strong Mexican detachment under Urrea, by whom, after two days' fighting, he was captured (March 20), and all his survivors, 357 men, treacherously shot in cold blood.

Greeley, Houston's Seizure of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.155

Houston, of course, continued his retreat, pursued by Santa Anna, but having too little to carry to be easily overtaken. He received some slight reenforcements on his march, and at the San Ja-cinto, April 10, met two guns (six-pounders), sent him from Cincinnati—his first. Santa Anna, still eagerly pressing on, had burned Harrisburg, the Texan capital, and crossed the San Jacinto with the advance of his army, the main body being detained on the other side by a freshet. Houston perceived his opportunity and embraced it. Facing suddenly about, he attacked the Mexican vanguard with great fury, firing several rounds of grape and canister at short range, then rushing to the attack with clubbed muskets (having no bayonets), and yells of "Remember the Alamo!" "Remember Goliad."

Greeley, Houston's Seizure of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.156

The Mexicans were utterly routed, and dispersed—the return of 630 killed to 208 wounded, proving that very little mercy was shown by the Texans, who nevertheless took 730 prisoners (about their own number), who were probably picked up after the battle, as their general was, in the trees and bushes among which they had sought safety in concealment. Santa Anna's life was barely saved by Houston, who was among the twenty-five wounded, who, with eight killed, formed the sum total of Texan loss in the fight. Houston made a treaty with his prisoner, in obedience to which the main body of the Mexicans retreated and abandoned the country, as they doubtless would, at any rate, have done. This treaty further stipulated for the independence of Texas; but no one could have seriously supposed that such a stipulation, wrested from a prisoner of war in imminent and well-grounded fear of massacre, would bind his country, even had he, when free, had power to make such a treaty. The victory, not the treaty, was the true basis and assurance of Texan independence.

Greeley, Houston's Seizure of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.157

General Houston—who had meantime returned to the United States to obtain proper treatment for his wounded ankle, and to confer with General Jackson and other friends of Texas—was immediately chosen President of the new republic, and inaugurated, October 22, 1836. In March following, the United States took the lead in acknowledging the independence of Texas, and other nations in due time followed. Espeditions, fitted out in western Texas, were sent to Santa Fe on the north, and to Mier on the Rio Grande, and each badly handled by the Mexicans, who captured the Santa Fe party entire, and sent them prisoners to their capital; but, within her original boundaries, no serious demonstration was made against the new republic by Mexico, subsequently to Santa Anna's disastrous failure in 1836. Meantime, her population steadily increased by migration from the United States, and, to some extent, from Europe; so that, tho her finances were in woful disorder, and her northern frontier constantly harassed by savage raids, there was very little probability that Texas would every have been reconquered by Mexico.

The Battle of San Jacinto

Title: The Battle of San Jacinto

Author: Cyrus Townsend Brady

Date: 1836

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.158-163

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.158

Houston was now ready to assume the offensive. Several mutinous and recalcitrant companies, which had withdrawn from him during the retreat, perceiving, before it was too late, the wisdom of Houston's course, now rejoined him. His total force was at this time about seven hundred and fifty men. Santa Anna was within the heart of Texas with perhaps fifteen hundred men, far from his base of supplies, and without the possibility of succor or reenforcement, should he need either. He was utterly unsuspicious that Houston had at last assumed the offensive. He made the not uncommon mistake of the successful commander of despising his enemies. His detachment of a regiment to pursue the President was a fatal blunder.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.158

Houston reached Harrisburg, which Santa Anna had destroyed, on the 18th of April, 1836. Leaving its baggage wagons, the army crossed Buffalo Bayou in a leaky scow and a timber raft. The cavalry horses were forced to swim the river. At dawn on the twentieth, receiving intelligence that the Mexican army was at hand, Houston marched to the junction of Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto River. Santa Anna, with twelve hundred men, was at New Washington. He immediately marched to attack Houston.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.159

The armies came in contact that same afternoon. There was some skirmishing, but no decisive engagement. The Mexicans went into camp and threw up a flimsy entrenchment. On the morning of the 21st Santa Anna was joined by five hundred cavalrymen under General Cos. The total force of the Texans was seven hundred and eighty-two. There were only two hundred bayonets in the Texan army. As the Mexicans outnumbered them more than two to one, the Texans expected to be attacked. The day wore away, however, without any movement being made by the Mexicans, and Houston decided at last to begin the engagement himself.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.159

At four o'clock in the afternoon he ordered his small cavalry squadron and his two-gun battery to advance, the infantry following with their guns at a trail. The army band, which consisted of a solitary drum and fife, played a popular air, "Will you come to the bower?" The movement was screened from the enemy by two little islands or clumps of trees between the Texans and the Mexicans. Houston, wearing an old black coat, a black velvet vest, a pair of snuff-colored pantaloons, and dilapidated boots, with his pantaloons tucked into them, and carying an old sword, led the advance. Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar was captain of the cavalry. Thomas J. Rusk, Secretary of War, commanded the left; Burleson, the center; and Sherman, the right. As the Texans passed theislands and came in full view of the Mexican lines, Houston galloped up and down the line on a white horse shouting profanely, "G—d d—n you, hold your fire!"

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.160

The place where the ensuing battle was fought was enclosed by marshes. There was only one safe way of retreat from it. That was by a road which led across the bayou, called the Vince's Bridge Road. When the army, now on a run, had come within a few hundred feet of the Mexican lines, Deaf Smith, a celebrated scout, dashed up, shouting that he had cut down Vince's Bridge, and that there was no retreat. Like Cortez, Houston had burned his boats behind him. It was to be a case of conquer or die. The men did not think of retreating. Shouting, "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad! Remember La Bahia!" they broke from the timber and rushed upon the Mexican camp.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.160

The surprize was complete. It had never occurred to the Mexicans that the Texans would have the territory to attack so overwhelming a force. When the Americans burst upon them, Santa Anna was asleep, the cavalry were watering their horses, the cooks were preparing the evening meal, and the soldiers had laid aside their arms and were playing games. The Mexicans ran to their arms, but were driven from their breastworks by a well-aimed volley at close range. They actually had no time to discharge their guns. The "Twin Sisters" did valiant service. In a few minutes the whole Mexican line was in hopeless retreat. Lamar, by a gallant dash with his eighty horses, drove the five hundred cavalrymen, struggling with their horses, in great confusion. Some of the Mexican officers bravely strove to rally and form their men, and put up a stout resistance, notably General Castrillon and Colonel Almonte, but in vain.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.161

The battle was over in fifteen minutes. The Mexicans scattered in every direction; some, hotly pursued by the Americans, ran toward the bayou; others fled into the marshes back of their camp, only to be shot as they stood enmired. Colonel Almonte rallied five hundred men under the trees, but they were panic-stricken and he could do nothing with them. They were surrendered in a body. Six hundred and thirty men, including thirty-three officers, were killed on the field. Two hundred and eight, of whom eighteen were officers, were seriously wounded. Seven hundred and thirty were made prisoners. There were a few who escaped, and many who were not accounted for who perished in the marshes and rivers. The total Mexican loss was about seventeen hundred. There were eight Texans killed and twenty-three wounded. Santa Anna himself was captured the day after the battle. With him in Houston's possession, the war was over.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.161

The battle of San Jacinto was a small engagement, but one of great importance, for it assured the independence of Texas. Nothing could have exceeded the dash and courage of the Texan force. Houston's maneuvering, his strategy before the battle, his tactics during it, were worthy of the highest praise.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.161

Flushed with its astonishing victory, the army was inclined to exact bloody revenge for the Mexican treatment of Travis and Fannin, and their men. It was with difficulty that Houston pre-served Santa Anna from the fury of the soldiers, who recalled the massacres and murders of which he had been guilty. Santa Anna was fearful for his life, naturally, and the more willing to recognize the Texan Republic, or to do anything which would insure his own safety, on that account. Houston carefully guarded the person of the Mexican dictator, realizing the decisive importance of his capture in determining the future of Texas.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.162

On May 14th, at Velasco, Santa Anna signed two treaties, a public and a private one, in which he agreed to the independence of Texas, and the withdrawal of all the Mexican troops in the territory.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.162

The treaties were ratified by General Filisola, upon whom the command of the Mexican troops devolved after Santa Anna's capture, and Texas was immediately evacuated. The Texans released Santa Anna. So soon as he reached Mexico, he disavowed the treaties, claiming that they were extorted from him under duress. As to that, it is certain that his desire for freedom and his fear for his personal safety induced him to sign the treaties. Paying no attention to this attitude of the Mexican Government, the Texans at once assumed a place among the nations of the world. This place they maintained for ten years.

Brady, Battle of San Jacinto, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.162

An election for President was held in September, 1836, and Sam Houston was chosen by an overwhelming majority over his competitors, Austin and Smith. Really, no man had done so much for Texas as Stephen F. Austin, but the glamour of Houston's decisive military success at San Jacinto was sufficient to give him the election over five thousand votes, Austin and Smith receiving less than one thousand in the aggregate. Houston, wisely desirous of uniting all parties, made Austin Secretary of State, and Smith Secretary of the Treasury.

The Fall of the Alamo

Title: The Fall of the Alamo

Author: Captain R. M. Potter

Date: 1836

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.200-218

Captain Potter lived in Matamoros, Mexico, on the Rio Grande River, when the Alamo fell, and, long residing near the scene of the massacre that occurred in 1836, had exceptional opportunities for obtaining the accurate information contained in this account. Urged repeatedly to publish it in the interests of history, he gave to the San Antonio Herald, in 1860 an imperfect outline of this record which was afterwards circulated in pamphlet form.

Subsequently he obtained many additional and interesting details from Colonel Juan Seguin, U. S. A., who was an officer of the Alamo garrison up to within six days of the assault and whose death removed the last of those who were soldiers of the Alamo when it was first invested. The accompanying article is a revision made by Captain Potter of his narrative of 1860.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.200

THE FALL of the Alamo and the massacre of its garrison, which in 1836 opened the campaign of Santa Ana in Texas, caused a profound sensation throughout the United States, and is still remembered with deep feeling by all who take an interest in the history of that section; yet the details of the final assault have never been fully and correctly narrated, and wild exaggerations have taken their place in popular legend. The reason will be obvious when it is remembered that not a single combatant of the last struggle from within the fort survived to tell the tale, while the official reports of the enemy were neither circumstantial nor reliable. When horror is intensified by mystery, the sure product is romance.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.200–p.201

A trustworthy account of the assault could be compiled only by comparing and combining the verbal narratives of such of the assailants as could be relied on for veracity, and adding to this such lights as might be gathered from military documents of that period, from credible local information, and from any source more to be trusted than rumor. As I was a resident at Matamoros when the event occurred, and for several months after the invading army retreated thither, and afterwards resided near the scene of action, I had opportunities for obtaining the kind of information referred to better perhaps than have been possessed by any person now living outside of Mexico….

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.201–p.202

Before beginning the narrative, however, I must describe the Alamo and its surroundings as they existed in the spring of 1836. San Antonio, then a town of about 7,000 inhabitants, had a Mexican population, a minority of which was well affected to the cause of Texas, while the rest were inclined to make the easiest terms they could with whichever side might be for the time being dominant. The San Antonio River, which, properly speaking, is a large rivulet, divided the town from the Alamo, the former on the west side and the latter on the east. The Alamo village, a small suburb of San Antonio, was south of the fort, or Mission, as it was originally called, which bore the same name. The latter was an old fabric, built during the first settlement of the vicinity by the Spaniards; and having been originally designed as a place of safety for the colonists and their property in case of Indian hostility, with room sufficient for that purpose, it had neither the strength, compactness, nor dominant points which ought to belong to a regular fortification. The front of the Alamo Chapel bears date of 1757, but the other works must have been built earlier. As the whole area contained between two and three acres, a thousand men would have barely sufficed to man its defenses; and before a regular siege train they would soon have crumbled. Yoakum, in his history of Texas, is not only astray in his details of the assault, but mistaken about the measurement of the place. Had the works covered no more ground than he represents, the result of the assault might have been different.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.202

Thus the works were mounted with fourteen guns, which agrees with Yoakum's account of their number, though Santa Ana in his report exaggerates it to twenty-one. The number, however, has little bearing on the merits of the final defense, with which cannon had very little to do. These guns were in the hands of men unskilled in their use, and owing to the construction of the works most of them had little width of range. Of the buildings above described, the chapel and the two barracks are probably still standing. They were repaired and newly roofed during the Mexican war for the use of the United States Quartermaster's department.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.202–p.203

In the winter of 1835-6 Colonel Neill, of Texas, was in command of San Antonio, with two companies of volunteers, among whom was a remnant of New Orleans Greys, who had taken an efficient part in the siege and capture of the town about a year before. At this time the Provisional Government of Texas, which, though in revolt, had not yet declared a final separation from Mexico, had broken into a conflicting duality. The Governor and Council repudiated each other, and each claimed the obedience which was generally not given to either. Invasion was impending, and there seemed to be little more than anarchy to meet it.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.203

During this state of affairs Lieutenant-Colonel Wm. B. Travis, who had commanded the scouting service of the late campaign, and had since been commissioned with the aforesaid rank as an officer of regular cavalry, was assigned by the Governor to relieve Colonel Neill of the command of his post. The volunteers, who cared little for either of the two governments, wished to choose their own leader, and were willing to accept Travis only as second in command. They were, therefore, clamorous that Neill should issue an order for the election of a Colonel.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.203–p.204

To get over the matter without interfering with Travis' right, he prepared an order for the election of a Lieutenant-Colonel, and was about to depart, when his men, finding out what he had done, mobbed him, and threatened his life unless he should comply with their wishes. He felt constrained to yield, and on the amended order James Bowie was unanimously elected a full Colonel. He had been for several years a resident of Texas, and had taken a prominent part in the late campaign against Cos. His election occurred early in February, 1836, about two weeks before the enemy came in sight; and Travis, who had just arrived or came soon after, found Bowie in command of the garrison, and claiming by virtue of the aforesaid election the right to command him and the reenforcement he brought. They both had their headquarters at the Alamo, where their men were quartered, and there must have been a tacit understanding on both sides that conflict of authority should as far as possible be avoided. This, however, could not have continued many days but for the common bond of approaching peril.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.204–p.205

Travis brought with him a company of regular recruits, enlisted for the half regiment of cavalry which the Provisional Government had intended to raise. J. N. Seguin, a native of San Antonio who had been commissioned as the senior Captain of Travis' corps, joined him at the Alamo and brought into the garrison the skeleton of his company, consisting of nine Mexican recruits, natives, some of the town aforesaid and others of the interior of Mexico. The aforesaid company and squad of enlisted men and the two companies of volunteers under Bowie formed the garrison of the Alamo, which then numbered from a hundred and fifty-six to a hundred and sixty. Of these the volunteers comprised considerably more than half, and over two-thirds of the whole were men who had but recently arrived in the country. Seguin and his nine recruits were all that represented the Mexican population of Texas. Of that nine, seven fell in the assault, the Captain and two of his men having been sent out on duty before that crisis.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.205

David Crocket, of Tennessee, who had a few years before represented a squatter constituency in Congress, where his oratory was distinguished for hard sense and rough grammar, had joined the garrison a few weeks before, as had also J. B. Bonham, Esq., of South Carolina, who had lately come to volunteer in the cause of Texas, and was considered one of the most chivalrous and estimable of its supporters. I pair them, a rough gem and a polished jewel, because their names are among the best known of those who fell; but I am not aware that either of them had any command.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.205

The main army of operation against Texas moved from Laredo upon San Antonio in four successive detachments. This was rendered necessary by the scarcity of pasture and water on certain portions of the route. The lower division, commanded by Brigadier-General Urrea, moved from Matamoros on Goliad by a route near the coast, and a short time after the fall of the Alamo achieved the capture and massacre of Fannius command.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.205–p.206

The advance from Laredo, consisting of the dragoon regiment of Dolores and three battalions of infantry, commanded by Santa Ana in person, arrived at San Antonio on the afternoon of February 22. No regular scouting service seems to have been kept up from the post of Bowie and Travis, owing probably to division and weakness of authority, for, though the enemy was expected, his immediate approach was not known to many of the inhabitants till the advance of his dragoons was seen descending the slope west of the San Pedro. A guard was kept in town with a sentinel on the top of the church, yet the surprise of the population was so nearly complete that one or more American residents engaged in trade fled to the Alamo, leaving their stores open. The garrison, however, received more timely notice, and the guard retired in good order to the fort.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.206–p.207

The confusion at the Alamo, which for the time being was great, did not impede a prompt show of resistance. In the evening, soon after the enemy entered the town, a shot from the 18-pounder of the fort was answered by a shell from the invaders; and this was followed by a parley, of which different accounts have been given. According to Santa Ana's official report, after the shell was thrown, a white flag was sent out by the garrison with an offer to evacuate the fort if allowed to retire unmolested and in arms, to which reply was made that no terms would be admitted short of an unconditional surrender. Seguin, however, gave me a more reliable version of the affair. He related that after the firing a parley was sounded and a white flag raised by the invaders. Travis was not inclined to respond to it; but Bowie, without consulting him, and much to his displeasure, sent a flag of truce to demand what the enemy wanted. Their General, with his usual duplicity, denied having sounded a parley or raised a flag, and informed the messenger that the garrison could be recognized only as rebels, and be allowed no other terms than a surrender at discretion. When informed of this, Travis harangued his men and administered to them an oath that they would resist to the last….

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.207

On the night of the 22d of February the enemy planted two batteries on the west side of the river, one bearing west and the other southwest from the Alamo, with a range which no houses then obstructed. They were the next day silenced by the fire of the 18-pounder of the fort, but were restored to activity on the following night. On the 24th another body of Mexican troops, a regiment of cavalry and three battalions of infantry arrived; and then the fort was invested and a regular siege commenced, which, counting from that day till the morning of the 6th of March, occupied eleven days. By the 27th seven more besieging batteries were planted, most of them on the east side of the river, and bearing on the northwest, southwest, and south of the fort; but there were none on the east. As that was the only direction in which the garrison would be likely to attempt retreat, Santa Ana wished to leave a temptation to such flitting, while he prepared to intercept it by forming his cavalry camp on what is now called the Powder House Hill, east of the Alamo….

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.207–p.208

The stern resistance which had sprung up in the demoralized band within, and the comparative unity and order which must have come with it, were ushered in by a scene which promised no such outcome. The first sight of the enemy created as much confusion with as little panic at the Alamo as might be expected among men who had known as little of discipline as they did of fear. Mr. Lewis, of San Antonio, informed me that he took refuge for a few hours in the fort when the invaders appeared, and the disorder of the post beggared description. Bowie with a detachment was engaged in breaking open deserted houses in the neighborhood and gathering corn, while another squad was driving cattle into the enclosure east of the long barrack. Some of the volunteers, who had sold their rifles to obtain the means of dissipation, were clamoring for guns of any kind; and the rest, though in arms, appeared to be mostly without orders or a capacity for obedience. No "army in Flanders" ever swore harder. He saw but one officer, who seemed to be at his proper post and perfectly collected. This was an Irish Captain named Ward, who, though generally an inveterate drunkard, was now sober, and stood quietly by the guns of the south battery, ready to use them. Yet amid the disorder of that hour no one seemed to think of flight; the first damaging shock, caused by the sight of the enemy, must have been cured by the first shell that he threw; and the threat conveyed by Santa Ana's message seems to have inspired a greater amount of discipline than those men had before been thought capable of possessing. The sobered toper who stood coolly by his guns was the first pustule which foretold a speedy inoculation of the whole mass with that qualification.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.209

The conflict of authority between Bowie and Travis, owing probably to the caution in which neither was deficient, had luckily produced no serious collision; and it was perhaps as fortunate that, at about the second day of the siege, the rivalry was cut short by a prostrating illness of the former, when Bowie was stricken by an attack of pneumonia, which would probably have proved fatal, had not its blow been anticipated by the sword. This left Travis in undisputed command….

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.209

On the following night, the 1st of March, a company of thirty-two men from Gonzales made its way through the enemy's lines, and entered the Alamo never again to leave it. This must have raised the force to 188 men or thereabout, as none of the original number of 156 had fallen.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.209–p.210

On the night of the 3d of March, Travis sent out another courier with a letter of that date to the government, which reached its destination. In that last despatch he says: "With a hundred and forty-five men I have held this place ten days against a force variously estimated from 1,500 to 6,000, and I shall continue to hold it till I get relief from my countrymen, or I will perish in the attempt. We have had a shower of bombs and cannon-balls continually falling among us the whole time, yet none of us have fallen. We have been miraculously preserved." As this was but two days and three nights before the final assault, it is quite possible that not a single defender was stricken down till the fort was stormed. At the first glance it may seem almost farcical that there should be no more result from so long a fire, which was never sluggish; but if so, this was a stage on which farce was coon to end in tragedy, and those two elements seem strangely mingled through the whole contest….

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.210–p.211

On the 4th of March Santa Ana called a council of war, and fixed on the morning of the 6th for the final assault. The besieging force now around the Alamo, comprising all the Mexican troops which had yet arrived, consisted of the two dragoon regiments of Dolores and Tampico, which formed a brigade, commanded by General Andrade, two companies or batteries of artillery under Colonel Ampudia, and six battalions of infantry, namely, Los Zapadores (engineer troops), Jimenes, Guerrero, Matamoros, Toluca, and Tres Villas. These six battalions of foot were to form the storming forces. The order for the attack, which I have read, but have no copy of, was full and precise in its details, and was signed by General Amador, as Chief of Staff. . . Santa Ana took his station, with a part of his staff and all the bands of music, at a battery about five hundred yards south of the Alamo and near the old bridge, from which post a signal was to be given by a bugle-note for the columns to move simultaneously at double-quick time against the fort. One, consisting of Los Zapadores, Toluca, and the light companies, and commanded by Castrillon, was to rush through the breach on the north; another, consisting of the battalion of Jimenes and other troops, and commanded by General Cos, was to storm the chapel; and a third, whose leader I do not recollect, was to scale the west barrier. Cos, who had evacuated San Antonio a year before under capitulation, was assigned to the most difficult point of attack, probably to give him an opportunity to retrieve his standing. By the timing of the signal it was calculated that the columns would reach the foot of the wall just as it should become sufficiently light for good operation.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.211

When the hour came, the south guns of the Alamo were answering the batteries which fronted them; but the music was silent till the blast of a bugle was followed by the rushing tramp of soldiers. The guns of the fort opened upon the moving masses, and Santa Ana's bands struck up the assassin note of "deguello," or no quarter. But a few and not very effective discharges of cannon from the works could be made before the enemy were under them, and it was probably not till then that the worn and wearied garrison was fully mustered. Castrillon's column arrived first at the foot of the wall, but was not the first to enter.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.211–p.212

The guns of the north, where Travis commanded in person, probably raked the breach, and this or the fire of the riflemen brought the column to a disordered halt, and Colonel Duque, who commanded the battalion of Toluca, fell dangerously wounded; but, while this was occurring, the column from the west crossed the barrier on that side by escalade at a point north of the center, and, as this checked resistance at the north, Castrillon shortly after passed the breach. It was probably while the enemy was thus pouring into the large area that Travis fell at his post, for his body, with a single shot in the forehead, was found beside the gun at the northwest angle. The outer walls and batteries, all except one gun, of which I will speak, were now abandoned by the defenders. In the meantime Cos had again proved unlucky. His column was repulsed from the chapel, and his troops fell back in disorder behind the old stone stable and huts that stood south of the southwest angle. There they were soon rallied and led into the large area by General Amador. I am not certain as to his point of entrance, but he probably followed the escalade of the column from the west.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.212–p.213

This all passed within a few minutes after the bugle sounded. The garrison, when driven from the thinly manned outer defenses, whose early loss was inevitable, took refuge in the buildings before described, but mainly in the long barrack; and it was not till then, when they became more concentrated and covered within, that the main struggle began. They were more concentrated as to space, not as to unity of command; for there was no communicating between buildings, nor, in all cases, between rooms. There was little need of command, however, to men who had no choice left but to fall where they stood before the weight of numbers. There was now no retreating from point to point, and each group of defenders had to fight and die in the den where it was brought to bay. From the doors, windows, and loopholes of the several rooms around the area the crack of the rifle and the hiss of the bullet came fierce and fast; as fast the enemy fell and recoiled in his first efforts to charge. The gun beside which Travis fell was now turned against the buildings, as were also some others, and shot after shot was sent crashing through the doors and barricades of the several rooms. Each ball was followed by a storm of musketry and a charge; and thus room after room was carried at the point of the bayonet, when all within them died fighting to the last. The struggle was made up of a number of separate and desperate combats, often hand to hand, between squads of the garrison and bodies of the enemy. The bloodiest spot about the fort was the long barrack and the ground in front of it, where the enemy fell in heaps.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.213–p.214

Before the action reached this stage, the turning of Travis' gun by the assailants was briefly imitated by a group of the defenders. "A small piece on a high platform," as it was described to me by General Bradburn, was wheeled by those who manned it against the large area after the enemy entered it. Some of the Mexican officers thought it did more execution than any gun which fired outward; but after two effective discharges it was silenced, when the last of its cannoneers fell under a shower of bullets. I cannot locate this gun with certainty, but it was probably the twelve-pound carronade which fired over the center of the west wall from a high commanding position. The smallness assigned to it perhaps referred only to its length. According to Mr. Ruiz, then the Alcalde of San Antonio, who, after the action, was required to point out the slain leaders to Santa Ana, the body of Crocket was found in the west battery just referred to; and we may infer that he either commanded that point or was stationed there as a sharpshooter. The common fate overtook Bowie in his bed in one of the rooms of the low barrack, when he probably had but a few days of life left in him; yet he had enough remaining, it is said, to shoot down with his pistols more than one of his assailants ere he was butchered on his couch. If he had sufficient strength and consciousness left to do it, we may safely assume that it was done.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.214–p.215

The chapel, which was the last point taken, was carried by a "coup de main" after the fire of the other buildings was silenced. Once the enemy in possession of the large area, the guns of the south could be turned to fire into the door of the church, only from fifty to a hundred yards off, and that was probably the route of attack. The inmates of this last stronghold, like the rest, fought to the last, and continued to fire down from the upper works after the enemy occupied the floor. A Mexican officer told of seeing one of his soldiers shot in the crown of the head during this melee. Towards the close of the struggle Lieutenant Dickenson, with his child in his arms, or, as some accounts say, tied to his back, leaped from the east embrasure of the chapel, and both were shot in the act. Of those he left behind him, the bayonet soon gleaned what the bullet had left; and in the upper part of that edifice the last defender must have fallen. The morning breeze which received his parting breath probably still fanned his flag above that fabric, for I doubt not he fell ere it was pulled down by the victors.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.215

The Alamo had fallen; but the impression it left on the invader was the forerunner of San Jacinto. It is a fact not often remembered that Travis and his band fell under the Mexican Federal flag of 1824, instead of the Lone Star of Texas, although Independence, unknown to them, had been declared by the new Convention four days before at Washington, on the Brazos. They died for a Republic of whose existence they never knew. The action, according to Santa Ana's report, lasted thirty minutes. It was certainly short, and possibly no longer time passed between the moment the enemy entered the breach and that when resistance died out. The assault was a task which had to be carried out quickly or fail. Some of the incidents which have to be related separately occurred simultaneously, and all occupied very little time. ' .

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.215–p.216

The stranger will naturally inquire where lie the heroes of the Alamo, and Texas can reply only by a silent blush. A few hours after the action the bodies of the slaughtered garrison were gathered by the victors, laid in three heaps, mingled with fuel and burned, though their own dead were interred. On the 25th of February, 1837, the bones and ashes of the defenders were, by order of General Houston, collected, as well as could then be done, for burial by Colonel Seguin, then in command at San Antonio. The bones were placed in a large coffin, which, together with the gathered ashes, was interred with military honors. The place of burial was a peach orchard, then outside of the Alamo village and a few hundred yards from the fort. When I was last there, in 1861, it was still a large enclosed open lot, though surrounded by the suburb which had there grown up; but the rude landmarks which had once pointed out the place of sepulture had long since disappeared. Diligent search might then have found it, but it is now densely built over, and its identity is irrecoverably lost.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.216–p.217

IN THE 2d of March, 1836, the delegates of the people of Texas in general convention at Washington on the Brazos declared their independence of Mexico. Their Declaration of Independence may be read in the appendix to Kennedy's History of Texas, vol. ii., and elsewhere. On the same day General Samuel Houston, the Texan commander-in-chief, issued a proclamation announcing that war was waging on the frontier, and Bexar besieged by 2,000 of the enemy, while the garrison was only 150 strong. "The citizens of Texas must rally to the aid of our army, or it will perish. Independence is declared: it must be maintained. Immediate action, united with valor, alone can achieve the great work." But the immediate action was too late. Already Santa Ana and his forces were closing in around the fated little band in the Alamo at San Antonio; and between midnight and dawn on the morning of March 6 came the terrible assault described in the leaflet, from which not one of the 180 Texans escaped alive, although before the last man died 500 of their assailants had fallen. No fiercer or more heroic fight was ever seen in America or in the world. The Texan force was under the command of William Barrett Travis, whose last letter, to the president of the convention at Washington, dated March 3, is given in Kennedy, vol. ii., p. 184. Its last words were: "The bearer of this will give your honorable body a statement more in detail, should he escape through the enemies' lines. God and Texas! Victory or Death!" Extracts from Almonte's Journal, on the Mexican side, are also given in Kennedy. Certain details of the massacre were supplied by Mrs. Dickenson, the wife of one of the massacred men, who along with a negro servant was spared.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.217–p.218

The account of the battle in Yoakum's History of Texas should be consulted. In the large new History of Texas by Wooten a special chapter on the "Siege and Fall of the Alamo" is contributed by Seth Shepard, and this is of great value. Judge Shepard pronounces Captain Potter's account, printed in the present leaflet, "the most accurate account that has yet appeared." Captain Potter was, at the time of the siege, a resident of Matamoros. He knew many of the leading Mexican officers personally, and his critical investigations were of such a nature that his paper has the value of an original document. It was first printed in the Magazine of American History, January, 1878, and is reprinted here by the permission of the publishers, Messrs. A. S. Barnes & Co.

Potter, Fall of the Alamo, America, Vol.6, p.218

On the capitol grounds at Austin, Tex., stands a monument to the heroes of the Alamo, erected in 1891, with the inscription: "Thermopylae had her messenger of defeat: the Alamo had none.

The Crushing of the Creeks

Title: The Crushing of the Creeks

Author: William Schley

Date: 1836

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.227-230

This official communication was sent by Governor William Schley, of Georgia, on October 7, 1836, to two Federal commissioners, Alfred Balch and T. Hartley Crawford, who were in Georgia for the purpose of fixing the blame for the Creek War and to determine what future action the United States government ought to take. Some of the Creek Indians had joined the United States forces against the Seminoles, while others had begun raiding Georgia and Alabama towns and villages.

Defeated by Government and State troops under Generals Scott and Sanford, nearly 25,000 Creek were removed to the Arkansas River in 1837, less than 800 being left behind. The Government tried to Christianize and civilize them, but they fiercely refused either missionaries or schools; especially Christianity which was scorned by them as the religion of their negro slaves.

United States War Department Report

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.227

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3d instant, in which you request me to communicate to you, as commissioners on the part of the United States to inquire into the causes of the recent Creek hostilities, such information as I may have, and which may be communicated consistently with my ideas of propriety and public duty, in regard to the causes of these hostilities, the time when the aspect of things on the Chattahoochee became alarming, the time when the means of meeting reasonable anticipations of danger to the white population of Alabama and Georgia were resorted to by the State and General Governments, and what these means were.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.228

Of the causes which led to the Creek War I know nothing, and can, therefore, only give you my opinion, with the reasons on which it is founded.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.228

The great majority of the Creek Indians are idle, dissolute vagrants, many of whom had, for a long time, been subsisting on provisions stolen, mostly from the people of Georgia living on and near the Chattahoochee. They were in the daily practice of crossing the river, stealing cattle, horses, hogs, corn, and such other articles as they wanted. If the people thus robbed objected, or attempted to resist or punish them, they would add murder to their other crimes. Many of them were in a state of starvation, and had no means of obtaining subsistence, except by depredations on the property of the white people. In the prosecution of their unlawful purpose they were sometimes detected, and in the conflict which ensued, some of each party were occasionally killed. A state of bad feeling was the consequence on both sides, and, with the Creeks ripened into a determination to revenge the death of their guilty comrades. They were, moreover, determined not to emigrate to Arkansas; and believed that, in the moment of panic and consternation produced by their hostilities, they could escape to Florida with the booty they could obtain from the murdered and fleeing inhabitants.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.228

These, in my opinion, were some of the causes which produced the Creek War.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.228–p.229

Public opinion has, in some sections of the State, assigned, as a principle cause of hosilities, the frauds which are alleged to have been committed on the Creeks in the purchase of their lands. Of this I know nothing, and have no evidence on which to form an opinion. I cannot, therefore, either affirm or deny the truth of the report.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.229

The predatory incursions of the Creeks into Georgia kept up a constant excitement in the counties on and near the Chattahoochee, which produced repeated calls on the Executive of the State for protection. In the month of January last, arms and ammunition were sent to the counties thus annoyed, and in each a corps of twenty men was formed and called into service as spies to watch the movements of the Indians, and give notice of their conduct to the commanding officer of the county, or to chastise and drive them off, if their numbers were not too great.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.229

These companies were kept in service until about the tenth of March, when they were superseded by a small battalion of mounted men, consisting of about two hundred, under the command of Major John H. Howard. This force was placed on the Chattahoochee, eighteen miles below Columbus, with instructions to patrol the country; and it had the effect to tranquilize the frontier until early in the month of May, when the Creeks commenced open active hostilities by murdering the white people and burning their towns and property, and carrying away such booty as they could procure.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.229–p.230

The first notice I received of this state of things on the frontier was contained in a communication from the honorable John Fontaine, Mayor of Columbus [Georgia], dated on the 9th day of May, and received at the Executive office on the 11th. On the 12th I sent to Columbus one six-pound field piece and all the small arms remaining in the arsenal, and wrote to the Secretary of War, giving him information of the situation of the people in that quarter, and the general hostility of the Indians. On the 13th I issued an order inviting volunteers to march to the scene of danger, and used all the exertions in my power to bring to the field a competent force, and furnished them with munitions of war.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.230

The troops began to arrive on the frontier the last of May, and the first company was mustered into the service on the 2d or 3d of June, as well as I now recollect.

Schley, Crushing of the Creeks, America, Vol.6, p.230

Previous to this, however, the militia of the neighborhood had been called out for temporary protection, and until the army could be assembled. The troops, as fast as they arrived and could be provided with arms, etc., were placed at different points on the river below Columbus, to prevent the escape of the enemy to Florida. The number of Georgia troops that flocked to the standard was between four and five thousand, besides which there was a considerable number of regular troops. But most of the Georgians were without arms, and, consequently, were not in a condition to go in search of the hostile Indians, until about the 18th or 20th of June, when the troops received arms and took up the line of march under Generals Scott and Sanford.

The Battle of San Jacinto

Title: The Battle of San Jacinto

Author: General Sam Houston

Date: April 21,1836

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.219-226

Houston made his report of the Battle of San Jacinto to Congress in the third person. It was printed in the "Congressional Globe." As a result of the battle fought April 21, 1836, the Mexican President-General Santa Ana was captured by the Texans under Houston, and the independence of Texas was achieved.

Yielding to popular clamor, the "hero of San Jacinto" reluctantly became a candidate for President of the Republic of Texas, and was elected by a large majority. One of his first acts was to liberate Santa Ana, who had been kept in captivity, and to send him to Washington to confer with President Jackson. He next opened negotiations with the United States Government for the annexation of Texas, but the measure met with such opposition in Congress that it did not succeed until 1845, when Houston went to Washington as the first United States Senator from the Lone Star State.

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.219

IT is necessary, in the first place, to announce the fact that, on the 2d of March, 1836, the declaration of Texan independence was proclaimed. The condition of the country at that time I will not particularly explain; but a provisional government had existed previous to that time. In December, 1835, when the troubles first began in Texas, in the inception of its revolution, Houston was appointed Major General of the forces by the consultation then in session at San Felipe. He remained in that position. A delegate from each municipality, or what would correspond to counties here, was to constitute the government, with a Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Council. They had the power of the country. An army was requisite, and means were necessary to sustain the revolution. This was the first organization of anything like a government, which absorbed the power that had previously existed in committees of vigilance and safety in different sections of the country. When the General was appointed, his first act was to organize a force to repel an invading army which he was satisfied would advance upon Texas. A rendezvous had been established, at which the drilling and organization of the troops was to take place, and officers were sent to their respective posts for the purpose of recruiting men. Colonel Fannin was appointed at Matagorda, to superintend that district, second in command to the General-in-Chief; and he remained there until the gallant band from Alabama and Georgia visited that country. They were volunteers under Colonels Ward, Shackleford, Duvall, and other illustrious names. When they arrived, Colonel Fannin, disregarding the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, became, by countenance of the council, a candidate for commander of the volunteers. Some four or five hundred of them had arrived, all equipped and disciplined; men of intelligence, men of character, men of chivalry and of honor. A more gallant band never graced the American soil in defense of liberty. He was selected; and the project of the council was to invade Matamoras, under the auspices of Fannin. San Antonio had been taken in 1835. Troops were to remain there. It was a post more than seventy miles from any colonies or settlements by the Americans. It was a Spanish town or city, with many thousand population, and very few Americans. The Alamo was nothing more than a church, 'and derived its cognomen from the fact of its being surrounded by poplars or cotton-wood trees. The Alamo was known as a fortress since the Mexican revolution in 1812….

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.221

. . . the Commander-in-Chief . . . send an order to Colonel Neill, who was in command of the Alamo, to blow up that place and fall back to Gonzales, making that a defensive position, which was supposed to be the furthest boundary the enemy would ever reach.

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.221

This was on the 17th of January. That order was secretly superseded by the council; and Colonel Travis, having relieved Colonel Neill, did not blow up the Alamo, and retreat with such articles as were necessary for the defense of the country; but remained in possession from the 17th of January until the last of February, when the Alamo was invested by the force of Santa Anna. Surrounded there, and cut off from all succor, the consequence was they were destroyed; they fell victims to the ruthless feelings of Santa Anna, by the contrivance of the council, and in violation of the plans of the Major General for the defense of the country….

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.221–p.222

The General proceeded on his way and met many fugitives. The day on which he left Washington, the 6th of March, the Alamo had fallen. He anticipated it; and marching to Gonzales as soon as practicable, though his health was infirm, he arrived there on the 11th of March. He found at Gonzales three hundred and seventy-four men, half fed, half clad, and half armed, and without organization. That was the nucleus on which he had to form an army and defend the country. No sooner did he arrive than he sent a dispatch to Colonel Fannin, fifty-eight miles, which would reach him in thirty hours, to fall back. He was satisfied that the Alamo had fallen. Colonel Fannin was ordered to fall back from Goliad, twenty-five miles to Victoria, on the Guadalupe, thus placing him within striking distance of Gonzales, for he had only to march twenty-five miles to Victoria to be on the east side of the Colorado, with the only succor hoped for by the General. He received an answer from, Colonel Fannin, stating that he had received his order; had held a council of war; and that he had determined to defend the place, and called it Fort Defiance, and had taken the responsibility to disobey the order….

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.222–p.223

Fannin, after disobeying orders, attempted, on the 19th, to retreat; and had only twenty-five miles to reach Victoria. His opinions of chivalry and honor were such that he would not avail himself of the night to do it in, although he had been admonished by the smoke of the enemies' encampment for eight days previous to attempting a retreat. He then attempted to retreat in open day. The Mexican cavalry surrounded him. He halted in a prairie, without water; commenced a fortification, and there was surrounded by the enemy, who, from the hilltops, shot down upon him. Though the most gallant spirits were there with him, he remained in that situation all that night and the next day, when a flag of truce was presented; he entered into a capitulation, and was taken to Goliad, on a promise to be returned to the United States with all associated with him. In less than eight days, the attempt was made to massacre him and every man with him. I believe some few did escape, most of whom came afterwards and joined the army.

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.223

The General fell back from the Colorado. . . He marched and took position on the Brazos, with as much expedition as was consistent with his situation; but at San Felipe he found a spirit of dissatisfaction in the troops. The Government had removed east. It had left Washington and gone to Harrisburg, and the apprehension of the settlers had been awakened and increased, rather than decreased. The spirits of the men were bowed down. Hope seemed to have departed, and with the little band alone remained anything like a consciousness of strength.

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.223

On the Brazos, the efficient force under his command amounted to five hundred and twenty.

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.223–p.224

The encampment on the Brazos was the point at which the first piece of artillery was ever received by the army. They were without munitions; old horse shoes, and all pieces of iron that could be procured, had to be cut up; various things were to be provided; there were no cartridges and but few balls. Two small six-pounders, presented by the magnanimity of the people of Cincinnati, and subsequently called the "twin sisters," were the first pieces of artillery that were used in Texas. From thence, the march commenced at Donoho's, three miles from Groce's. It had required several days to cross the Brazos, with the horses and wagons….

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.224

The march to Harrisburg was effected through the greatest possible difficulties. The prairies were quagmired. . . Notwithstanding that, the remarkable success of the march brought the army in a little time to Harrisburg, opposite which it halted. . . Orders were given by the General immediately to prepare rations for three days, and to be at an early hour in readiness to cross the bayou. The next morning we find that the Commander-in-Chief addressed a note in pencil to Colonel Henry Raguet, of Nacogdoches, in these words:

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.224

"Camp at Harrisburg, April 19, 1836.

"Sir: This morning we are in preparation to meet Santa Anna. It is the only chance of saving Texas. From time to time, I have looked for reinforcements in vain. The convention adjourning to Harrisburg, struck panic throughout the country. Texas could have started at least four thousand men. We will only have about seven hundred to march with, besides the camp guard. We go to conquer. It is wisdom, growing out of necessity, to meet the enemy now; every consideration enforces it. No previous occasion would justify it. The troops are in fine spirits, and now is the time for action….

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.224

"We shall use our best efforts to fight the enemy to such advantage as will insure victory, though odds are greatly against us. I leave the result in the hands of a wise God, and rely upon His providence.

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.225

"My country will do justice to those who serve her. The rights for which we fight will be secured, and Texas free.". . .

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.225

A crossing was effected by the evening, and the line of march was taken up. . . for San Jacinto, for the purpose of cutting off Santa Anna below the junction of the San Jacinto and Buffalo bayou….

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.225–p.226

In the morning the sun had risen brightly, and he determined with this omen, "to-day the battle shall take place." . . . After the council was dismissed, the General sent for Deaf Smith and his comrade, Reeves, who came mounted, when he gave them the axes so as not to attract the attention of the troops. They placed them in their saddles, as Mexicans carry swords and weapons, and started briskly for the scene of action. The General announced to them: "You will be speedy if you return in time for the scenes that are to be enacted here." They executed the order, and when the troops with the General were within sixty yards of the enemy's front, when charging, Deaf Smith returned and announced that the bridge was cut down. It had been preconcerted to announce that the enemy had received no reinforcement. It was announced to the army for the first time; for the idea that the bridge would be cut down was never thought of by any one but the General himself, until he ordered it to be done, and then only known to Smith and his comrade. It would have made the army polemic if it had been known that Vince's bridge was to be destroyed, for it cut off all means of escape for either army. There was no alternative but victory or death….

Houston, Battle of San Jacinto, America, Vol.6, p.226

With the exception of the Commander-in-Chief, no gentleman in the army had ever been in a general action, or even witnessed one; no one had been drilled in a regular army, or had been accustomed to the evolutions necessary to the maneuvering of troops. So soon as the disposition of the troops was made, according to his judgment, he announced to the Secretary of War the plan of battle. It was concurred in instantly. The Commander-in-Chief requested the Secretary of War to take command of the left wing, so as to possess him of the timber, and enable him to turn the right wing of the enemy. The General's plan of battle was carried out.

The Panic of 1837

Title: The Panic of 1837

Author: Edward M. Shepard

Date: 1837

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.6, pp.178-190

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.178

On March 4, 1837, Jackson and Van Buren rode together from the White House to the Capitol in a "beautiful phaeton" made from the timber of the old frigate Constitution, the gift to the General from the Democrats of New York city. He was the third and last President who has, after serving through his term, left office amid the same enthusiasm which attended him when he entered it, and to whom the surrender of place has not been full of those pangs which attend sudden loss of power, and of which the certain anticipation ought to moderate ambition in a country so rarely permitting a long and continuous public career. Washington, amid an almost unanimous love and reverence, left a station of which he was unaffectedly weary; and he was greater out of office than in it. Jefferson and Jackson remained really powerful characters….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.178

Leaving the White House under a still and brilliant sky, the retiring and incoming rulers had such a popular and military attendance as without much order or splendor has usually gone up Capitol Hill with our Presidents. Van Buren's inaugural speech was heard, it is said, by nearly twenty thousand persons; for he read it with remarkable distinctness and in a quiet air, from the historic eastern portico. He returned from the inauguration to his private residence; and with a fine deference insisted upon Jackson remaining in the White House until his departure, a few days later, for Tennessee. Van Buren, in his own carriage, took Jackson to the terminus of the new railway upon which the journey home was to begin. He bade the old man a most affectionate farewell, and promised to visit him at the Hermitage in the summer….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.179

Van Buren's inaugural address began again with the favorite touch of humility, but it now had an agreeable dignity. He was, he said, the first President born after the Revolution; he belonged to a later age than his illustrious predecessors. Nor ought he to expect his countrymen to weigh his actions with the same kind and partial hand which they had used toward worthies of Revolutionary times. But he piously looked for the sustaining support of Providence, and the kindness of a people who had never yet deserted a public servant honestly laboring in their cause….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.179

The lucid optimism of the speech was in perfect temper with this one of those shining and mellow days which even March now and then brings to Washington. But there was latent in the atmosphere a storm, carrying with it a furious and complete devastation. The profoundly thrilling and hidden delight which comes with the first taste of supreme power, even to the experienced and battered man of affairs, had been enjoyed by VanBuren only a few days, when the air grew heavy about him, and then perturbed, and then violently agitated, until in two months broke fiercely and beyond all restraint the most terrific of commercial convulsions in the United States. Since Washington began the experiment of our Federal Government amid the sullen doubts of extreme Federalists and extreme Democrats, no President, save only Abraham Lincoln, has had to face at the outset of his Presidency so appalling a political situation.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.180

The causes of the panic of 1837 lay far deeper than in the complex processes of banking or in the faults of Federal administration of the finances. But, as a man suddenly ill prefers to find for his ailment some recent and obvious cause, and is not convinced by even a long and dangerous sickness that its origin lay in old and continued habits of life, so the greater part of the American people and of their leaders believed this extraordinary crisis to be the result of financial blunders of Jackson's administration. They believed that Van Buren could with a few strokes of his pen repair, if he pleased, those blunders, and restore commercial confidence and prosperity. The panic of 1837 became, and has very largely remained, the subject of political and partizan differences, which obscure its real phenomena and causes. The farseeing and patriotic intrepidity with which Van Buren met its almost overwhelming difficulties is really the crown of his political carer. Fairly to appreciate the service he then rendered his country, the causes of this famous crisis must be attentively considered.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.180

In 1819 the United States suffered from commercial and financial derangement, which may be assumed to have been the effect of the second war with Great Britain. The enormous waste of a great war carried on by a highly organized nation is apt not to become obvious in general business distress until some time after the war has ended. A buoyant extravagance in living and in commercial and manufacturing ventures will continue after a peace has brought its extraordinary promises, upon the faith of which, and in joyful ignorance, the evil and inevitable day is postponed. All this was seen later and on a vaster scale from 1865 to 1873.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.181

In 1821 the country had quite recovered from its depression; and from this time on to near the end of Jackson's administration the United States saw a material prosperity, doubtless greater than saw a material prosperity, doubtless greater than any before known. The exuberant outburst of John Quincy Adams' message of 1827—that the productions of our soil, the exchanges of our commerce, the vivifying labors of human industry, had combined "to mingle in our cup a portion of enjoyment as large and liberal as the indulgence of Heaven has perhaps ever granted to the imperfect state of man upon earth"—was in the usual tone of the public utterances of our Presidents from 1821 to 1837. Our harvests were always great. We were a chosen people delighting in reminders from our rulers of our prosperity, and not restless under their pious urgency of perennial gratitude to providence. In 1821 the national debt had slightly increased, reaching upward of $90,000,000; but from that time its steady and rapid payment went on until it was all discharged in 1834. Our cities grew. Our populationstretched eagerly out into the rich Mississippi valley.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.182

From a population of ten millions in 1821, we reached sixteen millions in 1837. New York from about 1,400,000 became 2,200,000; and Pennsylvania from about 1,000,000, became 1,600,000. But the amazing growth was at the West—Illinois from 60,000 to 400,000, Indiana from 170,000 to 600,000, Ohio from 600,000 to 1,400,000, Tennessee from 450,000 to 800,000. Missouri had increased her 70,000 five-fold; Mississippi her 80,000 fourfold; Michigan her 10,000 twenty-fold. Iowa and Wisconsin were entirely unsettled in 1821; in 1837 the fertile lands of the former maintained nearly forty thousand and of the latter nearly thirty thousand hardy citizens. New towns and cities rose with magical rapidity. With much that was unlovely there was also exhibited an amazing energy and capacity for increase in wealth….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.182

Roads, canals, river improvements, preceded, attended, followed these sudden settlements, this vast and jubilant movement of population. There was an extraordinary growth of "internal improvements." In his message of 1831, Jackson rejoiced at the high wages earned by laborers in the construction of these works, which he truly said were "extending with unprecedented rapidity." The constitutional power of the Federal Government to promote the improvements within the States became a serious question, because the improvements proposed were upon so vast a scale. No single interest had for fifteen years before 1837 held so large a part of American attention as did the making of canals and roads. The debates of Congress and legislatures, the messages of Presi-dents and governors, were full of it. If the Erie Canal, finished in 1825, had rendered vast natural resources available, and had made its chief builder famous, why should not like schemes prosper further west? The success of railroads was already established; and there was indefinite promise in the extensions of them already planned. In 1830 twenty-three miles had been constructed; in 1831 ninety-four miles had been constructed; in 1831 ninety-four miles; and in 1836 the total construction had risen to 1,273 miles….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.183

The American people with one consent gave themselves to an amazing extravagance of land speculation. The Eden which Martin Chuzzlewit saw in later material decay was to be found in the new country on almost every stream to the east of the Mississippi, and on many streams west of it, where flatboats could be floated. Frauds there doubtless were; but they were incidental to the honest delusion of intelligent men inspired by the most extraordinary growth the world had seen. The often quoted illustration of Mobile, the valuation of whose real estate rose from $1,294,810 in 1831, to $27,482,961, in 1837, to sink again in 1846 to $8,638,250, not unfairly tells the story. In Pensacola, lots which to-day are worth $50 each, were sold for as much as lots on Fifth Avenue, in New York, which to-day are worth $100,000 apiece. Real estate in the latter city was assessed in 1836 at more than it was in the greatly larger and richer city of fifteen years later. From 1830 to 1837 the steamboat tonnage on the Western rivers rose from 63,053 to 253,661. From 1833 to 1837 the cotton crop of the newer slave States, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Florida, increased from 536,450 to 916,960 bales, while the price with fluctuations rose from ten to twenty cents a pound….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.184

The price of public lands was fixt by law at $1.25 an acre; and they were open to any purchaser, without the wholesome limits of acreage and the restraint to actual settlers which were afterward established. Here then was a commodity whose price to wholesale purchasers did not rise, and the very commodity by which so many fortunes had been made. In public lands, therefore, the fury of money-getting, the boastful confidence in the future of the country, reached their climax. From 1820 to 1829 the annual sales had averaged less than $1,300,000, in 1829 being $1,517,175. But in 1830 they exceeded $2,300,000, in 1831 $3,200,000, in 1832 $2,600,000, in 1833 $3,900,000, and in 1834 $4,800,000. In 1835 they suddenly mounted to $14,757,600, and in 1836 to $24,877,719. In his messages of 1829 and 1830 Jackson not unreasonably treated the moderate increase in the sales as a proof of increasing prosperity. In 1831 his congratulations were hushed; but in 1835 he again fancied, even in the abnormal sales of that year, only an ampler proof of ampler prosperity. In 1836 he at last saw that tremendous speculation was the true significance of the enormous increase. prices of course went up. Everybody thought himself richer and his labor worth more.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.184

There is no longer dispute that the prostration of business in 1837, and for several years afterward, was the perfectly natural result of the speculation which had gone before. The absurd denunciations of Van Buren by the most eminent of the Whigs for not ending the crisis by governmental interference are no longer respected….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.185

The enormous extension of bank credits during the three years before the breakdown in 1837 was rather the symptom than the cause of the disease. The fever of speculation was in the veins of the community before "kiting" began. Bank officers dwelt in the same atmosphere as did other Americans, and their sanguine extravagance in turn stimulated the universal temper of speculation.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.185

When the United States Bank lost the government deposits, late in 1833, they amounted to a little less than $10,000,000. On January 1, 1835, more than a year after the State banks took the deposits, they had increased to a little more than $10,000,000. But the public debt being then paid and the outgo of money thus checked, the deposits had by January 1, 1836, reached $25,000,000, and by June 1, 1836, $41,500,000. This enormous advance represented the sudden increase in the sales of public lands, which were paid for in bank paper, which in turn formed the bulk of the government deposits. The deposits were with only a small part of the six hundred and more State banks then in existence. But the increase in the sales of public lands was the result of all the organic causes and of all the long train of events which had seated the fever of speculation so profoundly in the American character of the day. To those causes and events must ultimately be ascribed the extension of bank credits so far as it immediately arose out of the increase of government deposits. Nor is there any sufficient reason to suppose that if the deposits, instead of being in fifty State banks, had remained in the United States Bank and its branches, the tendency to speculation would have been less. The influences whichsurrounded that bank were the very influences most completely subject to the popular mania.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.186

But the increase of government deposits was only fuel added to the flames. The craze for banks and credits was unbounded before the removal of the deposits had taken place, and before their great increase could have had serious effect. Between 1830 and January 1, 1834, the banking capital of the United States had risen from $61,000,000 to about $200,000,000; the loans and discounts of the banks from $200,000,000 to 324,000,000; and their note circulation from $61,000,000 to $95,000,000. The increase from January 1, 1834, to January 1, 1836, was even more rapid, the banking capital advancing in the two years to $251,000,000, the loans and discounts to $457,000,000, and the note circulation to $140,000,000. But there was certainty of disaster in the abnormal growth from 1830 to 1834. The insanity of speculation was in ample tho unobserved control of the country while Nicholas Biddle still controlled the deposits, and was certain to reach a climax whether they stayed with him or went elsewhere.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.186

It is difficult rightly to apportion among the statesmen and politicians of the time so much of blame for the mania of speculation as must go to that body of men. They had all drunk in the national intoxication over American success and growth….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.186

The great and long concealed devastation of physical wealth and of the accumulation of legitimate labor, by premature improvements and costly personal living, became now quickly apparent. Fancied wealth sank out of sight. Paper symbols of ne cities and towns, canals and roads, werenot only without value, but they were now plainly seen to be so. Rich men became poor men. The prices of articles in which there had been speculation sank in the reaction far below their true value. The industrious and the prudent, who had given their labor and their real wealth for paper promises issued upon the credit of seemingly assured fortunes, suffered at once with men whose fortunes had never been anything better than the delusions of their hope and imagination.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.187

It is now plain enough that to recover from this crisis was a work of physical reparation to which must go time, industry, and frugality. There was folly in every effort to retain and use as valuable assets the investments in companies and banks whose usefulness, if it had ever begun, was now ended. There was folly in every effort to conceal from the world by words of hopefulness the fact that the imagined values in new cities and garden lands had disappeared in a rude disenchantment as complete as that of Abou-Hassan in the "Thousand and One Nights," or that of Sly, the tinker, left untold in the "Taming of the Shrew." Their sites were no more than wild lands, whose value must wait the march of American progress, fast enough indeed to the rest of the world, but slow as the snail to the wild pacing of the speculators. Every pretense of a politician, whether in or out of the Senate chamber, that the government could by devices of financiering avoid this necessity of long physical repair, was either folly or wickedness. And of this folly or even wickedness there was no lack in the anxious spring and summer of 1837.

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.187

There had already occurred in many quartersthat misery which is borne by the humbler producers of wealth not for their own consumption, but simply for exchange, whose earnings are not increased to meet the inflation of prices upon which traders and speculators are accumulating apparent fortunes and spending them as if they were real. On February 14, 1837, several thousand people met in front of the City Hall in New York under a call of men whom the Commercial Advertiser described as "Jackson Jacobins." The call was headed: "Bread, meat, rent, fuel! Their prices must come down!" It invited the presence of "all friends of humanity determined to resist monopolists and extortionists." A very respectable meeting about high prices had been held two or three weeks before at the Broadway Tabernacle. The meeting in the City Hall park, with a mixture of wisdom and folly, urged the prohibition of banknotes under $100, and called for gold and silver; and then denounced landlords and dealers in provisions. The excitement of the meeting was followed by a riot, in which a great flour warehouse was gutted. The rioters were chiefly foreigner and few in number; nor were the promoters of the meeting involved in the riot. The military were called out; and Eli Hart & Co., the unfortunate flour merchants, issued a card pointing out with grim truth "that the destruction of the article can not have a tendency to reduce the price."

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.188

Commercial failures began in New York about April 1. By April 8 nearly one hundred failures had occurred in that city—five of foreign and exchange brokers, thirty of dry-goods jobbers, sixteen of commission houses, twenty-eight of real-estate speculators, eight of stock-brokers, and sev-eral others. Three days later the failures had reached one hundred and twenty-eight. Provisions, wages, rents, everything, as the New York Herald on that day announced, were coming down. Within a few days more the failures were too numerous to be specially noticed; and before the end of the month the rest of the country was in a like condition. The prostration in the newer cotton States was peculiarly complete. Their staple was now down to ten cents a pound; within a year it had been worth twenty. All other staples fell enormously in price….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.189

When Congress assembled, the country had cried itself, if not to sleep, at least to seeming quiet. The sun had not ceased to rise and set. Altho merchants and banks were prostrate with anxiety or even in irremediable ruin; altho thousands of clerks and laborers were out of employment or earning absurdly low wages—for near New York hundreds of laborers were rejected who applied for work at four dollars a month and board; altho honest frontiersmen found themselves hopelessly isolated in a wilderness—for the frontier had suddenly shrunk far behind them—still the harvest had been good, the masses of men had been at work, and economy had prevailed. The desperation was over. But there was a profound melancholy, from which a recovery was to come only too soon to be lasting….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.189

Another year, Van Buren now hoped, would bring a complete recovery from the blow of 1837. But the autumn of 1839 had also brought a blast, to grow more and more chilling and disastrous. In the early fall the Bank of the United States agreed to loan Pennsylvania $2,000,000; and forthe loan obtained the privilege of issuing $5 notes, having before been restricted to notes of $20 and upward. "Thus has the Van Buren State of Pennsylvania," it was boasted, "enabled the banks to overcome the reckless system of a Van Buren national administration." The price of cotton, which had risen to 16 cents a pound, fell in the summer of 1839, and in 1840 touched as low a point as 5 cents. In the Northwest many banks had not yet resumed since 1837. To avoid execution sales it was said that two hundred plantations had been abandoned and their slaves taken to Texas. The sheriff, instead of the ancient return, nulla bona, was said, in the grim sport of the frontier, to indorse on the fruitless writs "G. T.," meaning "Gone to Texas."

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.190

A money stringency again appeared in England, in 1839. Its exportation of goods and money to America had again become enormous. The customs duties collected in 1839 were over $23,000,000, and about the same as they had been in 1836, having fallen in 1837 to $11,000,000, and afterward in 1840 falling to $13,000,000. Speculation revived, the land sales exceeding $7,000,000 in 1839, while they had been $3,700,000 in 1838, and afterward fell to $3,000,000 in 1840. Under the pressure from England the Bank of the United States sank with a crash….

Shepard, Panic of 1837, Great Epochs, Vol.6, p.190

Altho the excitement of 1839 did not equal that of 1837, there was a duller and completer despondency. It was at last known that the recuperative power of even our own proud and bounding country had limits. Years were yet necessary to a recovery.

The Annexation of Texas

Title: The Annexation of Texas

Author: James Schouler

Date: 1837—1845

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.7, pp.3-9

Schouler, Annexation of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.3

As envoy and minister extraordinary from the new republic. Hunt presently proposed in form the immediate annexation of Texas to the United States; for by vote almost unanimous the inhabitants of that country had preferred this condition however, declined the proposal, whether finally or for a convenient delay was not apparent, tho annexationists chose to take his refusal in the latter sense. But the bare proposal was enough to arouse the opposition of the sensitive North, and petitions against annexing Texas to the Union soon poured in upon this Congress with the other anti-slavery memorials. Out of State legislatures, where this subject was earnestly debated, five—those of Vermont, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Michigan—declared their emphatic repugnance to the whole scheme; others showed a decided dislike of it; but South Carolina was most eager on the other side, and the legislatures of Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi strongly commended the cause to Congress and the country.

Since achieving her independence from Mexico in the battle of San Jacinto of 1836 (following the massacre in the Alamo in March), Texas for ten years had been an independent State—the "Lone Star State." But she had small resources; her credit was not good, and she was "constantly threatened with bankruptcy," says Garrison, her latest historian. With a voting population of not more than 7,000, she had to maintain an army and navy in order to meet trouble with the Indians and Mexicans, and a diplomatic corps. European powers, especially England and France, sought to acquire influence with her. The main obstacle with European powers was the slavery question, a difficulty which at once presented itself to the United States also when Texas sought admission. Commissioners were sent to Washington with an offer of annexation very soon after the battle of San Jacinto and Congress passed a resolution favorable to accepting the proposal, at such future time as Texas should prove herself capable of maintaining her independence. Mexico gave notice to the United States that annexation would be regarded in the light of an act of war. After annexation was finally achieved in 1845 Texas became more prosperous. With a population under 30,000 in 1836, she had in 1847 a white population of 100,000, besides 35,000 slaves. In 1850 her total population had risen to 200,000.

Schouler, Annexation of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.4

Much art was used by slaveholders to hold up this project as a national one; but new soil meant new slave soil, and the division of State feeling showed plainly that it was so regarded. With nine slave States, which it was thought might be formed out of Texas alone, slavery would sit impregnable in the national Senate. This was too much for the Northern stomach to bear at once. In vain, therefore, was Preston, of the Senate, a moderate Whig from South Carolina, and a most accomplished orator, put forward by the slave propagandists to embellish with his rhetoric a resolve to "reannex" the whole territory to the Rio Grande, with the consent of Texas, as a domain which was rightfully our own before the Florida treaty with Spain surrendered it. Even now Minister Hunt was trying to press the plan, and Secretaries Forsyth and Poinsett, and the President himself, so Preston thought, had been generally friendly. The Senate would take no action, while Adams, in the House debates, exposed the whole system of perfidy and duplicity which the Jackson administration had pursued toward Mexico from the beginning, with this same annexation in view. This silenced the subject for the present; and the sagacious Van Buren turning to the pacific management of American claims upon Mexico, the alarm of our free States at length subsided….

Schouler, Annexation of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.5

Seward in a recent campaign speech urged the true objection to Texas, not very different, in truth, from that which had weighed with President Monroe a quarter-century before. Texas and slavery were at war with the common interests and involved the integrity of the Union. "To increase the slaveholding power is to subvert the Constitution; to give a fearful preponderance which may and probably will be speedily followed by demands to which the Democratic free-labor States can not yield, and the denial of which will be made the ground of secession, nullification, and disunion." Most fellow Whigs thought the prediction at this time an extravagant one, but events established it.

Schouler, Annexation of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.5

In the Senate, McDuffe, and the House Charles J. Ingersoll, offered a joint resolution for annexing Texas; each resolution was duly referred. After the holidays the subject was earnestly debated in the House; many Southern Whigs favoring the measure, while Northern men insisted on modifying the Ingersoll resolutions so that the Missouri compromise line should be run through the proposed territory. This a Democratic caucus accepted, and the joint resolution as amended passed the House near the close of January by a majority of 22 votes….

Schouler, Annexation of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.6

Pending the final disposition of this measure the whole Union was agitated. Crowds besieged the Senate daily to listen to the debate, and foreign legations as well as the Cabinet were represented among the listeners. Nor were State legislatures silent in expressing their views. The legislature of Massachusetts took the Whig ground that no constitutional right nor precedent existed for admitting a foreign State by mere act of Congress, and protested in the name of the people against admitting Texas on any other basis than the perfect equality of freemen. But in those Northern border States which had gone Democratic, Michigan, New Hampshire, and Maine, the legislatures chose rather to commend the annexation of Texas as a great national measure. Virginia refused to instruct her senators on the subject, while South Carolina was dictatorial. Internal convulsions in Mexico at this very moment were an overpowering temptation to those who had wavered. Tyler's secret agents, who bore bribes in their hands and plausible explanations on their lips, had accomplished nothing with Santa Anna, but to spur him on, with his republic, to subjugate Texas for her perfidy. But just as Congress deliberated on the question came the news of a sudden revolution in Mexico which put Santa Anna under the wheel and Herrera at the top. Now was the time to clutch the prize, for we could secure it without a war; and this lying instigation sealed the book of fate.

Schouler, Annexation of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.7

To glance for a moment at the meaning of this joint resolution. It not only consented to the erection of Texas into a State for admission into the Union with a republican form of government, but pledged the faith of the United States to permit new States to be formed from that jurisdiction not exceeding four, besides Texas, should Texas assent to it, and to admit these additional States into the Union hereafter with or without slavery, as the people of each State might prefer, if formed below the Missouri compromise line of 36° 30', but if formed above that line, without slavery at all. The tiger in the jungle of this fair territory was the adjustment of boundaries with Mexico; but we adopted Texas and her circumstances together, and distinctly assumed that difficult function. Any constitution formed by the people of Texas was to be laid before Congress for its final action by the first of January next. Such was the first and original branch of this joint resolution, embracing a consent under conditions given in advance, which the President might submit to the republic of Texas by way of an offer from the United Statesfor immediate acceptance. But now, by force of the Benton alternative, the President might at his discretion negotiate with Texas clean terms of admission and submit the results hereafter.

Schouler, Annexation of Texas, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.8

Only three days were left to round out Tyler's official term. The second thought of Congress had apparently been to commit this whole business, with its dread responsibilities, to the incoming President, whose sober reticence was confided in. Polk had already pledged himself to "immediate reannexation," but this was a question of methods, and even Jacksonians disliked to give Tyler credit for anything. Benton and the Van Burenites had a last hope that the second alternative would be chosen, and, in fact, Benton afterward asserted that Polk privately promised to choose it. But Tyler was too slippery, too intent upon the prize of his calling, to be stript thus of his glory. He improved the last hours of his opportunity, and with Calhoun, it appears, to second him. The discretion given under the resolve he at once exercised himself; he chose the first alternative, which was what zealous annexationists wanted, and invited Texas to accept the conditions and enter without further transactions. Polk, perhaps, was willing to escape so easily the dilemma which the Democrats had arranged for him. He put upon his predecessor the odium of annexing Texas by the surest but most outrageous means, and Tyler, in return, put upon Polk the odium of handling consequences so that war with Mexico followed. On Monday, the last day of his term, and the same day that he vacated the White House, Tyler took the responsibility without a qualm, by dispatching a nephew, who spurred off with hot speed, bearingwith him the official dispatches which tendered to the Lone Star republic the proposal of the United States for immediate union.

Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed

Title: Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed

Author: William Ellery Channing, D. D.

Date: 1837

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.231-238

This is the main portion of a letter written to Senator Henry Clay in 1837 by Dr. Channing, the most famous and eloquent of the early Unitarian divines. His interest in social problems led to his active participation in the anti-slavery movement. He was not an extreme abolitionist, but favored political action. His principles are clearly enunciated in this protest against the proposed annexation of Texas, on the ground that it would strengthen "the peculiar institutions of the South, and open a new and vast field for slavery."

Dr. Channing was greatly esteemed by such notable contemporaries as Wordsworth and Coleridge, in England, and our own Ralph Waldo Emerson. Coleridge said of him: "He has the love of wisdom and the wisdom of love." In concert with Emerson and other great intellectual leaders, Channing was a factor in the strenuous New England life of his time.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.231

I PROCEED now to a consideration of what is to me the strongest argument against annexing Texas to the United States. This measure will extend and perpetuate slavery….

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.231–p.232

It is fitted and still more intended to do so. On this point there can be no doubt. As far back as the year 1829, the annexation of Texas was agitated in the Southern and Western States; and it was urged on the ground of the strength and extension it would give to the slaveholding interest. In a series of essays ascribed to a gentleman, now a Senator in Congress, it was maintained, that five or six slaveholding states would by this measure be added to the Union; and he even intimated that as many as nine states as large as Kentucky might be formed within the limits of Texas. In Virginia, about the same time, calculations were made as to the increased value which would thus be given to slaves, and it was even said, that this acquisition would raise the price fifty per cent. Of late the language on this subject is most explicit. The great argument for annexing Texas is, that it will strengthen "the peculiar institutions" of the South, and open a new and vast field for slavery.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.232

By this act, slavery will be spread over regions to which it is now impossible to set limits. Texas, I repeat it, is but the first step of aggression. I trust, indeed, that Providence will beat back and humble our cupidity and ambition. But one guilty success is often suffered to be crowned, as men call it, with greater; in order that a more awful retribution may at length vindicate the justice of God, and the rights of the oppressed. Texas, smitten with slavery, will spread the infection beyond herself. We know that the tropical regions have been found most propitious to this pestilence; nor can we promise ourselves, that its expulsion from them for a season forbids its return. By annexing Texas, we may send this scourge to a distance, which, if now revealed, would appal us, and through these vast regions every cry of the injured will invoke wrath on our heads.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.232–p.233

By this act, slavery will be perpetuated in the old States as well as spread over new. It is well known, that the soil of some of the old States has become exhausted by slave cultivation. Their neighborhood to communities, which are flourishing under free labor, forces on them perpetual arguments for adopting this better system. They now adhere to slavery, not on account of the wealth which it extracts from the soil, but because it furnishes men and women to be sold in newly settled and more southern districts. It is by slave breeding and slave selling that these States subsist. Take away from them a foreign market, and slavery would die. Of consequence, by opening a new market, it is prolonged and invigorated. By annexing Texas, we shall not only create it where it does not exist, but breathe new life into it, where its end seemed to be near. States, which might and ought to throw it off, will make the multiplication of slaves their great aim and chief resource.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.233–p.234

Nor is the worst told. As I have before intimated, and it cannot be too often repeated, we shall not only quicken the domestic slave trade; we shall give a new impulse to the foreign. This indeed we have pronounced in our laws to be felony; but we make our laws cobwebs, when we offer to rapacious men strong motives for their violation. Open a market for slaves in an unsettled country, with a sweep of sea-coast, and at such a distance from the seat of government that laws may be evaded with impunity, and how can you exclude slaves from Africa? It is well known that cargoes have been landed in Louisiana. What is to drive them from Texas? In incorporating this region with the Union to make it a slave country, we send the kidnapper to prowl through the jungles, and to dart, like a beast of prey, on the defenceless villages of Africa. We chain the helpless despairing victims; crowd them into the fetid, pestilential slave ship; expose them to the unutterable cruelties of the middle passage, and, if they survive it, crush them with perpetual bondage.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.234

I now ask, whether as a people, we are prepared to seize on a neighboring territory for the end of extending slavery? I ask, whether, as a people, we can stand forth in the sight of God, in the sight of the nations, and adopt this atrocious policy? Sooner perish! Sooner be our name blotted out from the record of nations! .

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.234

Whoever studies modern history with any care, must discern in it a steady growing movement towards one most interesting result, I mean, towards the elevation of the laboring class of society….

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.234–p.235

It is the great mission of this country, to forward this revolution, and never was a sublimer work committed to a nation. Our mission is to elevate society through all its conditions, to secure to every human being the means of progress, to substitute the government of equal laws for that of irresponsible individuals, to prove that, under popular institutions, the people may be carried forward, that the multitude who toil are capable of enjoying the noblest blessings of the social state. The prejudice, that labor is a degradation, one of the worst prejudices handed down from barbarous ages, is to receive here, a practical refutation. The power of liberty to raise up the whole people, this is the great Idea, on which our institutions rest, and which is to be wrought out in our history. Shall a nation having such a mission abjure it, and even fight against the progress which it is specially called to promote?

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.235

The annexation of Texas, if it should be accomplished, would do much to determine the future history and character of this country. It is one of those measures, which call a nation to pause, reflect, look forward, because their force is not soon exhausted.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.235–p.236

The chief interest of a people lies in measures, which, making, perhaps, little noise, go far to fix its character, to determine its policy and fate for ages, to decide its rank among nations. A fearful responsibility rests on those who originate or control these pregnant acts. The destiny of millions is in their hands. The execration of millions may fall on their heads. Long after present excitements shall have passed away, long after they and their generation shall have vanished from the earth, the fruits of their agency will be reaped. Such a measure is that of which I now write. It will commit us to a degrading policy, the issues of which lie beyond human foresight. In opening to ourselves vast regions, through which we may spread slavery, and in spreading it for this, among other ends, that the slaveholding states may bear rule in the national councils, we make slavery the predominant interest of the state. We make it the basis of power, the spring or guide of public measures, the object for which the revenues, strength, and wealth of the country, are to be exhausted. Slavery will be branded on our front, as the great Idea, the prominent feature of the country. We shall renounce our high calling as a people, and accomplish the lowest destiny to which a nation can be bound.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.236–p.237

And are we prepared for this degradation? Are we prepared to couple with the name of our country the infamy of deliberately spreading slavery, and especially of spreading it through regions from which the wise and humane legislation of a neighboring republic had excluded it? We call Mexico a semi-barbarous people; and yet we talk of planting slavery where Mexico would not suffer it to live. What American will not blush to lift his head in Europe, if this disgrace shall be fastened on his country? Let other calamities, if God so will, come on us. Let us be steeped in poverty. Let pestilence stalk through our land. Let famine thin our population. Let the world join hands against our free institutions, and deluge our shores with blood. All this can be endured. A few years of industry and peace will recruit our wasted numbers, and spread fruitfulness over our desolated fields. But a nation devoting itself to the work of spreading and perpetuating slavery, stamps itself with a guilt and shame, which generations may not be able to efface. The plea on which we have rested, that slavery was not our choice, but a sad necessity bequeathed us by our fathers, will avail us no longer. The whole guilt will be assumed by ourselves.

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.237

It is very lamentable, that among the distinguished men of the South, any should be found so wanting to their own fame, as to become advocates of slavery that men, who might leave honorable and enduring record of themselves in their country's history . . . should lend their great powers to the extension of slavery, is among the dark symptoms of the times. . . "Have they nothing of that prophetic instinct, by which truly great men read the future? Can they learn nothing from the sentence now passed on men, who, fifty years ago, defended the slave trade? .

Channing, Why the Annexation of Texas was Opposed, America, Vol.6, p.237–p.238

I have expressed my fears, that by the annexation of Texas, slavery is to be continued and extended. But I wish not to be understood, as having the slightest doubt as to the approaching fall of the institution. It may be prolonged to our reproach and greater ultimate suffering. But fall it will and must. . . Moral laws are as irresistible as physical. In the most enlightened countries of Europe, a man would forfeit his place in society, by vindicating slavery. The slaveholder must not imagine, that he has nothing to do but fight with a few societies. These, of themselves, are nothing. He should not waste on them one fear. They are strong, only as representing the spirit of the Christian and civilized world. His battle is with the laws of human nature and the irresistible tendencies of human affairs. These are not to be withstood by artful strokes of policy, or by daring crimes. The world is against him, and the world's Maker. Every day the sympathies of the world are forsaking him. Can he hope to sustain slavery against the moral feeling, the solemn sentence of the human race?

Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy

Title: Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy

Author: Horace Greeley

Date: 1837

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.239-247

Greeley's account of the mobbing and shooting of the abolitionist editor, Elijah P. Lovejoy, at Alton, Illinois, in 1837, appears in his "American Conflict," a remarkable Civil War history showing "the inevitable sequence whereby ideas proved the germ of events." This article reveals the characteristics of its author as "a champion in the arena of public affairs, laying about him with pen and speech like an ancient Bayard with his sword." The battles he fought for humanity have made him an epic figure in American journalism.

Lovejoy, who at first refrained from taking any part in the anti-slavery agitation, was virtually goaded into becoming an Abolitionist. His violent death, following a series of persecutions, caused great excitement throughout the country. Henry Tanner, one of the defenders of the warehouse-scene of the tragedy here reviewed, has described it at length as "The Martyrdom of Lovejoy."

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.239–p.240

ELIJAH P. LOVEJOY, son of Rev. Daniel Lovejoy, and the eldest of seven children, was born at Albion, Maine, November 9, 1802. His ancestors, partly English and partly Scotch, all of the industrious middle class, had been citizens of New Hampshire and of Maine for several generations. He was distinguished, from early youth, alike for diligence in labor and for zeal and success in the acquisition of knowledge. He graduated with high honors at Waterville College, Maine, in September, 1826. In May following, he turned his face westward, and in the autumn of that year found employment as a teacher in St. Louis. In 1828, he became editor of a political journal, of the "National Republican" faith, and was thence actively engaged in politics of the Clay and Webster school, until January, 1832, when he was brought under deep religious impressions, and the next month united with the Presbyterian Church. Relinquishing his political pursuits and prospects, he engaged in a course of study preparatory for the ministry, entering the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, on the 24th of March.

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.240

He received, next spring, a license to preach from the second Presbytery of Philadelphia, and spent the summer as an evangelist in Newport, R. I., and in New York. He left the last-named city in the autumn of that year, and returned to St. Louis, at the urgent invitation of a circle of fellow-Christians, who desired him to establish and edit a religious newspaper in that city—furnishing a capital of twelve hundred dollars for the purpose, and guaranteeing him, in writing, the entire control of the concern….

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.240–p.241

The "St. Louis Observer, weekly, was accordingly first issued on the 22d of November. It was of the "Evangelical" or Orthodox Protestant school; but had no controversy, save with wickedness, and no purpose but to quicken the zeal and enlarge the usefulness of professing Christians, while adding, if possible, to their number. There is no evidence that it was commenced with any intent to war on slavery, or with any expectation of exciting the special hostility of any interest but that of Satan. Its first exhibition of a combative or belligerent tendency had for its object the Roman Catholics and their dogmas; but this, though it naturally provoked some resentment in a city so largely Catholic as St. Louis, excited no tumult or violence. Its first articles concerning slavery were exceedingly moderate in their tone, and favorable rather to colonization than to immediate Abolition. Even when the editor first took decided ground against slavery, he still affirmed his hostility to immediate, unconditional emancipation.

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.241

On the request of its proprietors, Mr. Lovejoy gave up the establishment to them, intending to leave St. Louis; but they handed it over in payment of a debt of five hundred dollars, and the new owner immediately presented it to Mr. Lovejoy, telling him to go on with the paper as before. Meantime, his press was taken from St. Louis, by steamboat, to Alton, and landed on the bank about daylight on Sunday morning. It lay there in safety through the Sabbath; but, before the next morning, it had been destroyed by some five or six individuals. On Monday, a meeting of citizens was held, and a pledge voluntarily given to make good to Mr. Lovejoy his loss. The meeting passed some resolutions condemnatory of abolitionism, and Mr. Lovejoy assured them that he had not come to Alton to establish an Abolition, but a religious, journal; that he was not an Abolitionist, as they understood the term, but was an uncompromising enemy of slavery, and so expected to live and die.

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.242

The "Observer" was issued regularly at Alton until the 17th of August, 1837—discussing slavery among other topics, but occasionally, and in a spirit of decided moderation. But no moderation could satisfy those who had determined that the subject should not be discussed at all….

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.242

Two unsuccessful attempts having already been made—the office of "The Observer" was entered between the hours of ten and eleven P. M., by a band of fifteen or twenty persons, and the press, type, etc., utterly destroyed. The mob commenced, as usual, by throwing stones at the building, whereby one man was hit on the head and severely wounded; whereupon the office was deserted, and the destroyers finished their work without opposition, while a large concourse were "looking on and consenting." The authorities did nothing most rigorously. Mr. Lovejoy was absent at the time, but was met in the street by the mob, who stopped him, threatened him, and assailed him with vile language, but did him no serious harm.

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.242–p.243

On the 24th of August he issued an appeal to the friends of law and order for aid in reestablishing "The Observer"; and this appeal was promptly and generously responded to. Having obtained a sufficient amount in Alton and Quincy alone, he sent to Cincinnati to purchase new printing materials. Meantime, he issued an address, submitting "To the Friends of the Redeemer in Alton" his resignation of the editorship of the paper, offering to hand over to them the subscription list, now exceeding two thousand names, on condition that they pay the debts of the concern, receive all dues and assets, and furnish him sufficient means to remove himself and family to another field of labor. A meeting was accordingly held, which resolved that "The Observer" ought to be continued, while the question of retaining Mr. Lovejoy as its editor was discussed through two or three evenings, but left undecided.

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.243–p.244

Meantime, while he was absent, attending a meeting of the Presbytery, his new press—the third which he had brought to Alton within a little more than a year—arrived on the 21st of September, was landed about sunset, and immediately conveyed by his friends to the warehouse of Geary & Weller. As it passed along the streets—"There goes the Abolition press! stop it! stop it!" was cried, but no violence was attempted. The Mayor, apprised of its arrival and also of its peril, gave assurance that it should be protected, and asked its friends to leave the matter entirely in his hands, which they did. A constable was posted by the Mayor at the door of the warehouse, with orders to remain until a certain hour. He left at that hour; and immediately ten or twenty ruffians, with handkerchiefs tied over their faces, broke open the store, rolled the press across the street to the riverbank, broke it into pieces, and threw it in. Before they had finished the job, the Mayor was on hand, and ordered them to disperse. They replied, that they would, so soon as they got through, and were as good as their word. The Mayor declared that he had never witnessed a more quiet and gentlemanly mob!

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.244

Mr. Lovejoy preached at St. Charles, Missouri, the home of his wife's relatives, a few days after—October 1st—and was mobbed at the house of his mother-in-law, directly after his return from evening church. The mob attempted, with oaths and blows, to drag him from the house, but were defeated, mainly through the courageous efforts of his wife and one or two friends. Three times the house was broken into and a rush made up-stairs; and, finally, Mr. Lovejoy was induced, through the entreaties of his wife, to leave it clandestinely and take refuge with a friends, a mile distant, whence he and his wife made their way back to Alton next day….

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.244

It was known in Alton that a new press was now on the way to Mr. Jovejoy, and might arrive at any time. Great excitement pervaded the community. Friends were on the alert to protect it on its arrival, and enemies to insure its destruction. It finally reached St. Louis on the night of the 5th, and an arrangement was made to have it landed at Alton at three o'clock on the morning of the 7th. Meantime Mr. Lovejoy and a friend went to the Mayor and notified him of its expected arrival and of the threats that it should be destroyed, requesting the appointment of special constables to protect it. A meeting of the City Council was held, and some discussion had; but the subject was laid on the table and nothing done….

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.245

About ten o'clock, some thirty persons, as if by preconcert, suddenly emerged from a neighboring grogshop—a few of them with arms, but the majority with only stones in their hands—formed a line at the south end of the store, next the river, knocked and hailed. Mr. Gilman, from the garret door, asked what they wanted. Their leader replied: "The press." Mr. Gilman assured them that it would not be given up; adding: "We have no ill feelings toward any of you, and should much regret to do you any injury; but we are authorized by the Mayor to defend our property, and shall do so with our lives." The leader replied that they were resolved to have the press at any sacrifice, and presented a pistol, whereupon Mr. Gilman retired into the building. The mob then passed around to the opposite end of the warehouse and commenced throwing stones, which soon demolished several of the windows. No resistance was offered, the inmates having agreed not to fire unless their lives were in danger.

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.245–p.246

The warehouse being of stone, and solidly built, no further impression was made on it by this assault. Finding their missiles ineffectual, the mob fired two or three guns into the building, by which no one was hit. The fire was then returned, and several of the rioters wounded, one of them mortally. Hereupon, the mob recoiled, carrying off their wounded. But they soon returned with ladders, and other preparations for firing the roof of the warehouse, cursing and shouting, "Burn them out! burn them out!" They kept carefully on the side of the building where there were no windows, so that they could not be injured or repelled by its defenders. The Mayor and a justice were now deputed by the mob to bear a message to the inmates of the building, proposing that, on condition the press were given up, no one should be further molested, and no more property destroyed. The proposition was quietly declined….

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.246–p.247

The mob now raised their ladders against the building, mounted to the roof, and kindled a fire there, which burned rather slowly. Five of the defenders hereupon volunteered to sally out and drive them away. They left by the south door, passed around the corner to the east side of the building, and fired upon the man who guarded the foot of the ladder, drove him off, and dispersed his immediate comrades, returning to the store to reload. Mr. Jovejoy and two others stepped again to the door, and stood looking around just without the building—Mr. Lovejoy in advance of the others. Several of the rioters were concealed from their view behind a pile of lumber a few rods in their front. One of these had a two-barreled gun, which he fired. Mr. Lovejoy received five balls, three of them in his breast, probably each mortal. He turned quickly, ran into the store, and up a flight of stairs into the counting-room, where he fell, exclaiming, "Oh God, I am shot! I am shot!" and almost instantly expired. One of his friends received at the same time a ball in his leg, of which he recovered. Those remaining alive in the building now held a consultation, and concluded to surrender. One of their number went up to the scuttle and apprised the mob that Mr. Lovejoy was dead, and that the press would now be given up. A yell of exultation was sent up by the rioters and the proposed surrender declined. . . "The rioters then rushed into the building, threw the press out of the window, broke it up, and pitched the pieces into the river. They destroyed no other property, save a few guns. . . At two o'clock, they had dispersed and all was quiet again.

Greeley, Abolition Incites the Murder of Lovejoy, America, Vol.6, p.247

Mr. Lovejoy's remains were borne away next morning to his dwelling, amid the jeers and scoffs of his murderers. He was buried the day following—Thursday, November 9.

Effects of the Panic of 1837

Title: Effects of the Panic of 1837

Author: Captain Frederick Marryat

Date: 1837

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.248-254

Captain Marryat, novelist, author of "Mr. Midshipman Easy" and other best sellers of the early nineteenth century, visited America in 1837 and recorded his impressions in "A Diary in America, With Remarks on Its Institutions." His visit was enlivened by events incident to the most severe panic that had yet convulsed the country, growing out of President Jackson's fight on the Bank of the United States. Its career being ended, the Federal government encouraged the formation of hundreds of new State banks with nominal capital and the flooding of the country with paper money. Wild speculation occurred, especially in land, millions of acres being bought, on credit extended by the banks and held for a rise. When the banks began to call their loans and to increase rates of interest the panic was started. There was an epidemic of business failures and more than a hundred banks suspended. Captain Marryat pens a vivid picture of the state of chaos he encountered.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.248

A VISIT, to make it agreeable to both parties, should be well timed. My appearance at New York was very much like bursting into a friend's house with a merry face when there is a death in it—with the sudden change from levity to condolence. "Any other time most happy to see you. You find us in a very unfortunate situation."

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.248

"Indeed I'm very—very sorry.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.248

Two hundred and sixty houses have already failed, and no one knows where it is to end. Suspicion, fear and misfortune have taken possession of the city. Had I not been aware of the cause, I should have imagined that the plague was raging, and I had the description of Defoe before me.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.249

Not a smile on one countenance among the crowd who pass and repass; hurried steps, careworn faces, rapid exchanges of salutations, or hasty communication of anticipated ruin before the sun goes down. Here two or three are gathered together on one side, whispering and watching that they are not overheard; there a solitary, with his arms folded and his hat slouched, brooding over departed affluence. Mechanics, thrown out of employment, are pacing up and down with the air of famished wolves. The violent shock has been communicated like that of electricity, through the country to a distance of hundreds of miles. Canals, railroads, and all public works have been discontinued, and the Irish emigrant leans against his shanty, with his spade idle in his hand, and starves, as his thoughts wander back to his own Emerald Isle.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.249

The Americans delight in hyperbole; in fact they hardly have a metaphor without it. During this crash, when every day fifteen or twenty merchants' names appeared in the newspapers as bankrupts, one party, not in a very good humor, was hastening down Broadway, when he was run against by another whose temper was equally unamiable. This collision roused the choler of both.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.249

"What the devil do you mean, sir?" cried one. "I've a great mind to knock you into the middle of next week."

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.249–p.250

This occurring on a Saturday, the wrath of the other was checked by the recollection of how very favorable such a blow would be to his present circumstances.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.250

"Will you! By heavens, then pray do; it's just the thing I want, for how else am I to get over next Monday and the acceptances I must take up, is more than I can tell."

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.250

All the banks have stopped payment in specie, and there is not a dollar to be had. I walked down Wall Street, and had a convincing proof of the great demand for money, for somebody picked my pocket.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.250

The militia are under arms, as riots are expected. The banks in the country and other towns have followed the example of New York, and thus has General Jackson's currency bill been repealed without the aid of Congress. Affairs are now at their worst, and now that such is the case, the New Yorkers appear to recover their spirits. One of the newspapers humorously observes—"All Broadway is like unto a new-made widow, and don't know whether to laugh or cry." There certainly is a very remarkable energy in the American disposition; if they fall, they bound up again. Somebody has observed that the New York merchants are of that elastic nature, that, when fit for nothing else, they might be converted into coach springs, and such really appears to be their character.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.250–p.251

Nobody refuses to take the paper of the New York banks, although they virtually have stopped payment;—they never refuse anything in New York ;—but nobody will give specie in change, and great distress is occasioned by this want of a circulating medium. Some of the shopkeepers told me that they had been obliged to turn away a hundred dollars a day; and many a Southerner, who has come up with a large supply of Southern notes, has found himself a pauper, and has been indebted to a friend for a few dollars in specie to get home again.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.251

The radicals here, for there are radicals, it appears, in a democracy—

"In the lowest depths, a lower deep"—

are very loud in their complaints. I was watching the swarming multitude in Wall Street this morning, when one of these fellows was declaiming against the banks for stopping specie payments, and "robbing a poor man in such a villainous manner," when one of the merchants, who appeared to know his customer, said to him—"Well, as you say, it is hard for a poor fellow like you not to be able to get dollars for his notes; hand them out and I'll give you specie for them myself!" The blackguard had not a cent in his pocket, and walked away, looking very foolish. He reminded me of a little chimney-sweeper at the Tower Hamlets election, asking—"Vot vos my hopinions about primaginitur?"—a very important point to him certainly, he having no parents, and having been brought up by the parish.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.251–p.252

was in a store when a thorough-bred Democrat walked in. He talked loud, and voluntarily gave it as his opinion that all this distress was the very best thing that could have happened to the country, as America would now keep all the specie and pay her English creditors with bankruptcies. There always appears to me to be a great want of moral principle in all radicals; indeed, the leveling principles of radicalism are adverse to the sacred rights of "meum" and "tuum." At Philadelphia the ultra Democrats have held a large public meeting, at which one of the first resolutions brought forward and agreed to was—"That they did not owe one farthing to the English people."

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.252

"They may say the times are bad," said a young American to me, "but I think that they are excellent. A twenty-dollar note used to last but a week, but now it is as good as Fortunatus's purse, which was never empty. I eat my dinner at the hotel, and show them my twenty-dollar note. The landlord turns away from it, as if it were the head of Medusa, and begs that I will pay another time. I buy everything that I want, and I have only to offer my twenty-dollar note in payment, and my credit is unbounded—that is, for any sum under twenty dollars. If they ever do give change again in New York it will make a very unfortunate change in my affairs."

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.252–p.253

A government circular, enforcing the act of Congress, which obliges all those who have to pay custom-house duties or postage to do so in specie, has created great dissatisfaction, and added much to the distress and difficulty. At the same time that they (the Government) refuse to take from their debtors the notes of the banks, upon the ground that they are no longer legal tenders, they compel their creditors to take those very notes—having had a large quantity in their possession at the time that the banks suspended specie payments—an act of despotism which the English government would not venture upon.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.253

Miss Martineau's work is before me. How dangerous it is to prophesy. Speaking of the merchants of New York, and their recovering after the heavy losses they sustained by the calamitous fire of 1835, she says, that although eighteen millions of property were destroyed, not one merchant failed; and she continues, "It seems now as if the commercial credit of New York could stand any shock short of an earthquake like that of Lisbon." That was the prophesy of 1836. Where is the commercial credit of New York now in 1837?

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.253–p.254

The distress for change has produced a curious remedy. Every man is now his own banker. Go to the theaters and places of public amusement, and, instead of change, you receive an I. O. U. from the treasury. At the hotels and oyster cellars it is the same thing. Call for a glass of brandy and water, and the change is fifteen tickets, each "good for one glass of brandy and water." At an oyster shop, eat a plate of oysters, and you have in return seven tickets, good for one plate of oysters each. It is the same everywhere. The barbers give you tickets, good for so many shaves; and were there beggars in the street, I presume they would give you tickets in change, good for so much philanthropy. Dealers, in general, give out their own bank notes, or as they are called here, "Shin plasters," which are good for one dollar, and from that down to two and a half cents, all of which are redeemable, and redeemable only upon a general return of cash payments.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.254

Hence arises another variety of exchange in Ball Street.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.254

"Tom, do you want any oysters for lunch today?"

"Yes!"

"Then here's a ticket, and give me two shaves in return.

Marryat, Effects of the Panic of 1837, America, Vol.6, p.254

The most prominent causes of this convulsion have already been laid before the English public; but there is one—that of speculating in land—which has not been sufficiently dwelt upon, nor has the importance been given to it which it deserves; as, perhaps, next to the losses occasioned by the great fire, it led, more than any other species of over-speculation and overtrading, to the distress which has ensued.

The Murder of Lovejoy, Wendell Phillips, 1837

The Murder of Lovejoy

Title: The Murder of Lovejoy

Author: Wendell Phillips

Date: 1837

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.8, pp.222-230

Delivered in Faneuil Hall, Boston, on December 8, 1837, and Phillips's first great success as a public orator. This meeting had been called to denounce the murder of Lovejoy at Alton, Illinois, while defending his printing-press, from which had been printed antislavery literature. Speeches had been made at this Boston meeting by Channing and others, when great astonishment was evoked by a speech from the attorney-general of the commonwealth who in comparing the Alton attack on Lovejoy to the Boston Tea Party, said Lovejoy had "died as the fool dieth." Phillips, who followed this speaker, was then twenty-six years old. Only a few months before he had first become identified with the Antislavery Society. George William Curtis has likened the speech to Patrick Henry's "electrical warning to George III." He calls it "the greatest of oratorical triumphs," and mentions Lincoln's Gettysburg speech as the "third of three that are illustrious in our history." Abridged.

Born in 1811, died in 1884; admitted to the Bar in 1834; the leading Orator of the Abolitionists in 1837-61; President of the Anti-slavery Society in 1865-70; advocated woman suffrage and labor reform; Labor and Prohibition Candidate for Governor of Massachusetts in 1870.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.222

A COMPARISON has been drawn between the events of the Revolution and the tragedy at Alton. We have heard it asserted here in Faneuil Hall, that Great Britain had a right to tax the Colonies; and we have heard the mob at Alton, the drunken murderers of Lovejoy, compared to those patriot fathers who threw the tea overboard! Fellow citizens, is this Faneuil Hall doctrine? The mob at Alton were met to wrest from a citizen his just rights—met to resist the laws. We have been told that our fathers did the same; and the glorious mantle of Revolutionary precedent has been thrown over the mobs of our day. To make out their title to such defense the gentleman says that the British Parliament had a right to tax these Colonies.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.223

It is manifest that, without this, his parallel falls to the ground; for Lovejoy had stationed himself within constitutional bulwarks. He was not only defending the freedom of the Press, but he was under his own roof, in arms with the sanction of the civil authority. The men who assailed him went against and over the laws. The mob, as the gentleman terms it—mob, forsooth! certainly we sons of the tea-spillers are a marvelously patient generation!—the "orderly mob" which assembled in the Old South to destroy the tea were met to resist, not the laws, but illegal exactions! Shame on the American who calls the tea tax and Stamp Act laws! Our fathers resisted, not the king's prerogative, but the king's usurpation. To find any other account, you must read our Revolutionary history upside down. Our State archives are loaded with arguments of John Adams to prove the taxes laid by the British Parliament unconstitutional—beyond its power. It was not till this was made out that the men of New England rushed to arms. The arguments of the Council-chamber and the House of Representatives preceded and sanctioned the contest.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.224

To draw the conduct of our ancestors into a precedent for mobs, for a right to resist laws we ourselves have enacted, is an insult to their memory. The difference between the excitements of those days and our own, which the gentleman in kindness to the latter has overlooked, is simply this: the men of that day went for the right, as secured by the laws. They were the people rising to sustain the laws and Constitution of the province. The rioters of our day go for their own wills, right or wrong. Sir, when I heard the gentleman lay down principles which place the murderers of Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips [pointing to the portraits in the Hall] would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American—the slanderer of the dead. The gentleman said that he should sink into insignificance if he dared not gainsay the principles of these resolutions. Sir, for the sentiments he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.225

Fellow citizens, I can not take back my words. Surely, the attorney-general, so long and well known here, needs not the aid of your hisses against one so young as I am—my voice never before heard within these walls!

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.225

Another ground has been taken to excuse the mob, and throw doubt and discredit on the conduct of Lovejoy and his associates. Allusion has been made to what lawyers understand very well—the "conflict of laws." We are told that nothing but the Mississippi River rolls between St. Louis and Alton; and the conflict of laws somehow or other gives the citizens of the former a right to find fault with the defender of the Press for publishing his opinions no near their limits. Will the gentleman venture that argument before lawyers? How the laws of the two States could be said to come into conflict in such circumstances I question whether any lawyer in this audience can explain or understand. No matter whether the line that divides one sovereign State from another be an imaginary one or ocean-wide, the moment you cross it, the State you leave is blotted out of existence, so far as you are concerned. The Czar might as well claim to control the deliberations of Faneuil Hall, as the laws of Missouri demand reverence, or the shadow of obedience, from an inhabitant of Illinois.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.226

I must find some fault with the statement which has been made of the events at Alton. It has been asked why Lovejoy and his friends did not appeal to the executive—trust their defense to the police of the city. It has been hinted that, from hasty and ill-judged excitement, the men within the building provoked a quarrel, and that he fell in the course of it—one mob resisting another. Recollect, sir, that they did act with the approbation and sanction of the mayor. In strict truth there was no executive to appeal to for protection. The mayor acknowledged that he could not protect them. They asked him if it was lawful for them to defend themselves. He told them it was, and sanctioned their assembling in arms to do so. They were not, then, a mob; they were not merely citizens defending their own property; they were in some sense the posse comitatus, adopted for the occasion into the police of the city, acting under the order of a magistrate. It was civil authority resisting lawless violence. Where, then, was the imprudence? Is the doctrine to be sustained here that it is imprudent for men to aid magistrates in executing the laws?

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.226

Men are continually asking each other, had Lovejoy a right to resist? Sir, I protest against the question instead of answering it. Lovejoy did not resist, in the sense they mean. He did not throw himself back on the natural right of self-defense. He did not cry anarchy, and let slip the dogs of civil war, careless of the horrors which would follow.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.227

Sir, as I understand this affair, it was not an individual protecting his property; it was not one body of armed men resisting another, and making the streets of a peaceful city run blood with their contentions. It did not bring back the scenes in old Italian cities, where family met family, and faction met faction, and mutually trampled the laws under foot. No! The men in that house were regularly enrolled under the sanction of the mayor. There being no militia in Alton, about seventy men were enrolled with the approbation of the mayor. These relieved each other every other night. About thirty men were in arms on the night of the sixth, when the press was landed. The next evening it was not thought necessary to summon more than half that number: among these was Lovejoy. It was, therefore, you perceive, sir, the police of the city resisting rioters—civil government breasting itself to the shock of lawless men.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.227

Here is no question about the right of self-defense. It is in fact simply this: Has the civil magistrate a right to put down a riot?

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.227

It has been stated, perhaps inadvertently, that Lovejoy or his comrades fired first. This is denied by those who have he best means of knowing. Guns were first fired by the mob. After being twice fired on, those within the building consulted together and deliberately returned the fire. But suppose they did fire first. They had a right so to do—not only the right which every citizen has to defend himself, but the further right which every civil officer has to resist violence. Even if Lovejoy fired the first gun, it would not lessen his claim to our sympathy or destroy his title to be considered a martyr in defense of a free Press. The question now is, did he act within the Constitution and the laws? The men who fell in State Street on the 5th of March, 1770, did more than Lovejoy is charged with. They were the first assailants. Upon some slight quarrel they pelted the troops with every missile within reach. Did this bate one jot of the eulogy with which Hancock and Warren hallowed their memory, hailing them as the first martyrs in the cause of American liberty?

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.228

If, sir, I had adopted what are called peace principles, I might lament the circumstances of this case. But all you who believe, as I do, in the right and duty of magistrates to execute the laws, join with me and brand as base hypocrisy the conduct of those who assemble year after year on the Fourth of July to fight over the battles of the Revolution, and yet "damn with faint praise" or load with obloquy the memory of this man who shed his blood in defense of life, liberty, property, and the freedom of the Press!

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.228

Imagine yourself present when the first news of Bunker Hill Battle reached a New England town. The tale would have run thus: "The patriots are routed—the redcoats victorious—Warren lies dead upon the field." With what scorn would that Tory have been received who should have charged Warren with imprudence! who should have said that, bred a physician, he was "out of place" in that battle, and "died as the fool dieth!" How would the intimation have been received that Warren and his associates should have waited a better time? But, if success be indeed the only criterion of prudence, Respice finem—Wait till the end.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.229

Mr. Chairman, from the bottom of my heart I thank that brave little band at Alton for resisting. We must remember that Lovejoy had fled from city to city; suffered the destruction of three presses patiently. At length he took counsel with friends; men of character, of tried integrity, of wide views, of Christian principle. They thought the crisis had come. It was full time to assert the laws. They saw around them, not a community like our own, of fixed habits, of character molded and settled, but one "in the gristle not yet hardened into the bone of manhood." The people there, children of our older States, seem to have forgotten the blood-tried principles of their fathers the moment they lost sight of our New England hills. Something was to be done to show them the priceless value of the freedom of the Press, to bring back and set right their wandering and confused ideas. He and his advisers looked out on a community staggering like a drunken man, indifferent to their rights, and confused in their feelings. Deaf to argument, haply they might be stunned into sobriety. They saw that of which we can not judge: the necessity of resistance. Insulted law called for it. Public opinion, fast hastening on the downward course, must be arrested.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.230

Does not the event show they judged rightly? Absorbed in a thousand trifles, how has the nation all at once come to a stand! Men begin, as in 1776 and 1640, to discuss principles, to weigh characters, to find out where they are. Haply we may awake before we are borne over the precipice.

Phillips, Murder of Lovejoy, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.230

I am glad, sir, to see this crowded house. It is good for us to be here. When liberty is in danger, Faneuil Hall has the right, it is her duty, to strike the key-note for these United States. I am glad for one reason, that remarks such as those to which I have alluded have been uttered here. The passage of these resolutions, in spite of this opposition, led by the attorney-general of the commonwealth, will show more clearly, more decisively, the deep indignation with which Boston regards this outrage.

The Expunging Resolution, Benton, 1837

The Expunging Resolution

Title: The Expunging Resolution

Author: Benton

Date: 1837

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.8, pp.240-252

Delivered in the United States Senate January 12, 1837. Abridged. Benton's Expunging Resolution provided that from the Journal of the Senate the censure passed on Jackson by the Senate in march, 1834, be erased. This censure related to Jackson's action with the United States Bank. Benton's motion was carried four days after he made this speech.

Born in 1782, died in 1858; United States Senator from Missouri, 1821-51; Representative in Congress, 1853-55; Author of "Thirty Years' View."

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.240

IT is now three years since the resolve was adopted by the Senate which it is my present motion to expunge from the journal; at the moment that this resolve was adopted I gave notice of my intention to move to expunge it, and then expressed my confident belief that the motion would eventually prevail. That expression of confidence was not an ebullition of vanity or a presumptuous calculation intended to accelerate the event it affected to foretell. It was not a vain boast, or an idle assumption, but was the result of a deep conviction of the injustice done President Jackson, and a thorough reliance upon the justice of the American people. I felt that the president had been wronged; and my heart told me that this wrong would be redressed. The event proves that I was not mistaken. The question of expunging this resolution has been carried to the people, and their decision has been had upon it.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.241

Assuming that we have ascertained the will of the people on this great question, the inquiry presents itself how far the expression of that will ought to be conclusive of our action here. I hold that it ought to be binding and obligatory upon us; and that, not only upon the principles of representative government, which require obedience to the known will of the people, but also in conformity to the principles upon which the proceeding against President Jackson was conducted when the sentence against him was adopted. Then everything was done with especial reference to the will of the people. Their impulsion was assumed to be the sole motive to action; and to them the ultimate verdict was expressly referred. The whole machinery of alarm and pressure—every engine of political and moneyed power—was put in motion and worked for many months to excite the people against the president, and to stir up meetings, memorials, petitions, traveling committees, and distress deputations against him; and each symptom of popular discontent was hailed as an evidence of public will, and quoted here as proof that the people demanded the condemnation of the president. Not only legislative assemblies, and memorials from large assemblies were then produced here as evidence of public opinion, but the petitions of boys under age, the remonstrances of a few signers, and the results of the most inconsiderable elections were ostentatiously paraded and magnified as the evidence of the sovereign will of our constituents.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.242

Thus, sir, the public voice was everything, while that voice, partially obtained through political and pecuniary machinations, was adverse to the president. Then the popular will was the shrine at which all worshiped. Now, when that will is regularly, soberly, repeatedly, and almost universally expressed through the ballot-boxes at the various elections and turns out to be in favor of the president, certainly no one can disregard it, nor otherwise look at it than as the solemn verdict of the competent and ultimate tribunal upon an issue fairly made up, fully argued, and duly submitted for decision. As such verdict, I receive it. As the deliberate verdict of the sovereign people, I bow to it. I am content. I do not mean to reopen the case or to recommence the argument. I leave that work to others, if any others choose to perform it. For myself, I am content; and dispensing with further argument I shall call for judgment and ask to have execution done upon that unhappy journal which the verdict of millions of freemen finds guilty of bearing on its face an untrue, illegal, and unconstitutional sentence of condemnation against the approved president of the Republic.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.243

But, while declining to reopen the argument of this question, and refusing to tread over again the ground already traversed, there is another and a different task to perform; one which the approaching termination of President Jackson's administration makes peculiarly proper at this time, and which it is my privilege and perhaps my duty to execute, as being the suitable conclusion to the arduous contest in which we have been so long engaged. I allude to the general tenor of his administration and to its effect, for good or for evil, upon the condition of his country. This is the proper time for such a view to be taken. The political existence of this great man now draws to a close. In little more than forty days he ceases to be an object of political hope to any, and should cease to be an object of political hate, or envy, to all. Whatever of motive the servile and time-serving might have found in his exalted station for raising the altar of adulation and burning the incense of praise before him, that motive can no longer exist. The dispenser of the patronage of an empire, the chief of this great confederacy of States, is soon to be a private individual, stripped of all power to reward or to punish. His own thoughts, as he has shown us in the concluding paragraph of that message which is to be the last of its kind that we shall ever receive from him, are directed to that beloved retirement from which he was drawn by the voice of millions of freemen, and to which he now looks for that interval of repose which age and infirmities require. Under these circumstances he ceases to be a subject for the ebullition of the passions, and passes into a character for the contemplation of history.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.244

Historically, then, shall I view him; and limiting this view to his civil administration, I demand, where is there a chief magistrate of whom so much evil has been predicted and from whom so much good has come? Never has any man entered upon the chief magistracy of a country under such appalling predictions of ruin and woe! never has any one been so pursued with direful prognostications! never has any one been so beset and impeded by a powerful combination of political and moneyed confederates! never has any one in any country where the administration of justice has risen above the knife of the bowstring been so lawlessly and shamelessly tried and condemned by rivals and enemies, without hearing, without defense, without the forms of law and justice! History has been ransacked to find examples of tyrants sufficiently odious to illustrate him by comparison. Language has been tortured to find epithets sufficiently strong to paint him in description. Imagination has been exhausted in her efforts to deck him with revolting and inhuman attributes. Tyrant, despot, usurper; destroyer of the liberties of his country; rash, ignorant, imbecile; endangering the public peace with all foreign nations; destroying domestic prosperity at home; ruining all industry, all commerce, all manufactures; annihilating confidence between man and man; delivering up the streets of populous cities to grass and weeds, and the wharves of commercial towns to the encumbrance of decaying vessels; depriving labor of all reward; depriving industry of all employment; destroying the currency; plunging an innocent and happy people from the summit of felicity to the depths of misery, want, and despair. Such is the faint outline, followed up by actual condemnation, of the appalling denunciations daily uttered against this one MAN, from the moment he became an object of political competition, down to the concluding moment of his political existence.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.245

The sacred voice of inspiration has told us that there is a time for all things. There certainly has been a time for every evil that human nature admits of to be vaticinated of President Jackson's administration; equally certain the time has now come for all rational and well-disposed people to compare the predictions with the facts, and to ask themselves if these calamitous prognostications have been verified by events? Have we peace or war with foreign nations? Certainly we have peace with all the world! peace with all its benign, and felicitous, and beneficent influences! Are we respected, or despised abroad? Certainly the American name never was more honored throughout the four quarters of the globe than in this very moment. Do we hear the indignity or outrage in any quarter? of merchants robbed in foreign ports? of vessels searched on the high seas? of American citizens impressed into foreign service? of the national flag insulted anywhere? On the contrary, we see former wrongs repaired, no new one inflicted. France pays twenty-five millions of francs for spoliations committed thirty years ago; Naples pays two millions one hundred thousand ducats for wrongs of the same date; Denmark pays six hundred and fifty thousand rix-dollars for wrongs done a quarter of a century ago; Spain engages to pay twelve millions of reals vellon for injuries of fifteen years' date; Portugal, the last in the list of former aggressors, admits her liability and only waits the adjustment of details to close her account by adequate indemnity.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.246

From President Jackson the country has first learned the true theory and practical intent of the Constitution in giving to the executive a qualified negative on the legislative power of Congress. Far from being an odious, dangerous, or kingly prerogative, this power as vested in the president is nothing but a qualified copy of the famous veto power vested in the tribunes of the people among the Romans, and intended to suspend the passage of a law until the people themselves should have time to consider it. The qualified veto of the president destroys nothing; it only delays the passage of a law and refers it to the people for their consideration and decision. It is the reference of a law, not to a committee of the House, or of the whole House, but to the committee of the whole Union. It is a recommitment of the bill to the people, for them to examine and consider; and if, upon this examination, they are content to pass it, it will pass at the next session. The delay of a few months is the only effect of a veto in a case where the people shall ultimately approve a law; where the people shall ultimately approve a law; where they do not approve it, the interposition of the veto is the barrier which saves them the adoption of a law, the repeal of which might afterward be almost impossible. The qualified negative is, therefore, a beneficent power, intended as General Hamilton expressly declares in the Federalist, to protect, first, the executive department from the encroachments of the legislative department; and, secondly, to preserve the people from hasty, dangerous or criminal legislation on the part of their representatives.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.247

This is the design and intention of the veto power; and the fear expressed by General Hamilton was that presidents, so far from exercising it too often, would not exercise it as often as the safety of the people required; that they might lack the moral courage to stake themselves in opposition to a favorite measure of the majority of the two Houses of Congress; and thus deprive the people, in many instances, of their right to pass upon a bill before it becomes a final law. The cases in which President Jackson has exercised the veto power have shown the soundness of these observations. No ordinary president would have staked himself against the Bank of the United States and the two Houses of Congress in 1832. It required President Jackson to confront that power—to stem that torrent—to stay the progress of that charter and to refer it to the people for their decision. His moral courage was equal to the crisis. He arrested the charter until it could be got to the people, and they have arrested it for ever. Had he not done so the charter would have become a law and its repeal almost impossible. The people of the whole Union would now have been in the condition of the people of Pennsylvania, bestrode by the monster, in daily conflict with him, and maintaining a doubtful contest for supremacy between the government of a State and the directory of a moneyed corporation.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.248

To detail specific acts which adorn the administration of President Jackson and illustrate the intuitive sagacity of his intellect, the firmness of his mind, his disregard of personal popularity, and his entire devotion to the public good, would be inconsistent with this rapid sketch intended merely to present general views, and not to detail single actions, howsoever worthy they may be of a spendid page in the volume of history. But how can we pass over the great measure of the removal of the public moneys from the Bank of the United States in the autumn of 1833? that wise, heroic, and masterly measure of prevention which has rescued an empire from the fangs of a merciless, revengeful, greedy, insatiate, implacable, moneyed power!

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.249

The difficulty with France: what an instance it presents of the superior sagacity of President Jackson over all the commonplace politicians who beset and impede his administration at home! That difficulty, inflamed and aggravated by domestic faction, wore, at one time, a portentous aspect; the skill, firmness, elevation of purpose, and manly frankness of the president avoided the danger, accomplished the object, commanded the admiration of Europe, and retained the friendship of France. He conducted the delicate affair to a successful and mutual honorable issue. All is amicably and happily terminated, leaving not a wound, nor even a scar, behind; leaving the Frenchman and American on the ground on which they have stood for fifty years and should for ever stand—the ground of friendship, respect, good will, and mutual wishes for the honor, happiness, and prosperity of each other.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.249

But why this specification? So beneficent and so glorious has been the administration of this president that where to begin and where to end in the enumeration of great measures would be the embarrassment of him who has his eulogy to make. He came into office the first of generals; he goes out the first of statesmen. His civil competitors have shared the fate of his military opponents; and Washington City has been to the American politicians who have assailed him what New Orleans was to the British generals who attacked his lines. Repulsed! driven back! discomfited! crushed! has been the fate of all assailants, foreign and domestic, civil and military. At home and abroad the impress of his genius and of his character is felt. He has impressed upon the age in which he lives the stamp of his arms, of his diplomacy, and of his domestic policy.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.250

In a word, so transcendent have been the merits of his administration that they have operated a miracle upon the minds of his most inveterate opponents. He has expunged their objections to military chieftains! He has shown them that they were mistaken; that military men were not the dangerous rulers they had imagined, but safe and prosperous conductors of the vessel of state. He has changed their fear into love. With visible signs they admit their error, and, instead of deprecating, they now invoke the reign of chieftains. They labored hard to procure a military successor to the present incumbent; and if their love goes on increasing at the same rate the Republic may be put to the expense of periodical wars to breed a perpetual succession of these chieftains to rule over them and their posterity for ever.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.250

To drop this irony which the inconsistency of mad opponents has provoked, and to return to the plain delineations of historical painting, the mind instinctively dwells on the vast and unprecedented popularity of this president. Great is the influence, great the power, greater than any man ever before possessed in our America, which he has acquired over the public mind.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.251

And how has he acquired it? Not by the arts of intrigue, or the juggling tricks of diplomacy; not by undermining rivals or sacrificing public interests for the gratification of classes or individuals. But he has acquired it, first, by the exercise of an intuitive sagacity which, leaving all book learning at an immeasurable distance behind, has always enabled him to adopt the right remedy at the right time and to conquer soonest when the men of forms and office thought him most near to ruin and despair; next, by a moral courage which knew no fear when the public good beckoned him to go on.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.251

Last, and chiefest, he has acquired it by an open honesty or purpose which knew no concealments; by a straightforwardness of action which disdained the forms of office and the arts of intrigue; by a disinterestedness of motive which knew no selfish or sordid calculation; a devotedness of patriotism which staked everything personal on the issue of every measure which the public welfare required him to adopt. By these qualities and these means he has acquired his prodigious popularity and his transcendent influence over the public mind; and if there are any who envy that influence and popularity let them envy also, and emulate if they can, the qualities and means by which they were acquired.

Benton, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.252

And now, sir, I finish the task which three years ago I imposed upon myself. Solitary and alone, and amid the jeers and taunts of my opponents I put this ball in motion. The people have taken it up and rolled it forward, and I am no longer anything but a unit in the vast mass which now propels it. In the name of that mass I speak. I demand the execution of the edict of the people; I demand the expurgation of that sentence which the voice of a few senators and the power of their confederate, the Bank of the United States, has caused to be placed on the journal of the Senate, and which the voice of millions of freemen has ordered to be expunged from it.

The American Scholar, Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1837

The American Scholar

Title: The American Scholar

Author: Ralph Waldo Emerson

Date: 1837

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.8, pp.253-268

From his Phi Beta Kappa oration, delivered at Cambridge, Massachusetts, on August 31, 1837. Printed here by kind permission of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. At this time Emerson had just published "Nature" (September, 1836), and had brought out American editions of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" and "Essays." In 1823 Emerson had made his first visit to Carlyle.

Born in 1803, died in 1882; a Unitarian Clergyman in Boston in 1829-32; began a long career as Lecturer in 1833; settled in Concord in 1834; Editor of The Dial in 1842-44.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.253

THE planter, who is man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer instead of the man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney, a statute book; the mechanic, a machine; the sailor, a rope of a ship. In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is man thinking. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or, still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.254

In this view of him, as man thinking, the theory of his office is contained. Him nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the last instructs; him the future invites. Is not, indeed, every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And finally is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said: "All things have two handles; beware of the wrong one." In life too often the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.254

1. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and after sunset, night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day men and women conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find—so entire, so boundless. Far, too, as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward, without center, without circumference—in the mass and in the particle, nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind everything is individual, stands by itself. By and by it finds how to join two things and see in them one nature, then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground, whereby contrary and remote things cohere and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another, reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on for ever to animate the last fiber of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.255

2. The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is the mind of the past—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently—by considering their value alone.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.256

The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind and uttered it again. It came into him, life; it went our from him, truth. It came to him, short-lived actions; it went out from him, immortal thoughts. It came to him, business; it went from him, poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.256

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can be any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book or write a book of pure thought that shall be as efficient in all respects to a remote posterity as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or, rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.256

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation—the act of thought—is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man: henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforth it is settled the book is perfect. As love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue, instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by man thinking; by men of talent—that is, who start wrong; who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.257

Hence, instead of man thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence, the book-learned class who value books as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of third estate with the world and the soul. Hence, the restorers of readings—the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.257

Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end, which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world of value is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, altho, in almost all men, obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth, and utters truth, or creates. In this action, it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. That is good, say they—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not forward. But genius looks forward: the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead; man hopes, genius creates. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his; cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words; manners, actions, words—that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.258

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says: "A fig-tree, looking on a fig-tree, becomes fruitful."

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.259

It is remarkable the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all time from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I also had well-nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some preestablished harmony, some foresight of soul that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.259

3. There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian—as unfit for any handiwork or public labor as a penknife for an ax. The so-called "practical men" sneer at speculative men as if, because they speculate or see, they could no nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day—are addressed as women; that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a mincing and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised; and, indeed, there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet a man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth. While the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we can not even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know as I have lived. Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.260

The world—this shadow of the soul, or other me—lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I run eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct, that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by as a loss of power.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.261

If it were only for a vocabulary the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors; in town, in the insight into trades and manufactures; in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science, in art; to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and cope-stones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the workyard made.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.261

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is, that it is a resource. That great principle of undulation in nature that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold; and as yet more deeply ingratified in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of polarity—these "fits of easy transmission and reflection," as Newton called them, are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.262

The mind now thinks, now acts; and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended, and books are a weariness—he has always the resource to live. Character is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truths? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those "far from fame," who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandseled savage nature, out of terrible Druids and berserkers, come at last Alfred and Shakespeare.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.263

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.263

They are such as become man thinking. They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amid appearances. He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamstee and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalog the stars with the praise of all men, and the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observatory, cataloging obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind which as yet no man has thought of as such—watching days and months, sometimes, for a few facts; correcting still his old records—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech; often forego the living for the dead.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.263

Worse yet, he must accept—how often!—poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed; and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private consideration and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of today—this he shall hear and promulgate.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.264

These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended upon this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit has belief that a popgun is a popgun, tho the ancient had honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself; add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach; and bide his own time—happy enough if he can satisfy himself along that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.265

For the instinct is sure that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions—his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses—until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers; that they drink his words because he fulfils for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels: This is my music; this is myself.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.266

In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, "without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution." Brave; for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that, like children and women, his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles, to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still; so is the fear worse. Manlike, let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin—see the whelping of this lion which lies no great way back; he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side and can henceforth defy it and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold is there only by sufferance—by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

Emerson, The American Scholar, Famous Orations, Vol.8, p.267

Men such as they are very naturally seek money or power; and power because it is as good as money—the "spoils," so-called, "of office." And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them, and they shall quit the false good and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are the materials strewn along the ground. The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy—more formidable to its influence to its friend than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehends the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each actor, has only done for me as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe; we have seen that man and have passed on. First one, then another; we drain all cisterns, and, waxing greater by all these supplies; we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind can not be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily; and, now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

The Expunging Resolution, Calhoun, 1837

The Expunging Resolution (Calhoun)

Title: The Expunging Resolution

Author: Calhoun

Date: 1837

Source: The World's Famous Orations, Vol.9, pp.104-122

From a speech in the United States Senate in January, 1837. For Benton's speech on the same subject and the purport of the resolution, see volume eight.

Born in 1782, died in 1850; elected to Congress in 1811; Secretary of War in 1817; Vice-President in 1825; United States Senator in 1832-43; Secretary of State in 1844; again elected United States Senator in 1845.

Calhoun, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.104

THE gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Rives] says that the argument in favor of this Expunging Resolution has not been answered. Sir, there are some questions so plain that they can not be argued. Nothing can make them more plain; and this is one. No one, not blinded by party zeal, can possibly be insensible that the measure proposed is a violation of the Constitution. The Constitution requires the Senate to keep a journal; this resolution goes to expunge the journal. If you may expunge a part, you may expunge the whole; and if it is expunged, how is it kept? The Constitution says the journal shall be kept; this resolution says it shall be destroyed. It does the very thing which the Constitution declares shall not be done. That is the argument, the whole argument. There is none other. Talk of precedents? and precedents drawn from a foreign country? They do not apply. No, sir. This is to be done, not in consequence of argument, but in spite of argument. I understand the case. I know perfectly well the gentlemen have no liberty to vote otherwise. They are coerced by an exterior power. They try, indeed, to comfort their conscience by saying that it is the will of the people, and the voice of the people. It is no such thing. We all know how these legislative returns have been obtained. It is by dictation from the White House. The president himself, with that vast mass of patronage which he wields, and the thousand expectations he is able to hold up, has obtained these votes of the State Legislatures; and this, forsooth, is said to be the voice of the people. The voice of the people! Sir, can we forget the scene which was exhibited in this Chamber when that Expunging Resolution was first introduced here? Have we forgotten the universal giving away of conscience, so that the senator from Missouri was left alone? I see before me senators who could not swallow that resolution; and has its nature changed since then? Is it any more constitutional now than it was then? Not at all. But executive power has interposed. Talk to me of the voice of the people! No, sir. It is the combination of patronage and power to coerce this body into a gross and palpable violation of the Constitution. Some individuals, I perceive, think to escape through the particular form in which this act is to be perpetrated. They tell us that the resolution on your records is not to be expunged, but is only to be endorsed "Expunged." Really, sir, I do not know how to argue against such contemptible sophistry. The occasion is too solemn for an argument of this sort. You are going to violate the Constitution, and you get rid of the infamy by a falsehood. You yourselves say that the resolution is expunged by your order. Yet you say it is not expunged. You put your act in express words. You record it and then turn round and deny it.

Calhoun, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.106

But what is the motive? What is the pretext for this enormity? Why, gentlemen tell us the Senate has two distinct consciences—a legislative conscience, and a judicial conscience. As a legislative body we have decided that the president has violated the Constitution. But gentlemen tell us that this is an impeachable offense; and, as we may be called to try it in our judicial capacity, we have no right to express the opinion. I need not show how inconsistent such a position is with the eternal, imprescriptible right of freedom of speech, and how utterly inconsistent it is with precedents drawn from the history of our British ancestors, where the same liberty of speech has for centuries been enjoyed. There is a shorter and more direct argument in reply. Gentlemen who take that position can not, according to their own showing, vote for this resolution; for if it is unconstitutional for us to record a resolution of condemnation, because we may afterward be called to try the case in a judicial capacity, then it is equally unconstitutional for us to record a resolution of acquittal. If it is unconstitutional for the Senate to declare before a trial that the president has violated the Constitution, it is equally unconstitutional to declare before a trial that he has not violated the Constitution. The same principle is involved in both. Yet, in the very face of this principle, gentlemen are here going to condemn their own act.

Calhoun, Expunging Resolution, Famous Orations, Vol.9, p.107

But why do I waste my breath? I know it is all utterly vain. The day is gone; night approaches, and night is suitable to the dark deed we meditate. There is a sort of destiny in this thing. The act must be performed; and it is an act which will tell on the political history of this country for ever. Other preceding violations of the Constitution (and they have been many and great) filled my bosom with indignation, but this fills it only with grief. Others were done in the heat of partizanship. Power was, as it were, compelled to support itself by seizing upon new instruments of influence and patronage; and there were ambitious and able men to direct the process. Such was the removal of the deposits, which the president seized upon by a new and unprecedented act of arbitrary power—an act which gave him ample means of rewarding friends and punishing enemies. Something may, perhaps, be pardoned to him in this matter on the old apology of tyrants—the plea of necessity. But here there can be no such apology. Here no necessity can so much as be pretended. This act originates in pure, unmixed, personal idolatry. It is the melancholy evidence of a broken spirit, ready to bow at the feet of power. The former act was such a one as might have been perpetrated in the days of Pompey or Caesar; but an act like this could never have been consummated by a Roman Senate until the times of Caligula and Nero.

The "Log-Cabin and Hard Cider" Campaign

Title: The "Log-Cabin and Hard Cider" Campaign

Author: Horace Greeley

Date: 1840

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.263-272

Greeley, whose editorship of "The Log-Cabin" played no small part in the election of General William Henry Harrison as ninth President of the United States, was a delegate to the Whig Convention at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which nominated Harrison, in preference to Henry Clay and General Scott, in 1839. There forthwith began a political campaign which for popular enthusiasm and widespread activity has probably never been equaled in American politics. As Greeley records, in his, "Recollections of a Busy Life," new methods were introduced, and the log-cabin and hard cider became special emblems of the party of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too."

Although in good health at the time of his inauguration, 1840, General Harrison fell ill and died a year later, the whole political situation being thus suddenly altered. He was succeeded by John Tyler.

Greeley, Log-Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign, America, Vol.6, p.263–p.264

NEW YORK, which gave Mr. Van Buren the largest majority of any State in 1836, had been held against him throughout his administration, though she was his own State, and he had therein a powerful body of devoted, personal adherents, led by such men of eminent ability as Silas Wright, William L. Marcy, and Edwin Croswell. She had been so held by the talent, exertion and vigilance of men equally able and determined, among whom Thurlow Weed, William H. Seward (now Governor), John C. Spencer, and Willis Hall were conspicuous. But our majority of 15,000 in 1837 had fallen to 10,000 in 1838, and to 5,000 in 1839, despite our best efforts; Governor Seward's school recommendations and dispensation of State patronage had made him many enemies; and the friends of Mr. Van Buren counted, with reason, on carrying the State for his reelection, and against that of Governor Seward, in the impending struggle of 1840. Pennsylvania, Ohio, Tennessee and all the Northwest had been carried against the Whigs in the most recent contests; Mr. Van Buren's star was clearly in the ascendant at the South; while New England and New Jersey were nicely balanced—Massachusetts, as well as Maine and New Hampshire, having chosen a Democratic Governor (Marcus Morton) in 1839.

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Mr. Van Buren's administration, though at first condemned, was now sustained by a popular majority: New York alone—his own State—stood forth the flagship of the opposition. Both parties were silently preparing to put forth their very best efforts in the Presidential contest in prospect; but fully two-thirds of the States, choosing about that proportion of the electors, were now ranged on the Democratic side—many of them by impregnable majorities—while scarcely one State was unquestionably Whig. Mr. Van Buren, when first overwhelmed by the popular surge that followed close upon the collapse of the pet bank system, had calmly and with dignity appealed to the people's "sober second thought"; and it now seemed morally certain that he would be triumphantly reelected.

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Such were the auspices under which the first Whig National Convention (the second National Convention ever held by any party—that held in 1840 by the Democrats at Baltimore, which nominated Van Buren and Johnson, having been the first) assembled at Harrisburg, Pa., early in December, 1839. Of its doings I was a deeply interested observer. The States were nearly all represented, though in South Carolina there were no Whigs but a handful; even the name was unknown in Tennessee, and the party was feeble in several other States. But the delegations convened included many names widely and favorably known—including two ex-Governors of Virginia (James Barbour and John Tyler), one of Kentucky (Thomas Metcalf), one of Ohio (Joseph Vance), and at least one from several other States. I recollect at least two ex-Governors of Pennsylvania (John Andrew Shultze and Joseph Ritner) as actively counseling and sympathizing with the delegates.

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The sittings of the convention were protracted through three or four days, during which several ballots for President were taken. There was a plurality, though not a majority, in favor of nominating Mr. Clay; but it was in good part composed of delegates from States which could not rationally be expected to vote for any Whig candidate. On the other hand, the delegates from Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana said, "We can carry our States for General Harrison, but not for Mr. Clay." New York and New Jersey cast their earlier votes for General Scott, but stood ready to unite on General Harrison whenever it should be clear that he could be nominated and elected; and they ultimately did so. The delegates from Maine and Massachusetts contributed powerfully to secure General Harrison's ultimate nomination. Each delegation cast its vote through a committee, and the votes were added up by a general committee, which reported no names and no figures, but simply that no choice had been effected; until at length the Scott votes were all cast for Harrison, and his nomination thus effected; when the result was proclaimed.

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Governor Seward, who was in Albany (there were no telegraphs in those days), and Mr. Weed, who was present, and very influential in producing the result, were strongly blamed by the ardent, uncalculating supporters of Mr. Clay, as having cheated him out of the nomination—I could never see with what reason. They judged that he could not be chosen, if nominated, while another could be, and acted accordingly. If politics do not meditate the achievement of beneficent ends through the choice and use of the safest and most effective means, I wholly misapprehend them.

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Mr. John Tyler, with many or quite all his fellow delegates from Virginia, was for Clay first, last and all the time; for him whether he could be elected or not. When it was announced that Mr. Clay was defeated, he cried (so it was reported); and that report (I think) gave him the nomination for Vice-President without a contest. It was an attempt of the triumphant Harrisonites to heal the wounds of Mr. Clay's devoted friends. Yet the nomination was, for several reasons, a strong one.

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Mr. Tyler, though a Jackson man, had received, in 1828, the votes for United States Senator of the Adams men in the Virginia Legislature, and been thereby elected over John Randolph. When Jackson removed the deposits from the United States Bank, he united with the Whigs in publicly condemning the act; and, having been superseded therefor, he was thereafter regarded as a Whig. He had voted alone in the Senate of 1832-33 against the Force bill, which provided for the collection of the Federal revenue in South Carolina in defiance of the nullifying ordinance of her convention. He had run for Vice-President on the White ticket in 1836, and so had acquired a hold on the Southern opponents of Van Buren, which soon brought them all heartily into the support of the Harrisburg ticket. In short, the convention made the strongest possible ticket, so far as success was regarded; and everyone who had eyes could see that the Democrats in attendance desired and worked for the nomination of Mr. Clay. One of them, after the ticket was made, offered to bet that it would not be elected; but, his offer being promptly accepted, and he requested to name the amount, he hauled off. In short, we left Harrisburg with that confidence of success which goes far to secure its own justification; and we were greeted on our way home as though the battle were already won.

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But it was well understood that the struggle would be desperate, especially in our State, and preparations were soon in progress to render it effective. Our adversaries now helped us to our most effective weapons. They at once commenced assailing General Harrison as an imbecile, dotard, granny, etc., who had seen no real fighting, but had achieved a good deal of tall running from the enemy; and one militia general, Crary, who represented Michigan in the House, having made a speech in this vein, provoked a response from Hon. Tom Corwin of Ohio, which for wit, humor, and withering yet good-natured sarcasm has rarely, if ever, been excelled. The triumph was overwhelming; and, when the venerable and grave John Quincy Adams, in a few casual remarks next morning, spoke carelessly of "the late General Crary," a spontaneous roar attested the felicity of the allusion.

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General Harrison had lived many years after his removal to Ohio in a log house, and had been a poor man most of his life, as he still was. A Democratic journalist, scoffing at the idea of electing such a man to the Presidency, smartly observed, in substance, "Give him a log-cabin and a barrel of bard cider, and he will stay content in Ohio, not aspiring to the Presidency." The taunt was immediately caught up by the Whigs: "log-cabins" and "hard cider" became watchwords of the canvass; and every hour the excitement and enthusiasm swelled higher and higher.

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But the Democratic party claimed an unbroken series of triumphs in every Presidential election which it did not throw away by its own dissensions; and, being now united, regarded its success as inevitable. "You Whigs," said Dr. Duncan, of Ohio, one of its most effective canvassers, "achieve great victories every day in the year but one—that is the day of election." It was certain that a party which had enjoyed the ever-increasing patronage of the Federal Government for the preceding twelve years, which wielded that of most of the States also, and which was still backed by the popularity and active sympathy of General Jackson, was not to be expelled from power without the most resolute, persistent, systematic exertions. Hence, it was determined in the councils of our friends at Albany that a new campaign paper should be issued, to be entitled "The Log-Cabin"; and I was chosen to conduct it. No contributions were made or sought in its behalf. I was to publish as well as edit it; it was to be a folio of good size; and it was decided that fifteen copies should be sent for the full term of six months (from May 1 to November 1) for $5.

Greeley, Log-Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign, America, Vol.6, p.269–p.270

I had just secured a new partner (my fifth or sixth) of considerable business capacity, when this campaign sheet was undertaken; and the immediate influx of subscriptions frightened and repelled him. He insisted that the price was ruinous—that the paper could not be afforded for so little—that we should inevitably be bankrupted by its enormous circulation—and all my expostulations and entreaties were unavailing against his fixed resolve to get out of the concern at once. I therefore dissolved and settled with him, and was left alone to edit and publish both "The New-Yorker" and "The Log-Cabin," as I had in 1838 edited, but not published, "The New-Yorker" and "The Jeffersonian." Having neither steam presses nor facilities for mailing, I was obliged to hire everything done but the head-work, which involved heavier outlays than I ought to have had to meet. I tried to make "The Log-Cabin'" as effective as I could, with wood engravings of General Harrison's battle-scenes, music, etc., and to render it a model of its kind; but the times were so changed that it was more lively and less sedately argumentative than "The"

Greeley, Log-Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign, America, Vol.6, p.270

Its circulation was entirely beyond precedent. I fixed the edition of No. 1 at 30,000; but before the close of the week I was obliged to print 10,000 more; and even this was too few. The weekly issues ran rapidly up to 80,000, and might have been increased, had I possessed ample facilities for printing and mailing, to 100,000. With the machinery of distribution by news companies, expresses, etc., now existing, I guess that it might have been swelled to a quarter of a million. And, though I made very little money by it, I gave every subscriber an extra number containing the results of the election. After that, I continued the paper for a full year longer; having a circulation for it of 10,000 copies, which about paid the cost, counting my work as editor nothing.

Greeley, Log-Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign, America, Vol.6, p.270–p.271

"The Log-Cabin" was but an incident, a feature of the canvass. Briefly, we Whigs took the lead, and kept it throughout. Our opponents struggled manfully, desperately; but wind and tide were against them. They had campaign and other papers, good speakers, and large meetings; but we were far ahead of them in singing, and in electioneering emblems and mottoes which appealed to popular sympathies. The elections held next after the Harrisburg nominations were local, but they all went our way; and the State contests, which soon followed, amply confirmed their indications. In September, Maine held her State election, and chose the Whig candidate for Governor (Edward Kent) by a small majority, but on a very full vote. The Democrats did not concede his election till after the vote for President, in November. Pennsylvania, in October, gave a small Democratic majority; but we insisted that it could be overcome when we came to vote for Harrison, and it was. In October, Ohio, Indiana, and Georgia all gave decisive Harrison majorities, rendering the great result morally certain. Yet, when the Presidential electors chosen were fully ascertained, even the most sanguine among us were astounded by the completeness of our triumph. We had given General Harrison the electoral votes of all but the seven States of New Hampshire, Virginia, South Carolina, Alabama, Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas—sixty in all—while our candidate had 234; making his the heaviest majority by which any President had ever been chosen. New York, where each party had done its best, had been carried for him by 13,290 majority; but Governor Seward had been reelected by only 5,315. With any other candidate for President, he could scarcely have escaped defeat.

Greeley, Log-Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign, America, Vol.6, p.271–p.272

I judge that there were not many who had done more effective work in the canvass than I had; but I doubt that General Harrison ever heard my name. I never visited nor wrote him; I was not of the throng that surrounded him on reaching Washington—in fact, I did not visit that city, in 1841, until after his most untimely death. I received the news of that calamity on landing one morning from an Albany steamboat; and I mournfully realized, on the instant, that it was no common disaster, but far-reaching in its malign influence. General Harrison was never a great man, but he had good sense, was moderate in his views, and tolerant of adverse convictions; he truly loved and aspired to serve his country, and was at the summit of a broadly based and substantial popularity which, had he lived out his term, would have averted many impending evils. Our country, in my view, had lost many abler men, but none that she could so ill spare since Washington. He was President for one short month; and then the hopes born of his election were suddenly buried in his grave.

The Webster-Ashburton Treaty Forecasts the Fate of Texas

Title: The Webster-Ashburton Treaty Forecasts the Fate of Texas

Author: Unknown

Date: 1842

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.281-286

This is one in a series of articles anonymously in France and America shortly after the Webster-Ashburton Treaty between Great Britain and the United States was signed three years before Texas was annexed, in 1845. It explains why the treaty was making Texas annexation a popular American issue, the reason being that Great Britain was seeking to establish a protectorate over Texas and had bamboozled America into making the Webster-Ashburton Treaty.

Prior to its ratification, England could not communicate with Canada (other than Nova Scotia) in winter because of a wedge-shaped strip of land belonging to Maine. This was ceded to Canada, the United States paying Maine and Massachusetts $300,000 as compensation.

THE ASHBURTON TREATY,

AND THE REASONS WHY IT HAS MADE

THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS POPULAR

IN THE UNITED STATES

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.281–p.282

THE news lately received from the United States, represent the popular feeling in favor of the annexation of Texas as daily gaining ground; the impulse that produces it, proceeds from a cause that begins to be felt in the Northern States, although that cause has not yet been publicly divulged. The reasons why the American press has been silent thereupon, will be easily seen through on reading the following explanation. It is now given in France, for the purpose of refuting, at once, the daily abuse belched out by the British press, concerning what it calls the grasping ambition of the United States; the cause alluded to is briefly explained underneath.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.282

The Ashburton Treaty has enabled England to assume a threatening, and a truly formidable attitude on the Northern and Northwestern frontiers of the Federal Union. The new position created by that treaty, enables her to stir up, on a great scale, the whole of the Indian nations and tribes which have been of late years mostly concentrated west of the Mississippi, many of them with hostile feelings against the United States. Admitting the assertion as to the effect of the treaty to be true, it will be easily conceived, by looking over a chart of America, how important it is to prevent Great Britain from extending her protection to Texas, and from cementing with that country a connection akin to the one she established formerly with Portugal; it would, undoubtedly, enable her to control altogether the Gulf of Mexico; and it would give her an entering wedge to scatter her emissaries among the Indian tribes as far up as Lake Michigan, and thereby encircle with enemies the whole of the western frontier of the Union from North to South, which enemies would rise up at her bidding; and in order to demonstrate the strict truth of the above assertion, as to the dangerous consequences of the Ashburton Treaty, I am going to set forth, as clearly and as forcibly as I possibly can, the position of England before the treaty, and compare it with what it is now, and what it may be within a short time.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.283

In the month of November, 1837, a general rising of the people of Canada took place against the Colonial Government. The river St. Lawrence was then bound in icy fetters, and the news reached England through the United States, as no part of Canada can be approached from sea in winter time. Halifax, in Nova Scotia, is the only harbor that has a free communication with England all the year round; but Halifax, before the Ashburton Treaty, could not communicate with Canada, on account of a strip of land belonging to the State of Maine, which stretched so far North in those uncultivated and dreary regions as to prevent the possibility of its being turned. The result was, that England, notwithstanding her large standing army and her numerous fleets, could not send a single regiment to strengthen the garrison. The St. Lawrence did not open until the end of the month of May, and England would no doubt have lost, forever, her colony; if local causes had not enabled the Colonial Government to get over their adversaries without any material aid from the metropolis.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.283–p.284

Anterior to the Ashburton Treaty, the Northern and Western frontiers of the Union were comparatively safe, as, in case of war, Canada was actually cut out from England seven months out of twelve. It was then annually dependant on the United States for supplies and intelligence from abroad—that is, from the month of November to the month of May. The Ashburton Treaty has brought about a complete change. That part of the State of Maine which England had been so long coveting, for the purpose of opening a short and easy communication between Halifax and Canada, having been given up to her by the United States, a military road has already been completed; a railway is even talked of, and now, the British Ministry can send direct, despatches, emissaries, ammunitions, troops, &c., whenever it suits them, in winter as well as in summer. It must be taken into consideration, besides, that England keeps in North America, since the treaty, a garrison of twelve thousand men, which is nearly double the number of the whole regular American army, while in 1837 she had hardly three thousand! England has now completed such a compact and powerful organization in Canada, that she can, through the means of her steam navy on the Lakes, annoy and harass the American Union on a frontier extending three thousand miles.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.284–p.285

But what ought to be considered the most dangerous features of this new position, is the rapidity where—with instructions may be transmitted from London to Montreal. Celerity in war movements is well known to be the most energetic promoter of success, and the British Ministers might now, in the space of a few weeks, organize a plan of operations with the incalculable advantage of being able to superintend its execution, details, and progress, almost daily, from Downing street, in London, through expeditious steamers from England to Halifax; and the whole available force of Great Britain might thus be brought to act wherever it would be thought to be the most effective.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.285

The Colonial authorities in Canada succeeded in the last war, with limited means, to stir up against the Americans some of the Indian tribes, which waged on the borders a war of extermination, without distinction of age or sex. Now that we can appreciate the extent and efficiency of the means at the disposal of England, we may form some idea of the extension she might give to such a cruel and barbarous warfare. Well, if England, over and above the powerful means that the Ashburton Treaty has supplied her with, was to succeed besides to draw Texas under her protection, and was thereby, as a matter of course, to control the Gulf of Mexico, she might, it appears obvious, stir up simultaneously an Indian war all along the extensive Western frontiers, and at the same time, a war of revolted slaves at the South; which war of all others, is the most dangerous to the American Confederacy. To break asunder the Republican Union, has been the secret aim at which British machinations have been directed ever since 1815. This is the aim she had in view when she lavished so much money to abolish slavery in her Colonies on the coast of America.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.285–p.286

It is needless, no doubt, to enter into further developments. Every intelligent reader understands now the reasons why the annexation of Texas has become so popular. The Ashburton Treaty has made it an event of sheer necessity for the protection of the American Confederacy; so much so, indeed, that many individuals in the Northern States, who at first opposed annexation on account of honest and conscientious scruples about slavery, admit now, after a more comprehensive view of the subject, the urgency of immediate annexation.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty, America, Vol.6, p.286

But many people will probably exclaim, how is it that the American Government has been drawn into the discreditable cession of a passage whereof the consequences might be so disastrous? I confine myself to-day to prove the fact—the following remarks will, however, account for the silence of the American press. The fed attorney of Baring & Co. was Secretary of State, and was the American negotiator of the disgraceful treaty. President Tyler was so situated with his Whig Cabinet, that he was drawn into signing it—over two-thirds of both the Whig and Democratic Senators were equally guilty in voting for its ratification. Most of the influential presses took sides in its favor, some of them biased by their political leaders, others through mere corrupt influence. These circumstances, and the general disgust they created, explain the sullen silence of the great mass of the community on that infamous treaty.

Dickens Visits America

Title: Dickens Visits America

Author: Charles Dickens

Date: 1842

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.291-304

Much less familiar and in some respects more interesting and important than his "American Notes" are the letters of Charles Dickens, describing his travels in this country, included in John Forster's life of the novelist, published in London thirty years later. The freshness of first impressions is in them; they are simple and direct, unweakened by the rhetorical additions of his more formal book. "Written amid such distraction, fatigue and weariness as they describe," says Forster, "amid the jarring noises of hotels and streets, aboard steamers, on canal boats, and in log huts, there is not an erasure in them."

Dickens celebrated his thirtieth birthday (February 7, 1842) while in America. He had planned a more extended tour, but his wife's health interfered. Boston, New York, Washington. Baltimore, Richmond, Pittsburgh. Cincinnati and Cleveland to Buffalo, Niagara—which he viewed with something like ecstasy—and Montreal were in his itinerary.

His Own Account in Letters to Friends in England

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.291

DURING the whole voyage the weather had been unprecedentedly bad, the wind for the most part dead against them, the wet intolerable, the sea horribly disturbed, the days dark, and the nights fearful. On the previous Monday night it had blown a hurricane, beginning at five in the afternoon and raging all night.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.291–p.292

As his first American experience is very lightly glanced at in the Notes, a fuller picture will perhaps be welcome. "As the Cunard boats [in Boston] have a wharf of their own at the custom-house, and that a narrow one, we [wrote Dickens] were a long time (an hour at least) working in, was standing in full fig on the paddle-box beside the captain, staring about me, when suddenly, long before we were moored to the wharf, a dozen men came leaping on board at the peril of their lives, with great bundles of newspapers under their arms; worsted comforters (very much the worse for wear) round their necks; and so forth.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.292–p.293

'Aha!' says I, 'this is like our London Bridge'; believing, of course, that these visitors were news-boys. But what do you think of their being editors? And what do you think of their tearing violently up to me and beginning to shake hands like madmen? Oh! if you could have seen how I wrung their wrists! And if you could but know how I hated one man in very dirty gaiters, and with very protruding upper teeth, who said to all comers after him, 'So you've been introduced to our friend Dickens—eh?' There was one among them though, who really was of use; a Doctor S., editor of the——. He ran off here (two miles at least), and ordered rooms and dinner. And in course of time Kate, and I, and Lord Mulgrave (who was going back to his regiment at Montreal on Monday, and had agreed to live with us in the meanwhile) sat down in a spacious and handsome room to a very handsome dinner, bating peculiarities of putting on table, and had forgotten the ship entirely. A Mr. Alexander, to whom I had written from England promising to sit for a portrait, was on board directly we touched the land, and brought us here in his carriage. Then, after sending a present of most beautiful flowers, he left us to ourselves, and we thanked him for it."

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.293–p.294

What further he had to say of that week's experience finds its first public utterance here. "How can I tell you," he continues, "what has happened since that first day? How can I give you the faintest notion of my reception here; of the crowds that pour in and out the whole day; of the people that line the streets when I go out; of the cheering when I went to the theater; of the copies of verses, letter of congratulation, welcomes of all kinds, balls, dinners, assemblies without end? There is to be a public dinner to me here in Boston, next Tuesday, and great dissatisfaction has been given to the many by the high price (three pounds sterling each) of the tickets. There is to be a ball next Monday week at New York, and 150 names appear on the list of the committee. There is to be a dinner in the same place, in the same week, to which I have had an invitation with every known name in America appended to it. But what can I tell you about any of these things which will give you the slightest notion of the enthusiastic greeting they give me, or the cry that runs through the whole country? I have had deputations from the Far West, who have come from more than two thousand miles' distance: from the lakes, the rivers, the backwoods, the log houses, the cities, factories, villages, and towns. Authorities from nearly all the States have written to me. I have heard from the universities, Congress, Senate, and bodies, public and private, of every sort and kind. 'It is no nonsense, and no common feeling,' wrote Dr. Channing to me yesterday. 'It is all heart. There never was, and never will be, such a triumph. And it is a good thing, is it not, . . . to find those fancies it has given me and you the greatest satisfaction to think of, at the core of it all? It makes my heart quieter, and me a more retiring, sober, tranquil man, to watch the effect of those thoughts in all this noise and hurry, even than if I sat, pen in hand, to put them down for the first time. I feel, in the best aspects of this welcome, something of the presence and influence of that spirit which directs my life, and through a heavy sorrow has pointed upward with unchanging finger for more than four years past. And if I know my heart, not twenty times this praise would move me to an act of folly….

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.294–p.295

His second letter, radiant with the same kindly warmth that gave always preeminent charm to his genius, was dated from the Carlton Hotel, New York, on the 14th of February [1842], but its only allusion of any public interest was to the beginning of his agitation of the question of international copyright. He went to America with no express intention of starting this question in any way, and certainly with no belief that such remark upon it as a person in his position could alone be expected to make would be resented strongly by any sections of the American people. But he was not long left in doubt on this head. He had spoken upon it twice publicly, "to the great indignation of some of the editors here, who are attacking me for so doing, right and left." On the other hand, all the best men had assured him that, if only at once followed up in England, the blow struck might bring about a change in the law; and, yielding to the pleasant hope that the best men could be a match for the worst, he urged me to enlist on his side what force I could, and in particular, as he had made Scott's claim his war-cry, to bring Lockhart into the field. I could not do much, but I did what I could.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.295–p.296

Three days later he began another letter; and, as this will be entirely new to the reader, I shall print it as it reached me, with only such omission of matter concerning myself as I think it my duty, however reluctantly, to make throughout these extracts: "We left Boston on the fifth, and went away with the governor of the city to stay till Monday at his house at Worcester. He married a sister of Bancroft's, and another sister of Bancroft's went down with us. The village of Worcester is one of the prettiest in New England. . . On Monday morning at nine o'clock we started again by railroad and went on to Springfield, where a deputation of two were waiting, and everything was in readiness that the utmost attention could suggest. Owing to the mildness of the weather, the Connecticut River was 'open,' videlicet not frozen, and they had a steamboat ready to carry us on to Hartford; thus saving a land journey of only twenty-five miles, but on such roads at this time of year that it takes nearly twelve hours to accomplish! The boat was very small, the river full of floating blocks of ice, and the depth where we went (to avoid the ice and the current) not more than a few inches.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.296

"After two hours and a half of this queer traveling, we got to Hartford. There, there was quite an English inn; except in respect of the bed-rooms, which are always uncomfortable; and the best committee of management that has yet presented itself. They kept us more quiet, and were more considerate and thoughtful, even to their own exclusion, than any I have yet had to deal with. Kate's face being horribly bad, I determined to give her a rest here; and accordingly wrote to get rid of my engagement at New Haven, on that plea. We remained in this town until the eleventh: holding a formal levee every day for two hours, and receiving on each from two hundred to three hundred people. At five o'clock on the afternoon of the eleventh, we set off (still by railroad) for New Haven, which we reached about eight o'clock. The moment we had had tea, we were forced to open another levee for the students and professors of the college (the largest in the States), and the townspeople. I suppose we shook hands, before going to bed, with considerably more than five hundred people; and I stood, as a matter of course, the whole time….

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.296–p.297

"I was delighted to find on board a Mr. Felton [afterward president of Harvard] whom I had known at Boston. He is the Greek professor at Cambridge, and was going on to the ball and dinner. Like most men of his class whom I have seen, he is a most delightful fellow-unaffected, hearty, genial, jolly; quite [like] an Englishman of the best sort. We drank all the porter on board, ate all the cold pork and cheese, and were very merry indeed. I should have told you, in its proper place, that both at Hartford and New Haven a regular bank was subscribed, by these committees, for all my expenses. No bill was to be got at the bar, and everything was paid for. But as I would on no account suffer this to be done, I stoutly and positively refused to budge an inch until Mr. Q. should have received the bills from the landlord's own hands, and paid them to the last farthing. Finding it impossible to move me, they suffered me, most unwillingly, to carry the point.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.297–p.298

"About half-past 2 we arrived here [New York]. In half an hour more, we reached this hotel, where a very splendid suite of rooms was prepared for us; and where everything is very comfortable, and no doubt (as at Boston) enormously dear. Just as we sat down to dinner, David Colden made his appearance; and when he had gone, and we were taking our wine, Washington Irving came in alone, with open arms. And here he stopped, until ten o'clock at night." (Through Lord Jeffrey, with whom he was connected by marriage, and Macready, of whom he was the cordial friend, we already knew Mr. Colden; and his subsequent visits to Europe led to many years' intimate intercourse, greatly enjoyed by us both.) "Having got so far, I shall divide my discourse into four points. First, the ball. Secondly, some slight specimens of a certain phase of character in the Americans. Thirdly, international copyright. Fourthly, my life here, and projects to be carried out while I remain.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.298

"Firstly, the ball. It came off last Monday (vide pamphlet). 'At a quarter-past 9, exactly' (I quote the printed order of proceeding), we were waited upon by 'David Colden, Esquire, and General George Morris'; habited, the former in full ball costume, the latter in the full-dress uniform of Heaven knows what regiment of militia. The General took Kate, Colden gave his arm to me, and we proceeded downstairs to a carriage at the door, which took us to the stagedoor of the theater, greatly to the disappointment of an enormous crowd who were besetting the main door and making a most tremendous hullaballoo.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.298–p.299

"The scene on our entrance was very striking. There were three thousand people present in full dress; from the roof to the floor, the theater was decorated magnificently; and the light, glitter, glare, show, noise, and cheering, baffle my descriptive powers. We were walked in through the center of the center dress-box, the front whereof was taken out for the occasion; so to the back of the stage, where the Mayor and other dignitaries received us; and we were then paraded all round the enormous ballroom, twice, for the gratification of the many-headed. That done, we began to dance—Heaven knows how we did it, for there was no room. And we continued dancing until, being no longer able even to stand, we slipped away quietly, and came back to the hotel. All the documents connected with this extraordinary festival (quite unparalleled here) we have preserved; so you may suppose that on this head alone we shall have enough to show you when we come home. The bill of fare for supper is, in its amount and extent, quite a curiosity….

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.299–p.300

"The newspapers were, if possible, unusually loquacious; and in their accounts of me, and my seeings, sayings, and doings on the Saturday night and Sunday before, they describe my manner, mode of speaking, dressing, and so forth. In doing this, they report that I am a very charming fellow (of course), and have a very free and easy way with me; 'which,' say they, 'at first amused a few fashionables'; but soon pleased them exceedingly. Another paper, coming after the ball, dwells upon its splendor and brilliancy; hugs itself and its readers upon all that Dickens saw, and winds up by gravely expressing its conviction that Dickens was never in such society in England as he has seen in New York, and that its high and striking tone cannot fail to make an indelible impression on his mind! For the same reason I am alway represented, whene'er I appear in public, as being 'very pale': 'apparently thunderstruck'; and utterly confounded by all I see. You recognize the queer vanity which is at the root of all this? I have plenty of stories in connection with it to amuse you with when I return….

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.300

"I have the privilege of appearing on the floor of both Houses here [in Washington], and go to them every day. They are very handsome and commodious. There is a great deal of bad speaking, but there are a great many very remarkable men, in the legislature: such as John Quincy Adams, Clay, Preston, Calhoun and others: with whom I need scarcely add I have been placed in the friendliest relations. Adams is a fine old fellow—seventy-six years old, but with most surprising vigor, memory, readiness and pluck. Clay is perfectly enchanting; an irresistible man. There are some very notable specimens, too, out of the West. Splendid men to look at, hard to receive, prompt to act, lions in energy, Crichtons in varied accomplishments, Indians in quickness of eye and gesture, Americans in affectionate and generous impulse. It would be difficult to exaggerate the nobility of some of these glorious fellows."

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.300–p.301

"Irving was with me at Washington yesterday, and wept heartily at parting. He is a fine fellow, when you know him well; and you would relish him, my dear friend, of all things. We have laughed together at some absurdities we have encountered in company, quite in my vociferous Devonshire Terrace style. The 'Merrikin' Government has treated him, he says, most liberally and handsomely in every respect. He thinks of sailing for Liverpool on the 7th of April, passing a short time in London, and then going to Paris. Perhaps you may meet him. If you do, he will know that you are my dearest friend, and will open his whole heart to you at once. His secretary of legation, Mr. Coggleswell, is a man of very remarkable information, a great traveler, a good talker, and a scholar….

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.301

The next letter described his experiences in the Far West, his stay in St. Louis, his visit to a prairie, the return to Cincinnati, and, after a stage-coach ride from that city to Columbus, the travel thence to Sandusky, and so, by Lake Erie, to the Falls of Niagara….

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.301

"A St. Louis lady complimented Kate upon her voice and manner of speaking, assuring her that she should never have suspected her of being Scotch, or even English. She was so obliging as to add that she would have taken her for an American, anywhere : which she (Kate) was no doubt aware was a very great compliment, as the Americans were admitted on all hands to have greatly refined upon the English language! I need not tell you that out of Boston and New York a nasal drawl is universal, but I may as well hint that the prevailing grammar is also more than doubtful; that the oddest vulgarisms are received idioms; that all the women who have been bred in slave-States speak more or less like Negroes, from having been constantly in their childhood with black nurses; and that the most fashionable and aristocratic (these are two words in great use), instead of asking you in what place you were born, inquire where you 'hail from'! . . ."

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.302

"I never in my life was in such a state of excitement as coming from Buffalo here [to Niagara Falls] this morning. You come by railroad, and are nigh two hours upon the way. I looked out for the spray, and listened for the roar, as far beyond the bounds of possibility as though, landing in Liverpool, I were to listen for the music of your pleasant voice in Lincoln's Inn Fields. At last, when the train stopped, I saw two great white clouds rising up from the depths of the earth—nothing more. They rose up slowly, gently, majestically, into the air. I dragged Kate down a deep and slippery path leading to the ferry-boat; bullied Anne for not coming fast enough; perspired at every pore; and felt, it is impossible to say how, as the sound grew louder and louder in my ears, and yet nothing could be seen for the mist.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.302–p.303

"There were two English officers with us (ah! what gentlemen, what noblemen of nature they seemed), and they hurried off with me; leaving Kate and Anne on a crag of ice; and clambered after me over the rocks at the foot of the small fall, while the ferryman was getting the boat ready. I was not disappointed—but I could make out nothing. In an instant I was blinded by the spray, and wet to the skin. I saw the water tearing madly down from some immense height, but could get no idea of shape, or situation, or anything but vague immensity. But when we were seated in the boat, and crossing at the very foot of the cataract—then I began to feel what it was. Directly I had changed my clothes at the inn I went out again, taking Kate with me, and hurried to the Horseshoe Fall. I went down alone, into the very basin. It would be hard for a man to stand nearer God than he does there. There was a bright rainbow at my feet; and from that I looked up to—great Heaven! to what a fall of bright green water! The broad, deep, mighty stream seems to die in the act of falling; and from its unfathomable grave arises that tremendous ghost of spray and mist which is never laid, and has been haunting this place with the same dread solemnity—perhaps from the creation of the world.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.303

"We purpose remaining here a week. In my next I will try to give you some idea of my impressions, and to tell you how they change with every day. At present it is impossible. I can only say that the first effect of this tremendous spectacle on me was peace of mind—tranquillity—great thoughts of eternal rest and happiness—nothing of terror. I can shudder at the recollection of Glencoe (dear friend, with Heaven's leave we must see Glencoe together), but whenever I think of Niagara I shall think of its beauty.

Dickens Visits America, America, Vol.6, p.303–p.304

"If you could hear the roar that is in my ears as I write this. Both Falls are under our windows. From our sitting-room and bedroom we look down straight upon them. There is not a soul in the house but ourselves. What would I give if you and Mac were here to share the sensations of this time! I was going to add, what would I give if the dear girl whose ashes lie in Kensal Green had lived to come so far along with us—but she has been here many times, I doubt not, since her sweet face faded from my earthly sight."

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842

Title: Treaty with Great Britain

Author: The U.S. and British Governments

Date: 1842

Source: Harvard Classics, Vol.43, pp.299-308

The purpose of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty was to settle various outstanding questions between Great Britain and the United States, mainly concerned with boundary-lines. With the exception of the Oregon line, most of the frontier between Canada and the United States was defined by this agreement. The boundary west of the Rocky Mountains was decided in 1846.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.299

TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY RELATIVE TO BOUNDARIES, SUPPRESSION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE, AND EXTRADITION OF CRIMINALS, CONCLUDED AT WASHINGTON, AUGUST 9, 1842; RATIFICATION ADVISED BY SENATE, AUGUST 20, 1842; RATIFIED BY PRESIDENT, AUGUST 22, 1842; RATIFICATIONS EXCHANGED AT LONDON, OCTOBER 13, 1842; PROCLAIMED NOVEMBER 10, 1842.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.299

WHEREAS certain portions of the line of boundary between the United States of America and the British dominions in North America, described in the second article of the treaty of peace of 1783, have not yet been ascertained and determined, notwithstanding the repeated attempts which have been heretofore made for that purpose; and whereas it is now thought to be for the interest of both parties, that, avoiding further discussion of their respective rights, arising in this respect under the said treaty, they should agree on a conventional line in said portions of the said boundary, such as may be convenient to both parties, with such equivalents and compensations as are deemed just and reasonable; and whereas, by the treaty concluded at Ghent on the 24th day of December, 1814, between the United States and His Britannic Majesty, an article was agreed to and inserted of the following tenor, viz.: "Art. 10. Whereas the traffic in slaves is irreconcilable with the principles of humanity and justice; and whereas both His Majesty and the United States are desirous of continuing their efforts to promote its entire abolition, it is hereby agreed that both the contracting parties shall use their best endeavors to accomplish so desirable an object;" and whereas, notwithstanding the laws which have at various times been passed by the two Governments, and the efforts made to suppress it, that criminal traffic is still prosecuted and carried on; and whereas the United States of America and Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland are determined that, so far as may be in their power, it shall be effectually abolished; and whereas it is found expedient, for the better administration of justice and the prevention of crime within the territories and jurisdiction of the two parties respectively, that persons committing the crimes hereinafter enumerated, and being fugitives from justice, should, under certain circumstances, be reciprocally delivered up: The United States of America and Her Britannic Majesty, having resolved to treat on these several subjects, have for that purpose appointed their respective Plenipotentiaries to negotiate and conclude a treaty, that is to say:

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.300

The President of the United States has, on his part, furnished with full powers Daniel Webster, Secretary of State of the United States, and Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland has, on her part, appointed the Right Honorable Alexander Lord Ashburton, a peer of the said United Kingdom, a member of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, and Her Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary on a special mission to the United States;

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.300

Who, after a reciprocal communication of their respective full powers, have agreed to and signed the following articles:

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.300

ARTICLE I

It is hereby agreed and declared that the line of boundary shall be as follows: Beginning at the monument at the source of the river St. Croix as designated and agreed to by the Commissioners under the fifth article of the treaty of 1794, between the Governments of the United States and Great Britain; thence, north, following the exploring line run and marked by the surveyors of the two Governments in the years 1817 and 1818, under the fifth article of the treaty of Ghent, to its intersection with the river St. John, and to the middle of the channel thereof; thence, up the middle of the main channel of the said river St. John, to the mouth of the river St. Francis; thence, up the middle of the channel of the said river St. Francis, and of the lakes through which it flows, to the outlet of the Lake Pohenagamook; thence, southwesterly, in a straight line, to a point on the northwest branch of the river St. John, which point shall be ten miles distant from the main branch of the St. John, in a straight line, and in the nearest direction; but if the said point shall be found to be less than seven miles from the nearest point of the summit or crest of the highlands that divide those rivers which empty themselves into the river Saint Lawrence from those which fall into the river Saint John, then the said point shall be made to recede down the said northwest branch of the river St. John, to a point seven miles in a straight line from the said summit or crest; thence, in a straight line, in a course about south, eight degrees west, to the point where the parallel of latitude of 46° 25' north intersects the southwest branch of the St. John's; thence, southerly, by the said branch, to the source thereof in the highlands at the Metjarmette portage; thence, down along the said highlands which divide the waters which empty themselves into the river Saint Lawrence from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the head of Hall's Stream; thence, down the middle of said stream, till the line thus run intersects the old line of boundary surveyed and marked by Valentine and Collins, previously to the year 1774, as the 45th degree of north latitude, and which has been known and understood to be the line of actual division between the States of New York and Vermont on one side, and the British province of Canada on the other; and from said point of intersection, west, along the said dividing line, as heretofore known and understood, to the Iroquois or St. Lawrence River.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.302

ARTICLE II

It is moreover agreed, that from the place where the joint Commissioners terminated their labors under the sixth article of the treaty of Ghent, to wit, at a point in the Neebish Channel, near Muddy Lake, the line shall run into and along the ship-channel between Saint Joseph and St. Tammany Islands, to the division of the channel at or near the head of St. Joseph's Island; thence, turning eastwardly and northwardly around the lower end of St. George's or Sugar Island, and following the middle of the channel which divides St. George's from St. Joseph's Island; thence up the east Neebish Channel, nearest to St. George's Island, through the middle of Lake George; thence, west of Jonas' Island, into St. Mary's River, to a point in the middle of that river, about one mile above St. George's or Sugar Island, so as to appropriate and assign the said island to the United States; thence, adopting the line traced on the maps by the Commissioners, thro' the river St. Mary and Lake Superior, to a point north of Ile Royale, in said lake, one hundred yards to the north and east of Ile Chapeau, which last-mentioned island lies near the northeastern point of Ile Royale, where the line marked by the Commissioners terminates; and from the last-mentioned point, southwesterly, through the middle of the sound between Ile Royale and the northwestern main land, to the mouth of Pigeon River, and up the said river, to and through the north and south Fowl Lakes, to the lakes of the height of land between Lake Superior and the Lake of the Woods; thence, along the water communication to Lake Saisaginaga, and through that lake; thence, to and through Cypress Lake, Lac du Bois Blanc, Lac la Croix, Little Vermilion Lake, and Lake Namecan and through the several smaller lakes, straits, or streams, connecting the lakes here mentioned, to that point in Lac la Pluie, or Rainy Lake, at the Chaudiere Falls, from which the Commissioners traced the line to the most northwestern point of the Lake of the Woods; thence, along the said line, to the said most northwestern point, being in latitude 49° 23' 55" north and in longitude 95° 14' 38" west from the observatory at Greenwich; thence, according to existing treaties, due south to its intersection with the 49th parallel of north latitude, and along that parallel to the Rocky Mountains. It being understood that all the water communications and all the usual portages along the line from Lake Superior to the Lake of the Woods, and also Grand Portage, from the shore of Lake Superior to the Pigeon River, as now actually used, shall be free and open to the use of the citizens and subjects of both countries.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.303

ARTICLE III

In order to promote the interests and encourage the industry of all

the inhabitants of the countries watered by the river St. John and its tributaries, whether living within the State of Maine or the province of New Brunswick, it is agreed that, where, by the provisions of the present treaty, the river St. John is declared to be the line of boundary, the navigation of the said river shall be free and open to both parties, and shall in no way be obstructed by either; that all the produce of the forest, in logs, lumber, timber, boards, staves, or shingles, or of agriculture, not being manufactured, grown on any of those parts of the State of Maine watered by the river St. John, or by its tributaries, of which fact reasonable evidence shall, if required, be produced, shall have free access into and through the said river and its said tributaries, having their source within the State of Maine, to and from the sea-port at the mouth of the said river St. John's, and to and round the falls of the said river, either by boats, rafts, or other conveyance; that when within the province of New Brunswick, the said produce shall be dealt with as if it were the produce of the said province; that, in like manner, the inhabitants of the territory of the upper St. John, determined by this treaty to belong to Her Britannic Majesty, shall have free access to and through the river, for their produce, in those parts where the said river runs wholly through the State of Maine; Provided, always, that this agreement shall give no right to either party to interfere with any regulations not inconsistent with the terms of this treaty which the governments, respectively, of Maine or of New Brunswick may make respecting the navigation of the said river, where both banks thereof shall belong to the same party.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.304

ARTICLE IV

All grants of land heretofore made by either party, within the limits of the territory which by this treaty falls within the dominions of the other party, shall be held valid, ratified, and confirmed to the persons in possession under such grants, to the same extent as if such territory had by this treaty fallen within the dominions of the party by whom such grants were made; and all equitable possessory claims, arising from a possession and improvement of any lot or parcel of land by the person actually in possession, or by those under whom such person claims, for more than six years before the date of this treaty, shall, in like manner, be deemed valid, and be confirmed and quieted by a release to the persons entitled thereto, of the title to such lot or parcel of land, so described as best to include the improvements made thereon; and in all other respects the two contracting parties agree to deal upon the most liberal principles of equity with the settlers actually dwelling upon the territory falling to them, respectively, which has heretofore been in dispute between them.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.304

ARTICLE V

Whereas in the course of the controversy respecting the disputed territory on the northeastern boundary, some moneys have been received by the authorities of Her Britannic Majesty's province of New Brunswick, with the intention of preventing depredations, on the forests of the said territory, which moneys were to be carried to a fund called the "disputed territory fund," the proceeds whereof it was agreed should be hereafter paid over to the parties interested, in the proportions to be determined by a final settlement of boundaries, it is hereby agreed that a correct account of all receipts and payments on the said fund shall be delivered to the Government of the United States within six months after the ratification of this treaty; and the proportion of the amount due thereon to the States of Maine and Massachusetts, and any bonds or securities appertaining thereto shall be paid and delivered over to the Government of the United States; and the Government of the United States agrees to receive for the use of, and pay over to, the States of Maine and Massachusetts, their respective portions of said fund, and further, to pay and satisfy said States, respectively, for all claims for expenses incurred by them in protecting the said heretofore disputed territory and making a survey thereof in 1838; the Government of the United States agreeing with the States of Maine and Massachusetts to pay them the further sum of three hundred thousand dollars, in equal moieties, on account of their assent to the line of boundary described in this treaty, and in consideration of the conditions and equivalents received therefor from the Government of Her Britannic Majesty.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.305

ARTICLE VI

It is furthermore understood and agreed that, for the purpose of running and tracing those parts of the line between the source of the St. Croix and the St. Lawrence River which will require to be run and ascertained, and for marking the residue of said line by proper monuments on the land, two Commissioners shall be appointed, one by the President of the United States, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate thereof, and one by Her Britannic Majesty; and the said Commissioners shall meet at Bangor, in the State of Maine, on the first day of May next, or as soon thereafter as may be, and shall proceed to mark the line above described, from the source of St. Croix to the river St. John; and shall trace on proper maps the dividing-line along said river and along the river St. Francis to the outlet of the Lake Pohenagamook; and from the outlet of the said lake they shall ascertain, fix, and mark, by proper and durable monuments on the land, the line described in the first article of this treaty; and the said Commissioners shall make to each of their respective Governments a joint report or declaration, under their hands and seals, designating such line of boundary, and shall accompany such report or declaration with maps, certified by them to be true maps of the new boundary.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.306

ARTICLE VII

It is further agreed that the channels in the river St. Lawrence on both sides of the Long Sault Islands and of Barnhart Island, the channels in the river Detroit on both sides of the island Bois Blanc, and between that Island and both the American and Canadian shores, and all the several channels and passages between the various islands lying near the junction of the river St. Clair with the lake of that name, shall be equally free and open to the ships, vessels, and boats of both parties.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.306

ARTICLE VIII

The parties mutually stipulate that each shall prepare, equip, and maintain in service on the coast of Africa a sufficient and adequate squadron or naval force of vessels of suitable numbers and descriptions, to carry in all not less than eighty guns, to enforce, separately and respectively, the laws, rights and obligations of each of the two countries for the suppression of the slave-trade, the said squadrons to be independent of each other, but the two Governments stipulating, nevertheless, to give such orders to the officers commanding their respective forces as shall enable them most effectually to act in concert and co-operation, upon mutual consultation, as exigencies may arise, for the attainment of the true object of this article, copies of all such orders to be communicated by each Government to the other, respectively.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.306

ARTICLE IX

Whereas, notwithstanding all efforts which may be made on the coast of Africa for suppressing the slave-trade, the facilities for carrying on that traffic and avoiding the vigilance of cruisers, by the fraudulent use of flags and other means, are so great, and the temptations for pursuing it, while a market can be found for slaves, so strong, as that the desired result may be long delayed unless all markets be shut against the purchase of African negroes, the parties to this treaty agree that they will unite in all becoming representations and remonstrances with any and all Powers within whose dominions such markets are allowed to exist, and that they will urge upon all such Powers the propriety and duty of closing such markets effectually, at once and forever.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.307

ARTICLE X

It is agreed that the United States and Her Britannic Majesty shall, upon mutual requisitions by them, or their Ministers, officers, or authorities, respectively made, deliver up to justice all persons who, being charged with the crime of murder, or assault with intent to commit murder, or piracy, or arson, or robbery, or forgery, or the utterance of forged paper, committed within the jurisdiction of either shall seek an asylum or shall be found within the territories of the other: Provided, that this shall only be done upon such evidence of criminality as, according to the laws of the place where the fugitive or person so charged shall be found, would justify his apprehension and commitment for trial if the crime or offence had there been committed; and the respective judges and other magistrates of the two Governments shall have power, jurisdiction, and authority, upon complaint made under oath, to issue a warrant for the apprehension of the fugitive or person so charged, that he may be brought before such judges or other magistrates, respectively, to the end that the evidence of criminality may be heard and considered; and if, on such hearing, the evidence be deemed sufficient to sustain the charge, it shall be the duty of the examining judge or magistrate to certify the same to the proper executive authority, that a warrant may issue for the surrender of such fugitive. The expense of such apprehension and delivery shall be borne and defrayed by the party who makes the requisition and receives the fugitive.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.308

ARTICLE XI

The eighth article of this treaty shall be in force for five years from the date of the exchange of the ratification, and afterwards until one or the other party shall signify a wish to terminate it. The tenth article shall continue in force until one or the other of the parties shall signify its wish to terminate it, and no longer.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.308

ARTICLE XII

The present treaty shall be duly ratified, and the mutual exchange of ratification shall take place in London, within six months from the date hereof, or earlier if possible.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.308

In faith whereof we, the respective Plenipotentiaries, have signed this treaty and have hereunto affixed our seals.

Treaty with Great Britain, 1842, Harvard Classics, Vol.43, p.308

Done, in duplicate, at Washington, the ninth day of August, anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and forty-two.

DANL. WEBSTER [L. S.]

ASHBURTON [L. S.]

Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island

Title: Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island

Author: C. C. Jewett

Date: May, 1842

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.273-280

Thomas Wilson Dorr, celebrated as the leader of the rebellion in Rhode Island which bears his name, succeeded dramatically, in 1842, in procuring an extension of the right of suffrage in the State, although the rebellion failed and Dorr was convicted of treason and sentenced to imprisonment for life. After serving three years, however, he was released and his citizenship was restored.

At that time the Rhode Island form of government was based on the charter issued by Charles II in 1663, and by the act of 1798, the suffrage had been granted only to those who had a freehold valued at $134, or bringing an annual rental of $7. Also Providence, with twenty times the population of Portsmouth, had the same number of representatives in the State Assembly. Prior to the events recorded in the accompanying letter written by a resident of Providence, Dorr had vainly sought Federal support. Though his methods were revolutionary and unwise, they led to the adoption of the present constitution.

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.273

ON MONDAY, May 16th, 1842, Thomas W. Dorr, calling himself the Governor of Rhode Island, arrived in Providence, from New York and Washington. He was met at the State line, by a gang of armed men and boys, who accompanied him in an extra train of cars on the Stonington Railroad to the depot in Providence, where he was received by a large collection of people, some armed, some unarmed. He was escorted into the city by a procession numbering about twelve hundred—three hundred of whom were under arms—preceded by a band of music. They paraded through the principal streets, Dorr being seated in an open carriage, with a sword at his side and the bayonets of his followers bristling in the rear, seemed to fancy himself not only Governor, but monarch of all he surveyed. The citizens, for, be it known, that most of those who swelled the throng at his heels, could not claim the honor of belonging to Providence—the citizens, looked on, with teeth set and flashing eyes. I had read but an hour or two before, Dorr's "Proclamation," heralding his approach, in which he declared war not only against Rhode Island but against the government of the United States—saying that though the authorities of Rhode Island and of the United States were against him, the people were everywhere on his side, and that he was ready to make Rhode Island the battle ground of American Liberty. I had watched this whole struggle with intense anxiety. I thought I could see the interests of rational liberty throughout the United States, depending upon the issue. Two days' success of such principles as Dorr advocated would have thrown the whole Union into convulsions….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.274

After parading the streets a few hours and addressing his followers in a most inflammatory speech, Dorr took up his quarters at the house of one Burrington Anthony, formerly United States Marshal for Rhode Island, and Dorr's High Sheriff for the county of Providence. The house is on Federal Hill, a short remove from the thickly settled part of the city. A large company of armed men were retained to guard the house.

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.275

At one o'clock, P. M., on Tuesday, Dorr ordered the signal guns for collecting his friends to be fired. They soon came flocking from all quarters. In the afternoon, a company of them came down into the city and carried away, without resistance, two brass six-pounders from the alarm-post of the United Train of Artillery. It was generally supposed in the town that the only object of this gathering was to prevent arrests. But towards night information reached Governor King, from sources that could be relied on, that an attack would be made on the arsenal that very night.

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.275–p.276

The State officers now moved with an energy and resolution worthy of all praise. A strong additional guard was sent to the arsenal. Notices were immediately printed and circulated through the city, requesting all who were disposed to maintain law and order to repair forthwith to the arsenal and receive arms. A steamboat was dispatched as soon as she could be got ready to bring companies from Warren, Bristol and Newport, and messengers were sent off in advance of the boat to give the alarm. All this occurred about seven o'clock in the evening. I went over to the arsenal to receive my musket, and everything looked warlike. . . On returning from the arsenal through one of the most populous streets of the city I found that many, walking like myself, with their muskets, were stopped by squads of armed men, who, aided by the darkness, came suddenly upon them and wrenched away their arms. I only avoided a fight for my own by turning into another street and taking a circuitous route. About one thousand stands of arms were distributed among the citizens. But a comparatively small number of these fell into the hands of the rebels.

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.276

The system of espionage established through the city was one of the most fearful things of the whole affair. A group of citizens could not assemble at the corner of a street, in a store, or a public building, and scarcely in a private house, but some spy would be standing silently in their midst, listening to all that was said, and taking down the name of any one who expressed an opinion in opposition to the conspirators….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.276

The watchmen of the city, their numbers much increased by volunteers, were all armed, and many of them provided with horses…. The signal was agreed upon, and all awaited the event in terrible suspense. At two o'clock in the morning the alarm was sounded. The bells rung violently a few moments, then commenced the alarm toll—three strokes of a bell, answered by three of the next, and that by another, and so on around the city. The moon had set—a heavy fog rested on the river, and brooded over the town. The people began to gather. Every good man felt it his duty to show himself, wives retained not their husbands, Spartan mothers bade their sons go forth. Everyone knew the crisis had come….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.276–p.277

One veteran I well remember, who entered the armory, straightening up to the height of his manhood's prime, the fire of youth still burning beneath the white fringes of his wrinkled brows, "Will you take a man who can fight, but can't run?" said he. He was received with a spontaneous burst of applause—almost the only sound above a low, solemn tone, which I heard on that fearful night….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.277

The cause of the alarm was information brought by the watch that the conspirators had left their position and were moving toward the arsenal. At two o'clock in the morning they commenced their march. Their numbers had been variously estimated at from three to eight hundred. There were probably six hundred in all, and one half of them armed. They advanced near to the arsenal and demanded a surrender in the name of Colonel Wheeler, and in behalf of Governor Dorr. The arsenal was commanded by Colonel Leonard Blodget, a fearless man and an excellent officer. His answer was, "I know no such man as Colonel Wheeler, or Governor Dorr."

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.277

"Governor Dorr is present and with a sufficient force to batter down and take the arsenal if it is not surrendered. Must I carry back the answer you have given?"

"That or none."

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.277–p.278

Dorr then ordered the cannon—two six-pounders—to be brought within musket shot. They were heavily charged with ball and slugs. He gave the order to fire. It was followed by no report. He repeated the order with the same result. Suspecting his men of treachery, he became perfectly furious, brandished his sword, and with bitter imprecations seized a match and applied it himself. The powder flashed harmlessly upon the piece. He probably saw the truth, that his own followers would not sustain him in his desperate career; and, filled with rage and chagrin, he withdrew immediately to his old quarters….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.278

While these events were transpiring at the arsenal, the companies from the city were moving towards the scene of action a mile and a half distant. Their march can never be forgotten by any who were present. The stillness of midnight was broken only by the solemn tolls of the bells, the quick footfall of citizen after citizen as he left his home and hurried armed to join the ranks, and the occasional report of a cannon which came booming across the cove from the rebel quarters. The companies moved on, speechless and without music, a dark mass in solid phalanx, amid darkness and gloom, to a fate they knew not, but resolved to meet it like men….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.278–p.279

The sudden retreat of Dorr prevented the necessity of immediate conflict. At daylight a notice issued by the Mayor was circulated through the city requesting all men to close their places of business during the day, and to meet at the Cadet alarm-post, at half past seven o'clock. Dorr ordered his men to breakfast and to be at their posts by seven, prepared to defend him to the last. About seven, the steamboat arrived, bringing the Warren, Bristol and Newport troops, a hundred and sixty-one in number—as fine, resolute looking body of men as I ever saw….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.279

Punctual to the hour, the citizens assembled and joined the various military companies, and the whole body, numbering more than five hundred men, with six field-pieces, moved off towards Federal Hill, under command of Governor King and Colonel William Blodget….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.279–p.280

As we were approaching Dorr's headquarters, the report came that he had fled—but no one seemed to believe it, it was so unlike what we had been led to expect of him. . . Governor King, with the High Sheriff, at the head of one of the companies, now entered the house, amid shouts and threats, but without a gun being fired, searched it thoroughly, and announced to the troops that Dorr had actually fled. His flight, it seems, was so secret that only two or three of his own men knew it till a short time before it was thus announced. A company of men on horseback were despatched in pursuit of Dorr, and the attention of the rest directed to taking the cannon from the remaining mob of insurgents, and dispersing them. It seemed impossible to do this without the loss of many valuable lives. They were strongly posted—they were men, ferocious by nature, desperate in circumstances, and infuriated by liquor. They brandished their lighted matches within a few inches of their heavy-loaded cannon, and were several times prevented from firing only by some one of them less drunk, who struck off the match with a sword just as it was descending upon the powder. At this time we were facing their cannon, in a perfectly straight street, within half musket shot….

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.280

The Governor exhorted them for the last time to disperse. They answered only with oats and threats, and bravado. He waited a short time, and just as the word was given, the leaders of the rebels entreated the Governor to stop, told him that the men were drunk, and that they themselves had lost all command of them; but that if he would withdraw his forces from the ground, they would pledge themselves to return the cannon, and would induce the men to disperse as soon as the madness from rum had somewhat abated.

Jewett, Dorr's Rebellion in Rhode Island, America, Vol.6, p.280

In consideration of these statements and pledges, and to spare the lives of citizens who might otherwise be slaughtered, the Governor withdrew his forces. But no sooner had they returned to the armories than the miscreants, joined by many others, refused to red turn the guns and commenced throwing up a breastwork to defend themselves. . . They worked all night, and drank deeply of rum—but the cold dews and the hard labor, had a wonderful effect in sobering them, so that towards morning finding they were not reinforced as they expected to be, they brought back the cannon and dispersed.

Emigration Into Oregon

Title: Emigration Into Oregon

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1843-1844

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.287-290

The Oregon Question had occupied much of the attention of Congress since 1820, and when Russia agreed to make no settlements south of 54° 40' the idea gained ground that this was the proper northern boundary. Emigration to the Oregon country had begun in 1832; !he Methodists founded a mission under Jason Lee in 1834, and the Presbyterians under Marcus Whitman in 1836. By 18434 the American population numbered many thousands more than the British, who were limited to Hudson Bay Company trappers, and the boundary dispute becoming acute, the cry "Fifty-four forty, or fight," was raised. It was finally agreed that the boundary should be 490 to the channel between Vancouver and the mainland, thence down the middle of this channel, through the Straits of San Juan de Fuca to the sea. The rush of American settlers described by Benton, in his "Thirty Years' View, as saving Oregon to the United States took place at this period.

Benton, Emigration Into Oregon, America, Vol.6, p.287

THE great event of carrying the Anglo-Saxon race to the shore of the Pacific Ocean, and planting that race firmly on that sea, took place at this time, beginning in 1842, and largely increasing in 1843. It was not an act of the Government, leading the people and protecting them; but, like all the other great emigrations and settlements of that race on our continent, it was the act of the people, going forward without government aid or countenance, establishing their possession, and compelling the government to follow with its shield, and spread it over them. So far as the action of the Government was concerned, it operated to endanger our title to the Columbia, to prevent emigration, and to incur the loss of the country. . .

Benton, Emigration Into Oregon, America, Vol.6, p.288

The title to the country being endangered by the acts of the Government, the saving of it devolved upon the people—and they saved it. In 1842, invited by numerous newspaper publications, upward of a thousand American emigrants went to the country, making their long pilgrimage overland from the frontiers of Missouri, with their wives and children, their flocks and herds, their implements of husbandry and weapons of defense—traversing the vast inclined plane to the base of the Rocky Mountains, crossing that barrier (deemed impassable by Europeans) and descending the wide slope which declines from the mountains to the Pacific. Six months would be consumed in this journey, filled with hardships, beset by dangers from savage hostility, and only to be prosecuted in caravans of strength and determination. The Burnets and Applegates from Missouri were among the first leaders, and in 1843, some two thousand more joined the first emigration.

Benton, Emigration Into Oregon, America, Vol.6, p.288–p.289

To check these bold adventurers was the object of the Government: to encourage them, was the object of some Western Members of Congress, on whom (in conjunction with the people) the task of saving the Columbia evidently devolved. These Congressmen were ready for their work, and promptly began. . . An American settlement grew up at the mouth of the Columbia. Conventional agreements among themselves answered the purpose of laws. A colony was planted—had planted itself—and did not intend to retire from its position—and did not. It remained and grew; and that colony of self-impulsion, without the aid of government, and in spite of all its blunders, saved the Territory of Oregon to the United States: one of the many events which show how little the wisdom of government has to do with great events which fix the fate of countries.

Benton, Emigration Into Oregon, America, Vol.6, p.289

Connected with this emigration, and auxiliary to it, was the first expedition of Lieutenant Fremont to the Rocky Mountains, and undertaken and completed in the summer of 1842—upon its outside view the conception of the Government, but in fact conceived without its knowledge, and executed upon solicited orders, of which the design was unknown. Lieutenant Fremont was a young officer, appointed in the topographical corps from the class of citizens by President Jackson upon the recommendation of Mr. Poinsett, Secretary at War. He did not enter the army through the gate of West Point, and was considered an intrusive officer by the graduates of that institution. Having, before his appointment, assisted for two years the learned astronomer, Mr. Nicollet, in his great survey of the country between the Missouri and Mississippi, his mind was trained to such labor; and instead of hunting comfortable berths about the towns and villages, he solicited employment in the vast regions beyond the Mississippi.

Benton, Emigration Into Oregon, America, Vol.6, p.289–p.290

Colonel Abert, the chief of the corps, gave him an order to go to the frontier beyond the Mississippi. That order did not come up to his views. After receiving it he carried it back, and got it altered, and the Rocky Mountains inserted as an object of his exploration, and the South Pass in those mountains named as a particular point to be examined, and its position fixed by him. It was through this pass that the Oregon emigration crossed the mountains, and the exploration of Lieutenant Fremont had the double effect of fixing an important point in the line of the emigrants' travel, and giving them encouragement from the apparent interest which the Government took in their enterprise. At the same time the Government, that is, the executive administration, knew nothing about it, The design was conceived by the young lieutenant: the order for its execution was obtained, upon solicitation, from his immediate chief—importing, of course, to be done by his order, but an order which had its conception elsewhere.

The Invention of the Telegraph

Title: The Invention of the Telegraph

Author: Samuel F. B. Morse

Date: 1843

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.305-312

Morse first conceived the idea of the telegraph while aboard the packet-ship "Sully" on his way from Europe to America in 1832, while discussing the then recent French discovery of a method for obtaining the electric spark from the magnet. He was a graduate of Yale and was reckoned a successful artist, ranking with Washington Alston and Benjamin West. He was the first president of the National Academy of Design.

His right to the discovery of the telegraph was attacked and he labored for many years in defending his patent, and even his honor and integrity; but all his claims were finally established. The device brought him honors such as come to few inventors.

This account of the inauguration of the telegraph, through the aid of Congress in voting him $30,000 in 1843 was written by the inventor for Bishop Stevens of Pennsylvania. The supplementary account of the first telegraph instrument is taken from the "Life of Samuel F. B. Morse," by S. I. Prime.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.305

I HAD spent at Washington two entire sessions of Congress, one in 1837-38, the other in 1842-43, in the endeavor so far to interest the government in the novel telegraph as to furnish me with the means to construct a line of sufficient length to test its practicability and utility.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.305–p.306

The last days of the last session of that Congress were about to close. A bill appropriating thirty thousand dollars for my purpose had passed the House, and was before the Senate for concurrence, waiting its turn on the calendar. On the last day of the session (3d of March, 1 843), I had spent the whole day and part of the evening in the Senate chamber, anxiously watching the progress of the passing of the various bills, of which there were, in the morning of that day, over one hundred and forty to be acted upon, before the one in which I was interested would be reached; and a resolution had a few days before been passed, to proceed with the bills on the calendar in their regular order, forbidding any bill to be taken up out of its regular place. As evening approached, there seemed to be but little chance that the Telegraph Bill would be reached before the adjournment, and consequently I had the prospect of the delay of another year, with the loss of time, and all my means already expended.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.306

In my anxiety, I consulted with two of my senatorial friends—Senator Huntington, of Connecticut, and Senator Wright, of New York—asking their opinion of the probability of reaching the bill before the close of the session. Their answers were discouraging, and their advice was to prepare myself for disappointment. In this state of mind I retired to my chamber, and made all my arrangements for leaving Washington the next day. Painful as was this prospect of renewed disappointment, you, my dear sir, will understand me when I say that, knowing from experience whence my help must come in any difficulty, I soon disposed of my cares, and slept as quietly as a child.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.306–p.307

In the morning, as I had just gone into the breakfast-room, the servant called me out, announcing that a young lady was in the parlor, wishing to speak with me. I was at once greeted with the smiling face of my young friend, the daughter of my old and valued friend and classmate, the Hon. H. L. Ellsworth, the Commissioner of Patents. On expressing my surprise at so early a call, she said, "I have come to congratulate you."

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.307

"Indeed, for what?"

"On the passage of your bill."

"Oh, no, my young friend, you are mistaken; I was in the Senate-chamber till after the lamps were lighted, and my senatorial friends assured me there was no chance for me.

"But," she replied, "it is you that are mistaken. Father was there at the adjournment, at midnight, and saw the President put his name to your bill; and I asked father if I might come and tell you, and he gave me leave. Am I the first to tell you?"

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.307

The news was so unexpected that for some moments I could not speak. At length I replied: "Yes, Annie, you are the first to inform me; and now I am going to make you a promise: the first dispatch on the completed line from Washington to Baltimore shall be yours.

"Well," said she, "I shall hold you to your promise."

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.307–p.308

In about a year from that time, the line from Washington to Baltimore was completed. I was in Baltimore when the wires were brought into the office, and attached to the instrument. I proceeded to Washington, leaving word that no dispatch should be sent through the line until I had sent one from Washington. On my arrival there, I sent a note to Miss Ellsworth, announcing to her that everything was ready, and I was prepared to fulfill my promise of sending the first dispatch over the wire, which she was to indite. The answer was immediately returned. The dispatch was, What hath God wrought!" It was sent to Baltimore, and repeated to Washington, and the strip of paper upon which the telegraphic characters are printed, was claimed by Governor Seymour of Hartford, Connecticut, then a member of the House, on the ground that Miss Ellsworth was a native of Hartford. It was delivered to him by Miss Ellsworth, and is now preserved in the archives of the Hartford Museum, or Athenseum.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.308

I need only add that no words could have been selected more expressive of the disposition of my own mind at that time, to ascribe all the honor to Him to whom it truly belongs.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.308

THE FIRST TELEGRAPH INSTRUMENT

I COMMENCED, with very limited means, to experiment upon my invention. My first instrument was made up of an old picture or canvas frame fastened to a table; the wheels of an old wooden clock, moved by a weight to carry the paper forward; three wooden drums, upon one of which the paper was wound and passed over the other two; a wooden pendulum suspended to the top piece of the picture or stretching frame, and vibrating across the paper as it passes over the centre wooden drum; a pencil at the lower end of the pendulum, in contact with the paper; an electro-magnet fastened to a shelf across the picture or stretching frame, opposite to an armature made fast to the pendulum; a type rule and type for breaking the circuit, resting on an endless band, composed of carpet-binding, which passed over two wooden rollers, moved by a wooden crank, and carried forward by points projecting from the bottom of the rule downward into the carpet-binding; a lever, with a small weight on the upper side, and a tooth projecting downward at one end, operated on by the type, and a metallic fork also projecting downward over two mercury-cups, and a short circuit of wire, embracing the helices of the electro-magnet connected with the positive and negative poles of the battery and terminating in the mercury-cups.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.309–p.310

When the instrument was at rest the circuit was broken at the mercury-cups; as soon as the first type in the type-rule (put in motion by turning the wooden crank) came in contact with the tooth on the lever, it raised that end of the lever and depressed the other, bringing the prongs of the fork down into the mercury, thus closing the circuit; the current passing through the helices of the electro-magnet caused the pendulum to move and the pencil to make an oblique mark upon the paper, which, in the mean time, had been put in motion over the wooden drum. The tooth in the lever falling into the first two cogs of the types, the circuit was broken when the pendulum returned to its former position, the pencil making another mark as it returned across the paper. Thus, as the lever was alternately raised and depressed by the points of the type, the pencil passed to and fro across the slip of paper passing under it, making a mark resembling a succession of V's. The spaces between the types caused the pencil to mark horizontal lines, long or short, in proportion to the length of the spaces.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.310

With this apparatus, rude as it was, and completed before the first of the year 1836, I was enabled to and did mark down telegraphic intelligible signs, and to make and did make distinguishable sounds for telegraphing; and, having arrived at that point, I exhibited it to some of my friends early in that year, and among others to Professor Leonard D. Gale, who was a college professor in the university.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.310

I also experimented with the chemical power of the electric current in 1836 and succeeded in marking my telegraphic signs upon paper dipped in turmeric and a solution of the sulphate of soda (as well as other salts), by passing the current through it. I was soon satisfied, however, that the electro-magnetic power was more available for telegraphic purposes and possessed many advantages over any other, and I turned my thoughts in that direction.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.310–p.311

Early in 1836 I procured forty feet of wire, and putting it in the circuit I found that my battery of one cup was not sufficient to work my instrument. This result suggested to me the probability that the magnetism to be obtained from the electric current would diminish in proportion as the circuit was lengthened, so as to be insufficient for any practical purposes at great distances; and to remove that probable obstacle to my success I conceived the idea of combining two or more circuits together in the manner described in my first patent, each with an independent battery, making use of the magnetism of the current on the first to close and break the second; the second, the third, and so on. This contrivance was fully set forth in my patents.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.311

My chief concern, therefore, on my subsequent patents was to ascertain to what distance from the battery sufficient magnetism could be obtained to vibrate a piece of metal, knowing that, if I could obtain the least motion at the distance of eight or ten miles, the ultimate object was within my grasp. A practical mode of communicating the impulse of one circuit to another, such as that described in my patent of 1840, was matured as early as the spring of 1837, and exhibited then to Professor Gale, my confidential friend.

Morse, Invention of the Telegraph, America, Vol.6, p.311–p.312

Up to the autumn of 1837 my telegraphic apparatus existed in so rude a form that I felt a reluctance to have it seen. My means were very limited—so limited as to preclude the possibility of constructing an apparatus of such mechanical finish as to warrant my success in venturing upon its public exhibition. I had no wish to expose to ridicule the representative of so many hours of laborious thought. Prior to the summer of 1837, at which time Mr. Alfred Vail's attention became attracted to my telegraph, I depended upon my pencil for subsistence. Indeed, so straitened were my circumstances that, in order to save time to carry out my invention and to economize my scanty means, I had for many months lodged and eaten in my studio, procuring my food in small quantities from some grocery, and preparing it myself. To conceal from my friends the stinted manner in which I lived, I was in the habit of bringing my food to my room in the evenings, and this was my mode of life for many years.

Morse's First Telegraph Line

Title: Morse's First Telegraph Line

Author: Alonzo B. Cornell

Date: 1844

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.7, pp.36-43

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.36

In 1828 Joseph Henry, then professor of physics at the Albany Academy, afterward a professor at Princeton, and subsequently for many years secretary of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, made a highly important discovery that by winding a plain iron core with many layers of insulated wire, through which the electric current was passed, he could at pleasure charge and discharge the iron cone with magnetic power. Thus Henry produced the electromagnet which was the beginning of the mastery by man of the subtle fluid. He also discovered that the intensity and power of the electric current were materially augmented by increasing the number of the series of battery plates without increasing the quantity of metal used in their construction. These discoveries of Henry were, beyond all question, the most important in real and intrinsic value ever made in the progress of electric science, as they form the solid basis upon which all subsequent inventors have been enabled to accomplish successful results in their various fields of endeavor….

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.37

The possibility of utilizing Professor Henry's electromagnet for the purpose of transmitting intelligence to a distant point was conceived by still another American, Professor Samuel Finley Breese Morse, of New York, during his passage on board the packet-ship Sully, from Havre to New York, in the winter of 1832. Incidental discussions between himself and Doctor Jackson, a fellow-passenger, in reference to recent electrical improvements on both sides of the Atlantic, led Morse to the conclusion that intelligence might be instantaneously transmitted over a metallic circuit to a distant point, and he thereupon determined to devote himself to the solution of the problem involved. The following day he exhibited a rough sketch of a plan for recording electric impulses necessary to convey and express intelligence. He pursued the subject with great devotion during the remainder of the voyage, and after arrival in New York began the construction of the necessary apparatus to accomplish his purpose.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.37

Morse was by profession a portrait painter of more than ordinary merit, and was obliged to continue his artistic labors for a livelihood. He was a graduate of Yale College, where his attention had first been attracted to electrical experiments. He was thus, in a measure, prepared for carrying forward the important work he had undertaken, and pursued his labors with great assiduity. Devoting every spare moment to the pursuit of his object, which was attained but slowly by reason of his lack of mechanical skill and ingenuity, not until 1837 had he so far succeeded in his efforts as to be prepared to make application for letters-patent to enable him to secure and protect his rights of invention in the electromagnetic telegraph. In explanation of the slow progress of his experimental work, Professor Morse, in writing to a friend, said:

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.38

"Up to the autumn of 1837 my telegraphic apparatus existed in so rude a form that I felt reluctance to have it seen. My means were very limited, so limited as to preclude the possibility of constructing an apparatus of such mechanical finish as to warrant my success in venturing upon its public exhibition. I had no wish to expose to ridicule the representative of so many hours of laborious thought. Prior to the summer of 1837 I depended upon my pencil for subsistence. Indeed, so straitened were my circumstances that in order to save time to carry out my invention and to economize my scanty means I had for months lodged and eaten in my studio, procuring food in small quantities from some grocery, and preparing it myself. To conceal from my friends the stinted manner in which I lived, I was in the habit of bringing food to my room in the evenings; and this was my mode of life for many years."

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.38

After the continuance of this heroic struggle for more than five years, Morse found himself compelled to seek the aid of more accomplished mechanical skill than he possest, to perfect his apparatus, and was obliged to surrender a quarter interest in his invention in order to obtain pecuniary aid for this purpose.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.38

Having thus succeeded in obtaining, at such serious sacrifice, the requisite financial assistanceto enable him to perfect the mechanism necessary to demonstrate his invention, Professor Morse lost no time in completing his apparatus and presenting it for public inspection. On January 6, 1838, he first operated his system successfully, over a wire three miles long, in the presence of a number of personal friends, at Morristown, New Jersey. In the following month he made a similar exhibition before the faculty of the New York University, which was an occasion of much interest among the scientists of the metropolis. Shortly thereafter the apparatus was taken to Philadelphia and exhibited at the Franklin Institute, where he received the highest commendation from the committee of science and arts, with a strong expression in favor of government aid for the purpose of demonstrating the practical usefulness of the system.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.39

From Philadelphia Morse removed his apparatus to Washington, where he was permitted to demonstrate its operation before President Van Buren and his Cabinet. Foreign ministers and members of both Houses of Congress, as well, also, as prominent citizens, were invited to attend the exhibition, and manifested much interest in the novelty of the invention. A bill was introduced in Congress making an appropriation of thirty thousand dollars for the purpose of providing for the erection of an experimental line of telegraph between Washington and Baltimore, to illustrate, by practical use, its general utility. The bill was in good time favorably reported from the committee on commerce, but made no further progress in that Congress. Similar bills were subsequently introduced and diligently supported in each succeeding Congress, but it was not until the very closing hour of the expiringsession of 1843 that the necessary enactment was effected and the appropriation secured.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.40

The plan of construction devised by Professor Morse for the experimental line of telegraph to be erected between Washington and Baltimore, under the Congressional appropriation, provided for placing insulated wires in a lead pipe underground. This was to be accomplished by the use of a specially devised plough of peculiar construction, to be drawn by a powerful team, by which means the pipe containing the electric conductors was to be automatically deposited in the earth. This apparatus was entirely successful in operation, and the pipe was thus buried to the complete satisfaction of all concerned, at a cost very much lower than the work could have been accomplished in any other manner. Two wires were to be used to form a complete metallic circuit, for at that time it was not known, as was shortly afterward discovered, that the earth could be used to form one-half of the circuit. For purposes of insulation the wires were neatly covered with cotton-yarn and then saturated in a bath of hot gum shellac, but this treatment proved defective in insulating properties, for when ten miles of line had been completed the wires were found to be wholly useless for electric conduction.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.40

No mode had been devised for the treatment of india-rubber to make it available for purposes of insulation, and gutta-percha was wholly unknown as an article of use or commerce in this country. Twenty-three thousand dollars of the Government appropriation had been expended, and the work thus far accomplished was an acknowledged failure. Only seven thousand dollars of the availablefund remained unexpended, and this was regarded as inadequate to complete the undertaking under any other plan. The friends of the enterprise were in despair, and for some time saw not other alternative than to apply to Congress for an additional appropriation. This, however, was regarded as almost hopeless, and the difficulty of the situation was extremely embarrassing.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.41

An amusing incident was related of the means used to keep from public knowledge the desperate situation. Professor Morse finally visited the scene of activity where the pipe-laying was proceeding, and, calling the superintendent aside, confided to him the fact that the work must be stopt without the newspapers finding out the true reason of its suspension. The quick-witted superintendent was equal to the occasion, and, starting the ponderous machine, soon managed to run foul of a protruding rock and break the plow. The newspapers published sensational accounts of the accident, and announced that it would require several weeks to repair the damages. Thus the real trouble was kept from the public until new plans could be determined upon.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.41

After long and careful consideration, Professor Morse very reluctantly decided to erect the wires on poles. This plan was, at first, considered wholly objectionable, under the apprehension that the structure would be disturbed by evil-minded persons. It had, however, become manifest that this was the only mode of construction that could be accomplished within the remainder of the appropriation, and, finally, upon ascertaining that pole lines had already been adopted in England, it was determined to proceed in this manner. The line was thus completed between Washington and Baltimore about May 1, 1844, and proved to be successful in every way satisfactory in its operation.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.42

Shortly after the completion of the line the National Democratic Convention, which nominated Polk and Dallas for President and Vice-President, assembled in Baltimore [May, 1844]. Reports of the convention proceedings were promptly telegraphed to the capital city, where the telegraph office was thronged with members of Congress interested in the news. These reports created an immense sensation in Washington and speedily removed all doubts as to the practical success of the new system of communication. A dispatch from the Honorable Silas Wright, then United States Senator from New York, refusing to accept the nomination for Vice-President, was read in the National Convention and produced an extraordinary interest from the fact that very few of the delegates had ever heard of the telegraph, and it required much explanation to satisfy them of the genuineness of the alleged communication….

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.42

Once generally established, the telegraph won its way to popular appreciation very rapidly. It was in harmony with the spirit of the age, and it was not long before every town of any considerable importance regarded telegraphic facilities as an indispensable necessity. The small cost soon induced the construction of the rival lines, regardless of the rights of the patentees, and within a very few years unwise competition began to bring many lines to a condition of bankruptcy. The weakerconcerns soon passed through the sheriff's hands and found purchases only at an extreme sacrifice, at the bidding of the more provident and conservative proprietors of competing lines. Instead of inducing a more prudent course, these disastrous results only served to feed the spirit of rivalry, and general insolvency seemed to threaten the permanent prosperity of the telegraph business, in consequence of the wild and reckless competition which appeared to be inherent in its nature.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.43

This extremely unsatisfactory condition of telegraph rivalry drifted on from bad to worse until 1854, when, from dire necessity of self-preservation, a few of the more prudent and far-sighted proprietors of telegraph property were induced to combine their interests with some of their competitors and thus avoid the ruinous policy which had been so rapidly exhausting their vitality. Accordingly the principal telegraph lines in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and some of the neighboring States were brought into fraternal relations and formed the nucleus of the Western Union Telegraph Company.

Cornell, Morse's First Telegraph Line, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.43

The new policy soon brought prosperity in place of waste and improvidence. Profits were devoted to the purchase of additional lines, thus enlarging their domain and strengthening their position. Prosperity increased with rapid strides; and the beneficial effects of extirpating wasteful rivalry and building up a substantial system with superior facilities and provident management gave the new organization a dominating influence among the telegraph companies of America.

Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine

Title: Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine

Author: Appleton's Annual Encyclopedia

Date: 1844

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.7, pp.48-52

Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.48

The father of Elias Howe, Jr., the inventor and patentee of the American sewing-machine (born in Spencer, Mass., in 1819; died in Brooklyn, L.I., October 3, 1867), was a farmer and miller, and, as was the custom at that time in the country towns of New England, carried on in his family some of those minor branches of industry suited to the capacity of children, with which New England abounds. In his case the household industry in which most of his eight children were employed was the setting of card-teeth for carding cotton. When old enough, Elias assisted his father on the mill and farm, and it was when employed in the former, it is said, that he acquired that direction of taste and talent which developed itself so fruitfully both for himself and for his country. In 1835 he went to Lowell, and was employed there as a learner in a manufactory of cotton machinery, where he remained until the financial panic of 1837, when, like others, the stopping of the mills left him unemployed. He next found work at Cambridge, but remained there but a few months, having in the meantime succeeded in obtaining employment in the shop of Ari Davis, a Boston machinist.

Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.48

Here the feasibility of constructing a sewing-machine was talked of in his presence, and to this circumstance, no doubt, he is indebted to priority as the inventor. He nursed his idea, it appears, for several years, unable to develop it with steel and iron. Three years after his first introduction to the workshop of Davis, we find him, when in the receipt of but $9 a week, and with but a delicate constitution, adding to his cares by getting married. His health was not bettered by his new life, and its burdens bore heavily upon him. It was at this time that he gave heart and soul to perfect the invention which has since made him famous and a millionaire. But despite the labors of many weary months and the wakeful nights when he needed rest so much after his ordinary day's work, it was not until late in 1844 that he at last arose from his work, satisfied that he had embodied his idea. But when ready to put his invention before the world, he was without the means even to purchase the material necessary to the construction of a perfect model.

Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.49

It was at this time that he met an old school-fellow, George Fisher, a wood and coal merchant, at Cambridge, who, believing that there was a fortune in the discovery, formed a partnership with Howe, taking him and his family to board with him, that Elias might use the garret they had occupied, as a workshop, and advancing the sum of $500 wherewith to provide the necessary tools and material for the work. Here Howe labored day and night, completing his first machine in May, 1845. It might be thought that at this point, if the laborer did not rest, at least his fitting reward began, but it was not so. Strange as it may seem, he met opposition on every side from those most interested in the labor-saving machine. He exhibited it in Boston, where he convinced the tailors of its usefulness, and won their commendation, qualified by the expression of their opinion which accompanied it, that it would ruin the trade. Their praise of the machine was all the support its inventor received. Not one of them would invest a dollar in it.

Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.50

Again in despair, with all his money gone, his friend Fisher came once more to his rescue, and between them the machine was patented. This was the extent of his friend's support; the failure of further efforts to introduce the invention to public notice and patronage broke down the confidence of Fisher, and Howe moved back to his father's house in Cambridge, where he resided prior to his acquaintance with Fisher, his father having removed there, to carry on the manufacture of palm-leaf strips for hat-making. For a brief time he obtained employment on a railroad as engineer, and drove a locomotive until he broke down completely in health. Still hopeful, however, he concluded to seek the patronage in England denied him at home, and, assisted by his father, his brother Amasa left with the machine in October, 1846. Amasa found there, in William Thomas, of Cheapside, London, the first financial success, and mr. Thomas made an excellent bargain, receiving for þ250 sterling the machine which the brother had brought with him, and the right to use as many as he needed in his own business of corset making. With this offer Amasa returned, and as the þ250 only afforded a tem-porary relief, Elias concluded to go to England and accept the offer of Mr. Thomas, which he did, accompanied by Amasa. Here he worked eight months, but Thomas was exacting and Elias left him at the expiration of that time. In the meantime, his sick wife and three children had joined him.

Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.51

The story of his life, for several months after his dismissal from the workshop of Thomas, is most painful in its details, ending in absolute penury and his return home, after an absence of two years, with a half-crown in his pocket, and his model and patent papers pawned to furnish the means for his return. He landed at New York, where he learned that his wife, who had preceded him, was dying of consumption at Cambridge. He had not money enough to enable him to reach her bedside just before her death. Fate had not yet done her worst. The ship in which he had embarked the few household goods he had gathered together in England was lost at seas. This it would appear was fortune's last blow. He soon found himself in good employment, and better still, in a short time he realized that his machine had become famous during his absence. Ingenious mechanics, regardless of his patents, had constructed facsimiles. They were being exhibited about the country as wonders, and in some places had been actually introduced in important manufactures.

Howe's Invention of the Sewing Machine, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.51

Howe now found friends, and, after some delay, the necessary funds to establish his rights. In 1850 he was superintending in New York City the construction of machines to order. With the litigation which accompanies the first steps of the inventor on the road to fortune, readers are familiar. It is known that so protracted were these law proceedings that it was not until 1854, four years after his return from England, that Mr. Howe established his prior claim to the invention. Then, sole proprietor of his patent, his years of increasing revenue began, which grew from $300, it is state, to $200,000. On the 10th of September, 1867, his patent expired, at which time it was calculated he had realized about $2,000,000. With this princely fortune he enjoyed fame enough to satisfy him, had he worked for that alone, the last acknowledgment of his genius being the gold medal of the Paris Exposition, and the Cross of the Legion of Honor in addition, as a compliment to him as a manufacturer and inventor. For several years past, he had been a practical manufacturer of sewing-machines, and the machine bearing his name has now an excellent reputation, especially for leather work. During the Civil War Mr. Howe manifested a high degree of patriotism. When the country was in need of soldiers he contributed money largely, and at a public meeting in Bridgeport he enlisted as a private soldier in the Seventeenth Regiment, Connecticut Volunteers. He went to the field and performed his duties as an enlisted man, till his health failed. More than this, when the Government was prest for funds to pay its soldiers, he advanced the money necessary to pay the regiment of which he was a member.

War with Mexico Declared

Title: War with Mexico Declared

Author: James G. Blaine

Date: 1846

Source: America, Vol.7, pp.75-80

Blaine, from whose "Twenty Years in Congress" this account is taken, was graduating from Washington College, Pennsylvania, when the war between the United States and Mexico was victoriously concluded. It is of interest that his memorable volume of reminiscences appeared in 1884, following the assassination of President Garfield and Blaine's retirement as Secretary of State. This gave him the leisure necessary to authorship.

Blaine, who came near being a Republican President himself, shrewdly notes "the contrast between the boldness with which the Polk Administration had marched our army upon Mexico, and the prudence with which it had retreated from a contest with Great Britain" over Oregon territory, thereby exposing the Democrats to "merciless ridicule."

At Monterey, to which special reference is made, in September, 1846, 6,500 Americans, under General Taylor, defeated 10,000 Mexicans.

Blaine, War with Mexico Declared, America, Vol.7, p.75–p.76

THE army of occupation in Texas, commanded by General Zachary Taylor, had, during the preceding winter, been moving westward with the view of encamping in the valley of the Rio Grande. On the 28th of March General Taylor took up his position on the banks of the river, opposite Matamoros, and strengthened himself by the erection of fieldworks. General Ampudia, in command of the Mexican army stationed at Matamoros, was highly excited by the arrival of the American army, and on the 12th of April notified General Taylor to break up his camp within twenty-four hours, and to retire beyond the Nueces River. In the event of his failure to comply with these demands, Ampudia announced that "arms, and arms alone, must decide the question." According to the persistent claim of the Mexican Government, the Nueces River was the western boundary of Texas; and the territory between that river and the Rio Grande—a breadth of one hundred and fifty miles on the coast—was held by Mexico to be a part of her domain, and General Taylor consequently an invader of her soil, No reply was made to Ampudia; and on the 24th of April General Arista, who had succeeded to the command of the Mexican army, advised General Taylor that "he considered hostilities commenced, and should prosecute them."

Blaine, War with Mexico Declared, America, Vol.7, p.76

Directly after this notification was received, General Taylor dispatched a party of dragoons, sixty-three in number, officers and men, up the valley of the Rio Grande, to ascertain whether the Mexicans had crossed the river, They encountered a force much larger than their own, and after a short engagement, in which some seventeen were killed and wounded, the Americans were surrounded, and compelled to surrender. When intelligence of this affair reached the United States, the war-spirit rose high among the people. "Our country has been invaded," and "American blood spilled on American soil," were the cries heard on every side.

Blaine, War with Mexico Declared, America, Vol.7, p.76–p.77

In the very height of this first excitement, without waiting to know whether the Mexican Government would avow or disavow the hostile act, President Polk, on the 11th of May, sent a most aggressive message to Congress, "invoking its prompt action to recognize the existence of war, and to place at the disposition of the Executive the means of prosecuting the contest with vigor, and thus hastening the restoration of peace." As soon as the message was read in the House, a bill was introduced authorizing the President to call out a force of fifty thousand men, and giving him all the requisite power to organize, arm and equip them. The preamble declared that 'war existed by the act of Mexico," and this gave rise to an animated and somewhat angry discussion. The Whigs felt that they were placed in an embarrassing attitude. They must either vote for what they did not believe, or, by voting against the bill, incur the odium which always attaches to the party that fails by a hair's breadth to come to the defense of the country when war is Imminent.

Blaine, War with Mexico Declared, America, Vol.7, p.77–p.78

Prominent Whigs believed that, as an historical and geographical fact, the river Nueces was the western boundary of Texas, and that the President, by assuming the responsibility of sending an army of occupation into the country west of that river, pending negotiations with Mexico, had taken a hostile and indefensible step. But all agreed that it was too late to consider anything except the honor of the country, now that actual hostilities had begun. The position of the Whigs was as clearly defined by their speakers as was practicable in the brief space allowed for discussion of the war bill. Against the protest of many, it was forced to a vote, after a two hours' debate. The administration expected the declaration to be unanimous; but there were fourteen members of the House who accepted the responsibility of defying the war feeling of the country by voting "no"—an act which required no small degree of moral courage and personal independence. John Quincy Adams headed the list. The other gentlemen were all Northern Whigs, or pronounced Free-Soilers.

Blaine, War with Mexico Declared, America, Vol.7, p.78–p.79

The Senate considered the bill on the ensuing day, and passed it after a very able debate, in which Mr, Calhoun bore a leading part. He earnestly deprecated the necessity of the war, though accused by Benton, of plotting to bring it on. Forty Senators voted for it, and but two against it—Thomas Clayton, of Delaware, and John Davis, of Massachusetts. Mr, Crittenden, of Kentucky, and Mr. Upham, of Vermont, when their names were called, responded "Ay, except the preamble." The bill was promptly approved by the President, and on the 13th of May, 1846, the two Republics were declared to be at war. In the South and West, from the beginning, the war was popular. In the North and East it was unpopular. The gallant bearing of our army, however, changed in large degree the feeling in sections where the war had been opposed. No finer body of men ever enlisted in an heroic enterprise than those who volunteered to bear the flag in Mexico. They were young, ardent, enthusiastic, brave almost to recklessness, with a fervor of devotion to their country's honor. The march of Taylor from the Rio Grande, ending with the unexpected victory against superior numbers at Buena Vista, kept the country in a state of excitement and elation, and in the succeeding year elevated him to the Presidency. Not less splendid in its succession of victories was the march of Scott from Vera Crus to the City of Mexico, where he closed his triumphal journey by taking possession of the capital, and enabling his government to dictate terms of peace.

Blaine, War with Mexico Declared, America, Vol.7, p.79

For the first and only time in our political history, an administration conducting a war victorious at every step, steadily lost ground in the country. The House of Representatives which declared war on the 11th of May, 1846, was Democratic by a large majority. The House elected in the ensuing autumn amid the resounding acclamations of Taylor's memorable victory at Monterey had a decided Whig majority.

Blaine, War with Mexico Declared, America, Vol.7, p.79–p.80

This political reverse was due to three causes—the enactment of the tariff of 1846, which offended the manufacturing interest of the country; the receding of the administration on the Oregon question, which embarrassed the position and wounded the pride of the Northern Democrats; and the wide-spread apprehension that the war was undertaken for the purpose of extending and perpetuating slavery. The almost unanimous Southern vote for the hasty surrender of the line of 54 40', on which so much had been staked in the Presidential campaign, gave the Whigs an advantage in the popular canvass. The contrast between the boldness with which the Polk Administration had marched our army upon the territory claimed by Mexico, and the prudence with which it had retreated from a contest with Great Britain, after all our antecedent boasting, exposed the Democrats to merciless ridicule. Clever speakers, who were numerous in the Whig party at that day, did not fail to see and seize their advantage.

How Texas Was Annexed

Title: How Texas Was Annexed

Author: Thomas H. Benton

Date: 1845

Source: America, Vol.6, pp.313-316

Benton, who represented Missouri in the United States Senate for thirty years, charges John C. Calhoun with having instigated the war between this country and Mexico as far back as 1836 when he prematurely advocated the recognition of Texas as a Republic preparatory to its admission into the Union. The question of annexation was bound up with that of slavery, and the whole country was agitated. Finally the matter became a national issue, and James K. Polk was elected President on a platform favoring annexation; but before he took office a resolution was passed by Congress making an offer of statehood to Texas. This was accepted, and in December, 1845, the State was admitted.

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.313

I COME now to the direct proofs of the Senator's [John C. Calhoun's] authorship of the war; and begin with the year 1836, and with the month of May of that year, and with the 27th day of that month, and with the first rumors of the victory of San Jacinto. The Congress of the United States was then in session: the Senator from South Carolina was then a member of this body; and, without even waiting for the official confirmation of that great event, he proposed at once the immediate recognition of the independence of Texas, and her immediate admission into this Union….

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.313–p.314

. . . he was for plunging us into instant war with Mexico. I say, instant war; for Mexico and Texas were then in open war; and to incorporate Texas, was to incorporate the war at the same time. All this the Senator was then for, immediately after his own gratuitous cession of Texas, and long before the invention of the London abolition plot came so opportunely to his aid….

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.314

The Congress of 1836 would not admit Texas. The Senator from South Carolina became patient: the Texas question went to sleep; and for seven good years it made no disturbance. It then woke up, and with a suddenness and violence proportioned to its long repose. Mr. Tyler was then President: the Senator from South Carolina was potent under his administration, and soon became his Secretary of State.

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.314

I come at once to the letter of the 17th of January, from the Texan Minister to Mr. Upshur, the American Secretary of State; and the answer to that letter by Mr. Calhoun, of April 11th of the same year. They are both vital in this case; and the first is in these words:

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.314

"Sir: It is known to you that an armistice has been proclaimed between Mexico and Texas; that that armistice has been obtained through the intervention of several great Powers mutually friendly; and that negotiations are now pending, having for their object a settlement of the difficulties heretofore exist—in between the two countries. A proposition likewise having been submitted by the President of the United States, through you, for the annexation of Texas to this country, therefore (without indicating the nature of the reply which the President of Texas may direct to be made to this proposition) I beg leave to suggest that it may be apprehended, should a treaty of annexation be concluded, Mexico may think proper to at once terminate the armistice, break off all negotiations for peace, and again threaten or commence hostilities against Texas; and that some of the other Governments who have been instrumental in obtaining their cession, if they do not throw their influence into the Mexican scale, may altogether withdraw their good offices of mediation, thus losing to Texas their friendship, and exposing her to the unrestrained menaces of Mexico. In view, then, of these things, I desire to submit, through you, to his excellency the President of the United States this inquiry: Should the President of Texas accede to the proposition of annexation, would the President of the United States, after the signing of the treaty, and before it shall be ratified and receive the final action of the other branches of both Governments, in case Texas should desire it, or with her consent, order such number of the military and naval forces of the United States to such necessary points or places upon the territory or borders of Texas or the Gulf of Mexico as shall be sufficient to protect her against foreign aggression? . . .

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.315

. . . at last, and after long delay, the Secretary wrote, and signed the pledge which Murphy had given, and in all the amplitude of his original promise. That letter was dated on the 11th day of April, 1844, and was in these words:

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.316

"Gentlemen: The letter addressed by Mr. Van Zandt to the late Secretary of State, Mr. Upshur, to which you have called my attention, dated Washington, 17th January, 1844, has been laid before the President of the United States.

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.316

"In reply to it, I am directed by the President to say that the Secretary of the Navy has been instructed to order a strong naval force to concentrate in the Gulf of Mexico, to meet any emergency; and that similar orders have been issued by the Secretary of War, to move the disposable military forces on our southwestern frontier, for the same purpose. Should the exigency arise to which you refer in your note to Mr. Upshur, I am further directed by the President to say, that during the pendency of the treaty of annexation, he would deem it his duty to use all the means placed within his power by the Constitution to protect Texas from all foreign Invasion. I have the honor to be, &c.". . .

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.316

The pledge of the 11th of April being signed, the treaty was signed, and being communicated to the Senate it was rejected: and the great reason for the rejection was that the ratification of the treaty would have been war with Mexico! an act which the President and Senate together, no more than President Tyler and his Secretary of State together, had the power to make….

Benton, How Texas Was Annexed, America, Vol.6, p.316

I now come to the last act in this tragedy of errors—the alternative resolutions adopted by Congress in the last days of the session of 1844—'45, and in the last moments of Mr. Tyler's administration. A resolve, single and absolute, for the admission of Texas as a State of this Union, had been made by the House of Representatives; it came to this body; and an alternative resolution was added, subject to the choice of the President, authorizing negotiations for the admission, and appropriating $100,000 to defray the expenses of these negotiations. . . It was considered by everybody, that the choice between these resolutions belonged to the new President, who had been elected with a special view to the admission of Texas, and who was already in the city, awaiting the morning of the 4th of March to enter upon the execution of his duties, and upon whose administration all the evils of a mistake in the choice of these resolutions were to fall. We all expected the question to be left open to the new President; and so strong was that expectation, and so strong the feeling against the decency or propriety of interference on the part of the expiring administration, to snatch this choice out of the hands of Mr. Polk, that, on a mere suggestion of the possibility of such a proceeding, in a debate on this floor, a Senator standing in the relation personally, and politically, and locally to feel for the honor of the then Secretary of State, declared they would not have the audacity to do it. . . They did have the audacity! They did do it, or rather, he did it, for it is incontestable that Mr. Tyler was nothing, in anything that related to the Texas question, from the time of the arrival of his Secretary of State. . . On Sunday, the second day of March,—that day which preceded the last day of his authority—and on that day, sacred to peace—the council sat that acted on the resolutions;—and in the darkness of a night howling with the storm, and battling with the elements, as if Heaven warred upon the audacious act, (for well do I remember it,) the fatal messenger was sent off which carried the selected resolution to Texas. The exit of the Secretary from office, and the start of the messenger from Washington, were coetaneous—twin acts—which come together, and will be remembered together. The act was then done: Texas was admitted: all the consequences of admission were incurred….

The Mormon Exodus to Utah

Title: The Mormon Exodus to Utah

Author: Brigham H. Roberts

Date: 1847

Source: America, Vol.7, pp.106-113

The author of this account of the Mormon exodus from Nauvoo, Illinois, is the official historian of the Church of Latter-Day Saints. He was editor-in-chief of the Salt Lake "Herald," and in 1898 was elected to Congress. His election greatly agitated the country, and in 1900 the House of Representatives voted him constitutionally ineligible, as a polygamist, to a seat in that body.

The organization of the Mormon exodus was in many respects remarkable. A pioneer company was sent ahead as a path-finder. Nauvoo was turned into a vast wagon shop. Way stations were established, with repair shops, and a flour mill. The company here described, numbering 1,553 persons, with 566 wagons, followed the Oregon trail from Fort Laramie over the Great Divide to Fort Bridger, thence southwest to the present site of Salt Lake City, which was reached on July 23, 1847.

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.106

THE serious business of preparing for the continuation of the march into the wilderness, the completion of the exodus from the United States, was not neglected. It was considered in many council meetings of the presiding authorities, it was the chief topic of conversation wherever two or three were gathered together. Thought upon it finally so crystallized in the mind of Brigham Young that on the 14th of January, 1847, at Winter Quarters, he was prepared to announce "The Word and Will of the Lord" upon the march of the Camps of Israel to the West….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.106–p.107

After the revelation was received and announced to the Saints, preparations were made both for the formation of the pioneer company and companies to follow immediately on its trail. Word was sent to the various encampments naming the men whom President Young desired to go with him in the first pioneer company and those who were to take the lead in organizing the other companies to follow….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.107

Fort Laramie was situated about two miles from the South bank of the Platte, on the left bank of the Laramie River and about a mile and a half from its confluence with the Platte….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.107

On the 12th of June the main company of the Pioneers arrived at the Platte ferry, to find that their advanced company was employed in ferrying over the Oregon emigrants, carrying their goods over in the "Revenue Cutter"—their leather boat, floating over the empty wagons by means of ropes; but the stream was so swift and deep that the wagons would roll over several times in transit in spite of all efforts to prevent it. Ordinarily the Platte was fordable at this point, but this was the season of high water. The brethren received for ferrying over the Oregon emigrants "1,295 lbs. of flour, at the rate of two and a half cents per pound; also meal, beans, soap and honey at corresponding prices, likewise two cows, total bill for ferrying $78.00."….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.107–p.108

The Pioneer company remained five days at the Platte crossing. They made various experiments in ferrying over their wagons, first stretching a rope across the stream and trying to float single empty wagons over attached to the aforesaid overstream rope, and drawn by other ropes; but the current, deep and swift, rolled them over and over as if they were logs, much to the injury of the wagons. Then the experiment was made of fastening from two to four wagons together to prevent capsizing in transit, but the mad stream would roll them over in spite of all the ingenuity and care of the men. The small rafts were tried with a single wagon, but the difficulty of polling a raft in water so deep and swift was so great that frequently they would be swept down from one to two miles, though the stream was not more than from forty to fifty rods wide. The plan that proved the most successful was to use a raft,—of which two were made—constructed with oars, well manned, with which a landing with a single wagon could be effected in about half a mile. In this way wagons even partly loaded could be ferried over, but most of the goods of the camp were carried across in the leather boat—the "Revenue Cutter". . .

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.108–p.109

Their course now followed up the Sweet Water River, which they forded back and forth several times—to the South Pass, along the Oregon route. They were in frequent contact with companies of Oregon emigrants, and occasionally met companies of traders, trappers and mountaineers moving eastward. Near the South Pass, for instance, at which the company arrived on the 26th of June, they met a number of men from the Oregon settlements, led to this point by one Major Moses Harris, who had been a mountaineer for twenty or twenty-five years. He had extensive knowledge of the country from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific. "We obtained much information from him in relation to the great interior basin of the Salt Lake," says Orson Pratt, "the country of our destination. His report like that of Captain Fremont's is rather unfavorable to the formation of a colony in this basin, principally on account of scarcity of timber.". . .

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.109

At Green River ferry the Pioneers remained until the 3rd of July, detained by the necessity of making rafts with which to effect the crossing of that stream as its waters were high. The camp moved three miles from the ferry down the right bank and there spent the Fourth of July—"Independence Day," some of them noted in their Journals, also "the Lord's Day." At this encampment it was decided that a few of the Pioneers should return eastward to meet the large emigrating companies of Saints now enroute from Winter Quarters, and act as their guides to Green River….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.109–p.110

At this point the Pioneer company left the Oregon road taking Mr. Hasting's new route to the Bay of San Francisco, journalizes Orson Pratt, "this route is but dimly seen as only a few wagons passed over it last season." "We took a blind trail," is Erastus Snow's account of the departure from Fort Brigadier, "the general course of which is a little south of west, leading in the direction of the southern extremity of the Salt Lake, which is the region we wish to explore. Fortunately for us a party of emigrants bound for the coast of California passed this way last fall, though their trail is in many places, scarcely discernible….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.110

From the arrival of the camp at Green River, various members had suffered from what they called "mountain fever." At the camp on Bear River President Young himself was severely stricken with the malady. The main encampment moved westward, but eight wagons and a number of leading brethren remained at Bear River with the President, expecting to follow in a few hours. Closing his journal entry for the day's march, Orson Pratt rather sadly says—"Mr. Young did not overtake us to-night." His next day's entry in the Journal begins—"Early this morning we dispatched two messengers back to meet Mr. Young, being unwilling to move any farther until he should come up." These messengers were Joseph Mathews and John Brown. They found President Young had been too ill to move, but was improving….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.110–p.111

The journey was resumed, following Reed's route up a small stream, a company of about a dozen men going in advance of the wagons with spades, axes, etc., "to make the road passable, which required considerable labor." The camp moved about eight and a half miles during the day, their road in the last two miles of the journey leaving the small stream up which they had traveled to cross a ridge into another ravine in which they camped. They spent some four hours in labor with picks and spades on the latter part of the road. After an encampment was made, Orson Pratt and a Mr. Newman went further down the road to examine it. We found that Mr. Reed's company last season," journalizes Orson Pratt, "had spent several hours labor in spading, etc., but finding it almost impracticable for wagons they had turned up a ravine at the mouth of which we had camped, and taken a little more circuitous route over the hills." On the morning of the 17th after examining the road over which they had passed the day before for some distance back, and satisfying himself that no more practical route could be found, Elder Pratt directed that the camp spend several hours labor on the road over which they had already passed before resuming their march….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.111

Soon after sunrise of the 19th the two pioneers of this advance company, Orson Pratt and John Brown, started along the route of last year's emigrants to examine the road and country ahead. They continued along the road over which they had passed the day before and ascertained that it left Cannon Creek near the point where they had turned back to camp, and followed a ravine running west. This they ascended for four miles when they came to a dividing ridge from which they "could see over a great extent of country." Here they tied their horses and on foot ascended a mountain on the right for several hundred feet. "On the south west we could see an extensive level prairie some few miles distant which we thought must be near the lake." It was; and this is the first view any of the Pioneers had of Salt Lake Valley….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.112

Accordingly on the morning of the 21st Erastus Snow, mounted, rode alone over Pratt's route of the day before and overtook him on the afternoon of the 21st. Leaving the camp to proceed with their task of improving the road down Emigration Canon, Elders Pratt and Snow proceeded down the canon "four and a half miles," where the creek passes through a small canon "and issues into the broad valley below." "To avoid the canon," says Orson Pratt, "the wagons last season had passed over an exceedingly steep and dangerous hill.". . .

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.112–p.113

The two pioneers descended the butte at the mouth of the canyon and proceeded over the gentle declivity of the east slopes of the valley to a point on one of the several streams that enter from the east range of mountains, where tall canes were growing, "which looked like waving grain." The course they had followed bore a little southwestward, and on reaching the stream—since called Mill Creek—on the banks of which the canes grew—they remembered that the instructions of President Young had been to turn to the north on emerging from the valley and there plant their seeds. Accordingly they turned northward from the point they had reached and came to what was called afterwards and is now City Creek—on both sides of which Salt Lake city soon afterwards began to rise. It was a hot day that 21st of July when those two pioneers entered Salt Lake Valley. On the 23rd Orson Pratt reports the thermometer as standing at 96 degrees. It must have been about the same on the 21st. The two Pioneers had but one horse between them so that they walked and rode by turns. A few miles from the mouth of the canon Erastus Snow discovered he had lost his coat, having taken it off and thrown it loosely before him on the saddle from which it had slipped to the ground. This occasioned his return over their trail to find it, and meanwhile Orson Pratt walked northward alone until he arrived at the beautiful crystal stream that issued from the ravine leading down from the distant pineclad mountains to the northeast; and thus became the first of the Pioneers to stand upon the present site of Salt Lake City….

Roberts, Mormon Exodus to Utah, America, Vol.7, p.113

The following day [July 24th, 1847] President Brigham Young, with the main body of the Pioneers, entered the valley. He was resting in a carriage driven by Elder Wilford Woodruff, and as they emerged from the canon and pulled up into a ridge President Young, who was ill, requested Elder Woodruff to turn his carriage around so that he could look upon the valley. This was done, and President Young gazed in silence for a few moments. Then with an expression of satisfaction, he said, "This is the place, drive on." They entered into the valley and camped with the members who had preceded them. They had found the promised land a resting place for their weary feet, where they could fulfill the predictions of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains.

The Mormon Migration to Utah

Title: The Mormon Migration to Utah

Author: William A. Linn

Date: 1846-1848

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.7, pp.61-69

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.61

Two things may be accepted as facts with regard to the migration of the Mormons westward from Illinois; First, that they would not have moved had they not been compelled to; and second, that they did not know definitely where they were going when they started. Although Joseph Smith showed an uncertainty of his position by his instruction that the Twelve should look for a place in California or Oregon to which his people might move, he considered this removal so remote a possibility that he was at the same time beginning his campaign for the Presidency of the United States. As late as the spring of 1845, removal was considered by the leaders as only an alternative….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.61

Their destination could not have been determined in advance, because so little was known of the Far West. The territory now embraced in the boundaries of California and Utah was then under Mexican government, and "California" was, in common use, a name covering the Pacific coast and a stretch of land extending indefinitely eastward. Oregon had been heard of a good deal, and it, as well as Vancouver Island, had been spoken of as a possible goal if a westward migration became necessary. Lorenzo Snow, in describing the westward start, said: "On the first of March, the ground covered with snow, we broke encampment about noon, and soon nearly four hundred wagons were moving to—we knew not where." . . .

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.62

The story of this march is a remarkable one in many ways. Begun in winter, with the ground soon covered with snow, the travelers encountered Arctic weather, with the inconveniences of ice, rain, and mud, until May. After a snowfall they would have to scrape the ground when they had selected a place for pitching the tents. After a rain, or one of the occasional thaws, the country (there were no regular roads) would be practically impassable for teams, and they would have to remain in camp until the water disappeared, and the soil would bear the weight of the wagons after it was corduroyed with branches of trees. At one time bad roads caused a halt of two or three weeks. Fuel was not always abundant, and after a cold night it was no unusual thing to find wet garments and bedding frozen stiff in the morning.

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.62

Game was plenty—deer, wild turkeys, and prairie-hens—but while the members of this party were better supplied with provisions than their followers, there was no surplus among them, and by April many families were really destitute of food. Eliza Snow mentions that her brother, Lorenzo—one of the captains of tents—had two wagons, a small tent, a cow, and a scanty supply of provisions and clothing, and that "he was much better off than some of our neighbors." . . .

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.63

The adaptability of the American pioneer to his circumstances was shown during this march in many ways. When a halt occurred, a shoemaker might be seen looking for a stone to serve as a lap-stone in his repair work, of a gunsmith mending a rifle, or a weaver at a wheel or loom. The women learned that the jolting wagons would churn their milk, and, when a halt occurred, it took them but a short time to heat an oven hollowed out of a hillside in which to bake the bread already "raised." Colonel Kane says that he saw a piece of cloth the wool for which was sheared, dyed, spun, and woven during this march….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.63

John Taylor, whose pictures of this march, painted with a view to attract English emigrants, were always highly colored, estimated that, when he left Council Bluffs for England, in July, 1846, there were in camp and on the way 15,000 Mormons, with 3,000 wagons, 30,000 head of cattle, a great many horses and mules, and a vast number of sheep. Colonel Kane says that, besides the wagons, there was "a large number of nondescript turnouts, the motley makeshifts of poverty; from the unsuitable heavy cart that lumbered on mysteriously, with its sick driver hidden under its counterpane cover, to the crazy two-wheeled trundle, such as our own poor employ in the conveyance of their slop-barrels, this pulled along, it may be, by a little dry-dugged heifer, and rigged up only to drag some such light weight as a baby, a sack of meal or a pack of clothes and bedding."

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.64

Young and most of the first party continued their westward march through an uninhabited country, where they had to make their own roads. But they met with no opposition from the Indians, and the head of the procession reached the banks of the Missouri near Council Bluffs in June, other companies follwoing in quite rapid succession.

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.64

On October 9 wagons sent back by the earlier emigrants for their unfortunate brethren had arrived, and the start for the Missouri began. Bullock relates that, just as they were ready to set out, a great flight of quails settled in the camp, reunning around the wagons, so near that they could be knocked over with sticks, and the children caught them alive. One bird alighted upon their tea-board, in the midst of the cups, while they were at breakfast. It was estimated that five hundred of the birds were flying about the camp that day, but when one hundred had been killed or caught, the captain forbade the killing of any more, "as it was a direct manifestation and visitation by the Lord." Young closes his account of this incident with the words, "Tell this to the nations of the earth! Tell it to the kings and nobles and great ones." Wells, in his manuscript, "Utah Notes" (quoted by H.H. Bancroft), says: "This phenomenon extended some thirty or forty miles along the river, and was generally observed. The quail in immense quantities had attempted to cross the river, but this being beyond their strength, had dropt into the river boats or on the banks….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.64

The principal camp on the Missouri, known as Winter Quarters, was on the west bank, on what is now the site of Florence, Nebraska. Acouncil was held with the Omaha chiefs in the latter part of August, and Big Elk, in reply to an address by Brigham Young, recited their sufferings at the hands of the Sioux, and told the whites that they could stay there for two years and have the use of the firewood and timber, and that the young men of the Indians would watch their cattle and warn them of any danger. In return, the Indians asked for the use of teams to draw in their harvest, for assistance in house-building, plowing, and blacksmithing, and that a traffic in goods be established. An agreement to this effect was put in writing….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.65

During the winter of 1846-1847 preparations were under way to send an organization of pioneers across the plains and beyond the Rocky Mountains, to select a new dwelling-place for the Saints. The only "revelation" to Brigham Young found in the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants" is a direction about the organization and mission of this expedition. It was dated January 14, 1847, and it directed the organization of the pioneers into companies, with captains, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens, and a president and two counselors at their head, under charge of the Twelve. Each company was to provide its own equipment, and to take seeds and farming implements….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.65

The order of march was intelligently arranged, with a view to the probability of meeting Indians who, if not dangerous to life, had little regard for personal property. The Indians of the Platte region were notorious thieves, but had not the reputation as warriors of their northern neighbors. The regulations required that each private should walk constantly beside his wagon, leaving it onlyby his officer's command. In order to make as compact a force as possible, two wagons were to move abreast whenever this could be done. Every man was to keep his weapons loaded, and special care was insisted upon that the caps, flints, and locks should be in good condition. They had with them one small cannon mounted on wheels….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.66

More than one day's march was now made without finding water or grass. Banks of snow were observed on the near-by elevations, and overcoats were very comfortable at night. On June 26 they reached the South Pass, where the waters running to the Atlantic and to the Pacific separate. They found, however, no well-marked dividing ridge—only, as Pratt described it, "a quietly undulating plain or prairie, some fifteen or twenty miles in length and breadth, thickly covered with wild sage." There were good pasture and plenty of water, and they met there a small party who were making the journey from Oregon to the States on horseback."

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.66

All this time the leaders of the expedition had no definite view of their final stopping-place. Whenever Young was asked by any of his party, as they trudged along, what locality they were aiming for, his only reply was that he would recognize the site of their new home when he saw it, and that they would surely go on as the Lord would direct them….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.66

The pioneers resumed their march on June 29, over a desolate country, traveling seventeen miles without finding grass or water, until they made their night camp on the Big Sandy. There they encountered clouds of mosquitoes, which made more than one subsequent camping-place veryuncomfortable. A march of eight miles the next morning brought them to Green River. Finding this stream 180 yards wide, and deep and swift, they stopt long enough to make two rafts, on which they successfully ferried all their wagons without reloading them….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.67

On Monday, the 18th, Pratt again acted as advance explorer, and went ahead with one companion. Following a ravine on horseback for four miles, they then dismounted and climbed to an elevation from which, in the distance, they saw a level prairie which they thought could not be far from Great Salt Lake. The whole party advanced only six and a quarter miles that day, and six the next.

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.67

One day later Erastus Snow came up with them, and Pratt took him along as a companion in his advance explorations. They discovered a point where the travelers of the year before had ascended a hill to avoid a canon through which a creek dashed rapidly. Following in their predecessors' footsteps, when they arrived at the top of this hill there lay stretched out before them "a broad, open valley about twenty miles wide and thirty long, at the north end of which the waters of the Great Salt Lake glistened in the sunbeams." . .

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.67

Having made an inspection of the valley, the two explorers rejoined their party about ten o'clock that evening. The next day, with great labor, a road was cut through the canon down to the valley, and on July 22 Pratt's entire company camped on City Creek, below the present Emigration Street in Salt Lake City. The next morning, after sending word of their discovery to Brigham Young, the whole party moved some two milesfarther north, and there, after prayer, the work of putting in a crop was begun….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.68

While Apostles like Snow might have been as transported with delight over the aspect of the valley as he profest to be, others of the party could see only a desolate, treeless plain, with sage-brush supplying the vegetation. To the women especially the outlook was most depressing.

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.68

The day after the first arrival of Brigham Young in Salt Lake Valley (Sunday, July 25) church services were held and the sacrament was administered. Young addrest his followers, indicating at the start his idea of his leadership and of the ownership of the land, which was then Mexican territory….

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.68

The next day a party, including all the Twelve who were in the valley, set out to explore the neighborhood. They visited and bathed in Great Salt Lake, climbed and named Ensign Peak, and met a party of Utah Indians, who made signs that they wanted to trade. On their return Young explained to the people his idea of an exploration of the country to the west and north.

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.68

Meanwhile, those left in the valley had been busy staking off fields, irrigating them, and planting vegetables and grain. Some buildings, among them a blacksmith shop, were begun. The members of the battalion, about four hundred of whom had now arrived, constructed a "bowery." Camps of Utah Indians were visited, and the white men witnessed their method of securing for food the abundant black crickets, by driving them into an enclosure fenced with brush, which they set on fire.

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.68

On July 28, after a council of the Quorum hadbeen held, the site of the Temple was selected by Brigham Young, who waved his hand and said: "Here is the forty acres for the Temple. The city can be laid out perfectly square, east and west." The forty acres were a few days later reduced to ten, but the site then chosen is that on which the big Temple now stands. It was also decided that the city should be laid out in lots measuring ten by twenty rods, each, eight lots to a block, with streets eight rods wide, and sidewalks twenty feet wide; each house to be erected in the center of a lot, and twenty feet from the front line. Land was also reserved for four parks of ten acres each.

Linn, Mormon Migration to Utah, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.69

Men were at once sent into the mountains to secure logs for cabins, and work on adobe huts was also begun. On August 7, those of the Twelve present selected their "inheritances," each taking a block hear the Temple. A week later the Twelve, in council, selected the blocks which companies under each should settle. The city as then laid out covered a space nearly four miles long and three broad.

Dr. Morton's Introduction of Anesthetic Ether

Title: Dr. Morton's Introduction of Anesthetic Ether

Author: Encyclopedia Britannica

Date: 1846

Source: Great Epochs in American History, Vol.7, pp.70-72

Morton's Introduction of Anesthetic Ether, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.70

When, toward the close of last century, the brilliant discoveries of Priestly gave an impetus to chemical research, the properties of gases and vapors began to be more closely investigated, and the belief was then entertained that many of them would become of great medicinal value. In 1800 Sir Humphry Davy, experimenting on nitrous oxide gas, discovered its anesthetic properties, and described the effects it had on himself when inhaled, with the view of relieving local pain. He suggested its employment in surgery in the following words: "As nitrous oxid, in its extensive operation, seems capable of destroying physical pain, it may probably be used with advantage in surgical operations in which no great effusion of blood takes place." His suggestion, however, remained unheeded for nearly half a century. The inhalation of sulfuric ether for the relief of asthma and other lung affections, had been employed by Dr. Pearson, of Birmingham, as early as 1785; and in 1805 Dr. Pearson, of Birmingham, as early as 1785; and in 1805 Dr. Warren, of Boston, U.S., used this treatment in the later stages of pulmonary consumption. In 1818 Faraday showed that the inhalation of the vapor of sulfuric ether produced anesthetic effects similar to those of nitrous oxide gas; and this property of ether was also shown by the American physicians, Godman (1822) Jackson (1833), Wood and Bache (1834).

Morton's Introduction of Anesthetic Ether, Great Epochs, Vol.7, p.71

These observations, however, appear to have been regarded in the light of mere scientific curiosities and subjects for lecture-room experiment, rather than as facts capable of being applied practically in the treatment of disease, till December, 1844, when Dr. Horace Wells, a dentist of Hartford, Connecticut, underwent in his own person the operation of tooth extraction while rendered insensible by nitrous oxid gas. Satisfied, from further experience, that teeth could be extracted in this way without pain, Dr. Wells proposed to establish the practise of painless dentistry under the influence of gas; but in consequence of an unfortunate failure in an experiment at Boston, he abandoned the project. On September 39, 1846, Dr. William T.G. Morton, a dentist of Boston, employed the vapor of sulfuric ether to procure general anesthesia in a case of tooth extraction, and thereafter administered it in cases requiring surgical operation with complete success. This great achievement marked a new era in surgery. Operations were performed in America in numerous instances under ether inhalation, the result being only to establish more firmly its value as a successful anesthetic. The news of the discovery reached England on Decmeber 17th, 1846. On December 19th, Mr. Robinson, a dentist in London, and on the 21st, Mr. Liston, the eminent surgeon, operated on patients anesthetized by ether; and the practise soon became general both in Great Britain and on the Continent.

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