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No Government Bounty to Polygamy—Mr. Lyon.

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of the States. On this momentous question, the North will be a unit, except, it may be, an occasional Abolitionist, while the South will be divided, with no possibility of affiliation between the political Abolitionists of the North and the Secessionists of the South, although both equally may desire to sever the North from the South.

But a vast majority, both North and South, will never assent to the dissolution of this Union. To talk of it is idle; to sever it, impossible. If the South shall fall into this presidential trap, and shall not heed our protests now, let them not complain hereafter, when they shall come to reap those bitter fruits which their bad example shall have set us. If the interests of the peculiar institution shall become aggressive now, let the South not complain if freedom shall become aggressive hereafter. If they shall legislate now to break down the barriers of freedom, and open the door for the extension of slavery North, let them not complain, nor be taken by surprise, if they shall behold, hereafter, the just and humane institutions of freedom, proudly marching her resistless hosts down through the gate way which they now shall open; and having planted her proud standard in the far down South, shall declare to the South, and to the world, that not another foot of slave territory now within our borders, or hereafter to be acquired north or south of 36° 30', shall be admitted as States into this Union, nor any increase of slave representation by admitting any new slave States out of any existing State. What, then, are the South likely to gain? Nothing; in the final result, surely nothing! What, then, let me ask, sir, will our Whig brethren of the South gain? The extension of slavery! no, sir, their share of the spoils under the lead of a locofoco banner, never! What, then, have they to hope? Nothing promised can be realised. Let them pause, then, and ask themselves why and wherefore this. They do not desire to lend their aid to consummate the schemes of political opponents and demagogues. They desire the peace of the country as well as we. They love the Union, and desire its prosperity and its perpetuity as well as we do.

There are other compromise acts upon our national statute books which had better be looked into when this whole matter shall come to be reviewed, as nothing seems to be deemed final or settled. And in that future, though perhaps not far distant day, it may be well also to look a little into the statute books of some of the sovereign States of the chivalrous South, and see whether they do not contain unconstitutional enactments which are clear violations of freemen's rights, and ascertain whether it may not be necessary for Congress to pass an act providing for the release of a citizen of the North engaged in a legal commerce with the South, when he shall be imprisoned on account of his color. A habeas corpus by a Federal judge to bring up the prisoner, and refer the decision to the Supreme Court of the United States, would perhaps be the most summary and effectual mode of relief. It may be well for my southern friends, who propose to repeal the Missouri compromise, to reexamine this whole matter before they take the fatal step in the dark.

Let me not be understood as proposing to infringe upon the State rights of the South, but merely to secure and give a summary effect to that clause of our Constitution which declares "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States." What then, let me ask, will the South profit, or to use a trite expression of a *way down-east Yankee*, have they ever asked themselves the question, "Will it pay?" Why then permit themselves to be tacked on to the tail end of a presidential humbug, propelled by a little giant pursuing his own ambitious schemes for selfish and sordid purposes. I am ready, sir, to go into the contest with the understanding that all compromises shall be deemed unconstitutional, and as mere acts of Congress, and no longer binding; that agitation in Congress and out, are hereafter to be tolerated on the subject of slavery; that the majority shall govern, and all parties shall agree to bide the result. No one but the credulous or timid can fear, or can for a moment believe, that any State can secede from this Union. And none but the tresch-

erous, the interested or cowardly, will avail themselves of the stale cry of the dissolution of this glorious Confederacy. And none, sir, but the base deserters of the rights of humanity and of free institutions, will make, or will heed such idle threats for a single instant, come from what quarter, or emanate from whatsoever source they may. This Union, sir, contains within itself a self-sustaining power which can defy equally the attacks and assaults of its foreign foes, and of its internal enemies, alike and forever.

## NO GOVERNMENT BOUNTY TO POLYAMY.

## SPEECH OF MR. LYON, OF LYONSDALE,

NEW YORK,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

May 4, 1854.

"Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband."—St. Paul, 1st Corinthians.

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. LYON said: Mr. Chairman, this Territorial bill proposes to give, upon certain conditions, one hundred and sixty acres of land to every single man, and three hundred and twenty to every married man, "provided further, that the benefits of this act shall not extend to any person who shall now, or at any time hereafter, be the husband of more than one wife." Against the striking out of this proviso I most earnestly protest. This subject is too lightly considered, I fear, by this enlightened committee. Its great consequence as a precedent makes it needful that our investigations should be thorough, worthy of Christian statesmen and Christian lawgivers. I would appeal to the hearty patriotism of every member present, educated, as they have been, in the principles of the Pilgrim fathers, Cavaliers, and the Huguenots—the descendants of men who fled from profligate, libidinous, and licentious courts to enjoy a virtuous quiet in the unbroken wilderness of the West—if they are willing to see this Government disgrace itself by express or implied legislation, in any way sanctioning the practice of polygamy in this country. Its enormity as a crime has been made the subject of stringent statutes in every State in the Confederacy. Is a premium to be paid, in fertile lands, for the debauching of our daughters and the deluding of our wives? Is this Congress so weak as basely to stoop to such a purpose, reversing all the cherished associations and instructions of our childhood? Is this black cancer sore, this creeping leprosy, to be encouraged?

When the people of Utah are placed on the same basis as the people of other Territories, is not that sufficient? Is not that enough? Strike out the clause, and what will be its actual consequences? Individuals will go there whose senses are stronger than their sentiments, whose passions override their principles, and avail themselves of Government bounty, and, like Persians, Hindoos, and Musselmans, fill their houses with the blooming beauties of the North, and the witching women of the South, provided they have wealth or personal attractions to induce such a painful and horrid sacrifice. It has been demonstrated clearly by all political economists, by Dr. Franklin, Malthus, and Miss Martineau, that one man is just enough for one woman, the very state the Lord originally intended when he created Adam and Eve, that there should be no monopoly of the fair sex. Yet, when polygamy is tacitly respectable by an American Congress, it may not be so difficult to fill with sisters and daughters—those whom God destined for a nobler domestic sphere—an American Harem, a Mormon Seraglio. Sir, there is but one way to kill the cockatrice. It is to break the egg. It is to break the egg.

Let us look for a moment to those countries where polygamy exists—to the feeble and dismembered empire of the Sultan, at present under the protectorate of England and France. Women, according to the Koran, have no immortal souls; women are sold as slaves; women are protected by high walls, guarded by eunuchs, the creatures of appetite, ministering to the most inflammable passions of our nature. The bitter unhappiness of Harem life is little understood—its degradation of woman, its brutalization of man.

The innocent young creatures who seek Constantinople, and other cities of the Orient, look upon it as destiny, and bear their lot, prisoned by marble walls, amid the splendid misery of hanging gardens, sparkling fountains, radiant flowers, breathing perfumes, with sad and breaking hearts. And, sir, do you think things are different among the "Latter-Day Saints" in the Mormondom of Utah? No, sir; just as bad. Amid the jealousies of a plurality of wives the respect of parental authority is lost, the gentleness of fireside instruction and hearthstone memories is destroyed. Crime of the most revolting character ensues; and infanticide follows as a matter of course as soon as the husband finds he is getting more children than he can support. Sir, human nature is just the same in every land. Do you think Abdul Medjid, with three hundred and seventy wives, has been the father of only five children? It is impossible. [Applause and laughter.] The bodies of dead infants float on the sapphire tide of the Bosphorus, and the Light of many a harem, from the destruction of her offspring, has been lost among the dark shadows of the cypress of Scutari. There is not a drug shop in an Oriental city but sells the means of destroying the new-born. And, being warned of these things, let us not fix this plague-spot upon the route to the golden gate of the Pacific, the western pathway of empire. Posterity, sir, will anathematize this kind of legislation to the latest years of the Republic. We all shall die, crumble to dust, our names be lost in oblivion, but the principle we establish by implication, as the ghost of Hamlet's father, will evidence against us when we have passed away. Let us meet this subject, discourage it, condemn it, reject it. And, sir, it will be an honorable precedent, not for a day, but for all time.

The Mormons have been spoken of as a persecuted people—a martyred people, driven from State to State. With their sorrows I sympathize, for their griefs I grieve; but it seems a curious way to console them for the past by asking Congress to sanction polygamy in the future. It is said that this practice existed in the days of Solomon. True. The running after the strange women of Egypt, the falling from grace in the service of God, was the great reason of Solomon's reign, after a glorious day, ending with a lurid sunset. And from his loins issued that undutiful heir, whose unjust acts was the scourge of Israel; for plurality of wives destroys young men, and debases old. The light of the Prophets went out the night Jesus was crucified. The Old Dispensation was fulfilled, and a day of progress was brought in under the rays of a New Testament, from whose teachings our nationality sprang into existence. Lamartine beautifully said: "Jerusalem was the sepulcher of the Old World, and the cradle of the New." Let us, as Christians, follow and legislate in the doctrines of Christ, not of Joe Smith; let us take the holy Gospel, not the Book of Mormon.

One idea further, in continuation. Point me to a nation where polygamy is practiced, and I will point you to heathens and barbarians. It seriously affects the prosperity of States, it retards civilization, it uproots Christianity. The Ottomans or Turks are the best specimens of this system; and although they import, and have for centuries, the most beautiful women from the mountains of Georgia and the valleys of Circassia, those free and brainful countries, Tartar maidens from beyond the Caspian, and the Arabian girls from Yemen, yet, effeminacy and weakness, lack of intellectual strength, bodily energy, and national decay are its sad, unfailing results, while the Greeks, the Jews, and the Armenians have increased in numbers and enterprise under the iron heel of their merciless oppressors. Who fought the battles of the Turks since the day of Mahomet II.? Under Achmet, Amurath, Selim, and Mahmoud? Under whose leadership did they become a terror to Europe? It was the renegade and apostate Croates, Walcharens, Greeks, Poles, and Hungarians. Under their commands they victoriously floated the Crescent over the battlements of Belgrade, over the towers of Pesth, and by the walls of Vienna. But for the god-like gallantry of Stahrenberg, they might have swept on to the Elbe and the Rhine.

The Moors, after seven hundred years in Spain,

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were driven hence—though best and bravest of all the Moslems—a nation of polygamists and voluptuaries. Their last stronghold, Granada, fell before the pious sovereigns of Castile and Arragon. I will quote the rebuke given Boabdil el Chico by his heroic mother on his weakness at the surrender of his kingdom. "You do well," said she, "to weep like a woman for what you failed to defend like a man."

It has been doubted by gentlemen whether this clause is constitutional; yet, with the following words in relation to the powers of Congress, tender must be their scruples if they doubt it. Section third of the Constitution of the United States reads as follows:

"Congress shall have power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting, the Territories."

This is one of the necessary regulations—one of the wholesome rules. We are told by the Delegate from Utah [Mr. BEANWISER] that it is an "ecclesiastical establishment," a religious law, and over such many strict constitutional constructionists believe we have no control. The Thugs or stranglers of men, the Phansigars, the Buddhists, who worship Juggernaut, the Seftis, who perform every year human sacrifices, all have a right to practice their abominations under the territorial government of the United States, if once settled here. They all have an equal claim to their "religious establishment," no matter how demoralizing or inhuman, over which it is said Congress has no right to interfere or to control; but that we have power to prevent giving a bounty for its encouragement, I think I have fairly shown. If the many-wifed demoralizers get outnumbered by the virtuous single-wifed, a wise State government may yet be formed that will do honor and credit to the Union. Let us nip this evil in the bud, for the sake of morality, religion, and Christianity. Marc Antony was the first polygamist of all the Romans. Mark his fate. The conqueror of Philippi, like the builder of the temple of the Lord, fell before the Circean spells of the Syrens of Egypt. The fugitive of Actium died ingloriously in the arms of Cleopatra. This foul system was encouraged by the Emperors Theodosius, Honorius, Arcadius, and by Valentinian, by an express law, in the year 393. When the name of the Roman empire was *Ichabod*—its glory had departed.

Sir, this is a

"Monster of no frightful men  
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;  
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

By the blessed memory of those virtuous spirits who battled for LIBERTY NOT LICENTIOUSNESS it should be blotted out, as a stigma, a dishonor, a disgrace, from existence on the soil of NORTH AMERICA. [Sensation, and cries of "Good!" "Good!" "Well done!"]

#### THE COVENANT OF FREEDOM.

#### SPEECH OF MR. LYON, OF LYONSDALE,

NEW YORK,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

May 8, 1854,

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. LYON said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In the words of John Randolph of Roanoke, I "crave the pardon, the patience, the pity of this committee," in touching this well-digested subject. But each servant of a confiding, an intelligent, a sovereign constituency, is expected to do his duty, and I cheerfully do mine.

The outside structure of this measure is for the territorial organization of Nebraska and Kansas; but it conceals an apple of discord, which, like the fruit of the Dead Sea, is tempting to the eye, but ashes on the lips. By its passage you break the solemn faith that the nation has pledged to the lone Indians of the West. By it you obliterate the *American entente cordiale* of thirty years validity. By its agitation you weaken and destroy the fraternal brotherhood and kind relations that now exist between the States, and wantonly excite the prejudice and passion of the North, and embitter the sectional feeling of the South!

"That government is best which governs the least," said the Sage of the Hermitage, and a law implies the necessity of its enactment. In the bill upon which I speak, no such necessity exists; for, with the exception of the Indian tribes within these Territories, according to the most authentic advices, we have but three hundred inhabitants, and those are principally hunters and traders. Then, sir, what may be considered the actual purpose of this bill, drawn to deceive the unsuspecting and unwary, whose fourteenth section\* is an ambiguous mass of mischievous contradictions; whose covert aim is to establish slavery on soil now free? for all southern statesmen believe the Constitution of the United States carries slavery with it by implication. Though the principle of self-government, which needed no new affirmation, and which all freemen acknowledge, is set forth as the very corner-stone of the measure, the history of the Nebraska bill shows that it was an ingenious after-thought of its distinguished originator. Like the Sphinx of Egypt, it bears a face of wondrous beauty, with the loathsome body of a beast.

We are coolly told by astute Senators that the domestic institution will not flourish in Nebraska; that climate, and other like reasons, will forever exclude the African race. Let these gentlemen, if it is possible for them to believe what they say, step into Canada, and they will find negroes thriving as well; hearty, healthy, and breeding much faster than here. They will find that climate toughens them; makes them vigorous and strong; and that the trades of mechanics are learned by them with as little trouble as picking cotton, hoeing sugar-cane, or draining rice fields. Nor do men battle for a mere abstraction.

Since the passage of the Missouri compromise, negroes have risen in market over one hundred and fifty per cent. They are now worth from \$1,000 to \$1,500 per capita. Mechanics generally sell higher. A new market will be opened for slave breeding in Nebraska and Kansas, and the supply will be equal to the demand. Thus, it will be perceived, that a homestead at the North is just about the price of a solitary negro in the slaveholding States.

As a further evidence of the correctness of my views, I have understood from good authority, that an able gentleman of this House is meditating the propriety of introducing a bill for the withdrawal of our squadron from the coast of Africa; and, if this territorial bill passes, it will be followed, beyond doubt, by one to reopen the slave trade, freeing it from its former inhumanity and odiousness, by the employment of roomy and well ventilated steamers, to supply the increasing demand for labor at the South upon more reasonable terms. The stupendous consequences of this fact to the Christian world I leave for gentlemen to consider who do not believe that slavery is the conservator of morals, civilization, or religion!

A constitutional amendment has also been mooted to equalize slave representation. Pass this bill, and this may become the issue of the presidential canvass in 1856—whether a human chattel shall be equal to a free laborer. All that the much abused "Nashville Disunion Convention," which assembled in 1850, during the pendency of the later compromises of that year, upon which all sorts of epithets were exhausted, was the simple extension of the Missouri line to the Pacific—the line of 36° 30'. None were then so poor at the North as to do it reverence. Calhoun, with characteristic integrity, declared, in the following words, his adhesion to, and acquiescence

#### \* Extract from Nebraska Act.

Sec. 14. \* \* \* That the Constitution, and all laws of the United States, which are not locally inapplicable, shall have the same force and effect within the said Territory of Nebraska as elsewhere within the United States, except the eighth section of the act preparatory to the admission of Missouri into the Union, approved March 6, 1820, which, being inconsistent with the principle of non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the States and Territories, as recognized by the legislation of 1850, commonly called the compromise measures, is hereby declared inoperative and void; it being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States: Provided, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to revive or put in force any law or regulation which may have existed prior to the act of 6th March, 1820, either protecting, establishing, prohibiting, or abolishing slavery.

in, the compromise of 1820, in his speech in the Senate, February 19, 1847:

"I would have been willing to acquiesce in a continuation of the Missouri compromise, in order to preserve, under the present trying circumstances, the peace of the country."

Sir, now we find northern men—and my cheek reddens with shame at the thought—northern men, and I will not do injustice to the South by saying they have southern principles, nor will I say that they are devoid of principle—cradled among the hills of New England, pressing in hot haste this bill; winning, politically, the reputation the Vandals won who sacked Rome; wilfully destroying what they had not the appreciation to venerate nor the genius to create.

We are told that this is a Democratic test; and, let me ask, of what complexion were its political supporters in the Senate of the United States? Secessionists, Federalists, Whigs, and Democrats supported this speckled, this Mosaic measure—a measure never asked for by the South; for which the Southern people have never petitioned, never memorialized; for which there has been no political gatherings, and against which tens of thousands of remonstrances have been showered upon this House, bespeaking the pulsations of the deep-stirred heart of the mighty and awakened North. The integrity of these Territories is not to be bartered away by unbridled ambition without a struggle, nor, sir, by a law capable of a double construction. Laws should be like Justinian's—simple and comprehensive; but the clause contained in the fourteenth section seems to have been framed by a follower of the political school of Machiavelli. If the advocates of this measure are sincere, why was not the following amendment, offered in the Senate, accepted by its friends?

"Under which the people of the Territory, through their appropriate representatives, may, if they see fit, prohibit the existence of slavery therein."

But, sir, it failed; failed for the reasons given: that it was plain, not two-sided, Janus-faced, liable to be misunderstood in different ways by the different sections of the country; and I would now ask, are you, men of the North, ready for the sacrifice? Are you ready to open a region of country virgin with unconceived fertility, an empire challenging comparison with the imperial realms of Charlemagne, or his august successor, the Fifth Charles of Austria; larger than nine States the size of New York, gloriously guaranteed to freedom by southern votes—to the withering influence of involuntary servitude? Are you ready to tear down the Chinese Wall of protection, whose foundation was laid by the Cyclopean patriots of 1787, (who had but a single eye to their country's welfare,) completed by their worthy successors with earnest hands and honest hearts in 1820, known as the Missouri compromise? You who are the sons of joiners, carpenters, blacksmiths, cabinet-makers, coal heavers, fishermen, printers, tavern keepers, merchants, mechanics, and farmers, are you willing to dishonor your poor and obscure parentage, to degrade your descendants by working them by the side of slaves; to cheapen honest labor of the same humble callings as your own progenitors; to destroy its dignity by making it marketable in the persons of its possessors; and are you now willing, like the base Judean, to cast this precious Koh-i-noor away, whose like the world hath not! [Applause.]

The candid reader of our past history, in reviewing the divers cession of territory to the United States, whether from France, Spain, or Mexico, can come to but one conclusion, that the South has ever been the gainer by each successive cession. The rich, fertile bottom lands, with sugar groves, and rice plantations, the priceless cotton fields, and gold-bearing hills, orchards of the vine, the fig, the pomegranate, and the orange; forests of the live-oak, uncounted in value, green savannas, glowing with the odorous magnolia, rivers that glide in dreamy silence, ornate with wild woods of jessamine and myrtle, (as the rivers seen in the land of dreams,) a climate of perpetual spring; while a barren and stubborn soil, available only with untiring labor, a rock-bound and stormy coast, an inclement climate, the very Iceland of the Union, is the heritage of their northern brethren, and with it they are satisfied. Men of the