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Joshua Hill 1812-1891

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SPEECH

OF

HON. JOSHUA HILL, OF GEORGIA,

ON

THE ADMISSION OF KANSAS;

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MARCH 29, 1858.

WASHINGTON:
PRINTED AT THE CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE OFFICE.
1858.

SPEECH.

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

Mr. HILL said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I congratulate you, sir, that after this protracted discussion, we find you to-day still able to occupy your seat; for, from the long and wearisome task which has devolved upon you, one might well suppose that you would be found in the condition of the afflicted man of Uz, "broken in pieces with words." Could there be such a thing as a Representative without a constituency, I should not on this occasion utter one single remark. But, sir, it is in deference to the high-spirited and intelligent people I leave behind, and whose Representative I am, that I essay upon this occasion to make known the feelings and sentiments which will govern me in the course I shall take in regard to the matter now under consideration.

It is not inappropriate that in the beginning I should say, that, in kind and familiar conversations I have held with gentlemen of various shades of political opinion—and I am happy to say I know no enemies, personally, among those who occupy this floor—I have been asked to forbear the expression of my peculiar views upon this floor, lest perchance I might say something that might wound friends of this party or of that. I hope that I have as kind a nature as becomes any man; but I have found, in such cases, that it is safest for a man to be his own judge of the course proper for him to pursue; and so I have determined, irrespective of the advice given me, to go my own way. I am like the Frenchman, who consulted his wife as to the mode of building his house, and when, after hearing his plans, she agreed that they were most admirable, he said, "well, madame, it is very well that you think so, for it is all the same; the house would have been built that way any how."

I do not propose to address myself exclusively, by any means, to the immediate subject under

consideration. I propose to take a somewhat wider range. I am in the habit of doing so. I am in the habit, I may say, of inveighing against that spirit which pervades the American nation, and which is so hurtful, in my judgment, to its prosperity and well-being. I speak it in no unkindness of spirit to those who are now in power, or to those who will, in all human probability, succeed them. But the evil of the day is, in my judgment, the partisan spirit that pervades the land—the spirit that tolerates nothing of manly independence in thought, or action, but requires blind obedience to the dictates, and behests of party. Sir, dear to me as are the fortunes of the organization to which I belong, and devoted as I am to them, if it should ever assume the control of this Government, (which, I confess, looks at this time like a very remote possibility,) and should presume to dictate rules of thought and action to me, I would leave the organization, and if I could not find one agreeable to associate with thereafter I would stand aloof, though I should stand by myself.

For the few thoughts which I may utter on this occasion—for they will be few—I beg the indulgence of the House. I had prepared something in a wholly different vein from that in which I now propose to speak, but I have yielded it up to my own better judgment. If my thoughts suit not others I can only say in the spirit of the remark of the renowned Bacon: "So I think: let those who can, think more wisely."

Mr. Chairman, the year 1854, a year ever memorable and renowned in the annals of this nation by the extraordinary events that marked its passage, dawned on the American people as peacefully, as happily, and as benignly, as any one that had marked our brief but blessed career as a nation. The disappointments and acerbities growing out of the then recent presidential election had subsided in the country. Under the influence of the legislation of 1850—known as the compromise measures of that year—and of the wise and con-

servative Administration of him who justly earned the proud title of the "Model President," the country was marching on without a single obstacle in its career of progress and glory.

Sir, I have been accustomed to think that, in an evil hour, (I trust it may yet prove otherwise, for I fain would that good should come of it,) for some purpose as yet, perhaps, unavowed, and certainly by me not wholly understood, it became a matter of Democratic policy to inaugurate territorial governments for those immense wilds and wastes, solitudes of prairie and forest, known as Nebraska and Kansas. I never could perceive the pressing necessity of these measures at the time. The highest estimate that was made by any speaker on the occasion was, that in all those vast Territories there were not over nine hundred white souls, consisting, as they did, of hunters, trappers, and traders, with very few women and children among them. If I were disposed to be invidious, I might conjecture that the motive for the organization of those Territories was to carve out offices for dependants and expectants. I do not know that there was any such design, and therefore I make no such imputation.

But, if it had stopped there, although I think it was a premature act, the country would not have complained. It was not a very grave error, if error it was. But the momentous part of the matter was this: that in this act of legislation the Democratic party adopted the suggestion of a then political opponent—Mr. Dixon, of Kentucky—to repeal a measure which had stood on the statute-book for thirty years; which had received the sanction of a slaveholding President and of a Cabinet second in intelligence and worth to none that ever graced the Federal city. It had existed through successive Administrations, including that of the hero of the Hermitage—devoted as he was, heart and soul, in every pulsation, to the interests of the South. And during all that time no man had come forward and asked for its repeal.

Sir, it is a matter of history that at the time the proposition was made, the Washington Union, then conducted by a politician of signal ability, came out in an editorial the very next day, and denounced the proposition as a Whig trick, designed to divide and distract the Democratic party. The more cautious and distinguished chairman of the Senate's Committee on Territories, who had reported those bills, did not follow the lead of the organ of the party. He, like a prudent generalissimo, took time to reflect upon the proposition. Ay, sir, he slept upon it; and when his strong and vigorous intellect came to a conclusion, he rose, like a strong man, from his slumbers, resolved that he would do the deed or perish in attempting to execute it. The suggestion was incorporated into those measures, and became part and parcel of them, and impartial history must ever record that whatever of glory, of renown, or of shame, may attach to the transaction, the name of the distinguished Senator from Illinois must stand out in the front rank, towering above all others, as its advocate and defender. There he stands yet; and no matter how he may be condemned and derided to-

day, he is regarded as the father of this great measure, and history will so record him.

But there was another who had been thought worthy, at one time, to bear the standard of the Democratic party to battle—a veteran in politics, and a statesman who stood deservedly high. I allude, sir, to General Cass, who, on the 20th of February, 1854, in the Senate of the United States, gave utterance, in a carefully prepared speech, to the expression of doubts and misgivings as to the wisdom and propriety of this act. The distinguished Senator said:

"Mr. President, I have not withheld the expression of my regret elsewhere, nor shall I withhold it here, that this question of repeal of the Missouri compromise, which opens all the disputed points connected with the subject of congressional action upon slavery in the Territories of the United States, has been brought before us. I do not think the practical advantages to result from the measure will outweigh the injury which the ill-feeling, fated to accompany the discussion of this subject through the country, is sure to produce. And I was confirmed in this impression from what was said by the Senator from Tennessee, [Mr. JONES,] by the Senator from Kentucky, [Mr. DIXON,] and from North Carolina, [Mr. BAKER,] and also by the remarks which fell from the Senator from Virginia, [Mr. HUNTER,] and in which I fully concur, that the South will never receive any benefit from this measure, so far as respects the extension of slavery; for, legislate as we may, no human power can establish it in the regions defined by these bills. And such were the sentiments of two eminent patriots, to whose exertions we are greatly indebted for the satisfactory termination of the difficulties of 1850, and who since passed from their labors, and, I trust, to their reward. Thus believing, I should have been better content had the whole subject been left as it was by the bill when first introduced by the Senator from Illinois, without any provision regarding the Missouri compromise. I am aware that it was reported that I intended to propose the repeal of that measure, but it was an error. My intentions were wholly misunderstood. I had no design whatever to take such a step, and thus resuscitate a deed of conciliation which had done its work, and done it well, and which was hallowed by patriotism, by success, and by its association with great names, now transferred to history. It belonged to a past generation; and in the midst of a political tempest which appalled the wisest and firmest in the land, it had said to the waves of agitation, *Peace, be still*, and they became still. It would have been better, in my opinion, not to disturb its slumber, as all useful and practical objects could have been attained without it. But the question is here without my agency."

Thus, sir, discoursed General Cass. But in the same spirit to which I have alluded, he afterwards overcame his convictions of the impropriety of this repeal, and gave his vote for it.

Mr. Chairman, let it not be understood, from what I may say here in relation to the repeal of the Missouri compromise, that I was ever its eulogist or its advocate; for however vain and presumptuous it might appear in me to dissent from its great authors and advocates, I must say in truth, from the convictions of my best judgment, that the measure was extra-constitutional. So believing, had I been acting at the time of its adoption, I do not scruple to say that I would have seen the union of these States further imperiled than I believe it was in 1820, before I would have voted for it. It is said to have saved the Union. Certainly, if it deserved to have this said of it, it was a rare merit indeed; for I take it upon myself to say, (perilous, perhaps, as the expression may be to-day,) that if this Union could be restored to the purity with which it sprang from the fires of the Revolution, there is scarcely any

sacrifice upon earth that I could make myself that I would not freely suffer for its preservation. But, sir, the Union of to-day, I greatly fear, is not the Union of seventy years ago. I know that we all profess the same degree of attachment for it that the men who framed it professed; but every man has his own way, in these degenerate days of loving the Union.

The extreme man of the South demands every concession to his requirements, and that there shall be no denial of the smallest right that he may have in the institution to which he is so fondly devoted; and not only this, but he insists that those who intrude their opinions and intermeddle with slavery, even by discussion among themselves, are inimical to the Union, and unworthy of its association. On the other hand, we hear other gentlemen say, we are attached to the Union; we are brothers, we wish to preserve the Union! We say that we will never consent, however, that the hated institution of slavery shall go one inch further upon American soil. Now, sir, this is a novel mode of showing affection for the Union! Perhaps at the same time they will disclaim that they have any design or desire to interfere with slavery in the States, or with the inter-slave trade. This is held as highly commendable, as great magnanimity and generosity! This is not my mode of estimating the duties of citizens to the Union, and it is not one of the reasons for my attachment to it. I go to the charter of our liberties; I go to the Constitution, and refer to the men who framed that instrument, and to the motives which actuated them at that time. Without arrogating to myself to be purer and better in heart, or superior to others in love for the Union and in tried patriotism, I say that I will stand by that charter; so long as I am able to interpret it, I will claim, as a southern man, all of my rights and my equality in the Union, and I will be content with nothing less. At the same time, I will not say to the North, in angry tone and defiant language, "come on and wrest these rights from us, if you dare!" I will not speak of bloody fields and desolated homes; such language, in my judgment, will never convince the understanding of any man—certainly not that of a fanatic. It is not the language of a brother; and, so long as we live in this Union, we are brothers.

I will return, Mr. Chairman, to the repeal of the Missouri compromise. When the deed was done, when the blow was struck, and when the compromise of 1820 slept with its fathers, there arose throughout the land a mighty clamor, and a wail went up, long, loud, and frantic; and, I am sorry to say, it came from those that loved the lost one far better in death than in the pride of "lusty life." Beside its bier, bedewed with some tears of honest, manly sorrow, there stood as chief mourners the Abolitionist and the Free-Soiler; they came to perform the last sad offices for this legislative victim. Why, sir, Mark Antony, in the depth of his pathos over the "piece of bleeding earth" that lay before him, the

"Ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times,"

was not more eloquent in his sorrow than were

these disconsolates. Might not some Democratic Brutus, witnessing the affecting scene, have prophetically exclaimed: "Here comes its body, mourned by the Abolitionist and Free-Soiler, who, though they had no hand in its death, shall receive the benefit of its dying—a place in the Commonwealth—as which of you shall rot?"

Was it true that, up to the time of its lamented death, these worthies had sought to preserve this cherished object of their peculiar regard? Let the history of their affectionate solicitude give the answer. Yet their lamentations were as pathetic and heart-rending as were those of Rachel mourning for her children, refusing to be comforted because the Missouri compromise "was not." I thought, as General Cass thought, that if the country could reasonably have been expected to acquiesce in the measure of repeal, it would have been patriotic and proper. No evil could then have sprung from it. I knew that, surrounded by fanatical influences, there were men of milder mood, not fitted by nature to grapple with sterner spirits, who, when this hue-and-cry was raised, mustered in crowds and came to the rescue, and placed themselves under the banner of the anti-slavery party. When it is said to me that I am over-cautious in a measure that is abstractly right, and when I ought not to have desired anything more than its passage, I reply, that if these fanatical cries be music in the ears of some men, they grate harshly upon mine. They please me not. I could not laugh such things to scorn. I looked alone to the dreaded consequences to my country. It has been written that Nero, the tyrant, fiddled when Rome was burning; but the historian has not told us that the conflagration was the less destructive. So it is here. Making this reply, they may say that the measure, if not absolutely necessary, was one that was an act of justice to the South, under the Constitution, which was violated when the Missouri compromise was passed. Conceding this to be true, it seems to me that if there was no practical advantage in the thing, it was a most unnecessary hazard to the institutions of the country.

It occurs to me, in connection with this subject, to advert to the action of the distinguished gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MILLSON] who took a view of this subject which nearly coincided with my own at the time. I have not lost sight of him, but have regarded him with interest ever since. He was denounced in the South as being untrue to the section he represented, because he dared to vote against the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. His intelligent constituency—among the most intelligent, I believe, in the State of Virginia—have returned him again and again, and thus vindicated the patriotism of his course. Certainly it will not be expected of me that I shall stand upon this floor as a panegyrist of the distinguished Senator from Illinois; but I am apt to think that he whom I have so often and so recently heard, in my own State, and in my own district, extolled as "a Saul in Israel, towering above the political hosts," is the same to-day that he was in 1854. Men—and I thank God it is so

—are not like chameleons; certainly great men are not—and I class in that category the distinguished statesman from Illinois, because his own party stamped him with that seal, and they cannot take it away from him. He is intellectually to-day, as he has been heretofore, worthy of the *sobriquet* which has been applied to him, “the Little Giant.” Is he less honest now than he was in 1854? Why should it be said so? Is any man more honest, more sincere, than he was in 1854? And this explains the question which I put to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. SMITH,] the other day: does the fact that a gentleman who disapproved of the legislation of 1854 and now approves of the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton constitution, make him a better Democrat than he who devoted life, soul, and every energy he possessed, to the adoption of that measure? Well, this is all of a piece with that sort of generosity to which I have adverted.

Sir, once for all, I denounce the proscriptive policy which would bow down and crush out the highest intellects at the mere bidding of the parasites and panderers who bask in the sunshine of power. There was a better day in the Republic—the day of “the era of good feeling,” as it has been termed—when even Cabinet officers, the constitutional advisers of the Executive, could disagree upon great and important questions of State, and were still esteemed worthy to sit together at the council board. At the time of President Madison’s administration of the Government there were some of his Cabinet opposed to the great measure of his Administration, the Bank of the United States, then a question paramount to all others. The Executive did not exact a blind obedience to his own peculiar views. The policy which does so, has been inaugurated in later but certainly not better days.

This spirit has extended itself, and I find in the Government organ in this city, only two days ago, a tirade poured out upon the heads of two venerable and distinguished men, of ripe experience, and whose oft-exhibited firmness and integrity of character, united with a rare knowledge and intelligence, entitle them to rank as statesmen. I allude, of course, to the vituperative attack which the Washington Union has seen fit to make upon Senators CRITTENDEN and BELL. Though I dissent from the conclusions of those distinguished gentlemen, I should be wanting in truth and sincerity if I did not say that I know, from my intercourse with them, that their present course is one dictated by the same love of country, and devotion to the pacification of the land, which has hitherto marked their long and distinguished career. But, sir, we have at last come to this, that DOUGLAS and BELL and CRITTENDEN and a host of others, who have been, hitherto, considered worthy and patriotic, if they make but one false step, come to one false conclusion, all their good deeds for a lifetime are to be canceled, and to go for naught. Is this just, is it proper? Where will it lead to? Does it not lead to the abject submission of the human intellect, or ruthless proscription? That is not my mode of carrying a measure. If it cannot be carried without

bitterly denouncing as wanting in integrity and patriotism those who may differ with me, I would rather it should fail. Such a course suits not my taste, and never did. Circumstances which cannot be avoided divide men who are as honest the one as the other, and charity demands that you should be patient and forbearing with your erring brethren. I do not arrogate to myself such a degree of complacency as to say that I know and feel that I am right in the position I take to-day. I sometimes have misgivings as to the convictions of my own judgment, and well I may, when I see differing with me men of the best intellect in the land, and whom I know, from their antecedents, to be as patriotic as I can pretend to be.

Sir, in relation to the immediate subject under consideration, I had prepared, to some extent, (though I shall forbear to trouble the House with it at this time,) a succinct history of what has occurred in Kansas since it became a Territory and the progress of events which has marked its history. But it is sufficient for my purpose to state that I am satisfied, from what I have read and heard, and from what I know, as well as I can know facts which did not transpire in my immediate presence, that the Lecompton convention was a body that was legally constituted, called by the proper authority, and lawfully convened.

It is my judgment that they had power to form such a constitution as, in their wisdom, they might see fit; provided it did not run counter to the obligations of the embryo State to the Constitution of the United States, and that it was republican in form. I am satisfied, from an inspection of the constitution which they did form, that it contains all the elements that entitle it to be received as the constitution of a new State. I even go further, and say that its framers have collated with signal success and ability, from the various State constitutions, all that I think was most worthy of adoption. It stands to-day, in my judgment, one of the best instruments of the sort that it has ever been my fortune to read. Intrinsically, then, I say, there is nothing in it to complain of. Perhaps some of my friends on this side of the House may think that it has anti-republican features, because it establishes or tolerates the institution of slavery. Despite what Governor Walker had said, and even though he did say it, under the direction, if you please, and sanction and approval of the President and his Cabinet, the convention had full power to submit just as much of the constitution to the people as they pleased, or to submit no part of it, if they so chose.

These, I think, are sound views. The convention has framed a constitution, and, because there was one great subject of excitement paramount to all others in the Territory, they determined to submit that *sub modo*; and that is the chief complaint.

Sir, I am inclined to believe that if that constitution had ignored slavery as an institution of the new State, there would have been no opposition to it. The people of the Territory had the opportunity to vote against the slavery clause. They did not avail themselves of that opportu-

nity, but refused to go to the polls and assert their rights. Their reasons for that course—whether advised from outside of the Territory or from within—are unknown to me. But I infer that the advice came from distant communities, and for purposes foreign to the interests of the people of the Territory themselves. Shall this miserable agitation which has enlisted the interest and excited the sympathy of the nation for years, continue to go on increasing in magnitude, and perhaps increasing in danger? Sir, I, for one, think it wisest to stop it where it is. Let us take the instrument which they have sent us as their constitution, and leave them to amend it as they may hereafter see fit. It seems to be the conceded doctrine that they can do so. It is the doctrine of the President. According to my opinion, they may, at least, change it as the constitution provides, and in no other mode. They are bound by what it prescribes. If it omits to prescribe the method, they may alter it according to their own volition. And then this foul blot, this miserable stain, that now lies like an incubus on the community, and shocks the moral sense of the people of the North, will be wiped away, and Kansas be fitted for companionship with the sisterhood of the free States.

I, sir, as a southern man, have never looked for Kansas to be a slave State, and have not expected it. That was one of the reasons why I thought the repeal of the Missouri compromise was unwise and unnecessary. I thought that it would work out no practical advantage to the South, and might end in serious detriment to the Union. I am still of that opinion. I do not believe it can ever give one foot of soil to slavery; I trust it may never extend freedom beyond where it would likely have been limited if the compromise had lived forever. But it has been supposed, and often spoken of, that the opposition arises from the desire to get possession of the Government. These are speculations which run through the human mind, and you cannot get rid of them if you would. Perhaps it may be wise for politicians, when about to enact measures of great magnitude, to consider the effect which they may have on their party organization. But standing, as I do,—or *lying*, as I might more properly say—between the upper and the nether millstones, I can feel but little interest in any movement of that sort. One has been grinding and crushing the principles which I have advocated, and the other but emulates it at every opportunity that presents itself. I can say to my constituents, Americans and Democrats, that I am glad to see that this Kansas convention has taken a step in the right direction. Senator DOUGLAS has stigmatized, or complained of it, because the constitution contains what he is pleased to term “a little touch of Know Nothingism”—an American feature. Any affirmation, from any quarter, of what we know is the true policy of the nation, is grateful to my heart.

Now, a word of kind advice, kindly spoken, to gentlemen on this side of the House! It is this: if you contemplate the possibility of acquiring possession of this great Government, think, I beseech

you, before you take the reins in your hands, or before you again aspire to contend for the empire, whether you are to go headlong in your career of denunciation of the South and her institutions, and yet hope to administer this Government in peace.

Properly speaking, not one word should have been said in connection with this constitution, that involves the question of slavery. It has been dragged in here most improperly. It is a thing that belonged exclusively to the local community. It is wrong that the merits or demerits of the institution should be discussed here, because they have nothing to do with the question which we are considering. And I, for one, as a southern man, declare that, though I stand second to none in my advocacy of our cherished institution, born as I was amongst it, as were my ancestors, all slaveholders; determined, as I am, to adhere to it, and to abide its fortunes, let them lead me where they may; desiring to die, when my time shall come in the will of Heaven, and to be buried in the land of my fathers, still I will not consent to debate the question upon this floor, because it is not legitimately before us. I know what my rights are, and shall be ready, when the time comes, if it ever should—which God in his mercy avert!—to assert them to the utmost extreme. I shall stand prepared to take my destiny with those who are indissolubly linked with me. These are no idle enunciations. I deal not in them. They are the earnest convictions of my heart, and I will deceive no man. I say to the North, before you shall succeed to power, if you do obtain the possession of the Government, by all the glories of your boasted Bunker Hill; by the memories of your Pilgrim Fathers, whom I have never traduced, and never will; by the common blood that was poured out at Concord and Lexington and Saratoga, and on the battle-fields of the South, I implore you to give up and abandon this idea, which is suicidal to the Confederacy, of restricting the institution of slavery to its present limits. What would you say, in the event our country shall expand? But if you have determined to go on, if you have sworn in your hearts never to relent, you may, and perhaps will, have the power; but whenever you seek to use it, the unhappy day will have arrived when this nation, and civilized man throughout the world, will have cause to lament the dire calamity involved in your success.

I have sometimes thought that I have done injustice to our northern friends. I say it not as a taunt. I have thought that they acted as politicians merely, using an abstraction for the purpose of obtaining power, and not in their hearts cherishing the sentiments they profess. But I have seen exhibited, in the course of this discussion, unerring evidence to my mind, of a general sympathy with strong anti-slavery sentiments—ay, with abolition itself, and it has inspired me for the time with indignation and regret. I desire the preservation of the Union. It cannot be preserved, in my honest opinion, unless these ultra opinions are surrendered upon the altar of our country. In the midst of these various considerations, the commit-

tee will pardon me for saying that I have been accustomed, in the clashing of the great parties of this country, to look to that small, devoted band which is scattered throughout the States of this Confederacy, who preach peace and good-will to all good men, and who appeal to all to come up with them in the work of reforming our Government, of correcting the abuses which have crept into it, and of Americanizing every institution, as the nation's last hope.

NOTE.—The annexed copy of a letter, taken in connection with what is contained in the foregoing speech, fully expresses the author's views on the subject of the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton constitution. The words embraced in quotation marks are taken from the letter of invitation, and were copied into that, approvingly, from the special message of the President transmitting the constitution to Congress:

FROM HON. JOSHUA HILL.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, March 1, 1858.

DEAR SIR: I am in receipt of the invitation of the appropriate committees, to unite with them in a public meeting to be held at Tammany Hall, on Thursday evening next, at half past seven o'clock. I trust I am properly sensible of the honor intended me. I most cordially agree with the President of the United States in the sentiment which so justly demands the approval of your associates, that "the peace and quiet of the whole country are of greater importance than the mere temporary triumph of either of the political parties in Kansas;" and I even go further, and add, or of any political party in any State or in the United States.

I further give my hearty assent to the proposition of the President, that "Kansas has, for years, occupied too much

of public attention, and that it is high time this should be directed to far more important objects." I am clearly of opinion that it was quite an unnecessary and wanton disturbance of the public tranquillity to enact a law for the organization of a Territory in a wilderness, without population, and with conditions attached repugnant to the conservative sentiment of the country. I never thought the Missouri compromise constitutional, but its repeal was sudden, unasked for, unexpected, and, I fear, unprofitable. Coupled as it was with the Badger proviso, without which, I am well assured it could not have been repealed, to say nothing of its accompanying covert squatter sovereignty and patent alien suffrage, both pernicious doctrines. I regarded it as of no practical advantage to the South, and hurtful to the nation at large.

I am not so well convinced that, "when once admitted into the Union, whether with or without slavery, the excitement beyond her own limits will speedily pass away." I incline to the opinion that, so soon as the too sanguine people of the southern States lose all hope of Kansas becoming a slave State, or continuing one, they will advert to the influences which have disappointed their hopes, and if, by possibility, it should occur to them that the past and present Administrations of the General Government have, in any manner, contributed to produce so unpalatable a result, they will feel and exhibit a just indignation.

Apart from its influences upon parties, I am unable to attach any great importance to the admission of Kansas. I am free to own that, if I had my well grounded hope that when admitted, it would continue a slave State, I should feel deep solicitude for its admission. If any man, from any section, sustains the Lecompton constitution because he desires the admission of the new State to be followed soon by the assembling of a new convention of her people, for the purpose of excluding slavery from her system, I frankly declare that I have no sympathies with such supporter, and cannot regard him as my "natural ally."

Hoping that good counsels may prevail in your meeting, and that good may come of your deliberations, I have the honor to remain, with high respect, your obedient servant,

JOSHUA HILL.

PETER B. SWEENEY, Esq.,

Chairman General Committee, Tammany Hall.