

will be emigrants and not pioneers, will the motives of all, and the whole work of the pioneers of Kansas, be justly estimated.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me express the hope that all our old pioneers who were here twenty-five years ago, who helped to free not only Kansas but a race; all those who lived through the drouth of 1860 and grasshoppers of 1874, with you, Mr. Chairman, may continue to live in this beautiful State, and enjoy the good things of this earth, until the good angels, with the Goddess of Liberty at their head, at the great day of judgment, shall do what the Border Ruffians failed to do in their day—that is, remove them and you from earth, and transplant you all bodily to realms of eternal bliss.

ADDRESS OF HON. JOHN SPEER.

In introducing Mr. Speer, Col. Anthony spoke of him as one of the ablest and most faithful of those who struggled for the Freedom of Kansas. As a pioneer editor and publisher, he dealt stalwart blows against the slave power in the Territory. He was likewise one of those who suffered most at the atrocious hands of the minions of slavery. Mr. Speer then delivered the following address:

THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I feel truly grateful for the compliment paid me by the committee in the place assigned me on the programme; but I have just got out of a snow-drift in western Kansas, after six days spent in reaching the Capital, which otherwise would have taken but about half a day, and a snow-bank is not a propitious place for preparing an address of this kind.

The American Government was originally based upon the principle of the universality of freedom, and the Declaration of Independence was an emphatic, succinct declaration that "all men were created equal, and entitled to certain inalienable rights," life and liberty being the most essential of all the rights of man. The Saviour of all declared that upon the commandment, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," hang all the law and the prophets. The fathers of the Republic recognized the principle, and it was embraced by Jefferson in the original draft of American independence; but upon so slender a thread hung the hopes of victory in the desperate struggle for free government, that it was stricken out without inserting a single sentence which could be construed against the sentiment. After more than half a century of toleration of a system accursed of God and condemned by the advanced civilization of man, a struggle commenced, which only reached its climax in the discussion of the Congressional enactment which was destined to break the fetters of tyranny, and to make us in fact, as well as in theory, a nation of freemen. That was the organic act, which declared that the people of Kansas Territory should be perfectly free to regulate their institutions in their own way.

Upon this essential principle the great struggle, not only for Kansas rights, but that for universal freedom, was inaugurated, and the "Territorial Government" became the instrument in precipitating the country into a war which has no parallel in the history of any government which the world ever saw. Inaugurated by fraud and injustice, the very acts intended for our oppression became the instruments in arousing the people—the source of all just government—to throw off a yoke which had borne down the American Nation, and made its pretensions to justice the mock and scoff of the advanced civilization of the world. "Whom the gods will to destroy they first make mad;" and in the light of the present age, we look back at an attempt at tyranny so glaring, so damnable, that at the close of a quarter of a century

it is hard to realize that any respectable portion of the people could possibly have contemplated measures so aggressive and tyrannical.

The infant Territorial Government was seized by usurpation and fraud. Such was the aroused public sentiment, that after the usurpation of the reins of government by a fraudulently elected Legislature, the people arose spontaneously, even before a single enactment was framed, and by speech and by resolution, publicly declared they would not have these usurpers and tyrants to rule over them. The "irrepressible conflict" at this epoch became defined, as a fixed fact. From a theory of statesmen it became a struggle of arms.

This sentiment was voiced by the advanced statesmanship of Franklin, Jefferson and other bold spirits, even in the days of the revolution; but slavery grew into such an oligarchy as to silence or drive to private life every statesman of an earlier period.

Even good men feared the results of such a conflict, as calculated to so weaken the Government as to endanger its existence against an internal commotion and possible foreign war. Finally, however, its aggressions brought out the thundering denunciations of Garrison, Thaddeus Stevens, Sumner, Giddings, Greeley and others, whose voices were never silenced until the whole nation had been aroused against a system no longer tolerable, and which threatened alike the freedom of the white as well as the black. But in the history of the early struggle, but a single Governor broke out in exclamations against it—Governor Ritner, of Pennsylvania, who strongly advocated the abolition of slavery in all territory over which Congress had jurisdiction, and denounced Northern submission as "basely bowing the knee to the dark spirit of slavery," a sentiment, the utterance of which has done more to immortalize his name than all the other acts of his life, through the memorable lines of freedom's poet, Whittier:

"Thank God for the token—one lip is still free—
One spirit untrammel'd—unbending one knee;
Like the oak of the mountain, deep-rooted and firm,
Erect, when the multitude bends to the storm;
When traitors to freedom and honor and God,
Are bowed to an idol polluted with blood;
When the recreant North has forgotten her trust,
And the lip of her honor is low in the dust."

The organization of Kansas and Nebraska renewed the excitements which had been time and again suppressed by various "compromise measures," from the admission of Missouri in 1820 till the era of the Kansas imbroglio. The lovers of freedom in the East and the North rallied by organizations, and emigrated in companies as well as by individuals. The new Territory attracted men of enterprise and adventure as no country in American history, except the gold fields, had ever attracted them. The Free-State men had distances of 500 to 1,500 miles' travel before them, while the borders of the Pro-Slavery host were but divided from the fields of conflict by a mere imaginary line. Unequal as were their advantages, the Free-State men, though greatly in the minority at first, stood manfully for the cause of the oppressed, and in defense of the freedom of speech and the rights of man.

The first struggle for ascendancy was in the election of a Delegate to Congress, in which the Pro-Slavery faction was in the ascendant, and a most ultra partisan was elected. But the frauds perpetrated even at this election, the beginning of the struggle, inspired the vanquished with such courage as to make the first election of members of the Legislature, March 30, 1855, one of great interest. Full tickets were nominated on both sides, and the Free-State men entered into the canvass inspired with the strongest hopes of victory. This victory could only be averted by an invasion from Missouri, the parallel to which has never been witnessed at any election in

the history of the Republic. The district of which Lawrence was a prominent part, containing a clear Free-State majority, was invaded by nearly 1,000 Missourians, portions of whom went to and overran other districts; and thus by fraud and violence succeeded in securing the Legislature, and afterwards overrode the honest decision of the brave-hearted, incorruptible Governor Reeder, who set aside the fraudulent elections and gave certificates to a number of Free-State men.

Thus outraged, the people soon rallied in resistance to this usurpation, and your speaker had the honor to preside at the first meeting pledged in advance to resist pretended laws, a meeting addressed with great eloquence and power by Hon. Martin F. Conway, who publicly threw up his commission as a member of the Legislature, and declared that he would not sit in a body thrust upon the people by fraud and violence.

The anticipations of the Free-State men in the acts of a Legislature thus elected, were more than realized. It not only passed the entire barbaric code of Missouri, but it added to all the infamy of the most infamous legislative bodies by making the acts of the commonest humanity towards a despised race a capital offense, and the mere declaration that slavery "did not legally exist in Kansas," punishable with not less than two years in the penitentiary. At that period there were but three pronounced Free-State papers in the Territory. The law was made to take effect on the 15th day of September, 1855; and this audience will pardon the apparent egotism if I present and read my own denunciation of that law as published in the *Kansas Tribune* on the very day that it took effect, in large letters, on a full page of that paper, as follows:

"THE DAY OF OUR ENSLAVEMENT.—To-day, September 15, 1855, is the day on which the iniquitous enactment of the illegitimate, illegal and fraudulent Legislature has declared commences the prostration of the right of speech and the curtailment of the liberty of the press. To-day commences an era in Kansas which, unless the sturdy voice of the people, backed, if necessary, by 'strong arms and the sure eye,' shall teach the tyrants who attempt to enthrall us, the lesson which our fathers taught the kingly tyrants of old, shall prostrate us in the dust, and make us the slave of an oligarchy worse than the veriest despotism on earth.

"To-day commences the operation of a law which declares:

"SEC. 12. If any free person, by speaking or by writing, assert or maintain that persons have not the right to hold slaves in this Territory, or shall introduce into this Territory, print, publish, write, circulate or cause to be introduced into this Territory, written, printed, published or circulated in this Territory any book, paper, magazine, pamphlet or circular, containing any denial of the right of persons to hold slaves in this Territory, such person shall be deemed guilty of felony and punishment by imprisonment at hard labor for a term of not less than two years.

"Now we do assert and declare, despite all the bolts and bars of the iniquitous Legislature of Kansas, 'that persons have not the right to hold slaves in this Territory,' and we will emblazon it upon our banner in letters so large and in language so plain that the infatuated invaders who elected the Kansas Legislature, as well as that corrupt and ignorant Legislature itself, may understand it, so that, if they cannot read they may spell it out, and meditate and deliberate upon it; and we hold that the man who fails to utter this self-evident truth, on account of the insolent enactment alluded to, is a poltroon and a slave—worse than the black slaves of our persecutors and oppressors.

"The Constitution of the United States—the great Magna Charta of American liberties—guarantees to every citizen the liberty of speech and the freedom of the press. And this is the first time in the history of America that a body claiming legislative powers has dared to attempt to wrest them from the people. And it is not only the right, but the bounden duty of every freeman to spurn with contempt and trample under foot an enactment which thus basely violates the rights of free-men. For our part we do, and shall continue to, utter this truth so long as we have the power of utterance, and nothing but the brute force of an overbearing tyranny can prevent us.

"Will any citizen—any free American—brook the insult of an insolent gag law, the work of a Legislature elected by bullying ruffians who invaded Kansas with arms, and whose drunken revelry and insults to our peaceable, unoffending and comparatively unarmed citizens were a disgrace to manhood, and a burlesque upon popu-

lar republican government? If they do, they are slaves already, and with them freedom is but a mockery."

This denunciation was followed by bold utterances by the *Free State* and the *Herald of Freedom*. The little band of settlers had thus presented to them the alternative of resistance or of slavery. The same body required every voter to swear to support this very law, as well as all the enactments of that body, and all fugitive slave laws.

The day of conflict was not long delayed. The murder of Charles W. Dow, a Free-State man, by Franklin N. Coleman, Pro-Slavery, and the arrest of Branson and his rescue by Free-State men, were followed by an invasion of 1,200 men from Missouri, threatening death, destruction and extermination to every man who dared to resist the enforcement of the tyrannical enactments referred to; but the scattered settlers rallied to the defense of the doomed city of Lawrence, and, while less than half the number of their enemies, gallantly defended the town for a full week, when a compromise was effected through Governor Shannon with Generals Robinson and Lane. During this siege, Thomas W. Barber, one of the purest and best of Kansas men, was murdered by a band of guerrillas—a portion of the invading hosts. Thence onward war really existed in Kansas almost continually till the commencement of the Rebellion.

R. P. Brown, a Free-State man of Leavenworth county, was cruelly murdered on the 20th day of December, and with his mortal wounds was carried to his wife with merely strength to say before his death, "I have been cruelly murdered without cause," and then he died. A short cessation followed during a part of the winter, but was renewed in early spring, the arrest of Colonel S. N. Wood by Sheriff Jones being the exciting cause. Hoyt, Stewart, Jones, and others, of moderate Free-State men, became martyrs to freedom, and a system of robbery, rapine and murder unparalleled followed.

After these outrages old John Brown, of Osawatimie fame, executed five of the leading spirits in the murderous war which had preceded. Terrible as the retribution was, its effect was almost magic; the spirit of murder was checked, but large bodies were subsequently organized, and Forts Saunders, Titus, Hickory Point, Franklin, Lecompton and other places became the fortifications and rendezvous of the Pro-Slavery forces. Robinson, John Brown jr., G. W. Brown of the *Herald of Freedom*, G. W. Smith, H. H. Williams, Gaius Jenkins and others were made prisoners on charges of treason. The Free-State forces captured Titus, Saunders, Hickory Point, Franklin, and other strongholds.

Within the next year, 1857, the friends of free institutions gathered such strength that they carried the Legislature, changing the Territorial Government from a propaganda of slavery to a government supporting and sustaining the inalienable rights of man. That government abolished slavery, already a proclaimed institution of Kansas, and the slave and the slave-master, as such, were seen no more within our borders. The master fled with his slave, or the slave fled without his master.

The conflicts of the Territorial Government had only practically ended when the result of the check of slavery was followed by the War of the Rebellion. Indeed, war had been raging—the same war, for the same reasons—for nearly the whole period of our Territorial existence, and it was only because the blood on the frontier had not stained the lintels of Eastern homes, and the lurid flames of Kansas cabins had not cast their shadows in the far-off civilization, that it had scarcely been realized.

There were giants in those days—giants in physical valor and giants in intellect I am afraid to name them, for fear of disparagement. Lane, Robinson, John Brown, W. Y. Roberts, Holliday, James Redpath, W. A. Phillips, Charles Lenhart, J. B. Abbott, S. N. Wood, Dan. Horne, John Ritchie, Frank B. Swift, G. W. Deitzler, Geo. W.

Smith, Gains Jenkins, H. Miles Moore, Mark W. Delahay, Charles F. Garrett and hosts of others will live long in the memory of the men of the times, and will have their rewards in history. I have not spoken of the several Governors who constituted a part—perhaps I might say a small part—of the Territorial Government. It was a trite saying of the times, that Kansas was “the grave of Governors.” In our short Territorial career of six years there were six of them, three of whom were almost driven from the Territory. They were all sent to subjugate the Territory, and to curse us; but of some of them, notably Reeder and Geary, it might be said as of the prophet sent to curse Israel: “Thou altogether blesseth them.”

The Territorial struggle in Kansas was the incipient struggle of the war. It led onward to the universality of freedom, and justified the prophecy of Abraham Lincoln, in his great debate with Stephen A. Douglas, that this Nation must be all slave or all free territory. Till after the election of Abraham Lincoln the whole American mind had been absorbed in the arts of peace. But in Kansas nearly all citizens had been trained to the arts of war under General Lane, whose large experience as a leader of two regiments in the Mexican war made his services invaluable in resistance of the aggressions of the Territorial Government. The administration of Lincoln was ushered in amidst a tumult of threats and menaces. Early in the winter preceding the inauguration, General Lane tendered to Lincoln a regiment of Kansas men for his protection; but that just man, who had injured no human being himself, could see no reason to fear others, and respectfully declined the offer. But when he was afterward compelled to pass through Baltimore in disguise, to avoid assassination, and met Lane at the White House, he gratefully accepted his aid; and for several weeks a company of about fifty Kansas men camped in the celebrated east room of the Presidential mansion, under General Lane's command. Probably so distinguished an honor was never before conferred upon any body of men in halls of king, emperor, or president.

For long years the nations of Europe reproached us with the stigma that “republics were ungrateful,” and even De Tocqueville, the most liberal of European writers upon American institutions, represented us as lacking centrality of ideas—no great central object to hold us together—a giant without bones. The last generation has demonstrated that the giant had bones, muscle, and brains, making it the leading nation of the earth. Its central idea is, “That all just governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed,” and they commemorate the men who in all ages have been the heroes of that sentiment, and to them all their errors lie buried. It is related of Lafayette that while he was on shipboard, nearing the harbor of New York on a visit, after a half-century since his deeds of valor in the Revolution, he made the acquaintance of a New York gentleman, and the little old French hero, bowed down with age, in his simplicity and modesty, unable to realize his own merits, said to his new-made friend: “I lived in New York at ——— hotel, and I have heard that it is still a public house, and I think I will go there; but things are so changed, if Monsieur will be so kind as to conduct me there, I will be greatly obliged.” Soon he reached the harbor, and such a scene had never been witnessed on the American continent. All the armaments of the Nation thundered their salutations; houses, public and private, were decorated with flags; the vessels of war and the vessels of commerce vied with each other in their demonstrations of welcome, and he was the Nation's guest.

There was a beautiful superstition among the Helvetians, that the Helvetic Fathers but slept, and that when their liberties were endangered they would arise from the dead.

“When Uri's beachen woods wave red
In the burning hamlet's light,
Then from the caverns of the dead
Shall the sleepers wake in might.”

Ours is a better hope—the hope of an immortality, and that the good deeds of our heroes and martyrs shall so live that their example shall be the best guaranty for the actions of future generations in the perpetuation of free institutions.

It seems but yesterday that a scene occurred around the grave of an humble American, illustrative of the patriotism of our race. His bones had lain for three-quarters of a century in a foreign land. What had he done? Who can tell? He had won no battles; he was not illustrious as a statesman or a philosopher; he was not even one of the recognized American poets. But he had written "Home, Sweet Home," which touched a chord in the American heart; and presidents and cabinets and ministers bowed in homage over his grave.

Fifty years ago President Jackson ordered his secretary to remove the Government deposits; the secretary refused; and he removed him, and selected an officer who obeyed his mandates. A United States Congress passed resolutions of censure. The people, always grateful to their country's defenders, never rested till the censors were out of power, and then their servants in Congress drew black lines around the resolutions of censure, and wrote across their face in deep black the word "Expunged." Why? Not because they approved of his act—many of them did not. But he had stood in the face of the British lion; with a greatly inferior force he had met Pakenham; he had improvised the cotton bales as breastworks; he had ordered the nabobs of New Orleans into their country's army; he had imprisoned a judge who had interfered with a writ, paid his fine, but kept the judge in prison; and he had fought and won the ensanguinary battle of New Orleans, and sustained American valor and American rights. Who knows the judge's name or cares for the deposits? But above all, when nullification, disunion and rebellion threatened, he had faced the arch-traitor in the Senate, and told him if he dared institute rebellion in Congress he would hang him higher than Haman; he had sent General Scott with an army to Charleston, and he had sworn a great oath that "By the Eternal, the Union must and shall be preserved!"

Pigmies who write censures of dead heroes and martyrs may learn lessons from experience. The people know that "to err is human—to forgive divine," and will allow the errors of the past to lie buried, while the good deeds of the dead shall be celebrated and made immortal. Kansas has placed in tablets upon her legislative halls such names as those of John Brown, Lane, and Barber, and has named counties in their honor, and will write in everlasting black, the word "EXPUNGED" over the defamations of the men who made Kansas free.

ADDRESS OF HON. T. DWIGHT THACHER.

Mr. Thacher was introduced as one who had been a member of one of the four Kansas constitutional conventions, and as one of those early citizens who had done much to shape the policy and history of the State. The subject of Mr. Thacher's address was—

THE REJECTED CONSTITUTIONS.

The Constitutions of Kansas were an outgrowth of the struggle between Freedom and Slavery for the control of the inchoate commonwealth. Their genesis was altogether political; they were citadels around which the storm of battle surged, and were occupied or abandoned, as the varying fortunes of the great contest demanded. No study of these constitutions, or indeed of the history of Kansas generally, can be successful, or do the slightest justice to the subject, which does not recognize in the beginning, and at every step of the discussion, the great controlling fact that the master motive of the whole business was the determination on the one side to make Kansas a slave State, and on the other a free State. Any other view degrades the subject, and in effect falsifies the history.