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The  
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WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON  
JULY 8 1899  
NEW YORK



## THE ASSAULT UPON MR. SUMNER.

The outrage in the Senate, on Thursday last, is without a parallel in the legislative history of the country. Nothing has heretofore occurred so bold, so bad, so alarming. There have been affrays, more or less serious, in the House, for the House is a popular, and therefore a tumultuous, body; there have been rencounters in the streets, for the streets are arenas in which any assassin may display his prowess; but never before has the sanctity of the Senate Chamber been violated; never before has an intruder ventured to carry into those privileged precincts his private hostilities; never before has a Senator been struck down in his seat, and stretched, by the hand of a lawless bully, prostrate, bleeding, and insensible upon the floor. The wrong is full of public importance; and we almost forget the private injury of Mr. Sumner in the broad temerity of the insult which has been offered to the country, to Massachusetts, to the Senate. This first act of violence may pass into a precedent; what a single creature has done today, a hundred, equally barbarous, may attempt tomorrow; until a band of alien censors may crowd the galleries, and the lobbies, and even the floor of the Senate, and by the persuasive arguments of the bludgeon, the bowie knife, and the revolver, effectually refute and silence any member who may dare to utter, with something of force and freedom, his personal convictions. The privileges which we have fondly supposed were conferred with the Senatorial dignity; the right to characterize public measures and public men, with no responsibility save to God and to conscience; the freedom of debate, without which its forms are mere mockery—these will all disappear; and in their place we shall have the government of a self-constituted and revolutionary tribunal, overawing the Senate, as the Jacobins of Paris overawed the National Assembly of France; as the soldiers of Cromwell intimidated the Parliament of Great Britain. Shall we, did we say? We have it already. There is freedom of speech in Washington, but it is only for the champions of slavery. There is freedom of the press, but only of the press which extenuates or defends political wrongs. Twice already the South, foiled in the argument of reason, has resorted to the argument of folly. Driven from every position, constantly refuted in its reasoning, met and repulsed when it has resorted to invective, by an invective more vigorous than its own, at first astonished and then crazed by the changing and bolder tone of Northern men, the South has taken to expedients with which long use has made it familiar, and in which years of daily practice have given it a nefarious skill. Thank God, we know little of these resources in New England! We have our differences, but they are differences controlled by decency. We have our controversies, but we do not permit their warmth to betray us into brutality; we do not think it necessary to shoot, to slash, or to stun the man with whom we may differ upon political points. The controversial ethics of the South are of another character, and they find their most repulsive illustration in the event of Thursday.

The barbarian who assaulted Mr. Sumner, and who sought in the head of his bludgeon for an argument

which he could not find in his own, complained that South Carolina had been insulted by the Senator from Massachusetts, and that his venerable uncle had been spoken of in disrespectful terms! If every State the public policy of which is assailed in the Senate had been entitled to send to Washington a physical champion, we should long ago have despatched thither our bravest athlete. If every nephew whose uncle provokes criticism by public acts is to rush into the Senate, the champion of his kinsman, we shall have a nepotism established quite unauthorized by the Constitution! The South complains of hard words, of plain speech, of licentious language! Have its members then been accustomed to bridle their tongues, to control their tempers, to moderate their ire, to abstain from personalities? What indeed have we had from that quarter save one long storm of vituperation, one endless rain of fish-wife rhetoric, one continuous blast of feverish denunciation and passionate threat? Let the world judge between us. We have borne and forborne. We have been patient until patience has become ignominious. There are wrongs which no man of spirit will suffer tamely; there are topics which it is impossible to discuss with coldness; there are injuries which must lend fire to language, and arouse the temper of the most stolid. Mr. Sumner's speech is before the country, and it is for the country to decide whether it does or does not justify the violence with which it has been met. Our Senator comments freely upon the character of the Kansas bill, upon the apologies which have been made for it in Congress, upon the readiness of the Administration to promote the schemes of its supporters, upon the unparalleled injuries which have been inflicted upon the unfortunate people of Kansas. Others have spoken upon the same topics with equal plainness, although not perhaps with equal ability. Mr. Sumner is singularly well sustained in all his positions, in his opinion of the bill, and in his estimate of Douglas and Butler, by the mind and heart not only of his constituents, but of the whole North. The time had come for plain and unmistakable language, and it has been uttered. There are those who profess to believe that Northern rhetoric should always be emasculated, and that Northern members should always take care to speak humbly and with "bated breath." They complain with nervous fastidiousness that Mr. Sumner was provoking. So were Mr. Burke and Mr. Sheridan when in immortal language they exposed the wrongs of India and the crimes of Hastings; so was Patrick Henry when he plead against the parsons; so was Tristram Burges when he silenced Randolph of Roanoke; so was Mr. Webster when, in the most remarkable oration of modern times, he launched the lightning of his overwhelming invective, while every fibre of his great frame was full of indignation and reproach. Smooth speeches will answer for smooth times; but there is a species of oratory, classic since the days of Demosthenes, employed without a scruple upon fit occasions, in deliberative assemblies, perfectly well recognized, and sometimes absolutely necessary. Who will say that Kansas, and Atchison, and Douglas together, were not enough to inspire and justify a new Philippic?

But we care not what Mr. Sumner said, nor in what behalf he was pleading. We know him only



the Senator of Massachusetts, we remember only that the Commonwealth has been outraged. Had the Senator of any other State been subjected to a like indignity, we might have found words in which to express our abhorrence of the crime; but now we can only say, that every constituent of Mr. Sumner ought to feel that the injury is his own, and that it is for him to expect redress. A high-minded Senate would vindicate its trampled dignity; a respectable House of Representatives would drive the wrongdoer from its benches; in a society unpolluted by barbarism, the assaulter of an unarmed man would find himself the object of general contempt. We can hardly hope that such a retribution will visit the offender; but Massachusetts, in other and better times, would have had a right confidently to anticipate the expulsion of Preston Brooks from the House of Representatives. We leave it to others to decide how far it may be fit and proper for her officially to express her sense of this indignity. For our own part, we think that she can afford to remain quiescent; that she can rely upon the generosity and the justice of her sister States; that an outrage so indefensible will meet with a fitting rebuke from the people, if not from the representatives of the people. And if in this age of civilization, brute force is to control the government of the country, striking down our Senators, silencing debate, and leaving us only the name of freedom, there are remedies with which Massachusetts has found it necessary to meet similar exigencies in the past, which she will not hesitate to employ in the future.

**Washington Correspondence of the Atlas.**

WASHINGTON, May 22, 1856, }  
 1½ o'clock, P. M. }

I am just from the Senate chamber, and have received from numerous eyewitnesses the particulars of the assault upon Senator Sumner. Gov. Gorman, of Indiana, who saw the whole of it, gave me the most detailed account of it. Mr. Sumner was not knocked down, but after sitting in his chair after Brooks was seized, fell upon the floor, apparently fainting. Mr. Sumner was attacked while writing, and without any preliminary words which anybody heard. As soon as possible he advanced upon Brooks, and endeavored to grapple with him. Brooks got a black eye, and probably from a blow from Sumner.

The cane used by Brooks was of gutta percha and was broken into several pieces. I saw one of them. The cane was about three-fourths of an inch thick at the large end, and not much less thick at the smaller end.

Keitt, of South Carolina, stood near with a cane, endeavoring to keep off those who interfered.

The affray was of short duration, the officers of the Senate interposing with great promptness, and seizing Brooks.

Mr. Sumner is said to be badly injured, but on this point the telegraph will advise you.

The Southern Senators express their gratification at the assault. I myself heard Toombs, of Georgia, justifying, or apologising for it.

To what is all this tending?

The Boston Courier did not see fit to join yesterday morning in the unqualified rebuke which the assault upon Mr. Sumner elicited from almost every Boston newspaper. While it took very good

character, of an apologist for the South, by grossly misrepresenting Mr. Sumner's speech; and by hinting, as broadly as it dared to, that he had fairly provoked the indignity. It talked in sneering terms of Mr. Sumner's "insulting speech and broken head." This is the dignified language in which the Courier sees fit to complain of the want of dignity in others. It was very wrong for Mr. Sumner to speak of Mr. Douglas in terms of disrespect—it is perfectly right, we suppose, for the Courier to accuse Mr. Sumner of "low blackguardism." Did the writer of this precious article learn that pleasant phrase from his favorite Webster? And does he not know, that upon the very occasion to which he alludes, and when Mr. Webster said "I employ no scavengers," he indicated, by a significant glance, if not by a gesture, the "scavenger" to whom he alluded? And does he not remember, that when pressed by a storm of Southern reproach and vituperation, how our great statesman intimated that there might be blows to give as well as blows to take? But the Courier is very forgetful. It forgets that there is a State called Massachusetts. It forgets that there is a Senate of the United States. It remembers only its personal hatred of Charles Sumner.

**THE ASSAULT ON A MASSACHUSETTS SENATOR—INDIGNATION MEETING IN TREMONT TEMPLE.**

—In response to a call which appeared in some of the evening papers, a large concourse of the citizens of Boston gathered at Chapman Hall last evening, "to take into consideration the murderous assault which has been made in the Senate Chamber at Washington, upon Hon. Charles Sumner, Senator in Congress, from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts." It was soon ascertained that Chapman Hall could not accommodate half of the throng, and at 8 o'clock, the hour named for the meeting, Hamilton Willis, Esq., announced that the large Hall of Tremont Temple had been obtained, and the meeting was adjourned to that place.

As soon as the Hall of Tremont Temple could be lighted, it was packed full in every part. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Samuel May, and Deacon Samuel Greele was chosen Chairman, and Messrs. Henry Edwards and Hamilton Willis were chosen Secretaries. An appropriate prayer was then offered by the venerable Dr. Lyman Beecher.

Deacon Greele, the chairman, announced the object of the meeting. Our own Charles Sumner, the distinguished scholar, civilian, and philanthropist, had been stricken down in the Senate Chamber of the

United States, while engaged in the duties which Massachusetts sent him to perform. Every freeman of Massachusetts would feel that the assassin's blow was aimed at his own head. In ancient times, the Roman Senate was compared to an assembly of the gods; but the Senate at Washington would rather be supposed to come from Pluto's realms. The miserable assassin was backed up by Southern friends, and after the murderous deed was admitted to bail in the pitiful sum of \$500. [Dr. Beecher here remarked that that was more than the fellow was worth.] What will be the result of this attack remains uncertain. Dea. Greele proceeded to comment upon other assaults made by Southern bullies. He had not been in the habit of using the rifle and bowie-knife, but he thought the time might come when we should be called upon to arm ourselves for the defence of our rights.

Rev. James Freeman Clark was called for. He said this was a spontaneous meeting, and only a pre-



iminary of something better to come. He had felt grief and shame, but not for Hon. Charles Sumner. That gentleman had testified nobly in a noble cause, had written the words of a prophet in characters of living light, and had received the reward of a martyr. He was grieved that the nation had espoused the ignoble cause of slavery propagandism. He was ashamed that Massachusetts freemen in the Legislature should at the very time of the assault, have been engaged in humbling themselves to the slave power; that New England should send to Washington as her best men such as Franklin Pierce and Caleb Cushing; and that men could thus be found in Massachusetts to apologise for this black deed, because Sumner treated Stephen A. Douglas to personalty. He hoped hereafter to see Massachusetts standing united for freedom.

Wendell Phillips, Esq., was the next speaker, and stirred the audience with his eloquence. Nobody needs, he said, to read the speech of Charles Sumner to know that it was good; we measure the amount of the charge by the length of the rebound. When the spear makes the devil start into his own likeness, we know it is the spear of Ithuriel. The world will yet cover every one of Charles Sumner's scars with laurels. He must not die; we need him yet to lead the van of liberty. If Brooks, of South Carolina, is fit for the Halls of Congress, then those halls are unfit for the Massachusetts delegation.

Mr. Phillips portrayed the act of assassination in glowing language, and stamped the Southerners present, who refused to protect a helpless man, as his brother assassins.

Rev. Theodore Parker, John Swift, Esq., Mr. Williams, of Cambridge, Dr. Lyman Beecher, and Wm. B. Spooner, Esq., also addressed the meeting. Mr. Spooner, in behalf of a committee, reported the following list of names, to constitute a Committee of Arrangements for a mass meeting at Faneuil Hall, this (Saturday) evening, the present meeting being regarded only as a preliminary one.

Joshua Quincy, Robert Waterston, Charles H. Parker, Charles Ellis, Hamilton Willis, James G. Farwell, Benj. H. West, Samuel A. Shaw, George R. Russell, Henry W. Longfellow, Richard Fletcher, George Morey, Lyman Beecher, James F. Clark, Aaron Bancroft, William Brigham, John C. Park, Robert E. Wright, Prince Hayes, Ezra Lincoln, Wm. Blake, Thomas M. Brewer, S. G. Howe, J. M. S. Williams, Isaac Livermore, Francis E. Fay, S. C. Maine, John B. Alley, Henry C. Nash, John L. Emmons, James Tolman, Chas. T. Russell, Peleg W. Chandler, T. P. Chandler, Chas. A. Phelps, Chas. W. Moore, E. A. Raymond, David Thayer, Wm. Chaffin, Philander Ames, Phineas J. Stone, James M. Damon, Theodore Otis, Samuel Downer, Wm. T. Atkinson, Chas. M. Ellis, Chas. T. Congdon.

The meeting then adjourned to Faneuil Hall this evening.

GEN. JAMES W. NYE. This gentleman, whose speech at the Webster dinner at the Revere House a few weeks since will be remembered by those present, addressed a meeting in New Jersey on Wednesday last, and after stating that he voted for President Pierce in the Democratic Convention which nominated him, and also supported him at the polls, referred to the President in the following words:

*Where, he would ask, slept the honor and humanity of President Pierce, who had not either visited the sick room of Charles Sumner, or sent to inquire for him? Neither had a single member of his Cabinet: while the Foreign Ministers, moved by a common humanity, had been to pour oil into his wounds.* [Great cheers.]

"MR. BROOKS IS SATISFIED." The telegraph brings a report that Mr. Brooks of South Carolina has given notice to Gen. Webb, through Gov. Aiken, that his letter in Tuesday's Courier and Enquirer is *satisfactory*. We make the following extract from the letter in question. Gen. Webb says:

In my comments upon the recent outrage in the Senate, I have intentionally kept out of view both Mr. Sumner and Mr. Brooks—looking at it solely as an insult to the country, a trampling upon the Constitution, and an outrage upon the sanctity of the Senate Chamber, which merited death on the spot from any patriot present who was in a position to inflict the punishment.

WASHINGTON, May 26. MR. SUMNER'S CONDITION.—HIS STATEMENT OF THE ASSAULT. The House Committee of Investigation waited on Mr. Sumner today, and took his testimony with regard to the assault. He was also cross-examined. He was in bed during the examination, and has sat up but little since the assault. He is still very weak, and the physicians counsel him not to attempt to go out of the house during this week.

The following is the statement of Mr. Sumner, under oath, in regard to the assault upon him by Mr. Brooks:—I attended the Senate, as usual, on Thursday, the 22d of May. After some formal business a message was received from the House of Representatives, announcing the death of a member of that body from Missouri. This was followed by a brief tribute to the deceased from Mr. Geyer of Missouri, when, according to usage, and out of respect to the deceased, the Senate adjourned at once.

Instead of leaving the Senate chamber with the rest of the Senators on the adjournment, I continued in my seat, occupied with my pen, in order to be in season for the mail, which was soon to close, then promptly and briefly excusing myself to friends, for the reason that I was much engaged. When the last of these persons left me, I drew my arm chair close to my desk, and, with my legs under the desk, continued writing. My attention at this time was so entirely drawn from all other subjects, that, although there must have been many persons in the Senate, I saw nobody.

While thus intent, with my head bent over my writing desk, I was addressed by a person who approached the front of my desk so entirely unobscured that I was not aware of his presence until I heard my name pronounced. As I looked up, with pen in hand, I saw a tall man, whose countenance was not familiar, standing directly over me, and at the same moment caught these words: "I have read your speech twice over carefully. It is a libel on South Carolina and Mr. Butler, who is a relative of mine."

While these words were still passing from his lips, he commenced a succession of blows with a heavy cane, on my bare head, by the first of which I was stunned so as to lose my sight. I saw no longer my assailant, nor any other person or object in the room. What I did afterwards was done almost unconsciously, acting under the instincts of self-defence; with head already bent down, I rose from my seat, wrenching up my desk, which was screwed to the floor, and then pressing forward, while my assailant continued his blows.

I had no other consciousness until I found myself ten feet forward in front of my desk, lying on the floor of the Senate, with my bleeding head supported on the knee of a gentleman, whom I soon recognized by voice and manner as Mr. Morgan, of New York. Other persons there were about me, offering me friendly assistance, but I did not recognize any of them. Others there were at a distance, looking on and offering no assistance, of whom I recognized only Mr. Douglas, of Illinois, Mr. Toombs, of Georgia, and I thought also my assailant, standing between them.

I was helped from the floor and conducted into the lobby of the Senate, where I was placed upon a sofa. Of these who helped me there I have no recollection. As I entered the lobby I recognized Mr. Slidell of La., who retreated, but I recognized no one else until I felt a friendly grasp of the hand, which seemed to come from Mr. Campbell of Ohio. I have a vague impression that Mr. Bright, President of the Senate, spoke to me while I was on the floor in the Senate, or in the lobby. I make this statement in answer to the interrogatory of the Committee, and offer it as presenting completely all my recollections of the assault, and of the attending circumstances, whether immediately before or immediately after.

I desire to add, that besides the words which I have given as uttered by my assailant, I have an indistinct recollection of the words "old man," but these are so enveloped in the mist which ensued from the first blow, that I am not sure whether they were uttered or not.

On the cross-examination of Mr. Sumner, he stated that he was entirely without arms of any kind, and he had no notice or warning of any kind, direct or indirect, of this assault. In answer to a cross question, Mr. Sumner replied that what he had said of Mr. Butler was strictly responsive to Mr. Butler's speeches, and according to the usages of parliamentary debate.

THE CHARACTER OF THE ACT. There is one epithet that has been used in characterizing the recent outrage by Brooks, that is destined to stick, in spite of the anxious efforts of the "chivalry" to throw it off;—we allude to the epithet *cowardly*. We remember but two instances where it has been as yet used on the floor of Congress; and those were in the spirited remarks of Messrs. Wilson and Wade. It was expected that Col. Webb, in his communication to the Courier and Enquirer, would not shrink from applying this most fitting epithet, but he has avoided it, and



Brooks declares himself satisfied with the Colonel's carefully worded article.

If any testimony were wanted to prove the unmitigated cowardice of the act, it is afforded in the statement of Dr. Bunting, a Canadian gentleman, and a disinterested witness, present in the gallery at the time of the assault, and who tells us that he "saw Mr. Brooks approach Mr. Sumner, *not in front*, but on his side." This reminds us of the ancient assassin who could not stab the venerable Roman Senator until the latter turned away his head. Brooks was afraid, it seems, even to *face* his antagonist! Let his act be always called by the right name. *Ruffianly* and *brutal* are not enough without the addition of *cowardly*.

It has been repeatedly asked, Why did not Mr. Burlingame or some member of the Massachusetts delegation in the House, speak the right word at the right time? We must not be in too much of a hurry. We do not believe that Massachusetts will be mealy-mouthed. Our Legislature has spoken—has spoken of the brutality and *cowardice* of Brooks's outrage—and our representatives will not hesitate to sustain every word contained in the resolutions of our Legislature. We hope that some one will find or make an opportunity of doing this.

The South may chafe as they will—but they cannot make black white, nor can they convert an act of deliberate, calculating cowardice into an act of gallantry, notwithstanding the endorsement of Senator Toombs, and the compliment paid by Senator Butler to his "gallant (!) relative." The question is, not how will interested parties regard the act—not how the slaveholding chivalry regard it—but how will honorable men, wherever dwelling, in England or Turkey, Russia or France, regard it? How will history regard it? How will the slaveholders themselves, in their secret consciences and in their moments of dispassionate contemplation, regard it? There can be but one reply. The outrage was as dastardly as it was brutal.

The *ruffian's* eagerness to strike, before his unarmed victim could rise to his feet, and disembarrass himself of his chair and desk, can only be explained by the *coward's* fear of encountering the physical resistance that Sumner would instinctively have resorted to. *Coward, coward, coward*, is the word henceforth eternally branded on the forehead of the "chivalrous" Brooks. The South may send him services of plate, and resolve and re-resolve that he has done a brave thing—but they cannot change the damning complexion of the deed—cannot "rail the seal from off the bond"—they cannot reverse those laws of the human mind which compel us to admit the demonstrations of Euclid and the cowardice of the catiff, who thus, with nervous precipitation, assailed with murderous blows a man taken unawares, and incapacitated by his position from making any resistance.

We need only add that Mr. Keitt, the aider and abetter of the craven Brooks, shares with him in all his infamy, and is equally entitled to the epithets fixed upon the latter.

SOUTHERN VIEWS OF BROOKS'S BRUTALITY. *Rencontre in the Senate.* By a telegraphic despatch which we publish this morning, it will be seen that Mr. Brooks, of South Carolina, has been applying the Rust argument to the head of the fanatical Senator from Massachusetts. We hope, when the facts of the case come to hand, to learn that it is not so bad as reported—that the blow was not dealt while the Senator was engaged in writing at his desk. We are reluctant to believe that any provocation could have prompted Mr. Brooks to take such an advantage. [Savannah Morning News.

*Peace Hath Her Victories no less Renowned than War.* Mr. Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts, whose reputation as a scholar rests chiefly upon a discourse on the foregoing text, seems bent upon illustrating his theory in his own person. He concludes a two days' discharge of scholarly platitudes and pedantic dullness, by venting a filthy stream of billingsgate on heads hoary with age; answers insult from men who would afford him personal satisfaction with vulgar epithet; and when caned for cowardly vituperation, falls to the floor, an inanimate lump of incarnate cowardice, and most glorious exemplar of the *man of peace*. [Richmond Examiner.

The telegraph has recently announced no information more grateful to our feelings, than the *classical* caning which this outrageous abolitionist received on Thursday, at the hands of the chivalrous Brooks of South Carolina. It is enough for gentlemen to bear to be compelled to associate with such a character as Sumner, and to be bored with the stupid and arrogant dogmas with which his harangues invariably abound; but when, in gross violation of senatorial courtesy and in defiance of public opinion, the unscrupulous abolitionist undertakes to heap upon the head of a venerable Senator a vulgar tirade of abuse and calumny, no punishment is adequate to a proper restraint of his insolence but a deliberate, cool, dignified and *classical* caning. The only regret we have is, that the chastisement was not postponed until Sumner had left the Senate. The Senate Chamber would thus have been prevented from being the scene of such an exhibition, and the cowardly abolitionist would have been favored with an opportunity, of which there can be no doubt he would have availed himself, to make his escape. [South-Side (Virginia) Democrat.

1020.

PREMEDITATION OF THE ASSAULT—PRESENT TO THE ASSASSIN—BROOKS'S FEAR OF WILSON—MR. SUMNER'S CONDITION. [From the Washington correspondent of N. Y. Evening Post.] Not less than twenty witnesses have been examined by the House Investigating Committee as to the assault on Senator Sumner. It is said that Mr. Edmundson of Va. who was present with Brooks in the Senate, admits that he knew of the intention of Brooks in advance; that he was with him two mornings with a view of witnessing it, and that Brooks requested him to attend at the very time it happened. This and other evidence, I presume, will show its premeditated character beyond question.

It is stated that Mr. Stephens of Ga. strongly urged Mr. Brooks to issue a card, disclaiming all political motives in the attack, and justifying it solely on the ground of his personal displeasure in consequence of the alleged grievances of his uncle. Mr. Brooks is, however, reported to have declined to make such a statement.

Brooks's constituents have just sent him a testimonial in the form of a cane and a massive silver pitcher, both of which have arrived in Washington. The pitcher is engraved with this inscription: "Preston S. Brooks, May 22, 1856;" the very day of the assault.

I understand that assurances have been volunteered that, under no circumstances, will violence be offered to Wilson or his friends, either in or out of the Senate. Wilson's letter, refusing to either accept the challenge or qualify his words in regard to the assault on his colleague, is considered creditable alike to his courage and his good sense.

Mr. Sumner's sufferings, which for about twenty-four hours were intense, were greatly relieved yesterday by the lancing of the swelling upon his head. His neck and head are, however, still much swollen, and require constant bandaging. He sees no visitors, and the physician pronounces him still in danger. His case, on the first two or three days after the assault, was doubtless much aggravated by the excitement of receiving so many calls; but aside from this circumstance, he has not been able to leave his room without the risk of fatal consequences.



THE "PROVOCATION" TO THE ASSAULT. We have been surprised and shamed to notice, in some quarters, a disposition to misuse the word "provocation," to palliate, or to account for, the assault on Mr. Sumner. We purpose to show that the term is utterly without application to the occurrence, and that those who use it adopt the meanest or the most unreflecting of all the modes of defending the criminal.

The first fierce feeling of Massachusetts, on hearing of the outrage, was the sense of intolerable wrong, and in our rage, we dignified the member from South Carolina with epithets which, though harsh in themselves, caught some of the nobleness of the passion whence they sprung. With every exercise of cool reflection, however, the assailant is made further to descend the sliding scale of ruffianism, and sink to lower and lower depths of public scorn. We do not believe that the South itself will be able to bear up under the load of infamy which it will be compelled to carry in sustaining him. At first he was classed with bullies and blackguards; but it seems the bullies and blackguards are by no means ambitious of his companionship, and indignantly repudiate his claim to a place in their fraternity. Ever ready as they may be for acts of violence, and especially for those acts of violence which oppose to the logic of the brain the logic of the club and the revolver, they still have some dim vision of fairness floating before their minds in the most miscellaneous fight, and even their sense of honor and manliness is shocked by the act of the honorable member from South Carolina.

For what is the peculiar baseness of this act, as judged by the lowest standard of rowdiness? It consists in striking an unarmed man with a murderous weapon, while he is in a position which renders it physically impossible for him to offer the least resistance, even with his hands. We take it that a member of Rynders' Club would unhesitatingly decide that the assailant could hardly have done worse, if he had stolen into Mr. Sumner's chamber and struck him in his sleep. Now we know nothing of the character of Mr. Brooks, except as he has displayed it in this act; and, judging him by this act, he has pronounced himself an assassin.

It is hardly necessary to say that for such an act there can be no "provocation." It is impossible to urge anything in palliation of the outrage. And every man in Congress, no matter how high his station, who defends or excuses the dastardly assassin—every member of the House of Representatives who refuses to vote for his expulsion—makes himself an accomplice of the criminal. This is so plain, on those principles of honor which regulate intercourse even between bullies, that we can hardly believe that Southern gentlemen can fail to feel its force.

Let us suppose a case, where the sectional position of the parties is reversed. Mr. Hayne, in the celebrated speech which Mr. Webster answered, attacked Massachusetts more elaborately, more severely, and more unjustifiably, than the bitterest political opponents of Mr. Sumner can say that he attacked South Carolina in his late speech. Suppose that after Mr. Hayne had concluded his speech, he had been assailed by a member of the Massachusetts delegation in the House, precisely as Mr. Brooks assailed Mr. Sumner? Does any one doubt what would have been the result? We do not merely say that the assailant would have been universally execrated, North as well as South. We do not merely say that he would have been unanimously expelled

from the House of Representatives. He would have been expelled from the earth. He would have been torn to pieces in the first mad gust of Southern wrath; and the word "provocation" might perhaps have been properly used to account for such an ungovernable outburst of frantic revenge.

We trust we have demonstrated that nothing that Mr. Sumner said can be considered as furnishing "provocation" for the particular assault to which he was subjected. We might leave the matter here. But the case is so strong that we proceed to consider the question, whether he said any thing which could furnish provocation for any assault? As, in our previous remarks, we have altogether left out of view Mr. Sumner's peculiar right as a member of a legislative assembly, so we think we can answer this question without availing ourselves of the argument from his position.

And first, it must not be forgotten that the personalities of his speech, far from being a cause of provocation, were the result of provocation. They were personalities into which he might justly have been provoked by the systematic personalities of his opponents. They were not attacks, but retorts on attacks. Senators Butler, Douglas and Mason, have again and again charged him with perjury and falsehood, have loaded him with abuse, have refused him the name and the privileges of a gentleman. This we should call "provocation" indeed; but for a public man to retort personalities elaborately devised to stain his character, is in no sense to give provocation to outside assassins to attempt a personal assault: especially when we consider that the man thus placed on his defence, is in a small minority of the assembly where the attacks are made, is pursued by three of his opponents with peculiar energy of hatred, and has the great majority of the body resolutely prejudiced against him.

So much for what is absurdly called the provocation of the assault. We would now say a word in respect to Mr. Sumner's use of sarcasm, invective, and denunciation. Some persons affect to be shocked with these elements of his speech, probably believing that he is the first orator who has availed himself of these weapons. Demosthenes, Cicero, Chatham, Burke, Fox, Pitt, Brougham, Curran, Grattan, Adams, Otis, Henry, Webster, Clay—all men who have obtained renown in legislative assemblies, had, we supposed, said things which deprived Mr. Sumner of any claim to originality in the matter. In truth, we all cram our heads at school with so many specimens of this wrathful rhetoric, that through our lives we consider no man an orator who cannot on fitting occasions exhibit a mastery of it.

Why this sudden and astonishing prudery? Mr. Webster, it is said, never indulged in personalities of this sort. We suppose, of course, that when he punished so severely the hinted personal sarcasms of Hayne—when he represented the Senatorial defenders of the policy of Jackson, as engaged in "the ingenious and elaborate study of self-degradation"—when he came down with such frightful vehemence on those politicians who got up the cry of "the natural hatred of the poor against the rich"—when he assailed, from his seat in the Senate, Charles Jared Ingersoll, a member of the House—we suppose in all these cases there was nothing that savored of personality. Mr. Sumner, fiercely and brutally labelled by Senator Butler, compares him to Don Quixote. Mr. Webster, without provocation,



compares Mr. Cass to Snug, the Joiner.

The truth is, that Mr. Webster was known to be such a terrible master of invective, that no man in the Senate dared to attack him after his reply to Hayne. As a general thing, he abstained from attacking others; but his speeches furnish no evidence that he would have hesitated to assail any man, or body of men, whom he considered enemies to the public interest and public honor. We doubt not, if he had lived to our times, he would have taken the initiative in assailing the authors of the Kansas iniquity, and not modestly waited, like Senator Sumner, until he was driven into personalities to repel them.

No one denies to Mr. Winthrop the character of a high-toned gentleman, and nobody of any party thought it derogated from his character to put forth all his resources of sarcasm and invective in reply to his Free-soil opponents, though his speech is full of personalities. Who ever thought less of Choate for his reply, in the Texas debate, to McDuffie, though that reply was full of the most scathing personalities? It may or may not be Christian and humane, in the fierce collisions of political life, to attempt to make your opponent ridiculous or hateful; but, in regard to the universality of the practice, there can be no doubt. If it be an offence, certainly Mr. Sumner is one of the mildest of the offenders.

Mr. Sumner, indeed, is a man preëminently genial and amiable, not easily stirred into personalities, and who is kindled into wrath, not through his passions, but his moral sentiments. As an orator and as a man, he more closely resembles Wilberforce than Burke. Now it is well known that Wilberforce made himself such a terror to the West India Interest, that he narrowly escaped the same fate which has fallen on Mr. Sumner. The same charges of intemperate denunciation and invective, which have been brought against Mr. Sumner, were brought against him, with this difference, that every sensible man in England laughed at the idea of such charges being anything more than a commonplace of political hypocrisy, in the country which had listened delightedly to the marvels of personal invective, poured forth by Burke, Fox, and Pitt.

Perhaps the objection against Sumner may be that he uses denunciation in upholding the noblest cause and exposing the most colossal villainy of the time. Denunciation ought not to be employed while speaking of such matters. O no, to be sure! He ought not to be at all excited against gentlemen who merely ask that he shall surrender his personal honor, and the Free States their dearest sentiments and rights. These opponents of Mr. Sumner remind us of the Welsh priest in the *Beaux Stratagem*. Mr. Archer, the accomplished libertine of that play, insists that Squire Sullen shall give up Mrs. Sullen. The rustic brute refuses. "Not part with his wife!" exclaims the astonished Welsh ecclesiastic; "why the fellow is deficient in common shivility!"

**THE PUBLIC VOICE.** The recent outrage at Washington has called forth the voice of indignation from the press, the pulpit, the halls of learning, legislative assemblies, political conventions, and the people in town meeting assembled. We have not space to publish reports of the meetings held in this immediate vicinity. The clergymen in attendance upon the anniversaries in this city held an important meeting at the lower hall of the Tremont Temple yesterday,

which as fully attended and conducted in the most spirited manner. Men of high standing and great influence in their respective sects took part in the proceedings. A series of resolutions in accordance with the design and sentiment of the meeting was adopted. The speeches were of the true tone, and condemned the outrage upon Sumner in the most emphatic manner.

The mails and the telegraph bring us intelligence from the Middle and Western States, showing that the indignation at the outrages in the Federal city is by no means confined to this quarter. From the South, the tone is different. The *New York Evening Post* in referring to the impolitic course of the *Southern Press*, remarks:

The substance of all these articles, however, including that of Mr. Pierce's organ, is that the attack on Mr. Sumner was a meritorious action, justified by the provocation, and that if hereafter any member of Congress, or any other person, utters words which a hot-blooded Southerner may choose to consider as offensive, he makes himself a subject of plantation discipline. No regret at the outrage is intimated; neither the savageness nor the poltroonery of the act form any objection to it, and the North is given to understand, that whenever the occasion may arise, it will be repeated.

At a meeting in Philadelphia, the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved*, That in the atrocious commendations of Southern press on the brutal assault upon Senator Sumner, we see a debauched public sentiment, which can only exist in a community composed of lordly masters and servile slaves; and that the *Richmond Enquirer's* wish that Senator Seward may next be beaten like a brute, could only come from a mind made ferocious by slavery.

**THE VENERABLE QUINCY.** The following letter, sent to the presiding officer of the Unitarian Festival, by the venerable Josiah Quincy, Senior, now in the eighty-fifth year of his age, will be read with deep interest:

LETTER OF HON. JOSIAH QUINCY.

*E. R. Hoar, Esq.,—Sir:* I have received your letter, inviting me to attend the Unitarian Festival, and expressing the gratification it would give you "to see and hear me on that occasion." It would give me great pleasure to comply with your request, did not the very tenor of your letter preclude me from it. I perceive that should I attend, a *speech* will be expected from me. But, Sir, it would be impossible for me to utter my opinion on the subject with which my heart is full, without crossing the policy of some, offending the prejudices of others, and making, perhaps, the whole company apprehend that I had arrived at that period of second childhood, which is sometimes incident to old age.

My mind is in no state to receive pleasure from social scenes and friendly intercourse. I can think or speak of nothing but of the outrages of slaveholders at Kansas, and the outrages of slaveholders at Washington—outrages, which, if not met in the spirit of our fathers of the revolution, (and I see no sign that they will be)—our liberties are but a name, and our Union proves a curse. These outrages constitute a series of iniquitously contrived, well-connected, compact tissues, of which

The fugitive slave law was the first;

The repeal of the Missouri compromise, the second;

The invasion of Kansas, and the taking the ballot-boxes by storm, by a mob of slaveholders, the third;

The encouragement of this sacrilegious *foray* against the right of free suffrage, and the ultimate support of it by the National Executive and military arm, the fourth;

The hostile irruption of two members of Congress, into the Senate chamber of the United States, openly armed with deadly bludgeons, and probably secretly, according to the habits of their breed, with bowie knives and revolvers, and there prostrating on the floor with their bludgeons a Senator of the United States, sitting peaceably in his seat, unconscious of danger, and from his position incapable of defence, inflicting upon him blows, until he sunk, senseless,



under them, and which, if they do not prove mortal, it was not for want of malignant intent in the cowardly assassins—and all this for words publicly spoken in the Senate, in the course of debate, allowed by its presiding officer to be spoken, and exceeding not one hair's breadth any line of truth or duty. This is the fifth and the climax of this series of outrages, unparalleled, nefarious, and brutal.

Such are the facts—such are the outrages—a series of them, which ought to ring through every city and field, through every palace and cottage of the free States—which ought to fly, like the fiery cross on the highlands of Scotland, over the mountains and through the valleys of the free States, startling the sleeping, rousing the thoughtless, uniting the free clans, and enkindling whatever glimmering spark yet remains of the feeling and spirit, which, in former times, entitled the inhabitants of the free States to the character of patriots, and fearless, far seeing statesmen. But alas! sir, I see no principle of vitality in what is called freedom in these times. I see divisions enough, and parties enough; I see every *whim* setting up for itself and calling and expecting all the rest of the world to follow in its train. But of a thoughtful, concentrated, determined principle of united action, suited to the occasion, which, spurning the desire of place and the hope of emolument, and the hankering for office, and actuated solely for the advance of public good and general welfare, I see nothing. The paltry of death rests on the spirit of freedom in the so called "free States."

In my opinion, it is time to speak on the house-top, what every man who is worthy of the name of freeman utters in his chamber and feels in his heart. By a series of corruption, intrigue and cunning, bribing the high by appointments of State, the low by the hope of emoluments; playing between the parties of the free States, and counteracting one by the other; by flattering the vain, paying the mean, and rewarding the subservient, the slaveholders have, in the course of fifty years, usurped the whole constitutional powers of the Union, have possessed themselves of the executive chair, of the halls of Congress, of the national courts of justice and of the military arm, leaving nothing of hope to the spirit of freedom in the free States, but public speech in the legislature and the ballot box. The one a slaveholder's mob is crushing in Kansas, the other a deputation from the slaveholders of the House of Representatives have attempted to crush by a slaveholder's bludgeon.

My heart is too full. If I should pour forth all that is in it, both paper and time would fail me.

Truly, I am yours, JOSIAH QUINCY.

Quincy, 27th May, 1856.

REMARKS OF MR. R. W. EMERSON AT A MEETING IN CONCORD ON THE 26TH, TO CONSIDER THE OUTRAGE UPON MR. SUMNER. Mr. Chairman:

I sympathise heartily with the spirit of the resolutions. The events of the last few years and months and days have taught us the lessons of centuries. I do not see how a barbarous community and a civilized community can constitute one state. I think we must get rid of slavery, or we must get rid of freedom. Life has no parity of value in the free state and in the slave state. In one, it is adorned with education, with skillful labor, with arts, with long prospective interests, with sacred family ties, with honor and justice. In the other, life is a fever; man is an animal, given to pleasure, frivolous, irritable, spending his days in hunting and practising with deadly weapons to defend himself against his slaves and against his companions brought up in the same idle and dangerous way.

Such people live for the moment, they have properly no future, and readily risk on every passion a life which is of small value to themselves or to others. Many years ago, when Mr. Webster was challenged in Washington to a duel by one of these madcaps, his friends came forward with prompt good sense, and said such a thing was not to be thought of; Mr. Webster's life was the property of his friends and of the whole country, and was not to be risked on the turn of a vagabond's ball. Life and life are incommensurate. The whole State of South Carolina does not now offer any one or any number of persons who are to be weighed for a moment

in the scale with such a person as the meanest of them all has now struck down. The very conditions of the game must always be,—the worst life staked against the best. It is the best whom they desire to kill. It is only when they cannot answer your reasons, that they wish to knock you down. If, therefore, Massachusetts could send to the Senate a better man than Mr. Sumner, his death would be only so much more quick and certain.

Now, as men's bodily strength or skill with knives and guns, is not usually in proportion to their knowledge and mother wit, but oftener in the inverse ratio, it will only do to send foolish persons to Washington if you wish them to be safe. The outrage is the more shocking from the singularly pure character of its victim. Mr. Sumner's position is exceptional in its honor. He had not taken his degrees in the caucus and in back politics. It is notorious that, in the long time when his election was pending, he refused to take a single step to secure it. He would not so much as go up to the State House to shake hands with this or that person whose good will was reckoned important by his friends. He was elected. It was a homage to character and talent. In Congress, he did not rush into a party position. He sat long silent and studious. His friends, I remember, were told that they would find Sumner a man of the world, like the rest; 'tis quite impossible to be at Washington and not bend; he will bend as the rest have done.

Well, he did not bend. He took his position and kept it. He meekly bore the cold shoulder from some of his New England colleagues, the hatred of his enemies, the pity of the indifferent, cheered by the love and respect of good men with whom he acted, and has stood for the North, a little in advance of all the North, and therefore without adequate support. He has never faltered in his maintenance of justice and freedom. He has gone beyond the large expectation of his friends in his increasing ability and his manlier tone.

I have heard that some of his political friends tax him with indolence or negligence in refusing to make electioneering speeches, or otherwise to bear his part in the labor which party organization requires. I say it to his honor. But more to his honor are the faults which his enemies lay to his charge. I think, sir, if Mr. Sumner had any vices, we should be likely to hear of them. They have fastened their eyes like microscopes now for five years, on every act, word, manner, and movement, to find a flaw, and with what result? His opponents accuse him neither of drunkenness, nor debauchery, nor job, nor peculation, nor rapacity, nor personal aims of any kind. No; but with what? Why, beyond this charge, which it is impossible was ever sincerely made, that he broke over the proprieties of debate, I find him accused of publishing his opinion of the Nebraska conspiracy in a letter to the People of the United States, with discourtesy.

Then, that he is an abolitionist; as if every sane human were not an abolitionist, or a believer that all men should be free. And the third crime he stands charged with, is, that his speeches were written before they were spoken; which of course must be true in Sumner's case, as it was true of Webster, of Adams, of Calhoun, of Burke, of Chatham, of Demosthenes, of every first rate speaker that ever lived. It is the high compliment he pays to the intelligence of the Senate and of the country. When the same reproach was cast on the first orator of ancient times by some caviller of his day, he said, "I should be ashamed to come with one unconsidered word before such an assembly."

Mr. Chairman, when I think of these most small faults as the worst which party hatred could allege, I think I may borrow the language which Bishop Burnet applied to Sir Isaac Newton, and say, that Charles Sumner "has the whitest soul I ever knew."

Well, sir, this noble head, so comely and so wise, must be the target for a pair of bullies to beat with clubs! The murderer's brand shall stamp their foreheads wherever they may wander in the earth. But I wish, sir, that the high respects of this meeting shall be expressed to Mr. Sumner: that a copy of the resolutions that have been read may be forwarded to him. I wish that he may know the shudder of terror that ran through all this community on the first tidings



brutal attack. Let me hear what every man of worth in New England loves his virtues; that every mother thinks of him as the protector of families; that every friend of freedom thinks him the friend of freedom. And if our arms at this distance cannot defend him from assassins, we confide the defence of a life so precious, to all honorable men and true patriots, and to the Almighty Maker of men. [Evening Telegraph.]

**FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE OUTRAGE ON SENATOR SUMNER.**—We find in the correspondence of the New York papers some further particulars of the assault upon Senator Sumner. The Herald correspondence gives the following:—

WASHINGTON, May 22.—Mr. Brooks waited at the Porter's Lodge about an hour, yesterday, and as long this morning, hoping to meet with Mr. Sumner with a view to attack him. Failing in this, he entered the Senate Chamber today, just as that body adjourned, and seeing several ladies present, seated himself on the opposite side to Mr. Sumner. Soon all disappeared but one. He then requested a friend to get her out, when he immediately approached Mr. Sumner and said: "Mr. Sumner, I have read your speech with great care, and with as much impartiality as I am capable of, and I feel it my duty to say to you that you have published a libel on my State, and uttered a slander upon a relative, who is aged and absent, and I am come to punish you." After the concluding words, Mr. Sumner attempted to spring to his feet, but while in the act, was struck by Col. Brooks a back-handed blow with a gutta serena, came near an inch thick, but hollow, and he continued striking him right and left, until the stick was broken into fragments, and Mr. Sumner was prostrate and bleeding on the floor. No one took hold of Col. B. during the time, so quick was the operation, but immediately afterwards Mr. Crittenden caught him around the body and arms.

No one knew of his anticipated attack but the Hon. H. A. Edmundson of Virginia.

After his arrest, Col. Brooks went to the office of Justice Hollingshead, and tendered him his bond with securities, to appear and answer any charge preferred by the Grand Jury, but the Justice, deeming the bond premature, discharged him upon his parole of honor to appear before him again whenever required. Subsequently Mr. Brooks was complained of by Mr. William Y. Leader, on whose oath Justice Hollingshead required Brooks to give bail in the sum of \$500 as security for his appearance tomorrow afternoon.

Mr. Keitt of South Carolina, did not interfere, only to keep persons off.

Senator Toombs declared that it was the proper place to have chased Mr. Sumner.

The stick used was gutta serena, about an inch in diameter, and hollow, which was broken up like a pipe stem.

The following is from the correspondence of the Tribune:

Mr. Sumner was writing unsuspectingly and busily at his desk, when attacked by Brooks. The Senate had adjourned early, on the announcement of the death of Mr. Miller.

Mr. Keitt approached him, each with a cane. Several persons had been about Mr. Sumner's desk, after the adjournment, but at the time chosen for the attack, he was alone. Mr. Wilson had just left him, on his way out, passing Brooks, who was sitting in a back seat. Brooks walked up in front of Mr. Sumner, and told him that he had read his speech twice, and that it was a libel on South Carolina and a relative of his, Judge Butler.

With out waiting for any reply, or asking for any explanation, he immediately struck Mr. Sumner a violent blow over the head with his cane, while Mr. Sumner sat in his seat, unable to extricate himself, cutting by the blow a gash four inches in length on his head. Mr. Sumner had no distinct consciousness after the first blow. He involuntarily strove to rise from his seat, but being fastened by his position, tore up his desk from its fastenings in the attempt to extricate himself. He staggered under the blows, and fell senseless to the floor, being wholly stunned and blind from the first. It is stated by a reporter who was present, that Keitt stood by, and brandished his cane to keep off others.

Messrs. Morgan and Murray, of the New York delegation, were in the front ante-room, and hearing the noise, came in. Mr. Murray seized hold of Brooks, who had now broken his cane into several pieces, and Mr. Morgan went to the relief of Mr. Sumner, whom he found prostrate and nearly unconscious. The persons present in the Senate were Mr. Sutton, one of the reporters, the Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr. Simonton, Senators Crittenden, Iverson, Bright, Toombs, Douglas, Pearce, and others. No one of the Senators seemed to offer to interfere, but Mr. Crittenden, who pronounced it an inexcusable outrage.

Mr. Wilson rushed into the Senate Chamber when he heard of the attack, but found Mr. Sumner had been removed to the Vice President's rooms, and a surgeon was in attendance. He then helped to put his colleague into a carriage, and went with him to his lodgings.

Mr. Sumner is badly injured, having two very severe cuts on the head. His condition is considered critical, and his physician allows no one to see him. His clothes were literally covered with blood when he was removed. Considerable blood was also spattered on the adjoining desks.

**CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SENATOR WILSON AND MR. BROOKS.** *Mr. Brooks to Senator Wilson—Plum's Hotel, May 27, 1856.* Sir: In the Senate to-day, when referring to the collision with Mr. Sumner, you spoke of my conduct as "cowardly," thus making yourself an arbiter of true courage.

In debate in the Senate heretofore, you declared yourself responsible for what you might say there and elsewhere.

I, therefore, hold myself at liberty, by this note, to request that you will inform me, without delay, where and when, outside of this district, a further note will find you.

Respectfully, &c.,  
P. S. BROOKS.

HON. HENRY WILSON.

*Senator Wilson to Mr. Brooks. Washington, May 29th, 10 1/2 o'clock.* Hon P. S. Brooks: Sir—Your note of the 27th inst. was placed in my hands by your friend, General Lane, at twenty minutes past ten this morning.

I characterized on the floor of the Senate the assault upon my colleague as "brutal, murderous and cowardly." I thought so then—I think so now. I have no qualifications whatever to make in regard to these words.

I have never entertained or expressed in the Senate or elsewhere the idea of personal responsibility in the sense of the duellist. I have always regarded duelling as the lingering relic of a barbarous civilization, which the law of the country has branded as a crime. While, therefore, I religiously believe in the right of self-defence, in its broadest sense, the law of my country and the matured convictions of my whole life alike forbid me to meet you for the purpose indicated in your letter.

Your obedient servant,  
HENRY WILSON.

**CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN WILSON AND BROOKS.** There are no apprehensions of an attack on Mr. Wilson.

The following are the main features of the correspondence between Messrs. Brooks and Wilson: Mr. Brooks complains that Mr. Wilson spoke of his attack on Mr. Sumner as cowardly, and says: "Wherefore I hold myself at liberty, by this note, to request that you will inform me, without delay, where and when, outside of this District, a further note will reach you."

Gen. Wilson replied: "I characterized, on the floor of the Senate, the assault on my colleague as brutal, murderous and cowardly. I thought so then: I think so now, and have no qualifications whatever to make with regard to those words. I have always regarded duelling as a relic of barbarous civilization, which the law of the country has branded as crime. While, therefore, I religiously believe in the right of self-defence, in the broadest sense of the law of any country, the convictions of my whole life alike forbid me to meet you for the purpose indicated in your letter."

GEN. WILSON AND RUFFIAN BROOKS. The correspondent of the Courier and Enquirer writes: Mr. Brooks, by Mr. Lane, of Oregon, sent today a note to Gen. Wilson, demanding that Gen. Wilson should either retract the words "murderous, brutal and cowardly," used by him in characterizing Mr. Brooks's assault on Mr. Sumner, or indicate where he would receive a hostile message from Mr. Brooks. Gen. Wilson in answer to the letter, refused to retract, or qualify his words; declined receiving a challenge; but said he should defend himself from personal violence.

For some hours after this correspondence had passed, a street fight was expected, as Gen. Wilson was well armed, and surrounded by armed friends. Mr. Brooks, however, said he designed no violence, and it was agreed not to bring the subject before the House.

**SPIRITED REPLY OF SENATOR WILSON TO BROOKS'S CHALLENGE.** *Washington, May 29th.* General Lane, of Oregon, was the bearer of a challenge from Mr. Brooks to Senator Wilson this morning. Senator Wilson, it is said, replied that he used the language complained of because he at the time believed, and now believes, it was strictly true, and demanded by the character of the assault upon Mr. Sumner. He also said he was no duellist; but that he will use what language he thinks proper in debate, and if assailed for doing so, knows how to defend himself.

Mr. Brooks has given notice to General Webb, through Governor Aiken, that his letter in Tuesday's Courier and Enquirer is satisfactory.

All excitement appears to have ceased, excepting that which is connected with the challenge of Mr. Brooks to Senator Wilson.



United States guns, and their expenses paid with United States money!

This last scheme, concocted by the agents of this administration for the purpose of fastening slavery upon Kansas, will probably be successful. [Cleveland Herald.]

[From an Occasional Correspondent.]

WASHINGTON, May 24, 1856.

"A PAINFUL OCCURRENCE." To the Editor of the *Transcript*: The title to my letter is taken from the leader of the *Intelligencer* of Friday, (yesterday,) giving an account of the cowardly and brutal assault upon Senator Sumner in his seat in the Senate Chamber, in the presence of Toombs and Iverson of Georgia, Senator Douglas, and others, spectators, if not accessories to the assault.

The venerable editors of the *Intelligencer* whisper to their readers and the world in bated breath becoming the condition of hirelings and slaves, when speaking of the miscreant conduct of their masters; that—"It is an unpleasant duty to notice an occurrence which took place in the Capitol, being, we are sorry to say, a personal conflict between two members of Congress, growing out of what was regarded as a personal provocation!"

And this tells the tale of the assault of Preston S. Brooks upon Charles Sumner! It is the most expressive exhibition which I have yet seen of the domineering of these men of the South. The editors of the *Intelligencer* are men of great experience. They have seen generations of Senators and members pass before them, and they know what is due to the freedom of debate, as well as to the comity of social life. But it is a son of the South that has gone into the sanctuary of the Senate, and laid lifeless a Senator of Massachusetts, for daring to use his brilliant powers of sarcasm upon a Senator of South Carolina! This makes all the difference, as in the fable of the bull and the cow gored to death. Had it been Charles Sumner who had beaten Preston S. Brooks, as in the days of chivalry, "a thousand swords would have leaped out of their scabbards;" now a thousand bowie-knives would have been unclasped, while the thunders of the press would have resounded.

But it is only a Massachusetts Senator! and he a freesoiler; a man who dares to speak out on the floor of the Senate the heartfelt words which breath and burn in the souls of the hard yeomanry and mechanic classes of Massachusetts. Mr. Sumner has dared to do his duty fearlessly and faithfully, both wisely and well; but not wisely nor well in the judgment of men whose only standard of right is that of expediency. Mr. Sumner has committed a great offence in the eyes of such persons, and how? and for what? By daring to characterize the leaders of the cause of slavery on the floor in a way so graphic that everybody sees now in Judge Butler, old "Don Quixote," and in Judge Douglas the world-renowned "Sancho Panza." Never was there satire so well deserved, and it is its perfect fitness to these persons that has made it so hard to bear. Douglas raved as well as writhed under the infiction, and the nephew of Judge Butler has disgraced himself and his State by the way he has resented it.

At Baltimore, yesterday, I chanced to call on a Boston man doing a large business in that city, and found him in his *sanctum*, with two gentlemen, whom I shall call, for the sake of having names to my letter, Mr. Oldtown, of Essex, and Judge Marshall, of Virginia,—being both a lawyer and a judge—a man of wealth, standing high as a lawyer and a Presbyterian of the Old School—a very fine man, and whom I have long known

**CIVIL WAR IN KANSAS.** The west wind comes freighted with sad tidings from the fairest portion of our country. The Kansas iniquity has produced its legitimate fruit, and the new territory, that should have enjoyed an era of prosperity, peace and happiness, is now "subdued" by a course of action on the part of the administration, as wrong and brutal as ever disgraced the annals of a nation claiming a place within the pale of civilization. Accumulated wrongs—outrages the most atrocious—usurpations far greater than King George undertook against America—political invasions against the dearest rights of freemen—these, all these have failed to extort from the Administration a single effort for the defence of the people of Kansas. Worse, far worse than this, all the vast power of the National Government has been given to the side of the invader and usurper. In a fair contest the Free State men could meet and triumph over their opponents. Under one guise and another, the National Government has exerted all its influence to prevent the peaceful occupation of the territory, by men from the Free States. The largest, most populous and promising town in Kansas, has been virtually destroyed by an army of ruffians, shielded by the name and authority of the United States Government! We regret that we cannot give extended extracts from leading journals in regard to this last cruel and wanton outrage. The following have the right tone and indicate that the public mind is moving in the right direction.

One word of caution. The state of our public affairs requires patience and forbearance; but when we think of the dread scene just enacted in the West, and are sad at thought of the forlorn and aljeet state of our country, let us thank God that we can exercise those rights denied to our relatives and friends in Kansas! An American citizen should never despair of his country, never think that Freedom is a lost cause.

If the reports turn out to be true, there will not be a shadow of defence to be offered at the North in favor of the men who have thus violated the principles of State rights and of personal and political freedom. If these accounts are true,—and we hope they are not,—the people of Lawrence will hold the same place in history which is occupied by the Huguenots in France and the martyrs of St. Bartholomew, and there will be an end to all party feeling at the North, except that of indignation against the South. [Boston Courier.]

All sense of justice must be lost, all generous sympathy extinguished, all manly courage departed, and the American character become hopelessly degenerate, if such proceedings as these do not rouse the people of the United States to wrest the power from the hands of those who now hold it to the disgrace of our country. [N. Y. Eye Post.]

Bad and reprehensible as has been the conduct of the Missouri borderers and the pro-slavery party in Kansas generally; encouraged as they have been in violence by the Governor of the Territory and the Administration at Washington, we are not disposed to believe, on the anonymous assertions of telegraph reporters, that anything so disgraceful, and so suicidal to the cause sought to be upheld, has been perpetrated as the deliberate destruction of a defenceless town, and the massacre of its inhabitants, who, though at the eleventh hour, had laid down their arms, and after sending overtures of peace and allegiance, were fleeing from their homes in terror.

If such, however, be the fact, we have only to say that where Mr. Brooks's brutal attack upon Mr. Sumner has made hundreds of sectional men and determined antagonists of the slave power, the attack upon Lawrence, and the slaughter of any of its inhabitants, will make thousands and tens of thousands. [N. Y. Com. Advertiser.]

The story of Kansas, in short, is just this: Every means to make it a slave State seeming to be fruitless, except by driving free State men from the territory, Shannon and Marshal Donaldson have, on the strength of Reeder's refusal to waive his exemption from arrest, enrolled all the ruffians from the slave States as so much militia under pay. These assassin soldiery boast that fourteen days' service entitles them to 160 acres of land, besides their pay and rations. Thus an army of pro-slavery men is quartered upon Kansas to eat out its substance, destroy business, and free the territory from free State men. This, too, when a force of government troops, sufficient for every purpose of arrest and protection, is within call.

The world affords no case which has its parallel in violence. Not a man has resisted, even to the waving of his hand, the acts of Col. Sumner's troops; and these troops are not called upon, but cut throats and murderers are armed by Shannon with



highly respected. The Boston merchant, out of State street, said in a laughing way: "Mr. Sumner has got a drubbing, at last, which will do him no harm; he will now learn to keep a civil tongue in his head." This raised Mr. Oldtown in an instant: "I know something of this matter. I was in the city, and met on the avenue three persons, tall, in the prime of life, walking with a proud step, and eye which burned with excitement. I was struck with their appearance, when a gentleman who was following them said: 'See! sir; there go the modern conspirators, just from the Senate chamber, where, with cowardly blows, they have left the body of Charles Sumner, bruised, battered, and lifeless!' I looked back to see these men, and to listen to all this person had to tell me of the scene he had just witnessed, with horror and intense indignation; and, sir, I am surprised that you, a Boston man, should speak thus." The Boston gentleman did not feel very comfortable under this, but, having said what he had, he went on: "But, Mr. Oldtown, Mr. Sumner had no right to make an attack on an old and venerable man, and an absent man. He made a *personal* attack; it was this that made him a fit subject of chastisement."

Mr. Oldtown turned to the Judge and asked him to read aloud the passage which was spoken of as a personal attack. It was the passage to which we have already alluded. After the reading, the Judge most carefully scanned the speech, and said: "There is nothing personal in this; there's no personal attack here. To call one man Don Quixote and another Sancho Panza is no slander; it is satire, but no more; and if this is all, it is no apology for such an outrage upon the rights of Mr. Sumner." This was somewhat unexpected to the Boston merchant, who, like most persons settled away from New England, adopt the sentiments agreeable to their neighbors; a very amiable trait no doubt, but which helps to encourage the universal belief in the men of the South that the conscience of the people of the North is very elastic, and in a word, no conscience at all. After further conversation which more and more excited Mr. Oldtown, he could no longer sit in his chair, but rising, spoke as near as I can now recall his words, thus: "What are the facts in this case? Let me state them."

"Mr. Sumner is in his seat in the Senate Chamber writing, with his legs crossed under his table, completely helpless, when this man of the sunny South, who has been outlaying him for two days, waits till General Wilson and other friends who sit near Mr. Sumner have gone, and then stealthily, aided and abetted by Keitt, his colleague, who is on the alert to drive off with his club any one who shall seek to interfere, aid-

ed also by the conscious sympathizing presence of Douglas, Toombs, and Iverson, of Georgia, he reaches Mr. Sumner's desk, and with the desk between them, speaks to him, and before Mr. Sumner can rise, beats him senseless to the floor. O what courage! O what chivalry! and gentlemen, how long do you believe the people of Massachusetts and the free States will look with indifference on such scenes as this? It is true there has been a base cringing subserviency of many Northern men, partly by their corruption, purchased, as John Randolph said, 'dog cheap,' and partly by their coming from a section of the world where to fight a duel is to commit political suicide. But the time has come when all this is to be changed."

"Do you think, Mr. Oldtown," asked the State street gentleman, "that the people of the North

replied, "I will never forgive a man who fails to defend himself, and that he may have no excuse, every Representative in Congress will be furnished hereafter with a Colt's revolver and a bowie knife, and these men of the South shall learn that nothing is so sure as death when they begin an attack of the sort made on Mr. Sumner. There shall be no lack of pistols and scalping knives which shall tell their tales upon men who have only to see the glistening of the blade to shrink, as when a slave beaten beyond endurance, turns upon his ruffian master and makes up his mind to die upon the gibbet so he gains his long coveted revenge for cruelty long endured and now past bearing." "You had better send more Bibles to the South," said the Boston gentleman, wishing to turn aside the crimson current of Mr. Oldtown's thoughts. "No sir; no more Bibles! but Colt's revolvers! Let us see every Senator and every Member from the free States 'armed in shining panoply complete,' and when a Senator, like Jack Hale, rises portly and manly in his seat, let him first lay down his pistols and bowie knife and say:

"Mr. President; In rising to address the Senate, I am aware I shall, in using the freedom of speech, which is God's gift and my right, say some things this day which may be considered by some Senator on the other side of the Chamber, personal and offensive. I have before me pistols with which I can at a distance equal to the remotest Senator sitting opposite me, snuff a candle; and I hope not to send a bullet assigned for the Hon. Senator from Georgia into the head of the Hon. Senator from South Carolina. I attack no one; but I will not be either shot down on this floor, nor be beaten like a dog while I have the power to defend myself. Assassins may strike me in the dark, and cowards may come upon me by stealth; I must leave them to such of my friends around me as are armed ready for the defence of a friend in time of need; but those who stand before me I will meet as best I may.

"Such, gentlemen, will be the speeches made necessary by the conduct of these southern cowardly assassins; nor must you expect all are white livered cowards born north of Mason and Dixon's line. They are not cowards—for cowardice is of no nation; all men are brave, and when kicked and beaten to a sufficient extent, they will wake up and rebel. I am for rebelling now!"

"My dear Oldtown, you are really in a passion," said Mr. State street.

"No! cool as a summer's morning. I have reached this point. If the Senate chamber be not a sanctuary to its members, and if we have to come to blows, I am ready now."

"But," said the Boston merchant, "there's no use of fighting any body, or at any time. If Mr. Sumner had but used the language of a gentleman, there would have been no occasion for this attack."

"Indeed, sir," said Mr. Oldtown, "and to whom are Northern statesmen to go to learn polite literature and language? Shall they go to Mr. Stephens, of Georgia? He holds the place of Mr. John Randolph, of other days. Shall I recite to you a very elegant extract of that gentleman's speech, delivered to Northern doughfaces; the men who have the crowning infamy of having voted for the Kansas and Nebraska bill?"

"Certainly, let us have it."

"I have memorized it by frequent repetition," said Mr. Oldtown, "from the paper in which it was reported, delivered as I have said, by the



Hon. A. H. Stephens, now a member of the House of Representatives from Georgia. That gentleman thus disgraged himself:

Well gentlemen, you make a good deal of clamor, over the Nebraska measure, but it don't alarm us at all. We have got used to that kind of talk. You have threatened before, but you have never performed. You have always caved in, and you will again. You are a mouthing white-livered set. Of course you will oppose the measure; we expected that; but we don't care for your opposition. You will rail, but we don't care for your railing. You will hiss, but so do adders. We expect it of adders, and we expect it of you. You are like the devils that were pitched over the battlements of heaven into hell. They set up a howl at their discomfiture, and so will you. But their fate was sealed, and so is yours. You must submit to the yoke, but don't chafe. Gentlemen, we have got you in our power. You tried to drive us to the wall in 1850, but times are changed. \* \* \* You went a wooling, and have come home fleeced. Don't be so impudent as to complain. You will only be slapped in the face. Don't resist. You will only be lashed into obedience.

Legislatures of New York, of Rhode Island, of Massachusetts, Northern Divines, opponents of Nebraska everywhere are merely adders, whose vocation is to hiss; they are simply howling devils who shall be sent to hell.

When the recitation was over, Mr. Oldtown smiled and asked, "Now, gentlemen, what do you think of personalities?" To be sure this was delivered in the face of the very white livered slaves who he knew were ready to do his bidding and the bidding of their party leaders at the cost of every sentiment of personal respect and dictate of conscience.

Shall Mr. Sumner and other men of the North go to this modern Gamaliel to learn how to speak politely of the men of the South and their peculiar institutions?"

The old gentleman bowed and left us. Judge M. and his friend were sobered. They thought, if this old man, a very orthodox man too, a deacon it might be in an Orthodox church, could be roused to such a height of feeling, they asked what must be the feelings of the people of the North?

A great insult has been done to the dignity of the Senate, and there is no time to be lost in changing the aspect of matters here by all men loving liberty uniting to elect a President and administration who shall as zealously uphold liberty in the free States as General Pierce and his administration are now laboring to uphold slavery and to extend its political power over free territories, and through party organizations over the free States themselves. ROWLEY.

THE VOICE OF THE PRESS UPON THE OUTRAGE.

The press of the country, with here and there a few disgraceful exceptions, are speaking out in terms of manly and indignant condemnation of the cowardly attack of Brooks upon Mr. Sumner. We subjoin a few extracts from the comments of a small portion.

The *Baltimore American*, one of the ablest and most dignified of the Southern press, condemns with a heartiness that does it all honor this the latest phase of ruffianism. It says:

DISGRACEFUL ASSAULT UPON A SENATOR.—The dignity of the United States Senate was violated and the person of one of its members outraged yesterday, by a disgraceful assault upon Senator Sumner by Mr. Brooks, a member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina. The act, so far as our present accounts inform us, was attended with circumstances that showed a complete disregard of propriety and decorum upon the part of its perpetrator. Mr. Sumner was attacked in the Senate Chamber, prostrated by a

blow with a cane, and then beaten into a state of insensibility. We have no sympathy with Mr. Sumner as a politician, and have seen with deep regret the course of acrimonious personal crimination, so foreign to what has heretofore been characteristic of the Senate, in which he and other Senators have this session indulged, but we must protest against the law of violence which members of Congress are by their personal example holding up for the imitation of the country. Already we have seen one member assaulting an editor, another engaging in a brawl with the servants of a hotel and using his pistol with deadly effect, and now a third member deliberately enters the Senate Chamber, knocks down a Senator, and beats him until he is insensible. The House must be assured that if it desires to preserve for itself even a vestige of public respect, these acts, so derogatory to its members, cannot be permitted to go unrebuked.

From the *Baltimore Patriot*.

THE ASSAULT ON SENATOR SUMNER.—For the first time since the organization of our Government a Senator of the United States has been assaulted and severely beaten for words spoken in debate. Unhappily, under the auspices of the present Administration, the domination of the Democratic party and the reckless renewal of that slavery agitation to which they stood pledged to put an end, "both in and out of Congress;" a war of sections has been provoked which has led to bloodshed in Kansas and to a scene of violence in the Senate Chamber. The conduct of Mr. Brooks cannot be justified. By inflicting chastisement upon a Senator, for words spoken in debate, he has exasperated the evil he voluntarily undertook to correct, and has raised himself to the bad eminence of being the first man who has proceeded to the extreme of actual blows within a hall which has hitherto been sacred, if not from demonstrations of violence, yet from positive collisions. An affray so disgraceful and disreputable to the parties concerned, both in its exciting cause and in the result which has grown out of it, demands that it should be taken up and dealt with in such a manner as will vindicate the outraged dignity of the Senate, and preclude the repetition of a similar offence.

From the *Philadelphia North American of Friday*.

In view of recent events, reflecting men may well pause and ask themselves, what next is coming? We have seen peaceable settlers, in a Territory opened to them by the laws, driven from the lands they had purchased by armed mobs, obliged to leave behind them their property, and, in many cases, compelled to seek in concealment protection for their lives. We have seen the power of the National Government perverted to maintain these abuses, and its processes employed to assist in schemes of outrage and oppression; and now, when a Senator of the United States ventures to raise his voice in condemnation of these acts, we see him stricken down in the light of day, under the roof of the Capitol itself, by an infuriated bully, who does his atrocious work at his own will and with no one to stay his hand. What next is coming? In Kansas the friends of civil liberty have been hunted like beasts; in Washington the public sanctuaries have not served to save their advocates from being badgered, and even beaten, like dogs.

This is a fearful condition of things. Rash legislation and Executive connivance have brought us to the verge of a civil war; and yet he who opens his mouth to complain, does so at the risk of blows and mutilation, and perhaps even death. If a Senator, surrounded by the privileges of his position, may be pounded with bludgeons until consciousness is lost, what security can ordinary men feel against the bowie knife or the pistol?

We are anxious to know what the Senate will do to assert its injured dignity. We wait with earnest curiosity to see what will be the action of the House in regard to the member who has thus disgraced it. Will there be the usual time-serving and timidity—the usual truckling and apology on the one side—the usual temporary vapor and final submission on the other? A few days will determine this, but let the Senate and the House do, or fail to do, what may



seem good to them, we know the people of the North at least, and we should hope also that the people of the South, will be stirred with an indignation at this great wickedness, which will not be appeased until it has found its retribution.

*From the same of Saturday.*

The latest exhibition of chivalry is an advance upon every thing which has preceded it. A member of the House of Representatives goes into the Senate Chamber, and there makes upon a Senator an attack of such a nature that no unprejudiced jury of inquest would meet any difficulty in finding an indictment for an assault with intent to kill. It was done when the Senate had adjourned, but this was probably from no motive of respect to that body, but from the promptings of cowardice. The person attacked was taken at a disadvantage, and felled to the floor, before he could find any means of resistance or defence. It was a bloody, a brutal violence. Let us suppose that in the city of Philadelphia, or New York or Boston, a merchant in his counting-room, or a lawyer in his office were thus maltreated. Who would venture a word in defence of the assassin, for an assassin he would be considered, in purpose if not in the issue of his act. While we write the boys are clamoring in the streets, the "Extra" containing the account of the execution of a poor negro, for murder. But what are we to expect of the ignorant and the debased, who resent injury by violence, and in doing violence commit murder—what are we to expect of such people, if honorable members of the Congress of the United States shoot waiters, knock down editors, and beat Senators to insensibility?

The subject is to be investigated, and we trust that the Congress of the United States will vindicate itself by prompt action. The offender should be expelled, for no gentleman can recognize him, after such an act, as a colleague. We are prepared according to precedent to expect palliation of the offence in the reports of the members who have charge of the investigation; but this very habit of softening and excusing breaches not merely of privilege, but breaches of the peace, has been fruitful enough in mischief. It is scandalous that the House suffers the member under bail for trial for murder, to retain his seat; and if this last affair is smothered over, or the due vindication of the honor of the House is left unattempted the humiliation of the United States through her Legislature will be complete.

*The Philadelphia Ledger says:—*

In this country, where the Constitution guards the inviolability of the citizen, the legislative privilege, in practice at least, is more restricted. Congress but very rarely—in but three instances, we believe, in its history—having undertaken to punish breaches of its privilege. It has preferred to hand the offender over to the courts of law, where the character of the offence and the extent of the penalty are both well defined, though the power to provide for an undisturbed exercise of its functions undoubtedly still remains with Congress. If this assault upon Mr. Sumner is not a breach of privilege, it certainly is a flagrant outrage of more than ordinary turpitude, for it is not only a cruel personal assault, but it is an act the tendency of which is to restrict the freedom of debate in our National Councils, to interfere with the representative in the discharge of his duties to his constituents, and therefore endangering and impairing the functions of the legislature. The Senate, therefore, owes a duty to itself to see that the offender is handed over to the Grand Jury for indictment and trial; and if the House consult its own dignity, and has a proper regard to the protection due a legislator, it will expel Mr. Brooks from his seat in that body, for we presume the offender is the member of that name from South Carolina. In all the experience of ruffianism in Congress, we have never heard of a more wanton, brutal and unmanly act, than this attributed to Mr. Brooks.

*From the New York Courier and Enquirer.*

We will not enter upon the question whether Mr. Sumner's language was just and called for, or not. Upon that matter there may be different opinions.

It was certainly parliamentary. He delivered the whole speech without once being called to order. If there were personalities in it, they were not a tenth part so gross as those against himself; he has been compelled to listen to again and again in the Senate. It is true that his speech was full of satire and invective—satire the most cutting, and invective the most merciless—but they were directed against his adversaries in their public and not in their private relations. He did not make a charge, or borrow an illustration, or employ an epithet, that was not perfectly admissible in the field of senatorial debate. There was not one of them that could not easily be paralleled twenty times over, from the warfare of Chatham against the Walpoles and Grenvilles, Burke and Fox against Dundas and North, Brougham against Canning, O'Connell against Stanley, and Disraeli against Peel, or from that of the Randolphs, and the Quincys, and the Clays of our own National Legislature. It is just such a form of attack as must be expected, when men of real manhood and veritable brain are pitted against one another in a struggle between momentous principles; and the cause is in a bad way whose followers shrink from or whine about the blows of such a conflict.

The plain truth is that Mr. Sumner's great offence is his superiority to his opponents in the resources of rhetoric. There is not one of them that can match him in this respect. Douglas comes the nearest, but Douglas has never had training. He lacks culture, and, besides, his organization is naturally coarse. He cannot be severe without being abusive, nor sarcastic without being vulgar. In the slang of undefined but developing democracy he is an adept, and is first rate too at parliamentary clap-trap. But a really brilliant thing Douglas never said, nor can say. He never made a speech, nor a paragraph in a speech, that will bear reading three days after it was delivered. The interest of his harangues lies only in the excitement

of the hour. It is utterly beyond his power to produce anything that shall be a study for the intellect, or a pleasure to the imagination. He is at home only in that coarse style of argument and passion which forms the essence of successful mob-oratory. Labor would do his speeches no good, for he knows not how to elaborate; and his sneer the other day at Mr. Sumner, that this speech smelt of the lamp, was perfectly in keeping. The fling was true, undoubtedly. Mr. Sumner's speech exhibits in every line the trace of the most scrupulous workmanship. He doubtless aspired, by the most elaborate selection of themes, the aptest illustrations, the most chosen forms of phrase, and the most refined art in their arrangement, to produce a *finished* oration; but in doing this he did just what has been done by nearly every great orator, from Demosthenes down to Daniel Webster. There is no sin in that, nor presumption either. It would be a blessing to the country if more of our Congressmen had the scholarship and the ability, and the will, to do this same thing; it would relieve us of an almost insufferable amount of vulgar tirade and windy twaddle. But Mr. Douglas learned to his cost, before the day's debate was over, that a scholar could meet him on his own ground, and foil him at his own weapons. We were sorry to see Mr. Sumner descend to that level; but the provocation was very great, and the lesson to the victim, we are inclined to think, will prove very useful. The three Senators who, at the close of the speech, in no very chivalric spirit, made their combined onslaught upon him, have no reason to felicitate themselves upon success. They manifestly got what they did not expect.

But let all this be as it may, it would have been infinitely better for Mr. Sumner's enemies to have ended the whole business with Mr. Mason's inane sarcasm that he was *non compos mentis*, than for any of them to eke out their vengeance by physical force. This act has given that speech an emphasis such as no other speech in this country ever had—an emphasis that will make men's ears tingle, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Men cannot help listening to words that come to them winged and driven home with such a crime, and they will find a quick response in the indignant souls of tens of thousands, which also would



have remained unmoved. It only needs the implied sanction of the act by a majority of the Southern delegation in the House, in a refusal to sustain the proposition which will be submitted to expel Brooks from the seat he has disgraced, and concurrence in a white-washing resolution by a majority of Southern Senators, to make the speech complete in every effective accompaniment.

*From the New York Commercial of Friday evening.*

Matters have come to a pretty pass if on the floor of Congress—the Parliament of the United States—a Senator cannot freely utter his sentiments, we care not how extreme they may be, without imminent danger to himself personally from such ruffianly assaults. This is the most direct blow to freedom of speech yet made in this country. It is utterly without excuse or justification. If while Mr. Sumner was speaking, and supposing him to have been guilty of unprovoked personalities, some Senator, smarting under his invectives, had in a moment of high excitement personally assaulted him, the act might have had some shadow of excuse or palliation. But here it was otherwise. Mr. Brooks was not present when the speech was delivered, nor was he a member of that branch of the national legislature to which the speech was addressed. Whatever excitement was occasioned by its oral delivery had subsided. In truth, there was no provocation whatever for Mr. Brooks's outrage upon the Senator, and the only interpretation that can be put upon it is that Messrs. Brooks and Keitt had deliberately adopted the monstrous creed that any man who dared to utter sentiments which they deemed wrong or unjust should be brutally assailed, in order to deter others from like freedom of thought and speech. If this is to be tolerated, we may well ask what next?

*The New York Sun* says of Brooks:

He has heaped fuel on the flame of sectional agitation, and he has allowed his passion to impel him into the position of a traitor to the peace and dignity of his country.

*From the N. Y. Commercial of Saturday.*

THE EFFECT OF IT.—We commented yesterday upon the cowardly and brutal assault made by Mr. Brooks, of South Carolina, upon Senator Sumner, of Massachusetts. We have since conversed with men of all political parties, and we do not remember any event of so personal a character respecting which there was so universal a concurrence of sentiment. One effect of the outrage is very apparent. Gentlemen who have hitherto sympathized warmly with the South, and been the ready and unflinching defenders of the constitutional rights appertaining to Southern equality with the Northern States, are discouraged and disconcerted. The common remark is, that if Southern gentlemen have no better arguments than fists, canes, knives, and revolvers, and are determined to stifle freedom of speech by personal violence and assault—if they are going to show themselves so tyrannical, imperious and overbearing, that any man, not excepting the Legislators of the Republic, who finds fault with a Southern State or a Southern politician, is to be "punished" or "chastised" at the option of any Southern man who chooses to enact the part of a self-selected avenger—then it is impossible for republicans and freemen to sympathize with them, or defend them from epithets which they thus prove themselves to merit.

And we tell our Southern friends with all candor, and with all friendship, that unless they desire to convert the entire population of the free States into determined antagonists, they must unite with their conservative fellow-citizens in these States in frowning upon and denouncing all such attempts to bully and frighten those who differ in sentiment from them, and that perpetrated by Mr. P. S. Brooks upon Mr. Sumner. And more than this. They must abandon the system of intimidation—the practice of personal violence toward those who differ from them, so common in the South—the tar-and-feathering of men who oppose slavery, the cruel imprisonment of defenceless women because they dislike slavery, the opening of private correspondence and on evidence

thus obtained persecuting in every conceivable manner the writers of such correspondence—the resort to these and kindred unjustifiable means of destroying freedom of thought and speech, must be abandoned if they desire to disarm Abolitionists of their most powerful arguments, and maintain their own position in the Union.

With more than half a century's advocacy of constitutional and conservative doctrines to appeal to, we have a right to speak thus plainly to our Southern brethren. And it is time that the conservative press of the North should thus speak. The free States will submit to no such arrogance and imperious tyranny as is involved in these persecutions of men and women for their individual sentiments. Still less will they keep silence under such an outrage upon the freedom of speech as the half-murder of a Senator for uttering his sentiments on the floor of the Senate. They concede such freedom to all as a right, and they demand it for themselves as a right; and whatever is the consequence, they will never relinquish or surrender it. The issue is made in this case of Mr. Brooks, and it is for the Southern members of both Houses of Congress to meet the North fairly on this issue, and show themselves prompt to condemn his brutal attempt to stifle free utterance by assaulting the freeman who exercises that inalienable right of every American.

*From the New York Evening Post.*

Violence reigns in the streets of Washington; they are not safe for the man who speaks his mind without reserve, as Mr. Greeley proved the other day, when he was assaulted for commenting too freely upon the conduct of one of the Southern politicians. It had been supposed that the Senate Chamber, the room dedicated to the sittings of that "dignified body," as it has been called, was at least free from the intrusion of outside bullies, but violence has now found its way into the Senate Chamber. Violence lies in wait on all the navigable rivers and all the railways of Missouri, to obstruct those who pass from the free States to Kansas. Violence overhangs the frontier of that Territory like a storm-cloud charged with hail and lightning. Violence has carried election after election in that Territory; violence has imposed upon the inhabitants a fictitious Legislature and a tyrannical code of laws, and violence is mustering her myrmidons to put that code in execution. In short, violence is the order of the day; the North is to be pushed to the wall by it, and this plot will succeed, if the people of the free States are as apathetic as the slaveholders are insolent.

*From the Providence Journal.*

The measure of justice that any Northern man can expect at Washington is indicated by the proceedings of the two Houses of Congress yesterday, in relation to the assault upon Mr. Sumner. Mr. Cass, who has just had an unpleasant personal discussion with the victim of this cowardly brutality, is placed at the head of the committee, to which Mr. Seward was entitled by parliamentary usage. Not a man of the party to which Mr. Sumner belongs, and which includes some of the most accomplished and honorable members of the Senate, is on the committee. Who, in all that body, has borne himself with greater dignity, with greater forbearance, than Mr. Seward? Why is he excluded from a committee appointed on his own motion? Because he is neither a Democrat nor a Southerner, and the ruffian who committed the assault is both. So far as we can judge, there is but a single man on the committee—Mr. Allen—whose real sympathies are not rather with the perpetrator than with the victim of the crime. The Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate, a strong man, looked quietly on when the deed was done, and not a word of rebuke is administered to him. A Senator "improves the occasion" to propose a new rule restricting the latitude of debate, and prohibiting the discreditable personalities which have been uniformly allowed and applauded, till it was found that both sides could indulge in them.

In the House—more than a quarter of the members absent—68 representatives made themselves parties to the outrage by voting against a resolution of inquiry. Had a man from a free State made such an assault upon a slaveholder, he would have been ex-



delled from the House—as he would have deserved—before the chaplain had finished the opening prayer, and would now be under bonds to take his trial for an assault with intent to kill. If anything could arouse the spirit of the North;—but Mr. Webster was right, “there is no North.”

*From the Providence Post (Dem.)*

SHAME! SHAME!—We blush for human nature when we make record of an outrage so shameful and diabolical as that referred to in our despatch from Washington. It is an insult to the country, and a disgrace to civilization; and it will do more to arouse and foster sectional agitation than ten thousand speeches from Senator Sumner, no matter how fanatical, and violent, and abusive, could possibly have done.

*From the Albany Evening Journal.*

HOW THE SENATE REDRESSES WRONG.—The honorable the Senate of the United States takes sides with the Bully Brooks. It was moved yesterday, by Gov. Seward, that a Committee of Investigation be appointed to report in reference to the assault on Senator Sumner. Common courtesy, as well as parliamentary usage, demands that the mover of such a Committee should be its Chairman; and common justice demands that at least one of the assaulted man's friends should be placed among its members.

But the Senate, regardless alike of justice, usage, or courtesy, appoint Messrs. Cass, Allen, Dodge, Pearce and Geyer, three Administration Democrats and two Southern Slaveholders! Every man of them is linked, by either partisan or sectional ties, to the side of Brooks. Not one of them belongs to the same political party as Mr. Sumner. Not one is even a New England man. This is the spirit in which the Senate prosecutes an inquiry into an offence against its own dignity, and violence to one of its own members!

*From the New York Times.*

No severity of language—no violence of debate,—could furnish any excuse for the assault of the ruffian Brooks upon Mr. Sumner. But in this case there is wanting altogether the usual apology of the provocation of unjustly severe and aggressive speech. Every man who has sat in the Senate Chamber and seen and heard Butler, of South Carolina, during the discussion of any question touching Slavery, knows well that Mr. Sumner's picture of him in his great speech is not exaggerated, but is toned down, and altogether moderate. The South Carolinian's manner, his speech, his appearance, excite in a Northern gentleman mingled feelings of astonishment, anger, and disgust. Insolent, dictatorial and contemptuous—with a head of a half-breed and the voice and temper of an overseer—painfully discordant in his exhibition of young violence coursing through a trembling and bent form, and agitating whitened locks hanging over his maroon face as well as down his shoulders—the South Carolina Senator browbeats and flies at every opponent of Slavery Propagandism, and spits coarse abuse upon every measure of Freedom, and cracks his plantation whip at the greatest and best men in this nation. His customary demeanor in the American Senate is the most humiliating spectacle in the city of Washington. The picture of him in Mr. Sumner's speech is but an outline sketch. A likeness would have excited astonishment in all accustomed to think of Daniel Webster, William H. Seward, Silas Wright, John Bell, Lewis Cass, and Henry Clay in connection with the Senate of the United States.

But the assault upon Mr. Sumner was not on account of the injured vanity of the Southern Senator. It was the resentment of his speech. It was the answer to his argument against Slavery—an answer already fearfully common, and which threatens to be the *ultima ratio* of Southern logic throughout the Republic. The editor of the Tribune was replied to with the club—the claim of the Kansas settlers to employ free labor instead of slave labor is replied to with the rifle and the bowie-knife—the question of self-government in the Western Territories the South proposes to debate with ball cartridges and bayonets.

Now! The logic of the plantation, brute violence and might, has at last risen where it was inevitable it should rise to—the Senate of the United States. If we are not virtuous and firm, in the discharge of our duty to ourselves and the Republic, to strangle this serpent of slavery extension, it will fold us at every point in its grasp. State liberty cannot long survive the extinguishment of Federal freedom. And is the Senate of the United States longer free to the North?

**Washington Correspondence of the Atlas.**

WASHINGTON, Friday Evening, May 23, 1856.

Mr. Sumner's friends have no representation on the committee raised in the Senate, nominally to investigate, but really to whitewash, the outrage of yesterday. Everybody is amazed at the shameless audacity of the Senate, made patent to the world by such a composition of such a committee. You will observe it was selected by ballot; a method of selection which takes away all individual responsibility.

Mr. Bright, the President of the Senate, is prepared to go great lengths, but the pro-slavery leaders did not dare to trust even him. Acting with the eyes of the public upon him, Mr. Bright would certainly have placed at least *one* Republican upon the committee.

In the House, the cause of justice fared better. The test vote was upon sustaining the Speaker's decision that Mr. Campbell's resolution for raising a committee to inquire into the attack upon Mr. Sumner, was privileged. If the Speaker's decision had been over-ruled, it would have required the unattainable majority of two thirds, to sustain the introduction of the resolution. The Speaker was sustained by a majority of fourteen, and this was the *real* majority in favor of an investigation. The *apparent* majority on the final vote was larger.

The House Committee will make thorough work, and if they are able to elicit the truth, it will appear that the attack upon Mr. Sumner was understood and arranged and pushed on by a very large number of persons.

The Southern men here, so far as I personally know or can learn from others, sustain, justify or apologize for the outrage, and exult over it. You will correctly infer the tone here from the tone of the National Intelligencer, which, with some decent instincts, is yet wholly dependent upon pro-slavery patronage. The Intelligencer only musters courage enough to speak of the event as “*a painful occurrence!*” A little regret, but not a syllable of reprehension.

The Southern gentlemen in the House, today, resorted as usual to metaphysical constructions of the Constitution to shield Messrs. Brooks and Keitt. The country is too much accustomed to this sort of thing. The House has the absolute right to expel members. There is no restriction on the power. The safeguard against its abuse is, that a majority of two-thirds is required for its exercise. It is plain to any understanding, that no cause for expulsion can be more clearly good, than the display of such ruffianly and murderous propensities as make a man's society dangerous and revolting.



ADDRESS OF THE METHODIST CLERGY-  
MEN NOW IN BOSTON TO MR. SUMNER.

TO THE HON. CHARLES SUMNER.

Dear Sir:—Permit a body of your constituents, Ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the city of Boston and vicinity, to express to you, in the form of a friendly epistle, the feelings which recent events in your personal history have awakened in our hearts. Though it is our office "To lure to brighter worlds, and to lead the way," we deem a just regard for the well-being of the present world in no way incompatible with the duties of our high vocation. We cherish a deep interest in the greatest moral struggle of our age and country—the contest between American freedom and American despotism. For this reason, we have intently marked your career as a combatant in the arena of our National Legislature. And, now, as on a former occasion, we beg you to accept our *unqualified approval* of your course, and our *most cordial thanks* for your recent Herculean effort in behalf of Kansas, and of Constitutional freedom everywhere beneath our National flag. We thank you, that, with a strong hand, you have unmasked the nefarious crime, and with an unflinching tongue, rebuked its craven apologists, and, with true statesmanship and unanswerable argument, demonstrated the *true remedy*. We congratulate ourselves that a representative from Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill, standing in the Senate Chamber, "encompassed round with foes," was found "unmoved, unshaken, unseparated, unterrified" in his loyalty to the noble cause which he has espoused, and that he

—In bold voice and clear,  
Poured thick and fast the burning words  
Which tyrants quake to hear."

Were slavery, that relic of barbarism, tottering on the verge of its eternal downfall—were the monster hoary, and decrepit with age, drawing up his feet in his filthy bed to die, we might counsel you to forbear to blazon broadly over our land the stupendous atrocities of the dying old culprit; and, in silence, with averted face, to bury the putrescent carcass from the gaze of the nations. But, to this desired consummation, the baleful institution of African bondage has not come. The deadly serpent must be throttled with strong hands before he can be entombed forever. The slave power never was stronger in this republic than it is today. It sits enthroned over this nation, as Jupiter sat on Mount Olympus, and shook the subject world at his nod. It offensively exercises the prerogatives of sovereignty; whom it wills it sets up, and whom it wills it plucks down, and there is none to stay its hand; "for on the side of the oppressor there is power." Instead of evincing decay and paralysis, we see the monster nerving his arm with the strength of youth, and girding on his armor for conquest, defiantly shouting his watchword, "*Extension, EXTENSION!*" trampling down all the time-honored landmarks of Liberty, while Freedom flees appalled before his frowning visage. We thank you—that, in this fearful exigency of our country, you have distinctly apprehended your duty, and have nobly thrown yourself into the breach, sounded the clarion of alarm, parried the deadly thrust of enthroned despotism aimed at the heart of Liberty, and, "forgetful of self, have stood forth before your age, and gathered into your own generous bosom the shafts of Tyranny and Wrong, in order to make a pathway for Truth."

In the personal sufferings to which your vindication of the right has exposed you, you share our warmest sympathies. As truth is *one*, so are the lovers of truth *one*; hence, every blow which has been inflicted on you has made a wound in our hearts. Yet even in this flagrant outrage which American philanthropy has suffered, in your person, we read the prophecy of her speedy victory. By this act of violence oppression publishes its own defeat on the battle-ground of moral controversy, and kindles anew the expiring altar fires of freedom in myriads of bosoms; it "turns the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame."

Permit us, in conclusion, to assure you, that when we kneel at our family altars, or bow in our Sabbath

assemblies, we continue to invoke the Father of Mercies, the God of the oppressed, to smile upon you, and to strengthen your heart, and to nerve your arm in the holy cause of freedom; that He may shield you from the wrath of bloody men, and grant unto you length of days in your present official station, or in one of still higher influence, and, after many years of willing service in the cause of truth, and of valiant advocacy of the wailing millions, you may receive the recompense of the Christian philanthropist, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Signed by order of the Preachers' meeting, held this 27th of May, 1856.

D. S. KING, Chairman.

PLINY WOOD, Secretary.

GEN. WEBB'S LETTER.

The letter from Gen. JAMES WATSON WEBB to the New York Courier and Enquirer, in which he discusses the Sumner outrage in an admirable spirit, is worthy of publication in a pamphlet form. We subjoin a few extracts:

INFLUENCE OF SLAVERY ON SOCIETY.

That slavery is a curse to the country in which it is permitted to have a foothold, except in those Southern regions where white labor is impossible, is sufficiently demonstrated by the present condition and future prospects of the more Northern slaveholding States; that it is demoralizing in its influence upon the people among whom it exists, is rendered equally apparent by the habits and customs, the violence and habitual disregard of life, and the whole tone of thought and action among the people who are born and educated amidst its influences. That it is an aristocratic and anti-Republican institution, is proclaimed by the very terms of "master" and "slave," by which alone it can be described; and like all other aristocratic institutions, it produces specimens of the highest refinement, the gentlest habits, and the greatest culture, only to render more conspicuous the general brutality and debasing recklessness which it imposes upon the great mass of the people. The Southern gentleman and the Southern lady, are therefore noble specimens of humanity, well calculated to grace and adorn every society in which they may be cast; and nobody estimates more highly, or appreciates more thoroughly this small class than I do. But I cannot shut my eyes to the fact, that the superiority of the few to whom I allude, is purchased at the expense of the many; and the truth of this observation will be conceded by every candid person who will ask himself the question, where—in what section of our country—whether in the slave or free States—occur the most street fights, homicides, brawls, and acts of violence? I am safe in saying that during the past five years the deaths or injuries in the slave States from these causes would average at least two a week; while in the free States, during the same period, they would not average two per annum; and even in those cases the probability is, that the actors in them would prove to be the inhabitants of the slave States.

I make this remark more in sorrow than any spirit of boasting, for the double purpose of proving to my countrymen the true cause of the demoralization which exists in this, the capital of the nation, and to rouse them to a sense of their duty to themselves and their posterity, in resisting, as one man, the extension of this blighting curse into the now free territory, and over the virgin soil of Kansas.

A DIG FOR THE DOUGHFACES.

If there be on God's footstool, one human being more entitled than all others, to the contempt of honest men, it is the Member of Congress from a free State, who, entertaining the sentiments which all our Northern members do, and without a solitary one of the excuses for his vote which naturally cluster around those who are born and educated amid the influences and tendencies of the peculiar institution, yet, in miserable subserviency to this Administration, and the pro-slavery doctrines to which it is committed, dares not vindicate the Constitution of the country by punishing one who put at defiance its provisions,



derogation of our liberties, may mourn over the demoralization of slavery, and the overbearing violence and disregard of law and civilization, which it engenders in the masses, while it exalts and refines the favored few; but it rarely calls forth a feeling of contempt. Even its vices and its crimes are, in the main, manly ones; and whatever of contempt the late votes in the House of Representatives may have engendered, it belongs solely to the unscrupulous members from the free States, who consented to do this dirty work of party, and who have been so aptly denominated "Dough faces," by the very men, who, having benefited by the treason, turned from the traitors with loathing and disgust.

#### PLEASANT CONDITION OF AFFAIRS IN WASHINGTON.

To attempt to describe the actual state of affairs here in the Capital of the Nation, would be a hopeless task. It would not be believed were one from Heaven to proclaim it trumpet-tongued through the land; and yet no one can live here, as I have for the last six months, without feeling his blood boil at witnessing the fears and apprehensions of fatal consequences, on the part of our Northern men, if any one ventures openly and manfully to speak the truth in the bar-rooms, on the corners of the streets, and on the floor of Congress. And there is reason for these fears. This is a city in a Slave District; its tone is the tone and sentiments of Slavery; its visitors are mostly from the slave States, and a large majority of them (not the better portion of them), carry pistols and bowie-knives; and what is more, they have, both here and elsewhere, proved that they will not hesitate on occasion, freely to use them. They are overbearing, threatening, and defiant in their manner; and our people have been overawed and cowed. Sumner, a man of peace, ventured to beard them, and we perceive his fate. Wilson put them at defiance; but at the same time he put *pistols* in his pocket, and publicly declared that he held his person sacred from assault! Greeley carried a revolver during the latter part of his sojourn here; and then, and then only, even he was no longer molested; and since the brutal assault on Mr. Sumner, two-thirds of the anti-Nebraska members of Congress, and all who claim and exercise the right of free speech, as distinct from abusive language, or a bullying, threatening manner, have arrived at the conclusion, that the time has come when it is a duty they owe alike to themselves and to the country, to assert, and, if necessary, to vindicate this great Constitutional privilege, and to be in a situation at all times, effectually to protect themselves from the Bully and Assassin.

#### THE DUTY OF NORTHERN MEN VISITING WASHINGTON.

This is not a flattering picture to go abroad, but it is true, and recent events prove it. No reasonable man should doubt that the Slave power have unalterably determined to extend the area of their now merely local institution; and if possible to render it *National*. The bowie-knife, the pistol, and the bludgeon are all elements to be used in effecting this result; the latter practically, and on the most trivial occasions—the two former only theoretically and except under extraordinary circumstances. They are designed to operate upon the fears of the free States; and our people may as well be told at once, that when they visit this city they should come determined, at all proper times and in all proper places, openly and manfully but quietly and in gentlemanly and courteous language, to speak their honest convictions of the heinous crime perpetrated by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; of the iniquitous project of forcing slavery into Kansas; of their regard for the Constitution and the Constitutional rights of every section of the country; of the wickedness of slavery extension; of its being a merely local institution, with which the General Government may not and shall not meddle; of the right of every Slave State to be protected in the enjoyment of this and every other merely local institution they may establish, not incompatible with the Constitution; and of our unalterable determination to stand by that great charter of our liberties, and the liberty of speech which it guarantees, and never to

of the foot of territory north of 36° 30' to the blighting curse of Slavery.

It is the right of freemen boldly to express these sentiments here, as well as elsewhere; I tell them in all sincerity, that the time has arrived when they must do so, courteously but fearlessly, on all proper occasions and in all proper places, or we shall all, and speedily too, become slaves of the slave power, as are their plantation *chattels*; or what is far more degrading, we shall become the same pliant, cringing and sycophantic instruments of the Slaveocracy, as are the Northern doughfaces who are made by the present Administration to discourse just such music as their Southern masters may be pleased to dictate for the time being.

#### BROOKS' CRIME FORCIBLY CHARACTERIZED.

In my comments upon the recent outrage in the Senate, I have intentionally kept out of view both Mr. Sumner and Mr. Brooks—looking at it solely as an insult to the country, a trampling upon the Constitution, and an outrage upon the sanctity of the Senate Chamber, which merited death on the spot from any patriot present, who was in a position to inflict the punishment.

#### MR. DOUGLAS ASTONISHED!

It is due to Mr. Sumner, however, to say, as a fact familiar to all who are accustomed to read the debates in the Senate, that in each and every of the last five sessions of Congress, Messrs. Seward, Hale and Sumner have received at the hands of Senators from the Slave States and the pliant tools of the North, ten times—nay, a hundred times—the abuse, which in his late incomparable speech he so scathingly hurled back upon his assailants. All this has heretofore been submitted to in silence; and, in my judgment, too long submitted to; and now, when forbearance ceases to be a virtue, and the member for Massachusetts, in vindication of his manhood, and in the exercise of his privilege, retorts upon his assailants a tythe only of the abuse they have so long and so unsparingly heaped upon him and his friends, he is told that his "audacity" is absolutely incomprehensible, and his purpose inconceivable! Alike astounded that the man of peace, and the meek, modest and retiring scholar, should dare to repel any attack whatever, and cowed and crushed by its scathing severity, Mr. Douglas exclaims, under the smart of the wounds inflicted, "What does the Senator mean by this attack upon the majority of this body? What, I ask, does the Senator mean? What does he want us to do? We already refuse to know him socially. Does he want us to kick him? I ask again—Does he want us to kick him?" Mr. Mason, of Virginia, follows in a similar vein; and Mr. Brooks, of South Carolina, a member of the House of Representatives, resorts to the bludgeon, and assails him in his seat in the Senate Chamber of the United States.

#### FREEDOM OF DEBATE.

"And for any speech or debate, in either House, they" (the Senators and Representatives) "shall not be questioned in any other place."—*Constitution, Art. 1, Sect. 6.*

"Each House may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and with the concurrence of two-thirds expel a member."—*Ibid, Art. 1, Sect. 6.*

The shock of an outrage has bruised and stunned the heart of New England, like a sudden grief. But before it is forgotten that heart will awake, with a throb of fiercer energy than has convulsed it for seventy years. There is no need of words to sting it into a more speedy consciousness.

The assertion, from any quarter, that "the Senate Chamber was the proper place to attack Mr. Sumner," either adds the insult of a quibble to the injury of a crime, or means that every man in Massachusetts shall take to himself a portion of the stripes inflicted on her Senator, as in his official, representative capacity. There was no name for parricide among the early Romans, and no legislation for the unimagined crime. In like innocence the framers of the Constitution, not conceiving that the freedom of debate would be awed by violence in the Senate Chamber itself, or meaning by the word "house" a house in session, provided only against outrage elsewhere. The insult



ness—assassinate, grave as he does, does not prevent her from pitying the dishonor brought upon South Carolina. An injury may be forgiven and forgotten; but infamy is immortal, and defies the power of oblivion.

The real cause of grave foreboding today is, that any doubt or uncertainty as to the action of Congress—that any apprehension that a third of either House should be willing to perpetuate the leprosy of their shame, by retaining the member from that blasted Commonwealth—should weigh on the minds of men. Such a doubt shows into what disregard a little more than sixty years has brought the Constitution. It reflects the popular impression, as to the self-respect of gentlemen, the dignity of public men, the majesty of the country, and its supremest law. If a huge majority of the Senate and the House do not indorse the reported opinion of the gallant member from chivalrous Kentucky, we may well despair of our experiment in self-government. The republic, with fillibusters in its borders, civil war in its territories, treachery in its councils, and savages on its western frontier and in its capitol, will be the modern by-word of contempt through the world.

The insolent arrogance which prompts an insignificant member of a lower house to question a member of the Senate for words spoken in debate—the manner and place of that questioning—the affectation of a gallant delay—the absence even of any notice to the party, that, if he would not *fight* for his words, he should be horsewhipped or commit manslaughter for them—the fury of this unforewarned attack upon a professed non-resistant, while he was sitting down and wedged in his place—all these circumstances, while they throw a Quixotic air of mad absurdity over this tragedy, are unable to exalt it to the baseness of ordinary cowardice. But the past is done, and the present and future must be provided for.

Great principles of law remain as changeless guides for ages after the villain, whose crimes established and developed them, has rotted on the gibbet. The expulsion of a "disorderly" member regards, on the same principles, the future, more than the present or the past. It is not to be viewed as punishment of a criminal or expiation to a victim, for it may be inadequate to either; but as a great precedent in political legislation, which shall determine the fate of the Union. For, if it be once admitted that there is a *recognized* power beyond that of a presiding officer to punish personality in debate,—the admission will guide the suffrage of many quiet men, who, being unwilling to lose the use of their representatives for a few days or weeks of an active session, sincerely mourn that it did not accord with the Providence of God, to impress our Senator with a deep sense of the *probability* that he would be assaulted for his speech, and also of the *propriety*, under the circumstances, of killing his assailants where they stood. And this regret is independent of party taint, or tinge, or creed. It is a constitutional and essential plea in bar to the jurisdiction of any power beyond the Senate and its presiding officer. Every science has its technical rules that limit it; and parliamentary rules are or ought to be supreme, as to debate. Let their power be enlarged, if need be; but let no extrinsic rules intermeddle with the specialty. Otherwise, if the frown of Congress does not settle the question as to the proper judge and avenger of words spoken in debate, one of three things will result: Either Northern men will hold their tongues from fear, and the North will be a conquered province of the South;—or they must submit to personal chastisement occasionally;—or they must cross hilts with their antagonists. How long it will be before they call upon their constituents to take a part in the exercise, every man must judge.

Do not let us misunderstand the true question, unblinded by political or personal pre-judgments, either way. It matters not, whether Mr. Sumner be wrong or right, in applying to the highest of all civil contracts—the Constitution—a rule of interpretation not admitted in the meanest; it matters not whether he be a non-resistant, from the rankest cowardice or the noblest Christian principle; whether he be courteous or uncourteous, honorable or base. He was sent to Congress, not to be a ring fighter, or a sword player, or a pistol shot; but to use the talents that God gave

him in the *intellectual* labor of statesmanship. His mission was to think as acutely, to speak as vigorously, to vote as wisely, as he knew how. And the simple question is, whether mind, in the sacred halls of mind, shall be crushed and awed by *matter*. The action of Congress will answer it, and will determine whether a Senator shall sit upon a throne of intellectual freedom, or upon a swivel, loaded to the muzzle and turning every way.

Two races, distinct in temper, in social customs, interests, opinions—in all things but the accident of a common union, meet together at Washington in the antagonism of fierce debate. That supernal majesty of intellect, which can subdue an opponent's reason without wounding his heart, is the gift of the God-like, only, among men. Denunciation, invective, ridicule, are the natural weapons of most *able* men. If any fear of a challenge, as the consequence of their use, prevents their use, *the mind of a district is fettered, and representation becomes unequal*.

The pistol is, of course, no argument. The death of Hamilton rebuts any barbaric notion, even, that it offers an appeal to God. But what is to be done in the case of two litigants, who differ about the jurisdiction? If the Northerner, regardful of the laws and sentiments in which he has been educated, attempts to prevent a collision, by a gentle tameness of expression, he dissatisfies his constituents, and, perhaps, loses his cause. If, on the other hand, under loose rules of debate, he launches the rugged crystals of his mind with cutting force, he subjects himself to a challenge or a rencontre. The very men at the North, who would turn a cold shoulder upon him for accepting the proffer, indulge, moreover, in a quiet sneer, if he reject it. Popular opinion, which makes or may make the law, dispenses, at the South, applause, and at the North, dishonor, for the same illegal act. Those rules of regal courts, which have capitally punished a blow within the precincts, are the philosophic result of prudence and necessity. They are suited to the barbarism of every age. Such must

be maintained against those uncivilized animals whom popular caprice may authorize to mingle with gentlemen at Washington;—or, street rencontres must be frequent;—or, duelling must be nationalized.

Otherwise, feeble men must be selected to go to Congress, as under paid laborers, to a dangerous, distasteful toil. For the intellectual men are few who will enter upon political life with a wise, well-balanced appreciation of its price and its rewards. More than an education of the head—the philosophical training of the heart—is needed; and that undoubting self-reliance, which will, if need be, regardless of opinion, sacrifice the pride of personal courage upon the altar of tact and courtesy and a humble duty; but which, *unpledged*, and not unwisely ready to stake a future of useful ability against every twelve stone of carrion that seeks a stormy exit from infamy, is yet strong enough, in personal judgment, to *feel*, when peace has been cultivated in vain, and the patriot's toil is done, that the blood, which marks the track of freedom, is equally the blood of a martyr, whether it drops before the blow of the ruffian, the pistol of the duellist, or the serried lines of an armed host.

H. B. S.











































