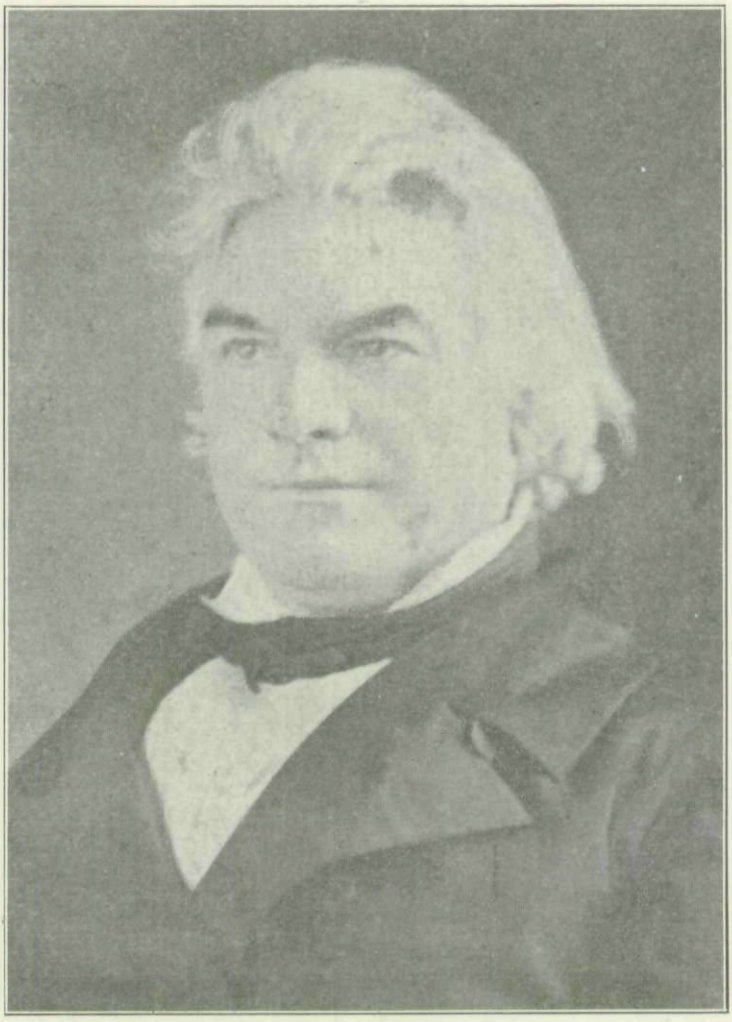

ANDREW PICKENS BUTLER
United States Senator from South Carolina, 1847-57.
From a photograph loaned by Mr. Reid Elkins, Greenville, South Carolina.

ANNALS OF IOWA

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JAMES W. GRIMES VERSUS THE SOUTHRONS

Being some account of the clash between Mr. James W. Grimes of Iowa and Senator Andrew P. Butler of South Carolina and Mr. Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia on the hustings in Iowa in the gubernatorial campaign of 1854 when the "Opposition," or the nascent Republican party, secured possession of the seats of authority in the first free state of the Louisiana Purchase and in its representation in the national Senate at Washington.

BY F. I. HERRIOTT
Professor in Drake University

It is now nearly three quarters of a century since the state of Iowa and its political affairs passed under the control of the Republican party—seventy-two years to be exact. Only once in the intervening years, since Mr. James W. Grimes was elected governor of Iowa in 1854, has there been any serious disturbance in the assurance of the leaders of the party of their general and particular control in the state's affairs since their initial victory.

Between 1890 and 1894 the predominance of the Republican party in Iowa was threatened. Because of the violent discontent of a large proportion of their adherents with the policy of prohibition of the traffic in alcoholic stimulants—chiefly the foreign-born resident in eastern Iowa—the Democratic party gained control of the governor's office and of almost a majority in the lower House of the General Assembly. The Republicans, however, did not loose their grip, for despite a prolonged deadlock they were able in the joint session of the two houses to muster a working majority and to return to the national Senate Mr. William B. Allison as his own successor for the third time.

During the past year (1925-1926) the Republicans have again found themselves in a very curious complex of contradiction and exasperating uncertainty. In consequence their authority and unanimity in the national Senate have again been threatened because of a cleavage within their ranks, which cleavage has produced increasing bitterness and dissension within their party councils and split their strength at the polls. Judging from the current comment in the Republican press of the state it is by no means certain that Iowa has two Republican senators at Washington; at least at this writing (April 4, 1926) it is not certain whether the present junior senator, Mr. Smith W. Brookhart, a nominal Republican, will be unseated and a Democrat, Mr. Daniel W. Steck, will be seated upon the basis of a nearly unanimous report of a Republican committee on elections of the national Senate. The confusion of both gods and philosophers has been enhanced by the fact that the chief local opposition to the seating of the present junior senator has been led by the Republican State Committee of the party in Iowa.[1]

In consequence of the present predicament of the major party in Iowa there may be more than academic interest for the average citizen, to say nothing of the practical partisan, in the conditions and premises, the programs and procedure of the party leaders when the Republicans first won their right to occupy the seats of authority in the commonwealth in 1854.

I

The sun rises and sets, the moon waxes and wanes, the seasons come and go with their rain and snow and intermittent flood and drought today more or less as they did seventy-five years ago. Human nature displays itself in much the same fashion, the chief difference, if any, being that the conditions and forms of life and human industry and modes of living are different. The people nowadays live in urban rather than in rural and sparsely settled regions. Mechanical devices do the bulk of man's labor rather than his hands. The modes of communication and transportation have completely changed the practical methods in social relations; they have extended the benefits and allurements of the

[1]On April 12, 1926, the Senate by a vote of 45 to 41 unseated Mr. Brookhart and declared his contestant, Mr. Steck, entitled to his seat in the Senate. Sixteen (16) Republicans concurred with twenty-nine (29) Democrats in the action. Thirty-one (31) Republicans, nine (9) Democrats, and one (1) Farm-Labor voted in the negative.

city to the country, or brought the farmer and his folk within the city areas; all of which affect the procedure in politics in city and country intimately. But the *genus politicum* has not changed his character, marks, or *modus operandi*. If these facts are kept constantly in mind in the analysis and interpretation of the antecedent developments and complexes of conditions controlling the party leaders in Iowa in 1854, we shall be surer footed and come nearer discerning the basic factors and forces determining the outcome in a contest which has not been very generally understood either by academic historians or popular commentators and eulogists of the Republican party.

Latter-day writers dealing with the beginnings of the Republican party either in Iowa or in the nation at large are likely to have their opinions and interpretations affected by the colors of the lights produced by the Civil War and the momentous changes resulting therefrom. The leaders of the Republican party, and notably Abraham Lincoln, guided the national government in the convulsion which concluded in the abolition of slavery within our dominions. Humanitarians and idealists have joined in a universal chorus of applause of emancipation. The eulogists of the Republican party, looking back upon the heroic days of its beginnings through the fused varicolored lights of that humanitarian struggle, have easily inferred that the auguries and portents were all clear and unequivocal, and the initial victories of the party indicated unmistakably that *vox populi* was *vox dei*. A close, critical scrutiny of the election of 1854 in Iowa gives no warrant for such an inference or assumption.

All signs on the political horizon on January 1, 1854, suggested emphatically that the "Administration" party, namely the national Democratic party, would continue in control of both the state and the national government. The so-called "Proslavery" party had every reason to feel that in Iowa, at least, it was thoroughly entrenched in power. The "Opposition," as its miscellany of critics and opponents were generally called, was a most variegated collection of mutually repellant particles. For numerous rather emphatic reasons there was little or no coherence and effective concentration within what were called the "Antislavery" forces.

Contemporary commentators—and some latter-day writers also

—refer to Mr. Grimes's election as a Whig success. The assertion does not have very substantial premises. In consequence of the overwhelming defeat of the Whigs in the national presidential campaign of 1852 that party at the beginning of the canvass of 1854 was in a state of sorry depression and demoralization—in very truth it was in a state of rapid disintegration and was really moribund. During the year 1853 its adherents were so benumbed that they did not have energy enough to call a convention to nominate a few candidates for state offices to be filled that year.

The tremendous reaction produced in the national theater by Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska bill, repealing the Missouri Compromise limiting the northern boundaries of slavery, suddenly aroused the flagging energies of the Antislavery Whigs. But the public revulsion simultaneously produced a violent internecine factional conflict within the Whig circles. The "Cotton" Whigs and the "Conscience" Whigs, the "Silver Greys" and the "Seward" Whigs instantly flew at each others' throats, or flew apart. Bitterness and dissension, passion and prejudice, rancor and suspicion impelled their discussion and thought and split their counsels. Harmony of views and unity of action were next to impossible. The call for the Whig state convention was denounced as a "great blunder" by the *Des Moines Valley Whig* of Keokuk, February 16, 1854, and it declared that there was general dissatisfaction anent the call in that "part of the state."

The so-called Whig convention which assembled on February 22, 1854, at Iowa City, while largely attended by the belligerent divisions of the Antislavery wing of the party, was not a body whose deliberations and decisions enhanced or insured the probability of success at the polls for the candidates and platform which they decided upon. These were put through by contentious and insistent groups who cared naught for the sullen resistance of the Silver Grays and Cotton Whigs who constituted such a large proportion of the wealth and old-time leadership of the party.

Mr. James W. Grimes of Burlington who was nominated for governor had been for a decade a conspicuous and forceful leader of the Whig party. He was one of the leaders at the Burlington bar, and therefore of the state at large. He was a man of great

natural ability and of noteworthy force of character. But he had been an outspoken and downright type of Antislavery Whig and he suffered the normal consequence of such forthrightness. He had a host of sharp critics and personal enemies, who either resented his personal character or success, or disliked him because of his pronounced views upon the issues involved in slavery.

Within a month the demoralization within the ranks of the Whigs, or more correctly the Opposition, became both apparent and alarming. Three of the candidates nominated at Iowa City either refused to accept the honor tendered them, or resigned and refused to run after canvassing the chances or their circumstances—Mr. Simeon Waters of Mount Pleasant, the nominee for secretary of state; Mr. Eliphalet Price of Elkader, the nominee for treasurer of state; and Dr. George Shedd, the nominee for superintendent of public instruction. The Administration or Democratic press indulged in much sardonic humor anent the disinclination of Mr. Grimes's party associates to take the risks of the campaign with him at the head of the ticket.[2] Such a condition produced serious adverse reactions upon party morale and prestige. The sorry state of mind among the Whigs was frankly suggested when the *Fairfield Ledger* on March 30, 1854, proclaimed that the refusal of so many men to stand as candidates of the party had produced a predicament which "calls for the holding of another convention to fill up the ticket."

During March Mr. Grimes and his Antislavery co-workers successfully negotiated an alliance with the Free-soilers. The latter met at Crawfordsville in Washington County on March 28 to nominate a state ticket. Dr. George F. Magoun claims the dis-

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[2]The following editorial notes from the *Miners' Express* of Dubuque are instructive and they are given entire:

DECLINED

It seems to be fashionable nowadays to decline nominations—that is in the Whig party. So fashionable is it that there are some men declining who we never supposed could muster the courage or exhibit the hard-heartedness to forsake their party. E. Price of Clayton County who was recently nominated by the Whig, Abolition, and Maine Law convention, for the office of state treasurer, declines the honor intended to be conferred.—From the *Daily Miners' Express*, March 16, 1854.

DECLINATIONS—TROUBLE IN THE WIGWAM

The Abolition coalition which the Whig party negotiated in its recent convention at Iowa City, does not seem to be well received. The nomination of Simeon Waters for secretary of state, a notorious Abolitionist, and the silent understanding to make Dr. Shedd an independent candidate for superintendent, another Abolitionist, has so outraged the feelings of the better portion of the Whig party, that it has been thought prudent to withdraw from the canvass the names of both of these individuals. In place of Dr. Shedd, I. I. Stewart has been substituted. Who takes Mr. Waters' place on the Whig ticket, we are not as yet informed.—From the *Daily Miners' Express*, Dubuque, Iowa, May 13, 1854.

tinction of convincing them that Mr. Grimes was a true-blue antagonist of slavery and induced them to agree to the withdrawal of their candidate for governor and the open endorsement of Mr. Grimes.[3] That accomplishment came dangerously near proving a fatal tactical blunder. Its announcement produced a violent revulsion among many of the strong old-line Whigs. The *Hawkeye* published in his home city of Burlington and the leading Whig organ of the state, immediately denounced the alliance, declared Mr. Grimes an Abolitionist and unworthy of the confidence or support of the Whigs.[4] It was a body blow and seriously weakened his otherwise unfavorable prospects.

Another serious cause of weakness was the aggressiveness of the temperance or prohibition forces, or the "Maine law" party, as the advocates of such drastic sumptuary legislation were then generally designated. They were getting under marked headway in the state and the major parties were each affected—the Whig party more than the Democratic party. The momentum of the agitation may be inferred from the fact that the following year (1855) they were strong enough first, to secure the submission of a proposal of total prohibition to the voters of the state, and second, to carry the measure at the polls. This agitation angered and alienated the foreign-born throughout the state very seriously.

Coincident with the foregoing another fact was becoming a cause of sorry perplexity for the Opposition leaders. Anti-foreign prejudice in the form of antagonism to Catholics and the incoming foreign-born was then surging up all over the country in the form of "Americanism" and manifesting itself in aggressive propaganda through the organization of a society, or Know-Nothing lodges. The majority of their members were Whigs, or normally, members of the Opposition.

The two facts just named, namely, temperance or Maine-Law-ism, and know-nothingism, produced violent reactions among the most powerful and certain antislavery folk in the North, save the Garrisonian Abolitionists. The German refugees, es-

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[3]See Magoun's "Asa Turner and His Times," pp. 286-291.

[4]The files of *The Hawkeye* for the period under review have not been available to the writer. Its contemporaries, however, disclose much evidence of its blunt opposition to Mr. Grimes's candidacy and his "radical" views and affiliations. See the *Iowa State Gazette* of Burlington of March 8, 1854, and the *Daily Miner's Express* of Dubuque of March 10, 1854.

pecially the "Forty-eighters," were intense opponents of slavery —in large part because its existence in this country reminded them of so much of the oppressive government which they had endured in Europe before coming to the United States. Their hostile attitude towards slavery was intense and outspoken in opposition and they were very aggressive in practical measures in politics. But know-nothingism and prohibition were also two black beasts and no more lovely in their sight than slavery itself —indeed all three they regarded as a trinity of evils to be fought to the death.

Finally, the basic fact in the premises of the political campaign in Iowa in 1854 was the predominance of southerners, or the descendants of southerners, in the pioneeer population of Iowa. In 1850 the national census disclosed only 5,535 native-born New Englanders from the six states east of the Hudson River; and 30,954 from the states south of Mason and Dixon's line, the Ohio River and the south line of Iowa. The emigrant sons of Virginia in Iowa that year totaled 7,861 and from Kentucky 8,994. The emigrants from southern and western Pennsylvania, from Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois were likewise southern in their ancestral inheritance, either by direct descent, or by reason of communal associations in life and trade.[5] A fact of the utmost significance inhered in their normal prejudices. The great majority of the southerners in Iowa left the South because of their dislike of slavery. Both industrial and social reasons conjoined to impel their emigration from the old South. In one sense they were pronouncedly antislavery—that is they did not want the institution with them or near them. But *per contra,* they were most emphatically proslavery in the sense that they were violently opposed to abolitionism, which meant Negro equality, which they abominated. They regarded the Garrisonian Abolitionist with the same virulent hatred that we have regarded the European Anarchists and Russian "Reds." Few can nowadays realize the fury of their intense dislike.

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[5]The writer has dealt briefly with the predominance of southerners in the formative days in Iowa in some articles in the ANNALS OF IOWA (Third series); see "The Transfusion of Political Ideas and Institutions in Iowa" in Vol. VI, pp. 47-54 (April 1903) and "Whence Came the Pioneers of Iowa" in Vol. VII, pp. 367-379 (April 1906) and pp. 446-465 (July 1906). The latter were reprinted with additions under the caption "Did Emigrants from New England First Settle Iowa?"

II

All of the facts just briefly summarized constituted the premises of the campaign in Iowa in 1854. Mr. Grimes was very much alive to their existence and to their serious importance as regards the issue of the canvass. He discerned without any delusions or uncertainty that the conditions were decidedly adverse. His own forces were in a sorry state of demoralization and dissension that steadily made for paralysis.

The imperative necessity which confronted him and which had to be met if he were to succeed in the canvass was a frontal attack upon the Administration that would pierce their center and divide their strength. If he could do this he might make the Germans forget the twin evils of temperance and know-nothingism.

The candidate of the Opposition was a tried hand in the strategy and tactics of politics, and he realized the adverse conditions and the trying perplexities in any straightout campaign. He encountered some additional troubles which must have been serious, or if not, then they must have been utilized as a cloak for a maneuver which is not quite clear in its import. His biographer informs us that private business matters of an urgent character compelled him to go to New England at the very outset of the campaign, thus preventing him making the personal canvass of the voting districts so important for the Opposition which is striving to break down the Administration strongholds and to get through to the seats of authority. In lieu of such direct personal appeal *viva voce* to the electors Mr. Grimes gave out on April 8 an extended "Address to the People of Iowa."[6] It was a powerful plea and it is not too much to say that the issues of the campaign were fought out almost wholly along the lines taken by him in that address. Its contents, or an outline of its contents or commitments, there are reasons for believing, had been submitted to the leaders of the Free-soil Convention at Crawfordsville on March 28, and constituted the premises for the alliance between the two antislavery factions.[7]

In order to understand its counts and contentions it is necessary to understand thoroughly the course of prior events at the

[6]Salter's "Life of James W. Grimes," pp. 34-50.
[7]Magoun's "Asa Turner and His Times," p. 287.

national capital which constitute the background whence reflected the heat and lightnings produced by Mr. Grimes' citations and references. Events and expressions in the national theater were utilized by him as the materials for his hand grenades in his attacks upon the Democrats in Iowa.

In what follows the writer reproduces a considerable number of consecutive sections of a study prepared in 1911-12 in connection with an effort to discover the conditions and factors determining the nomination of Abraham Lincoln for the presidency in 1860 by the national Republican Convention at Chicago, entitled:

A Neglected Factor in the Antislavery Triumph in Iowa in 1854

A study of the part taken by the foreign-born in the preliminaries of the formation of the Republican party, which was published by the "Yearbook" of the German American Historical Society of Illinois for the year 1918 (University of Chicago Press). Save that the sections have been renumbered and towards the close reorganized slightly because of new materials discovered and here reproduced, there have been few changes in the narrative as originally produced. The footnotes have been renumbered. The present writer and the Annals are indebted to the courtesy of Dr. Julius Goebal, editor of the "Yearbook" and professor in the University of Illinois, for his courteous permission to reprint the portions of the study which follow.

III

The debate on the Kansas-Nebraska bill was nearing its culmination in the national Senate. Most of the leaders on both sides had spoken—Senators Douglas and Chase, Badger and Wade, Cass and Seward, Everett and Houston, Dixon and Toombs, Hunter and Sumner—when the distinguished Senator from South Carolina arose in his place and addressed the Senate February 24, 1854. It had not been his wish or his purpose to take part in the discussion but the senators from Massachusetts [Sumner], from New York [Seward], and from Ohio [Chase and Wade] had uttered "some hard things," which he not only resented but would deny and repel. In order to appreciate the pith and point of Senator Butler's observations we must realize

at least two facts in connection with some of the "hard things" that were the aggravating causes of his speech.

First, the antislavery leaders indulged in adjectives and epithets that raked and slashed, scorched and blistered southern sensibilities, or recklessly threw out innuendo and insinuations or bold assertions, the implications of which were like hot needles arousing to fury and retort in kind. Northern historians in dealing with the controversies in Congress in *ante bellum* days have not always realized that the provocation to harsh and ugly speech was as much on the northern side as on the southern side. Crimination provokes recrimination.

Second, the antislavery champions, notably Chase, Seward, and Wade, constantly emphasized the paramount interest of the foreign-born—and Teutons, Germans, and Scandinavians were usually in mind—in the opposition to the extension of the domain of slavery. Slavocrats, incensed by the biting speech of the northern critics of their institutions and aroused by the realization of the antagonistic alien interest in free territory, struck back with animadversions upon the character and conduct of the aliens in the North.

Much of the bitterness and rancor of the debate in the Senate had been produced by the harsh epithets used by Messrs. Chase and Sumner, Giddings and Gerritt Smith in "The Appeal of the Independent Democrats in Congress to the People of the United States" (dated January 19) sounding the alarm against the Nebraska bill. Therein they branded the author and the abettors thereof as parties to "a gross violation of a sacred pledge; a criminal betrayal of precious rights; as part and parcel of an atrocious plot to exclude from a vast unoccupied region immigrants from the Old World and free laborers from our own states and convert it into a dreary region of despotism inhabited by masters and slaves." * * * "Not without the deepest dishonor and crime can the free states acquiesce in this demand." In his rejoinder to Senator Douglas' violent attack upon him for such language, Senator Chase reiterated the sentiments with emphasis (January 30). Senator Sumner followed and solemnly asserted: "* * * The language is strong but it is not stronger than the exigency required." "Such a measure cannot be regarded without emotions too strong for speech. It cannot be

justly described in common language. It is a soulless, eyeless monster—horrid, unshapely and vast—fitly pictured in the verse of the poet:

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.

And this horrid monster is now let loose upon the country."

Senator Wade in his speech (February 6) was not less explicit and emphatic. The Kansas-Nebraska bill was "a monstrous proposition," the work of "a base conspiracy" to force "the accursed scourge" of slavery into the free North. Indeed he capped the climax of condemnation: "Sir, in the days of the Revolution, Major Andre was hung for accepting a propositoin no more base than this, which is a gross betrayal of the rights of the whole North." It is not inconceivable and not improbable that it was this language of the junior Senator of Ohio that gave the cue to the Germans of Chicago in their proceedings in North Market Hall and in Court House Square on the night of March 16.

The extract from "The Appeal" just given indicates the second important fact, namely, the insistence of Antislavery leaders upon the primary concern of the foreign-born in the proposed repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Senator Chase in his defense of his part in putting forth "The Appeal" repeated and reinforced its assertions. Senator Wade pointed out the incompatibility of slavery and freedom, among other observations saying: "These two interests are antagonistic; they cannot both stand together." "Immigration does not go into slave states. Immigration cannot abide there." He then, to the amazement and disgust of southern senators bluntly declared himself an Abolitionist and a believer in the general equality of Negroes and whites.

Senator Seward (February 17) with the assurance so characteristic of him, and so aggravating to southerners, declared his confidence that the advance of freedom in the West could not be stopped, because: "The non-slaveholding states are teeming with an increase of freemen, educated, vigorous, enlightened, enterprising freemen; such freemen as neither England, nor Rome, nor even Athens ever reared. Half a million of freemen from Europe annually augment that increase. * * * You may obstruct, and so turn the directions of those peaceful armies away

from Nebraska. So long as you shall leave them room on hill or prairie, by riverside or in the mountain fastnesses, they will dispose of themselves peacefully and lawfully in the places you shall have left open to them; and there they will erect new states upon free soil, to be forever maintained and defended by free arms, and aggrandized by free labor. American slavery, I know, has a large and ever-flowing spring, but it cannot pour forth its blackened tide in volumes like that I have described. If you are wise these tides of slaves and freemen will never meet, for they will not voluntarily commingle. * * * You may legislate, and abrogate, and abnegate as you will; but there is a superior power that overrules all your actions * * * to the distant, but inevitable result of the equal and universal liberty of all men."

On the afternoon of Tuesday, February 21, Senator Sumner spoke his mind on the Nebraska bill. He was a master craftsman in the art of slashing speech and he was evidently in fine fettle. He arraigned the bill on two grounds: first, "in the name of the public faith" and second, "in the name of freedom"; and thereupon he thus characterized slavery:

"There is no offense against religion, against morals, against humanity, which may not, in the license of this institution, stalk 'unwhipt of justice.' Without a father, without a mother, almost without a God, the slave has nothing but a master. * * * And this is not all. The whole social fabric is disorganized; labor loses its dignity; industry sickens; education finds no schools, and all the land of slavery is impoverished." "Alone in the company of nations," he continued, "does our country assume this hateful championship." And thus he proceeded with sweeping, scorching generalizations interspersed with contemptuous references to the "curse" and "evils" of the "nefarious institution."

With the echoes of such sentiments ringing in his ears, with his nerves tingling from the stinging words of the Antislavery champions of the North, the courteous and learned colleague of Calhoun felt constrained to address the Senate on the afternoon of Friday, February 24. A fact occurring in the forepart of the Senate's proceedings that afternoon may have made his blood run faster, although he makes no direct mention thereof. Senator

Sumner presented sundry petitions remonstrating against the passage of the Nebraska bill, among them being two from Andover, Massachusetts, a center of culture in New England. The first was headed by a clergyman and signed by 1,100 citizens of that community and the other was headed by Harriet Beecher Stowe and signed by 1,100 women of Andover.

Senator Butler, first and last and foremost, was a jurist. The basic facts of the law and the Constitution made up the warp and woof of his thought and constituted the premises of his utterances and determined the line of his public speech and action. The legal elements of the problem were at once the substance and the limits of his duty under his oath. But so much that he deemed irrelevant and immaterial, perverting and pestiferous, had been dragged or injected into the discussion that he deemed it expedient "to say many things, apparently, not connected with the precise question in view, by way of episode." Much of his speech in consequence dealt thus with what he deemed irrelevant matters—matters, however, that immediately and tremendously engaged public interest in the North.

In the speech of Senator Chase (January 30) there was one remark that struck Senator Butler "with more astonishment than any" and that was his assertion that the Nebraska bill ought to be defeated because, as the South Carolinian summarized it, "the slaveholder with his laborers in the form of slaves would pollute the soil upon which they settled, and might by such settlement exclude foreigners as well as citizens from the non-slaveholding states." To this contention Senator Butler rejoined by two historical analogies that went close to the quick of the argument. It was in connection with the latter of the two that he made a reference which echoed long and loud on the hustings in Iowa.

If slavery was so obnoxious and its habitat so pestilent Senator Butler would have the senators from Ohio recall that an illustrious son of New England, General Nathaniel Greene, in the critical days of the nation's struggle for liberty, at the instance of a southern slaveholder, General Washington, had gone to South Carolina to take command of the troops of that state, troops officered by slaveholders, and aided and abetted by masters and their slaves; and he led those troops with glorious success, with-

out personal dishonor, without public degradation. More than this, indeed:

> Sir, he met under the banners of Cornwallis the Hessians, the sordid and mercenary Hessians, who had been employed by Great Britain to make war upon her children. They were a class of men who took pleasure in saying that they washed their muskets with the blood of rebels. And yet, according to the notion of the honorable Senator from Ohio, the descendants of those bloodthirsty and sordid Hessians from abroad could claim the soil of these territories to the exclusion of the descendants of General Greene, who was not so far blinded by the bigotry which now prevails as to prevent him from coming and settling among us. He settled with us and became a slaveholder himself. * * * At that the southern general commanded northern troops; and let the battles of Princeton and Saratoga suggest their names, whilst northern generals commanded southern troops, and let Eutaw and Charleston suggest their names. The men of that day, who governed senates and commanded armies, never thought of the distinctions now made by their more sublime and exclusive descendants.
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> I will take another case to test the gentleman's remark. It has become extremely popular to bestow praises upon my gallant countryman, Captain Ingraham. Sir, he deserves them. He is a slaveholder; I know him well. He is a constituent of mine, and I respect him; not alone as a brave man and heroic officer, but as a just man and responsible citizen. * * *
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> According to the honorable gentleman from Ohio, if Captain Ingraham were to take Martin Koszta tomorrow with him to Nebraska, Koszta would become the superior, and drive off Ingraham who had rescued him from the fetters of European bondage. Can such a thing be? Why, sir, the slaveholder, with his slaves well governed, forms a relation that is innocent enough, and useful enough. I believe that it is a population which Iowa tomorrow would prefer to an inundation of those men coming as emigrants from a foreign country, wholly unacquainted with the institutions of this country—and nearly all continental comers are of that class. The same remark cannot be made of those who, like the Irish and English, have lived under the administration of the common law.

The references to General Greene, the Hessians, and Martin Koszta were thrusts that could not be easily parried or dodged. Every American school boy's history blazoned the work of Greene and the Hessians, and the country was still ringing with the exultant huzzas following the dramatic rescue of Koszta, a Hungarian refugee and partially naturalized citizen of this country, from the hold of the Austrian warship Hussar in the harbor of Smyrna, by Captain Duncan N. Ingraham, commanding the U. S. S. St. Louis. Secretary of State Marcy in a notable state

paper had not only commended the rescue of the refugee who had merely an inchoate claim to American protection, but had refused point blank Austria's demand for an apology and public reprimand of Captain Ingraham. At that time a resolution carrying the thanks of Congress and ordering a gold medal struck as a recognition of his "judicious and gallant conduct" had already passed the House and was under consideration in the Senate.

Senator Butler's observation that Iowa would prefer slaveholders "with their slaves well governed" to an inundation of emigrants from a foreign country evidently produced something of a flurry, if not a commotion, at least among his Democratic brethren from the North. From its phraseology one might infer that it was made as an aside to his Democratic colleagues from Iowa, Messrs. Dodge and Jones; but neither of them, if present, took exception to the statement, so far as the records of the proceedings indicate. They, nevertheless, or other senators from the North, must have noted the remark and realized its serious importance, and on adjournment pointed out to Senator Butler the serious effect his assertion would produce among their constituents; for on the following day at the opening of the session when he concluded his speech he took pains to explain and soften the effect of his statement as follows:

* * * Before I touch, however, upon the subject which I was discussing at the adjournment of the Senate yesterday, I wish to make one explanation.

Some of my friends have supposed that, in a playful remark which I made yesterday, I assimilated the Germans coming from Bremen and other ports of Germany to the black men, and regarded them as equal. My intention was exactly the reverse. What I did say, what I intended to say, and what, as a southern man, I will maintain is, that an intelligent and judicious master, having his slaves around him, in Missouri or Nebraska, would be as acceptable a neighbor to me, and, as I thought would be to Iowa, as one of these new immigrants. I hope, now, that I am understood on that matter.

In politics, as in life generally, it is not so much what is said, as it is the manner and setting of what is said that produces reaction and resentment. Philosophical truths may be expressed freely in library and lecture room with little likelihood of disturbance resulting; but let them be uttered in the forum where and when human prejudice and passion concentrate and upheave,

and truisms and platitudes produce lightning flashes and thunder claps and violent disturbances.

Sentiments similar in character, if not in form, had been uttered many times before by publicists and statesmen, north and south. But just then nativistic prejudice in the form of know-nothingism was beginning to surge in flood tides throughout the North. The opposition to the Administration—particularly the Whigs—were chiefly infected by such prejudice. The Germans constituted one of the most loyal and numerous corps in the Democratic party. To have one of the most distinguished members of that party formally declare in serious speech in the open Senate that a population made up of slaveholders and their slaves was preferable to one composed of sons and daughters of Germania, then seeking our shores by the thousands annually and settling in the northern and western states—and to have that remark addressed to the senators from one of those states wherein Germans were numerous, highly intelligent and industrious and largely members of the Democratic party—it is no wonder that northern colleagues, realizing the probable misconstruction and misuse thereof, should have privately protested to Senator Butler that his remarks might prove troublesome to them in the approaching state elections. But his powerful bow had shot his shaft far beyond his control; and, as we shall see, it did the damage discerning friends had warned him would be the probable result.

To understand the collateral effects as well as the direct bearing of Senator Butler's "playful remark" later on the hustings in Iowa we must appreciate another fact respecting current legislation then pending in Congress which was immediately affected by the Kansas-Nebraska bill and in which the Germans were keenly interested.

In its editorial summary of "The News" in noting the events at Washington on the preceding day, the *New York Herald* (February 25) devotes a *paragraph* to the remonstrances with which the Senate was "flooded" against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the one signed by "Mrs. Uncle Tom Stowe" (that paper's accustomed name for Mrs. Stowe), and adverse comment upon the activity and inconsistencies of the Abolitionists; but merely a *line* is given to mentioning the

speeches of Senators Hunter and Butler and its summary of current events in the Senate is concluded as follows: "In the course of the day Mr. Walker, the chief leader of the land reformers, reported a bill for the extension of the pre-emption act, and remarked that it would probably supersede and render useless the free farm bill now pending in the House."

On December 6, 1853, the second day of that session of Congress, Senator Gwin of California in giving notice of a bill he expected to introduce said: "At the close of the last session of Congress, I pledged myself to the Senator from Iowa [Mr. Dodge] that I would assist him in passing the Homestead bill after we got through the discussion and passage of the Pacific Railroad bill. It is well known to the Senate that both bills failed during that session. I now give notice that I shall tomorrow, or at some early day thereafter, ask leave to introduce the bill commonly known as the Homestead bill." The next day he introduced a measure "to encourage agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and all other branches of industry, by granting to every man who is the head of a family and a citizen of the United States, a homestead of 160 acres of land out of the public domain 'on condition of occupancy and cultivation.'" A week later he had the bill printed in the proceedings and set forth as one of the special reasons for its favorable consideration the fact that it gave the benefit "not only to every citizen of the United States settling upon the public lands, but to all persons who have declared their intention to become citizens at the date of their settlement." The first bill on the file of the House of Representatives that session was a similar one with like title introduced by Mr. W. R. W. Cobb of Alabama. It was this and other like bills in the respective houses that Senator Walker had in mind in his remarks just before Senator Butler made his speech on February 24. The Homestead bill that finally passed the House, as already pointed out, restricted its privileges to "heads of families" and "citizens of the United States." One of the staunchest advocates of the more liberal provisions respecting the foreign-born was Senator A. C. Dodge of Iowa.

Another fact has some collateral bearing upon the significance of subsequent events. At the conclusion of Senator Butler's speech Senator A. G. Brown of Mississippi obtained the floor

and spoke strongly in behalf of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. He assailed the doctrine of "squatter sovereignty" as held by Senator Cass of Michigan and in the course of his argument he spoke contemptuously of "certain menial employments," referring to bootblacks *et al* and their relative social positions in the North and in the South. Senator Dodge of Iowa followed. He too advocated the Kansas-Nebraska bill. His opening remarks, however, were a passionate, almost melodramatic repudiation of Senator Brown's sentiments respecting the social position and consideration accorded persons in menial service in the North. He declared with intense feeling that he (Senator Dodge) had himself engaged in many of the menial occupations sneeringly referred to and he never knew and did not then know any sense of degradation. Labor of all sorts was honorable in Iowa and always had been so far as his experience and observation went—and his experience went back to days before Iowa was separated from Michigan Territory—upon this fact he based a very substantial argument in favor of Douglas' bill.

Free Negroes did not, Senator Dodge asserted, and could not, thrive in industry in the North and West, partly because they were lazy, and partly because they were untrained to work as northern and western conditions required. Slavery in the long run could not thrive effectually in the North because climate and conditions would prove adverse. Further, he maintained, that the contention of the Free-soilers and Abolitionists that white labor could not migrate where slavery existed was fallacious. He pointed out that northern laborers and farmers were moving into Maryland and Virginia and prospering in property and increasing in numbers. Slaveholders could not compete with white labor as one might see "along the banks of the Mississippi, Ohio, and Missouri, and in many portions of our country." He might have said, but did not, that Germans in great swarms had not hesitated to move into all of the northern slave states and into Texas and were verifying his assertions. Senator Dodge did not notice or take any exception to the assertion of Senator Butler that Iowa would, or might, prefer slaveholders and their slaves to Germans and their ways. In the conclusion of his speech he exhibited the stout character of his views and his confidence in the certainty of local support for them when he proclaimed with exultation:

"Iowa is the only free state which never for a moment gave way to the 'Wilmot Proviso.' My colleague [Senator Jones] * * * voted for every one of the compromise measures in all their phases, stages and conditions, including the Fugitive Slave Law —the late Senator Sturgeon, of Pennsylvania, and ourselves, being the only three senators from the entire non-slaveholding section of the Union who voted for it."

Let us follow developments in Iowa as they affected the foreign-born in the political campaign then getting under way.

IV

So far as the writer can discover, none of the Democratic papers in Iowa took notice of "the playful remark" of the Senator from South Carolina in his speech of February 24. The *Miners' Express* and The *Herald* of Dubuque, and the *Enquirer* of Muscatine did not make any mention or reference to the allegation of the possible preferences of Iowans as regards slaveholders with their slaves and Germans from Bremen. They had correspondents in Washington who were alert videttes and reporters of current happenings. They were no doubt good party promoters and saw the "kick back" in the southern Senator's observation and either refrained from giving it wider circulation in their daily or weekly summaries, or if they related the episode the editors used their blue pencils or scissors.

On the other hand none of the correspondents of the Whig or Opposition papers in Iowa seems to have caught Senator Butler's "playful remark" and none of them, save one, related it in their news columns or commented on it editorially. This nonmention was due largely to the fact, we may presume, that few of the prominent eastern antislavery papers, such as the *New York Tribune* and the *National Era* caught it up and discerned its significance and political importance. A correspondent of the *Philadelphia Ledger,* however, reported it and enlarged upon its bearings, and the editor of one paper in Iowa noted his letter. General James M. Morgan became editor of the *Burlington Telegraph* in February. He discerned the important consequences of the Southerner's "aside," should it be hurled into the discussions of the hustings in Iowa. General Morgan was a Whig with both conservative and antislavery tendencies—that is, he would respect the rights of the southern slaveholders in their own locus

but he wanted no extension of the "peculiar institution" northward and no promotion of it by the national government. He was very outspoken in his opposition to the repeal of the Compromise of 1820 and expressed his views and feelings in forceful and unequivocal language. In his judgment expressed in the *Telegraph* on February 18 Douglas' bill and its progress was the outworkings of "an infamous plot" conceived by an ambitious and unscrupulous candidate for the presidency:

A northern senator with southern possessions—a northern politician with "nigger" necessities—has been found willing, aye, more than willing to bare himself to northern opprobrium and to southern scorn by assuming the initiative in this plot—a plot to annul the most sacred pacts * * * to unchain the demon of discord in the land!

On March 11 the *Telegraph* contained another ringing editorial proclaiming a warning to Iowans as to the purport and probable consequences of the repeal if accomplished—some pertinent portions of which are given:

WHY ALL IOWA SHOULD OPPOSE THE NEBRASKA BILL

* * * It requires no prophetic vision to foresee that Nebraska might soon become to Louisiana what Maryland and Virginia have for years been to the Carolinas—a successful breeder and rearer of slaves. Is not such a purpose a part of the game?" * * *

In the light of such vigorous feelings and views we may appreciate his state of mind when he read the *Philadelphia Ledger's* report of Senator Butler's speech on February 24. He expressed himself as follows on March 18:

THE HOMESTEAD BILL—A SOUTHERN SENATOR'S OPINION OF THE GERMANS

Senator Butler of South Carolina, one of the principal champions of the Douglas Nebraska bill in the Senate, distinguished himself by one or two set speeches in its favor, and is said to have testified his zeal still further in its behalf by "celebrating" its passage. He was prominent among those who went in so decidedly for *excluding foreigners* from Nebraska, and ensuring it to the slave holders, by disfranchising all free white men who have not gone through the "five years' probation." Recently, when the Homestead bill came before the Senate, he took occasion to manifest his determined hostility to that measure, and, according to the correspondent of the *Philadelphia Ledger*, indicated a mortal hatred of the Germans, and a disrespect for their character which none but a slavery propagandist could conceive, or a heartless tyrant avow. The correspondent of the *Ledger*, speaking of the Homestead bill, says:

"I doubt much whether the bill will pass the Senate, especially after the epithets which have recently been bestowed in that body by southern members on our adopted citizens. Judge Butler, for instance, senator

from South Carolina, declared frankly in his seat, that he should prefer Negroes in Nebraska to the 'emigrants from the land of kraut.' The preference is natural enough. The Negroes may be owned, while the German farmers in the West generally own enough themselves to make useful and independent citizens. It is not on account of any vicious habits that emigrants from Europe are disliked by the chivalrous senators from the South, but simply because they bring down the price of Negroes. I have always been a compromise man, as the readers of the *Ledger* well know, and am a compromise man yet, but it is one of the deplorable features of slavery that it lowers the estimate of humanity and gives to the word 'liberty' a technical application at variance with political or Christian philosophy."

That northern papers should be found willing to gloss over or to conceal the conduct of such a man, and join in praises of the "southern chivalry"—that northern politicians should shut their eyes to such displays of southern arrogance, and bung up their ears to such gross insults—and that northern statesmen should be found hand in hand in public measures with one whose entire policy of legislation is based upon his love of slave labor, his hatred of the poor white man, and his avowed disgust for foreigners—are facts not less explicable than they are painful to contemplate. But we suppose it is all right—at least the organs will tell us that it is—for it seems to be their province to tell us "nothing else." We could wish, most sincerely, that for once at least the sense of burning shame and the spirit of manly independence might unite in their composition, and induce them to hurl back with becoming scorn and indignation the vile and ungenerous insults thus heaped upon their unoffending fellow citizens.

General Morgan did not rest with that protest and warning. He had read a report of the Washington correspondent of the *St. Louis Republican* as to some of the designs of the promoters of the "Repeal" hostile to the foreign-born in the new territories and he followed the foregoing editorial immediately with another equally pointed and pertinent to the campaign here studied. It brings into the foreground the objective of the Antislavery leaders in their direct effort to arouse and allure the foreign-born voters by insistence upon the inherent hostility of Slavocrats towards the liberties coveted by the foreign-born who sought refuge and homes under the American flag.

SLAVERY VS. FOREIGNERS

The *St. Louis Republican* is a strong friend of the Douglas-Nebraska bill—almost the only friend, indeed, which that bill seems to have among the Missouri press. It keeps a Washington correspondent who does not fail to advise it in full of all that relates to the great question of the day. We publish an extract from one of his late letters for the purpose

of *proving* to our readers what the South *means* by repealing the Missouri Compromise, that they intend thereby to *force* slavery into Nebraska, that to "make assurance doubly sure" they have provided for the virtual *exclusion of foreigners from the territory.* Negroes may go there, *but foreigners cannot,* unless, like Negroes, they will be content to do without the privilege of voting! A splendid affair is the Nebraska bill! And wonderfully democratic indeed! And yet, opposition to the measure embracing such provisions as these, is boldly denounced by a portion of the party press as "wrong"—"factious"—and "disorganizing"! And the whole Democratic party is unblushingly called upon to come up to the support of this Nebraska scheme and to treat as enemies of Democratic principles all who cannot and will not swallow its anti-republican provisions! We rejoice that the people who have heads to think and hearts to feel resist in the mass the unhallowed appeals which are made to their prejudices, that they refuse to be made inconsistent with their lifelong professions, that they appreciated the full enormity of this Nebraska proposition and that they esteem too highly the glorious memories of the past to tarnish at this late day the proud escutcheon of their party by giving their support to a measure which is at war with the progress of liberal principles, and which reduces the free white man to the same political level as the Negro slave. Here is what the *Republican* correspondent says:—

"But another amendment made to the bill secured to the South an important advantage. This was the striking out of that clause which permitted foreigners who might have declared their intention to become citizens, to vote in the elections for Territorial Legislature. The motion to strike out was made by Mr. Clayton, who ably advocated it. Mr. Atchison addressed the Senate with great earnestness and ability on the same side of the question. He contended that the admission of unnaturalized foreigners to vote would overcome the voice of the American settlers, and banish slavery before southern men could have a fair expression of the popular feeling on the subject. The first vote was of the greatest importance. It would decide the whole question. He wished that issue to be left to American citizens, and not to persons having no stake in the country. The amendment was adopted, 22 yes, noes 20."

We shall have occasion later in analyzing the assertions and arguments of the Opposition leaders to show the lack of warrant and the injustice of some of the foregoing utterances. Here the matter to be realized is that partisan editors in Iowa were conscious early in the campaign in 1854 that the foreign-born voters might play an important part in the campaign and they were openly training their guns on the Democratic strongholds expressly to dislodge the foreign-born voter.

V

Political conditions in Iowa, as we have seen, were chaotic. The Whigs were in internal clash and confusion; and the Democrats more or less were split asunder. The preponderance of advantage, however, seems clearly to have been with the party of the national administration during the first three months of 1854. Mr. Grimes, if he was to win in the race for governor, must win by hard work and by a direct appeal to the voters in an aggressive campaign.

For reasons affecting his private affairs, he felt constrained to forego such a personal canvass, as sundry matters called him to the East. Whether his decision meant perfect assurance of his probable success the curious may consider and the cynical doubt. In lieu of such personal canvass Mr. Grimes published on April 8 an Address or Open Letter "To the People of Iowa." It was a paper of considerable length, slightly exceeding sixteen pages printed in small type in Dr. Salter's "Life," and it became one of the noteworthy documents in the antislavery discussion of Iowa and indeed of the West. A draft of the Address had been made in the forepart or middle of March, for Dr. George F. Magoun tells us that he took it to the Free-soil Convention of Crawfordsville on March 28 and submitted it to Asa Turner and other leaders there, and that a summary of the Address was publicly read in the convention and discussed openly as a means of securing the endorsement of Mr. Grimes's candidacy already referred to.[8]

1

Mr. Grimes takes up and discusses the five main questions touched upon in the Whig platform—but, save the first, he treats them in the reverse order. In so doing and in the relative amount of attention accorded to each he exhibits his keenness of vision for the main strategic points in the situation and his shrewdness in party tactics.

First, he emphasizes the need of radical revision in the State Constitution, especially in respect of banks and incorporations, devoting three pages thereto. In a half page he next touches upon the vexatious temperance question. He neither dodged, nor hedged; but he was brief and therein was the soul of political

[8]Magoun's "Asa Turner and His Times," p. 287.

wisdom. A page is devoted to Douglas' scheme for a tonnage tax for internal improvements. The balance of the Address discusses national issues—the Homestead bill is first briefly touched upon, the Kansas-Nebraska bill and the complex of issues therewith involved are lucidly stated and cogently discussed.

Before dealing directly with those portions of the Address which especially concern us, two facts should be borne in mind, in order to realize its telling effect. First, few of the antislavery papers had prior to April 1 dwelt upon the discriminations against aliens in the Homestead and Kansas-Nebraska bills. The *Iowa Democratic Enquirer* of Muscatine, the one leading Democratic paper in the state that openly opposed the Nebraska bill, once (March 16) briefly noted the Clayton amendment and informed its readers that it was passed to make the Germans "pay dear" for their opposition to the bill. Second, so far as the writer can discover, no paper save the *Telegraph* made note of Senator Butler's assertion in the Senate (February 24) as to Iowa's probable preferences in respect of her population. The *Enquirer* had an alert correspondent at Washington who attended the debates, but he too failed to catch either the original observation or the explanation and modification. The active editor of *Der Demokrat*, the leading German paper of Iowa, Mr. Theodore Guilich, likewise missed catching it.

In order that the fibre and force of Mr. Grimes's Address may be fully gauged, the drift and effect of his argument apprehended, and the significance of subsequent developments more easily appreciated, generous extracts are given:

> 4. I regard the Homestead bill as beneficent in its character, and as calculated to greatly advance the material interests of Iowa. But I cannot give my assent to all the provisions of the bill recently passed by the House of Representatives, and now pending in the Senate. I cannot assent to the principles of discriminating against foreigners who come to the country with a bona fide intention to become citizens. I do not concur in the recent promulgation of southern politicians, that our institutions are in danger from foreign immigration, and I abhor the sentiment announced by Senator Butler that Iowa would be more prosperous with the institution of slavery than with her industrious and patriotic German population.
>
> I believe that the Homestead bill, now under consideration in the Senate, should be so amended as to allow foreigners coming to our shores with the intention to remain, and who declare their intention to

become citizens, to enjoy the same advantages under the law as though they were born on American soil.

5. But the most important of all questions now engrossing the public attention is the attempt to introduce slavery into the territories of Nebraska and Kansas, by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

He then gives a summary of the major points in the history of the slavery question, the legislation and the compromises on which it rested. Thereupon he discusses "squatter sovereignty" and the attitude of the Senate and its insistence upon "non-intervention" and remarks:

One would suppose that the new principles of "squatter sovereignty" would be comprehensive enough to allow aliens the same rights of citizenship that they enjoy in other territories. But the man who imagines so would be eggregiously mistaken. The bill that passed the Senate, and for which Mr. Douglas and all his willing followers voted, denies to the "squatters" who happen to have been born on the banks of the Rhine or the Shannon, and who reside in these territories, the privilege of voting for or against the constitutions of the new states, even after making declarations of their intention to become citizens. And this, too, when the uniform practice has been to grant the elective franchise to foreigners under such circumstances. Five hundred slaveholders from Virginia or Southern Carolina may carry slaves into the territory and legislate for the protection of slave property, while five thousand German settlers—free laborers—who become landholders in the territory, and have made oath of their intention to become citizens, shall have no control in its government and no opportunity to protect themselves against the degrading competition with slave labor. Another evidence of the meaning of this doctrine of "squatter sovereignty"!

* * *

It is urged by some that if the Missouri Compromise is repealed, slavery will not become a permanent institution in Kansas and Nebraska. So it was said of Missouri thirty-four years ago. * * * Instead of this being the case, they have increased from that time to the present at the rate of three thousand a year and Missouri now contains more than a hundred thousand slaves! Those who are most familiar with the institution, and with the territories of Nebraska and Kansas, entertain no doubt but that they will become slave states. Senator Atchison [of Missouri and president pro tem of the United States Senate] who lives near the line of Nebraska, and is a large slaveholder, expressed the opinion a year ago, that but for the Missouri Compromise, they would be extensive slaveholding states. He is said to have expressed the same opinion at the time of the passage of the bill by the Senate, provided his amendment disfranchising the Germans and Irish should be adopted, and it was accordingly. And why would they not become slave states? * * *

After showing how slavery almost got a foothold in the territory of Iowa and how a Court prevented it, he continues:

If there is one state in the Union more interested than another in the maintenance of the Missouri Compromise, it is the state of Iowa. With the free enterprising population on the west, our state will be vastly benefited by an early organization of Nebraska. With a slave state on our western border, I see nothing but trouble and darkness in the future. Bounded on two sides by slave states, we shall be intercepted with underground railroads, and continually distracted by slave hunts. Instead of having a population at the west that will sympathize with us, we shall find their sympathies and interests constantly antagonistic to ours. The energies of our people will be paralyzed, our works of internal improvement will languish, and the bright anticipations of the future greatness of Iowa forever blasted. In the boastfulness of anticipated triumph, the citizens of Iowa have been told by a southern senator how much better would be the condition of our state with Negro slaves than with our foreign population. A distinguished representative from Georgia has announced that in fifteen years Iowa would be a slave state. I sincerely believe that, should the Missouri Compromise be repealed, there will soon be a contest for the mastery between freedom and slavery on the soil of Iowa. The principle of non-intervention so strenuously contended for by the South will soon be extended to the free states of the Northwest. It is already contended in some quarters that slaves are mere appendages and attachments to the person, and that the owner had the same right to remove them to a free state that he has to remove his cattle and horses. Let the Missouri Compromise act be repealed, and this will be the next question to be met.

Citizens of Iowa, are you ready to meet this issue?

In penning his Address to the electors Mr. Grimes evidently contemplated two classes or groups in general, and one group in particular. On the whole he sought to hold the doubtful Whigs and secure the Anti-Nebraska Democrats. But especially he tried to allure the Germans and detach them from the Democratic party with which up to that time they had chiefly allied themselves. The first two groups he addressed with forceful arguments in general terms that all opponents of the extension of slavery readily accepted. The Germans he dealt with specifically, appealing to them by direct personal reference to issues in which they were immensely interested; and he handled those affecting the Germans with much adroitness—by indirection, allaying their discontent on one moot question, and by direct frontal attack, alarming them and attracting them to his standards.

In dealing with the troublesome temperance question he deftly reduced irritation and opposition, without in any sense abating his well known views or compromising his reputation for straightforward conduct; first, by brevity; second, by shifting the responsibility for the enactment of restrictive or prohibitory legislation completely upon the public at large, and thirdly, by the expression of views to which Germans, and especially German Radicals, could not logically or practically object. He reiterated with some amplification his response to Rev. H. Clay Dean's interrogatory: "It is a cardinal principle of the Whig party that all questions of expediency belong legitimately to the people, and should be settled by the legislative department of the government. It would be a violation of my own priciples * * * to endeavor to thwart in any degree the wishes of the people of the state as expressed through their representatives. The friends of both the prohibitory and the license systems must bear in mind that the executive of the state has nothing whatever to do with the preparation of laws."[9]

Legally minded electors probably asked themselves, if not Mr. Grimes, as today they have like occasion to do, whether his position relative to the respective spheres and functions of the legislature, the executive and the people's dominion was consistent with his caustic comments on "squatter sovereignty" in subsequent paragraphs; and they doubtless queried what the Constitution and the law expect an executive to do when "the people" or their representatives demand and clamorously insist upon legislation that may be or actually is obnoxious to law and order and wise public policy. But then, as now, the majority of the electors was not legally minded. He had, however, avoided the burden of the issue in the canvass. The Democrats were in a keen quandary. Mr. Dean was a potent factor in that party and a powerful preacher of the Methodist church, easily foremost among the churches of Iowa in numbers and influence. Mr. Bates, the Democratic candidate for governor, had taken a stand similar to that taken by Mr. Grimes.[10] Germans, consequently, if other matters weighted the scales, had no particular or pressing reason for preferring Mr. Bates to Mr. Grimes on the score of the liquor question; and other matters did weight the scales.

[9]Salter's "Life of James W. Grimes," p. 37.
[10]*Fairfield Ledger*, March 30, 1854.

But if Mr. Grimes was discreet and brief regarding the liquor question, he was direct and clumsy, pugnacious and pungent, in discussing the interest of the Germans in the slavery question and the pending Homestead and Kansas-Nebraska bills. There is no logical discernment in his appeal to the Germans on this score; he addressed them directly and without equivocation, apparently being especially intent upon arousing them. In four different connections he directly refers to the Germans and the major part of his argument incident thereto hinges upon the interest of Germans as such in the matters at issue: first, in dealing with the Free Homestead bill then before the Senate[11]; second, in applying the doctrine of "squatter sovereignty"[12]; thirdly, in citing Senator Atchison's alleged remark[13]; and, fourthly, in predicting the inevitable struggle that the Slavocrats would make to secure control in Iowa.[14]

He sought to arouse the Germans by precisely the same sort of appeal and argument that characterized the composition of "The Appeal" issued from Washington January 19 preceding, by Chase, Sumner, Giddings, and Gerrit Smith. He pointedly appeals to their self-interest in dwelling upon the discriminations against them in the Free Homestead bill then before Congress. He enhances the force of his appeal by his emphasis upon the political deprivation Germans would suffer under the Douglas bill as amended by Clayton that shut them out of the franchise and denied them the privileges and emoluments of public office in the new territories. He obviously sought to prick German pride and arouse their resentment when he takes pains to exhibit the fact that Germans would have no higher status politically than Negroes in the new territories, at least prior to naturalization—a fact that burnt and scorched the pride of sons of Germania.

2

Mr. Grimes's Address was issued in circular and pamphlet form and sent out broadcast to the press and the voters. Save in his home city it was generally commended by the Opposition press.

It was printed entire in the *Ledger* of Fairfield, the *Valley Whig* of Keokuk, the *Courier* of Ottumwa, and in considerable

[11]Salter's "Life of James W. Grimes," p. 39.
[12]Salter's "Life of James W. Grimes," p. 44.
[13]Salter's "Life of James W. Grimes," p. 46.
[14]Salter's "Life of James W. Grimes," p. 47.

part in the *Gazette* of Davenport, and in the *Journal* of Muscatine.

The reception accorded the Address by the Democratic press was somewhat varied. Editors, then as now, suffered more or less from mental astigmatism and ethical refraction. They saw nothing or saw only the weak points. Dr. Phillip Harvey of the *State Gazette* of Burlington bluntly declared that the Address was filled with "the grossest falsehoods and misrepresentations"; and that "it drags in issues that in no way are before the people in the present canvass, merely for the purpose, we suppose, of making 'a spread' before them."[15] The *Miners' Express* of Dubuque conceded (May 6) that Mr. Grimes was a man of force but his Address was a compilation of fallacies; and Mr. Merritt would have it appear that its author was an advocate of wildcat banks and worthless currency, the popular election of judges, the Maine Law, and abolitionism. Mr. Merritt ignores utterly Mr. Grimes's insistence upon the infringement of the interests of Germans in the Homestead and Nebraska bills. His silence was evidence of his insight and prudence. The Germans and their interest in pending national legislation was a hot iron, the heat of which discussion would only enhance.

The columns of the Democratic organ at Burlington, *The Iowa State Gazette,* contained but little notice of Mr. Grimes's Address or Manifesto as the Democrats were wont to call it. Beginning March 18, however, a local correspondent signing himself "A Democrat," in a series of letters addressed "To James W. Grimes, Esq.," takes up his points *seriatim.* In his letter "No. 4" after some preliminary observations respecting the government of the territories the correspondent takes up his gauge about "squatter sovereignty" and Grimes's fling at the consistency of Douglas' "new born friendship for our adopted citizens" "born on the banks of the Rhine or the Shannon" and the denial to them of access to the new territories with the full complement of electoral privileges, thus putting them on the same level with the Negroes who had no such rights.

> * * * You know very well, sir, that Mr. Douglas' bill, as contended for by him, the senators from Iowa, and many others, expressly allowed aliens who had declared their intention to become citizens, the right of voting; and that in this respect it differed from almost all preceding

[15]Quoted in *Miners' Express,* April 26, 1854.

acts to organize territories. The amendment that denies to your *dear friends* from "the banks of the Rhine or the Shannon" the right of voting till they become citizens, sprang from your own party; it was introduced by Mr. Clayton, a Whig senator from Delaware, and was opposed by Mr. Douglas, our senators and others; but they were outvoted in the matter; and in the full knowledge of these facts you seek to raise a prejudice against them for what they are entirely innocent of. Oh shame, where is thy blush? You further say "the uniform practice has been to grant the elective franchise to foreigners under such circumstances." You are a lawyer, sir, and we may presume you wrote with a full knowledge of the facts; it is your business to know them, and you make the statement positively. Imagine then our astonishment when, upon referring to the statutes of the United States we found the almost uniform practice to have been quite contrary. In the act establishing the territorial government of Oregon, alone, have we been able to find that the right of suffrage has been extended to those who have declared their intention to become citizens and taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the territorial act. In the acts establishing the territories of Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Utah, and New Mexico which we have referred to, we find it expressly "provided that the right of suffrage and of holding office shall be exercised only by citizens of the United States." How you could have been so indiscreet, sir, as to make the assertions you have about the "uniform practice" when you must have known that the authority was at hand to confute you, is really astonishing.

The Address attracted attention and met with favor beyond the borders of the state. Some Olympian gods were alertly interested in the success of his candidacy. Senator Chase of Ohio, as we have seen, was promoting his chances; and Greeley's *Tribune* (May 10) approved it in strong terms: "The Address is marked by great clearness and ability, and shows Mr. Grimes to be a man of abundant talent. * * * It is a plain and manly appeal to the people. The views he advocates are so undeniably sound, that did no partisan hindrances exist, one would suppose they could hardly fail to receive the endorsement of every citizen of the state."

But plaudits were not the only responses the Address elicited from national leaders in the East. Mr. Grimes went east as announced. Either for business or political reasons he visited Washington. There he probably conferred with Senators Chase, Hale, Seward, and Wade, with Giddings and other Antislavery leaders—a fact that doubtless was known and had some influence upon subsequent developments. Mr. Grimes then went north,

going to New Hampshire to attend to the private affairs that especially called him east. While in his native hills his peace and his plans were greatly disturbed by a terrific broadside from the Thunderer of the Administration, *The Daily Union* of Washington.

VI

On Saturday, April 29, *The Daily Union* published a three column leader entitled

Iowa and Nebraska

A Whig Candidate for Governor Answered

The editorial begins with flattering encomiums upon Iowa and the course of Senators A. C. Dodge and George W. Jones and Representative Bernard Henn in respect of pending legislation affecting slavery:—"The Democrats of Iowa may boast, with some justice, that that state is the soundest Democratic free state on the subject of the compromises of the Constitution. They have never yet been known to evade the responsibility of accepting the boldest issue on the slavery question. The consequence has been that they have become impregnable to the assaults of the Whigs, and that no true Democrat of Iowa ever waits to see how the wind is blowing before taking his position."

Because of such staunch support of "the compromises of the Constitution" the senators from Iowa became the objects of the malevolence of Abolitionists and Antislavery Whigs. Senator Dodge in particular, the editors assert, was especially marked for punishment because in August the legislature was to be elected that was to choose his successor. His enemies and critics perceived "a fine opportunity to resort to clamor and falsehood" and were energetically proceeding. Evidence thereof was the recent Address of Mr. James W. Grimes "To the People of Iowa," which the *Union* characterizes as "a production of extraordinary recklessness." However, as it is typical of the logic and tactics of Whigs generally, both in Iowa and in the North, they propose "a frank, plain-spoken review" of its contents.

Whig principles and Whig hypocrisy, the editors aver, are almost interchangeable terms. Whigs make much of the rights of the people and pretend to insist upon the rule of the people, yet they vehemently oppose the Kansas-Nebraska bill which com-

mits the great question of slavery solely to the people of those territories. But such an attitude had been customary with them. They had opposed popular rule in Massachusetts, in Rhode Island, in North Carolina, in Maryland, in Louisiana, in New Jersey. "In Iowa the same rule held good, and the very individual now nominated by the Whigs of Iowa for governor was a leader of that party against the reforms of the Democrats of Iowa in giving the election of state officers to the people." And among those opposing was this champion of the people, the Whig candidate for governor of Iowa. Nevertheless, this puissant Whig, forgetful of his past course, now comes forward and demands the popular election of judges, and in the same breath denounces the grant of popular rule to the people of the new territories. "But Mr. Grimes is an adroit political gamester." Recognizing the weakness and palpable hypocrisy of his course he seeks to distract attention from himself by denouncing the conduct of Messrs. Dodge and Jones for denying to the people of Kansas and Nebraska the right to elect their own officers. But this is unjust, for the editors allege, and assert from personal knowledge, that both of the senators from Iowa were in favor of allowing the people of the territories such rights with respect to their officers; but they would not vote for such amendments when proposed by deadly enemies of the bill with a view to defeating the major purpose of the bill. To Mr. Grimes's assertion that the organization of the territory was not justified because of paucity of population, they retort that all of the Whigs of the House of Representatives had, the year preceding, voted for such organization.

But Mr. Grimes in this Address to the citizens of Iowa is greatly stirred up because in the Nebraska bill, as it passed the Senate, foreigners are placed upon the same footing which foreigners not yet naturalized occupied in the territories of Wisconsin, Arkansas, Michigan, and Iowa!—that is that they are not to vote until formally invested with the rights of citizenship. Moreover, Messrs. Dodge and Jones are censured for voting for the bill with such provision therein; "but did not Mr. Grimes know that their votes were cast against this objectionable provision, and that they supported the bill after this provision had been carried, with the fact before them that its rejection in the House was conceded?"

Our would-be governor of Iowa was doubtless, a few years ago, if he is not now, with the most of his party, a *Native American*. Like General Scott, he has doubtless cursed the foreigners *after* the election, though he coaxed them most affectionately before the election. The adopted citizens have been a stumbling bock to the Whigs; it is a fact which Whig history strangely and always verifies that the Whigs will flatter the foreign vote, even with a thousand evidences on record of their deep seated hostility to it. Mr. Grimes is excessively aroused against the bill of Judge Douglas because it excludes foreigners from voting in the territories, complacently omitting that the author of the amendment which inhibits them from voting was no less a Whig than John M. Clayton of Delaware, and that Senators Douglas, Jones, and Dodge all voted against it! Not content with this, he *invents* statements to sustain his reckless assertions, and does not hesitate, in at least two instances, grossly and deliberately to resort to falsehood. That this language is by no means too strong, we propose briefly to show.

The editors then quote Mr. Grimes's assertion: "I abhor the sentiment announced by Senator Butler that Iowa would be more prosperous with the institution of slavery than with her industrious and patriotic German population." As the completest answer, and the shortest one, to "this extraordinary declaration" they offer in evidence the correspondence between Messrs. Dodge and Jones with "the venerable and staid Senator Butler." Under date of April 22 the senators from Iowa had written Judge Butler submitting a copy of the *Des Moines Valley Whig* containing Mr. Grimes's Address and asking specifically whether he had ever uttered the sentiment quoted. From his committee room at the Capitol Senator Butler replied April 25 declaring that he had "never said anything which could authorize such a remark." He presumes that Mr. Grimes did not read his speech of March 25 wherein he expressly denied that he had "assimilated the Germans coming from Bremen and other ports of Germany to the black men, and regarded them as equal. My intention was exactly the reverse." And he reiterates his assertion and concludes: "I never had it in my mind to think of Iowa as a state that would allow or introduce the institution of slavery in her limits."[16]

[16]Below is given Senator Butler's reply at length for purposes of comparison:

Committee Room
Washington, April 25, '54

Gentlemen: Your communication of the 22d instant has just been received. You call my attention to certain extracts which you quote from a circular letter addressed by James W. Grimes to the people of Iowa, connected with the gubernatorial election of that state. The remarks of Mr. G., so far as they are applicable to myself, are *wholly* without foundation. I here notice one of them as a sample of the others. Mr. G. says "I abhor the statement announced by Senator Butler that *Iowa would be more prosperous with the institution of slavery than with her industrious and patriotic German population*." I have never said

Mr. Grimes's additional averment or "assumption" that "A distinguished representative from Georgia has announced that in fifteen years Iowa will be a slave state," was then considered, to which they rejoin: "What sort of credence should be attached to any statement of such a man when we assure the reader and the people of Iowa that every Georgia representative in Congress unequivocally and indignantly denies having used the language here put into the mouth of one of them?" Thereupon follows the correspondence between Senators Dodge and Jones, and Senators Robert Toombs and Wm. C. Dawson of Georgia, the latter denying point blank the allegation as affecting themselves. The entire delegation from Georgia in the lower house, "we are informed, denies and denounces the assertion of Mr. James W. Grimes." The editors of the *Union* then give Mr. Grimes a Roland for his Oliver.

If the Germans of Iowa can be deceived by falsehoods, such as Mr. Grimes does not hesitate to resort to, they can be caught by very shallow trickery indeed. The history of the Whig party discloses to the adopted citizens of this country one unvarying rule of opposition, in the first place to liberal emigration laws and, secondly, to impartial naturalization laws. *At this moment there is not a Native American organization in the country that is not controlled by the Whig leaders—by just such men* as James W. Grimes. Let the Germans of Iowa look to Philadelphia now, and they will find the whole Native American organization there publicly rallied under the Whig banners. And dare Mr. Grimes deny that the leader of the Anti-Nebraska forces in the

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anything which would authorize such a remark; and I think it will be seen that this gentleman has indulged more in the license of attribution than a disposition to consult the truthful statement of fact. I presume (I must so presume) that he never read my remarks made in the Senate upon the only occasion on which I spoke of Iowa in connection with the institution of slavery. It would seem that Mr. G. has found it more convenient to rely on assumption than to consult accurate information. The remark to which I allude will be found on the eighth page of my speech delivered the 25th of February last, and is as follows:

"Some of my friends have supposed that in a playful remark which I made yesterday, I assimilated the Germans coming from Bremen and other ports of Germany to the black men, and regarded them as equal. My intention was exactly the reverse. What I did say, what I intended to say, and what, as a southern man, I will maintain, is, that an intelligent and judicious master, having his slaves around him, in Missouri or Nebraska, would be as acceptable a neighbor to me, and, as I thought, would be to Iowa, as one of those new emigrants. I hope, now, that I am understood on that matter."

Now, it must be apparent to any fair-minded man that Iowa was not separated from the other non-slaveholding northwestern states because of any supposed difference between her and her neighboring sisters, but she was selected simply as an illustration, because of her proximity and neighborhood to Missouri and Kansas. The remark was intended to illustrate the opinion that a gentleman of good character in Missouri or Nebraska, notwithstanding he held slaves, would be as good a neighbor as a newly immigrated foreigner from Germany. I never had it in my mind to think of Iowa as a state that would allow or introduce the institution of slavery in her limits.

I am, gentlemen, with true respect, yours,

A. P. BUTLER.

Hon. A. C. Dodge and G. W. Jones.

Senate—W. H. Seward of New York, the opponent also of that popular sovereignty—for asking which the Germans, the Irishman, the Frenchman, and the Italian have been driven from their fatherlands—is, with all his pretenses, the worst enemy the adopted citizens have in that body? We refer in proof of this remark to his extraordinary offer to Governor Smith of Virginia made a few years ago, at Richmond, that *he was willing to exchange the free Negroes of Virginia for the honest Germans and Irish emigrants of New York!* This remarkable declaration can be established by Governor Smith, now an eloquent member in Congress, and cannot be successfully denied by Senator Seward.

The editors conclude by ridiculing Mr. Grimes's references to Mormonism as a possible result of the application of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, by asserting the obvious and substantial fairness of the South in the matter in controversy as signified in the Badger amendment to the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and by the laudation of "the purity of the motives and the disinterestedness of the course of that indefatigable and invincible champion of the Constitution," Judge Douglas.

[*To be concluded*]

NEWS IN ADVANCE OF THE MAIL

The Valley Mail left Salt Lake City on the 18th of April last. Two or three men have arrived in advance, bringing the General Epistle of the Presidency there, which we publish today. The news is generally good—met the first emigrants on the 14th of May near the South Pass. Found plenty of grass from the Sweet Water. Emigrants generally getting along well,—heard of no particular disease among them. They lost not so many animals as we anticipated they would. Prospects for plenty of wheat this year, were good. No particular lack of provisions there—still they bore golden prices. Corn $2.50 per bushel—Flour $12.00 per hundred pounds—fresh beef from 7 to 8 cents per pound—potatoes $2.00 per bushel—sugar 50 cents—coffee from 30 to 50 cts per pound. No sugar in the place.—*The Frontier Guardian,* Kanesville (Council Bluffs), Iowa, June 12, 1850. (In the Newspaper Division of the Historical, Memorial and Art Department of Iowa.)