

New Boundaries

While the people of the Territory of Iowa were preparing for and holding a second Constitutional Convention, and while they were debating the provisions of the new Constitution of 1846, Congress was reconsidering the boundaries of the proposed State.

As early as December, 1845, Delegate Augustus C. Dodge had introduced a bill to amend the act of admission by restoring the Lucas boundaries. Later, however, Stephen A. Douglas proposed the compromise line of forty-three degrees and thirty minutes for the northern boundary. For more than two months this bill was on the House calendar without being considered. Meanwhile, the same parallel had been adopted as the northern boundary by the Constitutional Convention in Iowa.

On the ninth of June, the Douglas amendment was taken up by the House and passed. It was reported to the Senate without delay, but was not passed by that body until the first day of August. On the fourth day of August the act received the approval of President Polk.

The strongest speech, perhaps, in the whole de-

bate was that of the Iowa Delegate. Mr. Dodge reviewed the history of the boundary dispute and pointed out that both he and the people of Iowa had pursued a firm and honorable course. He showed that many of the States were as large as or even larger than the proposed State of Iowa. Referring to the boundary proposed in the act of March 3, 1845, he said: "It will never be accepted by the people of Iowa." But he produced letters to show that members of the Iowa Convention of 1846 were willing to accept the compromise boundary proposed in the bill under discussion. "I admonish the majority of this House", he said, that if they diminish the territory, "they might as well pass an act for our perpetual exclusion from the Union. Sir, the people of Iowa will never acquiesce in it."