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Sectionalism

It is constantly objected to Fremont & Dayton, that they are supported by a sectional party, who, by their sectionalism, endanger the National Union— This objection, more than all others, causes many, really opposed to slavery extension, to hesitate— Practically, it is the most difficult objection we have to meet—

For this reason, I now propose to examine it, a little more carefully than I have heretofore seen, or seen it done by others—

First, then, what is the ~~nation~~ question between the parties, respectively represented by Buchanan and Fremont?

Simply this: "Shall slavery be allowed to extend into U. S. territories, now legally free?" Buchanan says it shall, and Fremont says it shall not—

That is the nation issue, and the whole of it— Say the respective platforms side by side, and the difference between them, will be found to amount to precisely that—

True, each party charges upon the other, designs much beyond what is involved in the issue, as stated; but as these charges can not be fully proved either way, it is probably better to reject them on both sides, and stick to the nation issue, as it is clearly made up on the record.

And now, to restate the question "Shall slavery be allowed to extend into U. S territories, now legally free? I beg to know how one side of that question is more sectional than the other? Of course I expect to effect

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nothing with the man who makes this charge of sectionalism, without caring whether it is just or not — But of the candid, fair man, who has been puzzling with this charge, I do ask how is one side of this question, more sectional, than the other? I beg of him to consider well, and answer calmly —

If one side be as sectional as the other, nothing is gained, as to sectionalism, by changing sides; so that each must choose sides of the question on some other ground as I shall now think, according, as the one side or the other, shall appear nearest right —

If he shall really think slavery ought to be extended, let him go to Buchanan; if he think it ought not let go to Fremont —

But, Fremont and Dayton, are both residents of the free-states; and this fact has been vaunted, in high places, as excessive sectionalism —

While interested individuals become indignant and excited, against this manifestation of sectionalism, I am very happy to know, that the Constitution remains calm — keeps cool — upon the subject — It does say that President and Vice President shall be resident of different states; but it does not say one must live in a slave, and the other in a free state —

It has been a custom to take one from a slave, and the other from a free state; but the custom has not, at all been uniform — In 1828 Gen. Jackson and Mr. Calhoun, both from slave-states, were placed on the same ticket; and Mr. Adams and Dr. Rush ~~were from~~

both from the free-states, were pitted against them. Gen. Jackson and Mr. Calhoun were elected, and qualified and served under the election; yet the whole thing never suggested the idea of sectionalism —

In 1841, the president, Gen. Harrison died, by which Mr. Tyler, the Vice-President, became president — Mr. Mangum, another slave-state man, was placed in the Vice Prendential chair, served out the term, and no fuss about it — no sectionalism thought of —

In 1853 the present president came into office — He is a free-state man — Mr King, the new Vice President elect, was a slave state man; but he died without entering on the duties of his office — At first, his vacancy was filled by Atchison, another slave-state man; but he soon resigned, and the place was supplied by Bright, a free-state man — So that right now, and for the year and a half last past, our president and pres.-prendent are both actually free-state men —

But, it is said, the friends of Fremont, avow the purpose of electing him exclusively by free-state votes, and that this is unendurable sectionalism —

This statement of fact, is not exactly true. With the friends of Fremont, it is an expected necessity, but it is not an "avowed purpose" to elect him, if at all, principally, by free state votes; but it is, with equal intensity, true

that Buchanan's friends expect to elect him, if at all, chiefly by slave-state votes—
Here, again, the sectionalism, is just as much on one side as the other—

The thing which gives most color to the charge of Sectionalism, made against those who oppose the spread of slavery into free territory, is the fact that they can get no votes in the slave-states, while their opponents get all, or nearly so, in the slave-states, and also, a large number in the free States— To state it in another way, the Extensionists can get votes all over the Nation, while the Restrictionists can get them only in the free states—

This being the fact, why is it so? It is not because one side of the question during them, is more sectional than the other; nor because of any difference in the mental or moral structure of the people North and South— It is because, in that question, the people of the South have an immediate palpable, and immensely great pecuniary interest; while, with the people of the North, it is merely an abstract question of moral right, with only slight, and remote pecuniary interest added—

The slaves of the South, at a moderate estimate, are worth a thousand millions of dollars. Let it be permanently settled that this property may extend to new territory, without restraint, and it greatly enhances, perhaps quite doubles, its value at once— This immense, palpable pecuniary interest, on the question of extending slavery, unites the Southern people, as one man— But it can not be demonstrated that the North will gain a dollar by restricting it—

Moral principle is all, or nearly all, that unites us of the North— Pity us, it is so, but this is a looser bond, than pecuniary interest.

Right here is the plain cause of <u>their</u> perfect union and <u>our</u> want of it— And see how it works— If a Southern man aspires to be president, they choke him down instantly, in order that the glittering prize of the presidency, may be held up, on Southern terms, to the greedy eyes of Northern ambition— With this they tempt us, and cheat us upon us—

The democratic party, in 1844, elected a Southern president— Since then, they have neither had a Southern candidate for <u>election</u>, or <u>nomination</u>— Their Conventions of 1848— 1852 and 1856, have been struggles exclusively among <u>Northern</u> men, each vieing to outbid the other for the Southern vote— the South standing calmly by to finally cry going, going, gone, to the highest bidder; and, at the same time, to make its power more distinctly seen, and thereby to secure a still higher bid at the next succeeding struggle—

"Actions speak louder than words", is the maxim; and, if true, the South now distinctly says to the North "Give us the <u>measures</u> and you take the <u>men</u>".

The total withdrawal of Southern aspirants, for the present, multiplies the number of Northern ones— These last, in competing with each other, commit themselves to the utmost verge that, though their own greediness, they have the least hope their Northern supporters will bear— Having got committed, in a race of competition, necessity drives them into peril to sustain themselves. Each, at first secures all he can, on personal attach

ments to him, and though hopes resting on
him personally— Next, they unite with one
another, and with the perfectly bonded
South, to make the offensive position they
have got into, "a party measure". This alone,
large additional numbers are secured—
When the repeal of the Missouri Compro=
mise was first proposed, at the North
there was, literally "nobody" in favor of
it— In February 1854 our Legislature met in
call. a extra, session— From them Douglas
sought an indorsement of his then pend=
ing measure of Repeal— In our Legisla=
ture were about 70 democrats to 30 whigs—
The former held a caucus, in which it was res=
olved to give Douglas the desired indorsement=
Some of the members of that caucus bolted
— would not stand it— and they now
divulge the secret— They say that the
caucus fairly confessed that the Repeal
was wrong; and they pleaded their determi=
nation to redress it, solely on the ground
that it was necessary to sustain Douglas—
Here we have the direct evidence of how the
Nebraska-bill obtained its strength in Illinois.
It was given, not in a sense of right, but in the
teeth of a sense of wrong, to sustain Douglas.
So Illinois was divided— So New England,
for Peirce; Michigan for Cass, and Pennsylvania
was for Buchanan, and all for the Democrat=
ic party—
And when, by such means, they have
got a large portion of the Northern people into
a position contrary to their own honest impulses,
and sense of right; they have the impudence

to turn upon them who are pleased from, and call them sectional.

Were it not two serious a matter, this cool impudence would be laughable, to say the least.

Recurring to the question "Shall slavery be allowed to extend into U. S. territory now legal free?

This is a sectional question — that is to say, it is a question, in its nature calculated to divide the American people geographically — Who is to blame for that? Who can help it? Either side can help it; but how? Simply by yielding to the other side. There is no other way — In the whole range of possibility, there is no other way — Then, which side shall yield? To this again, there can be but one answer — the side which is in the wrong. True, we differ, as to which side is wrong; and we boldly say, let all who really think slavery ought to spread into free territory, openly go over against us — There is where they rightfully belong.

But why should any go, who really think slavery ought not to spread? Do they really think the right ought to yield to the wrong? Are they afraid to stand by the right? Do they fear that the constitution is too weak to sustain them in the right? Do they really think that by right surrendering to wrong, the hopes of our constitution, our Union, and our liberties, can possibly be bettered?

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Twenty two years ago Judge Douglas and I first became acquainted— We were both young then; he, a trifle younger than I. Even then, we were both ambitious; I, perhaps, quite as much so as he— With me, the race of ambition has been a failure— a flat failure; with him it has been one of splendid success— His name fills the nation; and is not unknown ~~is~~, even, ~~to~~ in foreign lands— I affect no contempt for the high eminence he has reached— So reached, that the oppressed of my species, might have shared with me in the elevation, I would rather stand on that eminence, than wear the proudest crown that ever pressed a monarch's brow.

[1839?]
Barton?