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[From the Fayetteville Observer.]

The Public Domain.

Messrs. Editors:—The subject of the Public Domain, I am happy to see, is now attracting the attention of the old States; and being one of the greatest interest to every tax payer within the limits of our own Commonwealth, I ask a place in your columns for some remarks in relation to their history—their value—our title to a distributive portion—and the unjust and iniquitous policy which has prevailed in the disposition of this magnificent property.

By the term Public Domain, is meant that vast tract of territory within the limits of the United States not appropriated to individuals, communities or corporations.

In the progress of the war of Independence, this subject of the waste lands was a subject of discord and dissension, which excited sad forebodings in the breasts of these early votaries of liberty.

The large States, influenced by that feeling of avarice which, as being then exhibited, appears to be almost inseparable from our common nature, insisted that, in case of a successful issue to the contest, their territorial limits should not be lessened, and their right to the soil should remain unaltered.

The smaller States, on the other hand, urged that the struggle was for principle and not for aggrandizement—that they furnished a full proportion of men and money—that the sovereignty of the soil within the chartered limits of each of the States, was still in the British crown—and never would be wrested from it but by a united effort and at a common sacrifice—that even if they succeeded in the attempt to be emancipated from foreign political oppression, their influence in the new Government proposed to be established at home, would inevitably be overshadowed by the overwhelming influence of the larger States,—and refused to enter into the Confederacy until a compact was formed, which secured to each member rights and privileges proportioned to charge and expenditure incurred by each.

In order to show the state of feeling which existed at that early day in relation to the waste land, I quote a portion of the instructions given by the Legislature of the State of Maryland, in 1779, to her delegates to Congress:

"Is it possible that those States, which are ambitiously grasping at Territories to which, in our judgment, they have not the least shadow of exclusive right, will use with greater moderation, the increase of wealth and power derived from those territories, when acquired, than what they have displayed in their endeavors to acquire them? We think not—we are convinced the same spirit which hath prompted them to insist on a claim so extravagant so repugnant, to every principle of justice, so incompatible with the general welfare of the States, will urge them on to add oppression to injustice.—If they should not be incited by a superiority of wealth and strength, to oppress by open force their less powerful neighbors, yet depopulation, and, consequently, the impoverishment of those States will necessarily follow, which, by an unfair construction of the confederations may be stripped of a common interest and the common benefits derivable from the Western Country. Suppose Virginia, for instance, in disputably possessed of the extensive and fertile country to which she has set up claim; what would be the probable consequences to Maryland of such an undisturbed and undisputed possession. They cannot escape the least discerning. Virginia, by selling on the most moderate terms a small portion of the lands in question, would draw into her treasury, vast sums of money, and in proportion to the sums arising from such sales, would be enabled to lessen her taxes. Lands comparatively cheap and Taxes comparatively low, with the land and Taxes of an adjacent State, would quickly drain the State, thus disadvantageously circumstanced, of its most useful inhabitants. Its wealth, and its consequence in the scale of the confederated States, would sink of course. A claim so injurious to more than one half, if not the whole of the United States, ought to be supported by the clearest evidence of right.—Yet what evidence of that right has been produced? What arguments alleged in support, either of the evidence or the right? None that we have heard of, deserving a serious refutation. We are convinced—policy and justice require that a country, unsettled at the commencement of this War, claimed by the British Crown and ceded to it by the Treaty of Paris, if wrested from the common enemy by the blood and treasure of the 13 States, should be considered as a common property—subject to be parcelled out by Congress, into free, convenient, and independent Governments, in such manner and at such times as the wisdom of that Assembly shall hereafter direct.

"Thus convinced, we should betray the trust reposed in us by our constituents, were we to authorize you to ratify on their behalf, the Confederation, unless it be further explained We have coolly, and dispassionately, considered the subject; we have weighed probable inconveniences and hardships, against the sacrifice of just and essential rights, and do instruct you not to agree to the Confederation, unless an article or articles be added thereto, in conformity with our declaration. Should we succeed in obtaining such articles, then you are hereby fully empowered to accede to the Confederacy."

The political sagacity, the insight into the future, manifested by the authors of these instructions, is indeed most admirable. The articles insisted on by Maryland were inserted; and yet, in little more than half a century, we witness the overwhelming preponderance of some of the States in the councils of the nation. Some of the States, formed out of territory then unappropriated, have on the floor of Congress three fold the representatives, and carry in consequence, three times the influence, of some of the original thirteen. Ohio, one of the off shoots of Virginia, has 21 members to her mother's 13.

So great was the irritation of the public mind in many of the Colonies on the subject of the waste lands, that at one time it was apprehended that the small States would withdraw from the contest,—a step which must have proved fatal to the success of the struggle. It was essential to a successful prosecution of the war, and the establishment of a salutary and permanent form of Government at its close, that a Federal alliance should be formed; without it, there was no common head—no concert of action, either in projecting plans of operation or in conducting them. In order to compromise and to accomplish so desirable an object, the several Legislatures passed resolutions and the general Congress made appeals (for they had not power to do more,) to the magnanimity and patriotism of the States; and under the genial influence of the love of liberty and of union, the appeal was not made in vain.

New York led the way in the generous compromise. In 1710, her Legislature passed an act, entitled "An Act to facilitate the articles of confederation and perpetual union among the U. S. of America." By this act it was declared that the territory which she ceded "should be and enure forever for the use and benefit of such of the United States as should become members of the Federal alliance of the said States—*and for no other use or purpose whatsoever.*"

The deeds of cession by Virginia follow after; and although of precisely the same tenor as all the others, yet, as being rather more full and explicit than some of them, and as those deeds of cession are the deeds of conveyance from the then owners to the present heirs or legatees, I quote in full. This instrument bears date 1st March, 1784, and by it she authorizes certain Commissioners "to convey, transfer, and make over to the United States, in Congress assembled, for the benefit of said States, *Virginia inclusive*, all right, title, and dominion, as well of soil as of jurisdiction, which the said Commonwealth hath to the territory or tract of country within the limits of the Virginia charter—situated, lying and being to the Northwest of the Ohio river, to and for the uses and purposes of the above mentioned act" Then follows the act—"That all the lands within the territories so ceded to the United States, and not reserved for, or appropriated to any of the before mentioned purposes, or disposed of in bounties to the officers and soldiers of the American army, shall be considered as a common fund, for the *use* and *benefit* of such of the United States as have been, or shall become, members of the Confederation or Federal alliance of the said States, *Virginia inclusive*, according to their *usual respective portions* of the *general charge* and *expenditure*—and shall be faithfully and bona fide disposed of for that purpose, and for no other use or purpose whatsoever."

The deeds from the other States, containing unappropriated lands within their chartered limits, were of a similar character; and, with the exception of the purchases from the Indians included the whole of the public land which is embraced within the boundary of the original 13

But, besides this large domain, constituting at this time more than half the original number of States, we have a still more extensive territory acquired by purchase or by conquest.

In 1803, the purchase of Louisiana was made of France by Mr. Jefferson; and by it was acquired all the tract of country lying west of the Mississippi, (with the exception of Texas, New Mexico and the territory west of the Rocky Mountains) It is now parcelled off into several of our most valuable States and Territories constituting a large item in the pecuniary estimate of the Public Domain.

In 1820, the purchase of Florida was made from Spain, under the administration of Mr. Monroe. The value and extent of this rich inheritance is not understood by many of our people. They have been so long misled by the misrepresentations of designing politicians, as to become incredulous as to any true statement on the subject. I must refer them to some official sources of information as to the quality, the number of acres, and to the actual sales, for the value per acre.

"*Public domain.*—Lands sold from opening of land office to 30th June, 1852, 103,113,861 acres; granted for schools, &c, 40,588,978; deaf and dumb asylums, 44,971; for internal improvements, 10,007,677; military service, 18,709,219; reserved for Indians, 3,400.725; swamp lands granted to States, 28,156,670; lands unsold, 1,387,534,001 acres."—*Census Compend., p.* 191.

But, again, by the operation of the act of August, 1842, to provide revenue from imports &c., the distribution of the net proceeds of the public lands among the States was suspended. The proceeds of these lands up to, and including 1st January, 1839, amounted to the sum of $57,227,520. Since that time, the following sums have been received, viz:

1839,	$7,076,447	1848,	$3,328,642
1840,	3,292,683	1849,	1,688,959
1841,	1,365,627	1850,	1,859,894
1842,	1,385,797	1851,	2,352,305
1843,	897,818	1852,	2,043,239
1844,	2,059,939	1853,	1,667,084
1845,	2,077,022	1854,	8,470,798
1846,	2,694,452	1855,	11,497,049
1847,	2,498,355	1856,	8,917,644
To July, 1856, total,			$122,811,274

By this just and patriotic act, the State of North Carolina received more than $1,250,000—which were appropriated to the payment of $300,000 of public debt—the like amount added to the Literary Fund—$600,000 to the stock of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad and the balance to the draining of the swamp lands. And while passing along, I take leave to state, that, without this most opportune aid to the efforts of individuals, the railroad could not have been built, and we should have been up to this time, in all probability without a railroad.

Had that most just and munificent system of distribution (for, although it was called by another name, it was nothing else,) been continued up to the present time, it is clearly demonstrated by the figures shown, that the State would have received many millions of dollars, and been able, without contracting a debt, to have completed her works of internal improvement, so indispensable to the development of her vast resources.

If any doubt exists as to the value of the lands, let us look to the late Report of the Illinois Central Railroad Co; which shows that the company has now in operation 704 miles of road, costing in the aggregate $20,000,000 paid for entirely from grants of the public land—the company having received 2,595,000 acres, of which about 900,000 have been sold for $10,713,228—leaving on hand 1,700,000 acres, worth, according to last year's sales, $23,000,000, but, in reality, a much larger sum, as the company had borrowed money on the lands, and is able to hold them until their value is increased far beyond that sum. As it is, the company has received from the United States, in round numbers, $26,000,000, and a bonus of $7,000,000 for taking the road!

But, to show further the utter falsity of the impression endeavored to be produced upon the public mind, that the lands are of no value; look to the Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in the State of Michigan submitted to the Legislature a few years since. I quote his language:

"The primary school lands reserved from sale and given to the State by ordinance of Congress, consist of sections No. 16, in all the surveyed townships. The peninsular portion of the State of Michigan consists of nearly 40,000 square miles—one thirty sixth part of which belongs to the common school fund.—In 40,000 square miles there are, 1,111 townships of 36 square miles each. But dropping 11 entire townships for the deficiency already suggested, there will remain 1,100 townships, which is a fraction less than the true number. In 1,100 square miles, there are 704,000 acres which, at $5 per acre, the medium price, would realize to the State $3,520,000"—according to another estimate, he values them at $3,850,000,000, and adds: "These estimates may seem to be extravagant, but it is confidently believed that the result will exceed rather than fall short of the highest computation." And he was right, for, under a great pressure of the money market, the actual sales far exceeded his highest estimate.

These statements by the recipients of unjust liberality of Congress, are evidence alike of the value of the Public Domain, and the iniquitous disposition which has been made of it by Congress, the trustee of the whole family of States.

JUSTICE.

[Concluded next week.]

Personal Explanation.

SPEECH OF

Hon. JOHN A. GILMER,

OF NORTH CAROLINA,

In the House of Representatives, May 31, 1858.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. Gilmer said:

MR CHAIRMAN: There seems to be some indication of a disposition to deal with me quite fiercely and harshly. Indeed of arguing the political questions under consideration, thrusts and attacks are made *ad hominem* to do me harm. Points out of the ordinary scope are made, and my colleague seems to insist upon them as though something very important was to turn upon them. Before I proceed, however, I will call upon the gentleman from New York, [Mr. Goodwin,] who was between Mr. Giddings and myself, and I would be glad if he would state, in the hearing of the House, what took place between us.

Mr. Atkins. I object, as objection was made on this side of the House just now under similar circumstances.

Several Members. It was withdrawn.

Mr. Atkins. Then I withdraw my objection

Mr. Goodwin. Mr. Chairman——

Mr. Gilmer. My friends say they think it wholly unnecessary to introduce any testimony upon this subject. [Cries of 'Let him go on.'] Well, I am perfectly willing that he shall make his statement.

Mr. Goodwin. I will say that I was in my own seat at the time, [Mr. Goodwin's seat is next but one to the seat occupied by Mr. Gilmer, and between it and the aisle,] that Mr Giddings stood in the aisle by the side of my desk; and that there is one more desk between Mr Gilmer's and my own; Mr. Giddings stood here by the side of my desk and shook his hands at Mr Gilmer, and said, "I do not thank you for connecting my name with that of Mr. Buchanan." That was all he said; and then he passed along. He did not take Mr. Gilmer by the hand. He was not within reach of his hands. My colleague, [Mr. Andrews,] who sits by me, was here at the time.

Mr. Andrews. My recollection of what occurred corresponds with what my colleague has just stated.

Mr. Bingham. I take the liberty of saying that I believe the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. Shaw] was present when my colleague, [Mr. Giddings,] in his hearing, and in the hearing of the House, said that he never congratulated Mr. Gilmer on that occasion, or on any other, about his speech; and I submit to the House and to the country if, after hearing that statement of my colleague, it is not, to say the least of it, a departure from those rules which ordinarily govern gentlemen, for the gentleman from North Carolina, in the absence of my colleague, to raise a question of veracity with him, especially on a subject which he knows nothing about?

Mr. Gilmer. I think I recollect seeing the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. Cox] somewhere near me at the time. If he is in the House I should be glad to hear his recollection of what occurred.

Mr. Underwood. I trust that if the committee has no more important business than this, we shall rise.

Mr. Gilmer. Well, I will let that pass.—Mr Chairman, I am not going to inflict a speech upon th ecommittee—very far from it. I will simply state that when I made my speech upon this subject of Kansas and Lecompton, I aimed, as far as I could, (and I think I succeeded,) at making a speech in which there were no offensive personal allusions—a speech that, I conceive, was acceptable to most southern gentlemen, and to the conservative gentlemen from the North My colleague, [Mr. Shaw,] twenty days thereafter, in my absence, made a reply to it; and I submit to his own good sense, and I submit to the sense of the committee, and to all who may have read his speech, whether, instead of answering the views which I had respectfully submitted to the consideration of the House and the country, without offense to any one, he did not in his speech reply to the *ad hominem*, as if my having done this or that, having helped a poor Irishman, or having voted this way, or that way, in the Legislature of North Carolina, had anything to do with the great questions that were then before us? And if my colleague, having thus attempted by a speech to affect me politically, in the estimation of my constituents, has found, from my reply, that he has gained nothing by it, but on the contrary, that he is about to lose by it, I would simply say, here, with all good humor, and with all respect, that I do not think it becomes him to get into this fever, this excitement, this fury, this evident state of dissatisfaction; for I can assure my colleague that I am down with no such complaint.

I desire, now, to say a word or two in reply to my colleague, in regard to my speech in reply to him having been delivered on Monday evening. My colleague may be assured that as early as a week ago last Tuesday night, after it was determined, as I understood, that we were to hold evening sessions for debate, I was then ready to proceed, but could not, by the House refusing to go into committee, for which refusal he voted. I waited till Saturday evening, when I obtained the floor; but as my colleague was not then present, I postponed my remarks still further, until Monday evening, for the express purpose of giving him an opportunity to be here. He says he did not receive the notice. I proceeded. With regard to the printing of my speech, my colleague will find by reference to the Globe, that it occupied its regular place in the proceedings, and appeared at the earliest possible moment. But such was my anxiety to publish it that I had it printed elsewhere, at my own expense; and if it did not fall into the hands of my colleague, it was in the hands of many gentlemen here before it was published in its regular order in the official proceedings in the Globe. But all this is catching at small things; and I express my belief, with all becoming respect that they had better be left out in discussions of this kind. I expect to gain nothing by such. I think my colleague will find that the people of North Carolina, before whom we have both to appear, will take very little notice of these small matters.

My colleague, it seems, would get me into some controversy with the venerable gentleman from Mississippi, [Mr. Quitman.] In that I trust he will be disappointed; for I say here, as I have often said in relation to the gentleman from Mississippi, that I had esteemed and venerated him as much as any man whose acquaintance it has been my fortune to make since the commencement of this Congress. He may get him momentarily into some excitement which on reflection, I am sure will soon pass away. I expressed my views as to how those who desired to have the Green amendment stricken out of the Senate bill could have proceeded so easily to do it; and in this, I indulged in the usual freedom of political criticism. But upon that particular subject I think I have been heard in such a manner that my people, at least, and all North Carolina, will be well satisfied with the history and explanation which I have given of that subject Was the amendment of the venerable gentleman from Mississippi to strike out the Green amendment? Let us see.

First, we had the Senate bill. The first amendment was to strike out the Senate bill and insert in lieu thereof the Crittenden Montgomery amendment. What was the amendment of the gentleman from Mississippi? It was to substitute his amendment for both the Senate bill and the Crittenden bill—to throw the Crittenden bill entirely aside Had it been written out no mention of the Green amendment would appear in it. It was a substitute both for the Senate bill and for the Crittenden Montgomery bill. In his amendment, I repeat, nothing would be said about the Green amendment, suppose it written out. What was the vote? Those who preferred the adjustment of the difficulty by means of the Crittenden Montgomery amendment, and were opposed to the Green amendment, to support the Quitman amendment would have had to vote against their own favorite bill, in order to have got at the Green amendment. In my reply I asked why the motion was not made simply to strike out the Green amendment from the Senate bill? To this no answer is given. My colleague does not doubt, no man doubts, if the amendment had been first made to strike out the Green amendment from the Senate bill, that motion would have been successful. Then what would have been the next vote? It would have been a vote deciding between the Crittenden Montgomery bill on the one side, and the Senate bill, thus stripped of the Green amendment, upon the other side. When the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. Marshall] brought that fact to their attention, and asked that the previous question should be withdrawn, that this motion might first be made, so as to place all in their true and proper position, why did not my colleague and those of our southern friends who wanted the Green amendment stricken out yield to him that the question might be submitted in that shape? Nothing could be gained effectually in putting the motion in the shape in which it was put, and everything could be gained by putting it in the simple, plain shape of striking out the Green amendment; and then the vote would have been between the two propositions as I have stated.

But I desire to say no more upon that subject. I understood the greater portion of the speech of my colleague, of the 20th of April, to be a defense of the doctrine contained in the executive Lecompton message. I directed my remarks to the doctrine contained in the message. In order that there should be no difficulty upon that question, I quoted the very identical doctrine in that message with which I found fault and dissented from, and upon which the Green amendment rested for explanation—the executive message giving meaning, force, and effect, to this Green amendment. I have, as to this, not heard my colleague distinctly and really; I do not understand to-day whether he approves of that doctrine or not; though if I have heard and understood him correctly, he says he does not approve of that portion of the message. Then I submit with great deference, that my colleague ought to have let my argument on that subject pass with his approval, and himself argued somewhat against that doctrine of the President; and not have devoted himself so entirely to other matters in the speech which I made, and matters foreign and to which no allusion had been made by me.

One word now as to the vote which he said I gave in the Senate of North Carolina. I desire that what he quoted and stated as to the provisions of the constitution of North Carolina shall appear in his speech just as he spoke it here to-day; because, when it shall be compared with the constitution of North Carolina, there will be found, I conceive, a very material difference between his quotation and the constitution itself. We had a convention to amend the constitution of North Carolina, in 1835.—It was called by an enabling act, the people being first consulted. They declared in favor of a convention, and delegates were elected:—Amendments were made by that convention, and the people ratified their action.

In that connection, the committee reported in substance that no convention should be called except in the manner stated by my colleague. I speak from memory. But according to the register of the debates of the convention, complaints were made of the phraseology of the draft of the constitutional amendment first proposed, as to calling a convention in the future.—Whereupon a very important amendment, materially changing the language as to the call of a convention was made—the first draft being, in substance "that no convention should be called, except by the concurring vote of two thirds of both Houses" The amendment made this section read in substance, "no convention shall be called by the Legislature except by the concurring vote of two thirds of both Houses," &c. This amendment, thus made—explained more fully by the debates—maintained for the power of the people of North Carolina over their constitution.

But how does any difference of opinion on this sustain my colleague? Did I ever talk of sustaining the doctrine that, in a new State or in an old State, a convention, called in one way or the other, could fairly give the Legislature the power to make a discrimination between property? I never did at any time.—I never maintained the doctrine that a convention can justly give the Legislature power to give security to one species of property in preference to another—never. All this, however, I more fully explained before.

A word now about the eighty millions of public lands. The fault which I found with my colleague's speech was, that he stated that I voted against the necessary provisions to protect the Government in her right in the public lands within the confines of Kansas, without noticing the fact that the same safeguards were contained in the Crittenden Montgomery bill that were in the Senate bill.

I understand my colleague now to say that he was misunderstood; that what he meant was, that inasmuch as the people of Kansas might vote down Lecompton, and proceed to form a new constitution, and in the formation of this new constitution they might claim a right to these lands, that would be effectual against the title of the United States.

Now, let me show how erroneous this position is. All Congress can do is to put a proper safeguard into the bill on which the State is to be admitted. Suppose, for instance, that Minnesota or any other State having public lands within it comes into the Union with proper provisions in the act of admission as to the rights of the United States in the public domain, and afterwards the people of that State should change their constitution and put in a clause declaring that all the public lands within its borders should be the property of the State; how would this affect the Government title? The position of my colleague is, if I understand him, that a subsequent alteration of the State constitution could take away the title of the United States to the public lands in that State, when express provision against it is in the admitting act—if the admission afterwards should be by *proclamation*. But, sir, I presented the views of the gentleman from Mississippi, [Senator Davis,] and quoted from his letter. My colleague must admit that I quoted properly. It declares in substance, that unless you provide in the act of admission proper safeguards as to the title of the United States to the public lands in a State, the General Government loses its control over those public lands. But my colleague flies instantly to something else to get out of that difficulty; and says the remedy is contained in the enabling act. I read the views and position of the Senator from Mississippi, and showed that they must be provided for.

Mr. Shaw, of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman——

Mr. Gilmer. My colleague would not extend this courtesy to me, and I cannot yield.

Mr. Shaw, of North Carolina. I only wish to interrupt my colleague to correct him in his statement. The Senator from Mississippi did not say that. He did not say the condition precedent must be contained in the act of admission. He is so reported in my colleague's speech, but he did not say that——

Mr. Gilmer. I cannot yield. My purpose was to try my colleague by his own assumed rule, and by the opinion of Senator Davis. I understand my colleague now to say, that what he meant by the remark in his opening speech that I had not been faithful against alien suffrage, consisted in this: that the inhabitants or citizens of Kansas might, under the Crittenden Montgomery bill, for which I voted, in case they voted down the Lecompton constitution, make a new one, in which they might tolerate alien suffrage, than to guard against it in the act of admission? If the State afterwards sees proper to call a convention and amend its constitution, the difficulty which my colleague seems to labor under would arise in every case.

I mention this to my colleague to show how anxious he is to point out defects, and indulge in fault finding.

He says that, by quoting the letter of the Honorable Senator from Mississippi, [Mr. Davis,] I clinch the argument on his position, and in his favor, on his vote to admit Minnesota without a provision protecting the United States in her rights to the public domain within the confines of that new State. Very different, in truth, if there be anything *in his own position assumed against me.*

I am free to admit that my great objection to the admission of Minnesota was the alien universal suffrage which her constitution tolerates, and which is not denied.

My colleague is down upon me about my former views as to the admission of Kansas with the Lecompton constitution; talks enigmatically, and charges more than I recollect. I do not recollect about the canvass. I do not deny, however, that previous to my coming to Congress I did entertain and express different views in relation to Kansas and Lecompton to those I formed and acted upon after investigating and becoming familiar with the whole facts. The time, I presume is not material. I am free to admit, that had I not become well satisfied that serious difficulties would likely, *inevitably, and without gain or benefit to my section*, arise to the peace and quiet of the Union, I would have been as ready and as anxious as any other to admit Kansas with the Lecompton constitution, unconditionally.

But I came here to confer, investigate, and to legislate for the best interests of my country I came here to give that vote which I thought would be best for the North, best for the South, best for the East, and best for the West; and when I had made a full investigation of the subject so far as I could; I found things very different and came honestly to the conclusion, without any reference to any section of this country, that a bill containing the provisions such as the bill I have advocated and sustained was best calculated to quiet the country finally and forever. I gave it my heart, I gave it my hand, I gave it my cordial and honest support.

Mr. Shaw, of North Carolina. Will my colleague permit me to ask him a question?

Mr. Gilmer. My colleague will recollect how he answered me when I asked the same privilege. I must reply to him in the same way.

Mr. Shaw, of North Carolina. I would be glad to know whether my colleague denies that the submission of the Lecompton constitution to the people was a question in the last canvass? I understood him to say that he took no position in regard to that question. If the gentleman denies what I have said, I am prepared to prove it. I say this now, because it is not my purpose to reply to him.——

Mr. Gilmer. My colleague will interrupt me whether I will or not.

I admit that I was, with others at the South who believed that there was no necessity for a submission of the Lecompton constitution to the people, for that I then believed that it was to be submitted for the sole and improper purpose *unfairly* to get rid of slavery. Had such been the true state of things, and *that* Lecompton admitted slavery, *the question*, no man would have more readily stood up for the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton constitution.

My colleague says that I had indicated my anxiety to get rid of this question. *Never did he state a greater truth.* I was anxious, and have been anxious since the difficulty arose, that the question might be got rid of without harm to the peace and interests of the country or the sacrifice of any principle. I presume that my colleague desired the same thing. I presume that all gentlemen who voted honestly on this question here desired and aimed at the same thing. And I repeat here, that the course I have pursued on this subject, whether southern men were with me or against me, *is an honest one.* Inasmuch as our southern friends have come, substantially, to the bill which was passed, upon my identical platform, I trust that experience, which is the result of time, may prove that I was right.

When my colleague speaks of my vote on the Crittenden bill being different from the votes of the great majority of my southern friends, and with a majority of the North, why did he not mention that upon the conference bill two as honest southern men as ever graced this floor recorded their names with the North?—Does my colleague say that the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. Boyce,] and the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. Quitman] have, because of that vote, been false to their States, and become northern in their feelings and principles? How *would* they feel, and how *ought* they to feel, if I had risen up in my place, and in the presence of the assembled Representatives of the nation, undertook to brand these gentlemen with having pursued a course by which they forfeited the confidence of their country—had perpetrated "an unparalleled outrage"—because they felt bound, under a sense of duty, to record their votes with what my colleague calls the Black Republican party? I merely present this attempt to make me out an abolitionist as one of those things to be placed in the same category as reading the names of those who subscribed for my speech.

In my reply to my colleague's speech, I said in substance, that I was surprised that he had not pointed out some portion of my speech that an ultra northern man could put his name to, or an ultra man anywhere, which he has been wholly unable to do. I desire to stand or fall by what is true—the facts, nothing more. My speech is before the country, and I ask to be judged by my speech. I am willing to let my first speech and the remarks which I have subsequently made, go to North Carolina, or anywhere else, and be judged of and decided on by an honest constituency. I did complain, in answer to my colleague's speech, that he, in speaking of my remarks against the Senate bill,