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"Suum cuique tributo."

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### SPEECH OF MR. MARSHALL, OF KENTUCKY.

On the bill to appropriate the proceeds of the sales of the Public Lands, and to grant Pre-emption Rights.  
(Concluded.)

Fortune, a most propitious and singular fortune, has placed at the disposal of this Government a fund, an enormous fund, independent of taxation, to which we have shown the States, have something very like to strict title. Eight hundred millions of acres of land, at one dollar and one quarter per acre, one thousand millions of dollars—think of that, sir!—to be applied gradually and upon a principle of strict federal equality to the extinction of State debts, to the extension of State improvements, to the support of State credit! Oh! who can say, sir, that this measure is hostile to the rights of the States as separate communities? And this fund, too, conferring ten times its own value upon the individuals from whom it is drawn, and opening up new perennial and unfathomable fountains of revenue to the Government which distributes it! Who shall say that it is injurious to the interests of the People as a nation, or to their National Treasury? This picture is not overdrawn—not in the least. It is the advantage, the peculiar advantage, of peopling and bringing new and fertile land into cultivation. Raise money in any other way, or from any other source, and it is taxation. Sell any thing else, the product of human art or labor, below its value, and you are either robbed by the vendor or you rob those from whom you derive it. But land, vacant, unsettled, unpeopled, fertile, uncultivated land, is the creation and the gift of God. When you sell it for the one-tenth of its value, you have enriched yourselves to that extent from the munificence of Heaven; and he who purchases has made one thousand per cent upon his investment. You enlarge the national capital a thousand fold by the very act of filling the National Treasury; and, at the same time, and by the same operation, extend incalculable the sources of future revenue. But sir, although all this is true, strictly and philosophically true, and the individual is enriched, American population increased, the national capital enlarged, and the National Treasury filled by this progress of emigration and settlement, still the money thus profitably invested is withdrawn from the productive industry of the States from whence it was taken, and the power of that industry is for the time, and to that extent, diminished. How beautiful the operation of this bill, which restores and renovates the fountains whence these streams were drawn enabling them to flow on, and on, and on, without exhaustion, till the whole grand reservoir of the West be full of people and of capital—the perennial sources remaining fresh, and full and vigorous as before! And it restores, in a form at once the most just, the most beneficent, the most useful. It was gone from the State entirely and forever. It is taken by the General Government, as I have shown, without tax or oppression. It is given back in masses to the State treasuries to be expended, not unproductively, but in the creation of new instruments and vehicles of commerce and production; the People receiving again the money, the State receiving an equal value in works which are to be the permanent sources of revenue to the public, by conferring permanent and enriching facilities upon the industry of the people, at once prevent the drain of capital by emigration, and replenishing the State treasuries without taxation.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Wise) has told us that the effect of this bill upon the States will be similar to an effort to reform a spendthrift by filling his pockets with money. Sir, is it just to the States, is it quite consistent in those who claim to be the champions of their rights, their sovereignty, and the guardians of their honor, thus to stigmatize their character and their

credit? Is it quite fair in a Government, or any member of it, which, holding the imperial sources of revenue in exclusive property, and in possession but a few years ago of a vast surplus, repudiating all authority to advance the arts of peace, all power to extend domestic commerce, and to conquer the vast distances of its territory by quickening communication and intercourse—is it quite fair, after shuffling off these sovereign powers upon the States, and seducing them into their exertion by promises of aid and countenance, to brand as profligate and prodigal the generous efforts they have made to improve the face of their country, to bring themselves nearer to each other, to increase the objects of the industry and enlarge and extend the markets for the productions of their people? No, sir; the internal improvement debt of the States finds no type in the wanton expenditure of the profligate. Theirs is rather the wise and far-sighted policy of the husbandman, who sows all his seed broad-cast upon his fields, and even stints himself for the present rather than his lands should lie idle, awaiting with philosophic patience the rich and sure reward of the coming harvest.

But, sir, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Wise) found much to blame in the details as well as the principle of the bill. He considers the ten per cent. on the net profits of the lands situated within their territorial limits, which the bill gives to the nine States enumerated in the first section, over and above their federal population, as unjust and unequal—a mere bribe to those States. The principle which governs this provision seems clear and unexceptionable. In the first place, the land upon which this per centum is given is within the territorial limits and jurisdiction of the States to which it is given, and is, by the existing law, exempt for five years from taxation. In the second place, the States so enumerated are found to increase in population in a ratio of about ten per centum faster than the older States of the Union. So that the provision of this section is necessary to compensate the State for the loss of revenue occasioned by the exemption of the public lands from taxation for five years after the settlement, and to preserve the general principle of the bill, by apportioning the distribution, as nearly as possible, to the increasing ratio of population.

The section which fixes the maximum price which the Government shall demand during the existence of the laws at the present minimum of \$1 25 per acre, has met with the severest denunciation. The wisdom and propriety of this provision seem to be equally manifest with the policy and justice of the preceding. The great national object is to promote as fast as possible the settlement, real and bona fide, of the public domain, and so to keep down the price as to place comfortable farms within the reach of the poorer class of emigrants. Under the distribution law, the necessities of some of the older States, or the jealousy of those who imagine that emigration drains their population, and ascribe their own decline, or at least inertness and stagnation, to the rise of the Western States, might induce them to raise the price of lands so as to check the advance of that population which the General Government is most interested in extending. The one would kill the goose that lays the golden egg to get at the treasure; the other would stop the national growth, in the vain hope of increasing thereby their own particular importance. Against either result, or either motive, the provision is aimed, and wisely aimed, as it seems to me.

And here, Mr. Chairman, I beg leave to differ not only from the gen-

tleman from Virginia, [Mr. Wise] but from my associate in this argument, the gentleman from North Carolina, [Mr. RAYNER.] I cannot ascribe the want of progress, or at least the very slow advance of population and resources in the Carolinas and Virginia to the settlement and growth of the Western country. When was emigration ever known to diminish population at home, all things else being right there? Did emigration to America diminish the population of Great Britain? Has the population of New England diminished under the settlement and most wonderful advance of Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana? Has New York or Pennsylvania declined under the growth of the West? So far from it, the settlement of the Western lands and the creation of the Western communities have been the great source of the rapid advance and wonderful improvement of the States from whence they have principally drawn their people. The power of increase in the human species is unlimited, save by the means of subsistence; the amount of which depends upon the amount and character of the industry employed, and the remuneration it receives. Population and labor move *pari passu*. The growth of the new States has furnished the demand for the products of the commerce and manufactures of the old, and the cultivation of the fertile lands of the West has afforded abundant means of exchange and payment, States which have neither commerce nor manufactures, and whose agriculture is carried on by those who have neither a property in the soil nor interest in its production, if they find themselves sinking into poverty and weakness, must look for the cause elsewhere than in the prosperity of communities differently situated.—But this is dangerous ground, and I quit it.

Finally, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Wise) conceives this bill to convert the public lands into a fund of universal corruption: States, old and new—corporations and individuals, rich and poor—Governments and People—all bid for and bought. In the power to resume the fund in case of war, when the necessities of the National Treasury and the interruption of our commerce may render it essential to the public defence, he detects a bribe to peace. The national honor is endangered; the States of this Union are tempted to bear with national wrongs and indignities; to prostrate their rights and their independence at the footstool of European monarchs; lest, in case of war, they should lose their annual share in the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands. It seems, then, sir, that the great objection to the bill is the universal benefit it confers. Every class of persons, natural and political, find their advantage in it.—Could a prouder commendation be passed upon any measure? Could human wisdom have produced aught more perfect in legislation than a law which promotes every interest, and rains down blessings upon every class; which reconciles jealousies and hostilities one with another, and blinds a whole People by the strong cords of a common interest to their common country? It was a great and a just compliment which the gentleman paid to the bill. It does, indeed, contain bonuses in abundance. Bless bribery! which enriches the new States without impoverishing the old; which strengthens State revenue without increasing State taxation; which lifts the poor into opulence without plundering the rich; which renders the local Governments strong and independent, without affecting the power or the resources of the National; which removes all cause of jealousy or uneasiness between them, by leaving the States in the uninterrupted

power of locating and directing the improvement of their own territory, furnishing ample means, and deriving national strength, resource, and safety, from their expenditure. Whence, Mr. Chairman, springs this jealousy of the Federal Government, and whither does it tend? One would imagine that it was created but to be feared and watched. It is treated as something naturally and necessarily hostile and dangerous to the States and the People. The powers with which it is armed are considered but as so many instruments of destruction. It is represented as a great central mass, charged with poison and death, attracting every thing within its sphere, and polluting or destroying every thing which it attracts. It is represented as something foreign and inimical, whose constant and necessary policy it is to bow the sovereign crests of these States at the footstool of its power by force, or to conquer and debase them into stipendiaries and vassals by bribes and corruption. Sir, while I listened to the impassioned invective of the gentleman from Virginia, I felt my mind inflaming against this mortal and monstrous foe, meditating such foul designs against public virtue and public liberty.

But the question recurred, what is this Government, and who are we? Is Kentucky to be bought and sold, that she may be corrupted and enslaved? Are New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia—all—to be brought under the hammer and struck off—honor, independence, freedom—all at a stroke? And who the auctioneer? Who the purchaser? Their own Representatives, freely chosen and entirely responsible? Nay, sir, they are doubly represented in this Government, so bent upon their destruction. We come fresh from the hands of the People themselves, soon to return and account for our conduct.—Those in the other end of the Capitol represent the States as sovereigns. Strange violation of all natural order, that we should plot the ruin of those whose breath is our life, whose independence and safety is our glory. Whither does this jealousy tend? Are the States only safe in alienation from an enemy to their common head? Are we most to dread the national authority when exerted most beneficently upon State interest? Sir, what can this mean, and to what does it tend, save dismemberment? Why continue a Government whose only power is for mischief; which, to be innocent, must be inert; and which, where most it seems to favor and to bless, means the more insidiously, but the more surely, to corrupt and to destroy? I can understand why a consolidationist, if there be such a foe to reason and to liberty, or an early federalist, feeling an overwrought jealousy of the State sovereignties, and dreading the uniform tendency of confederated republics to dismemberment and separation, should feel unwilling to part with the power of internal improvement, and grant the revenue necessary to its exertion along with the power. I can understand why such an one, stretching his vision forward to that period when a sum approximating to the national debt of England shall have been expended by State authority, and the State Governments, surrounded with corporations of their own creation, and invested in perpetuity with the vast revenues in future to be derived from this vast and most profitable expenditure, shall swell into populous, opulent, and potent nations, the People looking up to them as the source from whence the facilities of commerce have been derived—I can understand that such an one might apprehend that, under these circumstances, the more distant orb, the central sun, would grow dim, and lose its just proportions to the planets which were

destined to wheel around it. But how a State rights man, one whose jealousies are all in the other direction, who dreads from the contripetal tendency, the absorption of the smaller bodies and the consolidation of the system—how such an one can see aught in this bill to threaten the power and independence of the States, passes my understanding. For my part, I see no danger on either hand. I see power, independence and ample revenues for the States; but, as they swell, the nation which they compose cannot dwindle. The resources of the National Treasury expand in exact proportion to the expansion of the population, the wealth, the commerce, and consumption of the States. Indeed, sir, as a mere measure of national finance, as a far-sighted mean of deepening the sources, the exclusive and peculiar sources, into which the States are forbidden to dip, and from whence they as Governments cannot drink, I should vote for the measure. Imagine the vast wilderness tamed into cultivation, eight hundred millions of acres of fertile land teeming with people, studded with cities, and intersected and connected by highways and canals; compute the consumption if you can; imagine the revenue to be derived from it; concede, what is manifest, that, as the revenue increases, the burdens on commerce will diminish; and tell me—no, sir, you will not tell me—that the effect of this bill is to weaken the national powers or to oppress the People.

But, sir, the provision for resuming this fund in time of war is a bribe to peace. Surely, sir, no one desires to convert this into a military republic, to infuse into the States or the People a thirst for wars of ambition and of conquest. The meaning of the objection must be, that the pecuniary consideration in the bill—the distributive share of the States being limited to the time of peace—will emasculate the spirit of the States, will tempt them to bear with wrongs and indignities, to shrink from just and necessary wars, wars of defence—will, in a word, make slaves and cowards of us all. In this sense, this odious sense, is the bill considered as a bribe to peace. Mr. Chairman, I have shown, I think, that the necessary effect and avowed object of this bill is to increase the strength, enlarge the resources, establish the credit, and relieve the finances of the States, at the same time that it multiplies the means and instruments of military operations, and extends the sources of national revenue. It is a new philosophy which teaches that, in proportion as you enlarge the objects for which men are most apt to fight, and improve the force with which they are to be defended, you destroy the courage which makes that force efficient. Peace, sir, is emphatically the policy of this country; peace is the true policy of the world; a policy into which religion and the most enlarged philosophy may yet indoctrinate mankind.

"Oh! monarchs, did ye taste the peace ye mar,  
"The hoarse dull drum might sleep, and man be happy yet."

In one sense, industry and commerce are bribes to peace. The peculiar industry of the South is emphatically a bribe to peace. War, which would interrupt, if not destroy, our foreign commerce, and cut off the planting interest from their best customers, their most profitable markets, war would fall with aggravated hardships upon the agriculture of the South. Shall we inhibit the growth of cotton? Shall we break up all industry which has foreign consumption for its object? Shall we sunder the chain which binds the civilized nations of the world into one great commercial republic? Shall we undo all that art, science, reason, and religion have achieved to change the direction