

GAMALIEL BAILEY AND THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT:

A STUDY OF THE THOUGHT AND ACTIONS OF  
A POLITICAL ANTISLAVERY JOURNALIST

by

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## ABSTRACT

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American Constitutional Democracy was only half a century old in the 1830's. To Americans such as Gamaliel Bailey, it was an article of faith that its destiny was to spread across the globe. Certainly, the road was anything but easy. The United States was virtually alone in a world of varying degrees of despotism. Democracy had failed and failed miserably in France and Bailey was under no illusion that the vitality of democratic ideology could capture the minds of the world populace by weight of sheer reason alone. With that practiced Yankee eye for practicality, he saw that it had to be carried into direct confrontation wherever despotism existed - no matter what its form. Nor was he so naive as to believe that democracy could be exported before it was purified and thoroughly entrenched in American society.

Obviously, he viewed the world beginning from the prejudices of his own generation. But, he was a true democrat and when those prejudices were in direct conflict with the logic of democracy, he endeavored to reform them. To him, the slave/plantation system of the South was abominable. This was not primarily because it was an immoral system of race relations, but because it was like having hundreds of little monarchies in the very homeland of democracy. It could not help but to absorb



the energy needed by democracy to succeed in its worldwide conquest. For that reason, it had to be removed from the American way of life. Believing in the American Federal System and Constitution, Bailey refused to advocate abolition policies which went contrary to them. Instead, he advocated a complete separation of the Federal Government from slavery, thus isolating it into the states where it existed. Thereafter, he felt that the inherent defects of slavery would quickly destroy it as a viable system.

To accomplish this "divorce", Bailey turned to politics in the mid-1830's. For the next twenty-nine years of his life, he successfully acted as a leading spokesman in first the Liberty, then the Free Soil and finally, the Free Democratic Parties. Through The National Era, the most widely read of his journals, he consistently strove to make his ideas on antislavery the basis of a strong national party. With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, he used his considerable personal influence to assist political leaders in organizing the massive popular reaction into the Republican Party. Slightly over a decade later, slavery was at an end and the section that had maintained it was in shambles.

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The speech of Stephen A. Douglas delivered before the United States Senate on February 27, 1850. *Continental Register*, 24th Year, 2d Session, Boston, February 25, 1850, pp. 314-315.

PROLOGUE TO CHAPTER I

"Mr. President, I am free to say here . . . that, in my opinion, this Government was made by white men, on the white basis, for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and should be administered by white men, and by none other whatsoever . . . . . I hold that the question of slavery is one of political economy, governed by the laws of climate, soil, productions, and self-interest, and not by mere statutory provision. I repudiate the doctrine, that because free institutions may be best in one climate, they are, necessarily, the best everywhere; or that because slavery may be indispensable in one locality, therefore, it is desirable everywhere. . . . . Our system rests on the supposition that each State has something in her condition or climate, or her circumstances, requiring laws and institutions different from every other State of the Union. . . ."

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*[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page]*

From the speech of Stephen A. Douglas delivered before the United States Senate on February 29, 1860. Congressional Globe, 36th Congress, 1st Session, February 29, 1860: pp. 914 - 915.

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CHAPTER I

## THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT

It was the winter of 1853. Most Americans were thinking of the coming year with great expectations for themselves. They were an optimistic generation of Americans, and apparently, had much upon which to base that optimism. Northern industrialism, while still in childhood, had left the womb and embarked upon the world in earnest. In the South, the staple crops such as cotton fed the factories of the Northeast and crossed the Atlantic, capturing the thriving markets of Europe. For those enraptured by the nomadic free-spirit, there were the western territories - taken from Mexico less than a decade ago and awaiting the conquering touch of settlement. To spur and solidify that settlement of over two million square miles, Americans confidently expected the iron tracks of the railroads to sprawl their way westward. In their dreams, they envisioned their nation encompassing the continent and, perhaps, even spilling beyond the natural limits of the continent. At the core of their optimism was the confidence that the great divisive question of slavery had been laid to rest for good with the Compromise of 1850. The two separate economic and social systems - one free and one based on the overt servitude of a race of people - could thrive concurrently. Within those systems, each man could proceed to better himself through hard work and enterprise within the confines of his chosen field.

Though most Americans chose to ignore them, there were numerous signs that the nation's confidence was misplaced. Certainly, their traditional fountain of leadership - the Presidency - was weak. But most



Americans responded that if President Franklin Pierce ". . . was nerveless and the Administration inert, the nation had often before drifted without meeting any harm".<sup>1</sup> The inference, however, did not withstand scrutiny. In the past, direction of the nation had been managed by others - namely the great senatorial triumvirate of John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster - when the Presidency had failed to provide it. In 1853, those statesmen were dead and silent. In their stead, new political figures, born two generations after the Founding Fathers, had come into power. They brought with them a new political style ". . . distinguished by a lack of great leaders. . . ." and characterized by ". . . partisanship, acrimony and occasional fisticuffs".<sup>2</sup> Lacking a policy, and even more important, high principles upon which to base party unity and forge party discipline, Pierce was unable to help the Democratic Party - which was in the majority - from being torn by factionalism and sectional dissension.<sup>3</sup> The nation was facing a new experience in the workings of its democratic system. It had a weak President, a leaderless Congress and a factionalized party in power - all incapable of directing the nation's energies in a competent manner.

Within such a political climate, any opportunistic politician daring enough to chart fresh goals for the nation's energies could

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<sup>1</sup>Allen Nevins, Ordeal of the Union, Vol. II: A House Dividing, 1852 - 1853 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>James A. Rawley, Race and Politics: Bleeding Kansas and the Coming of the Civil War (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1969), p. 25.

<sup>3</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 77.

impose ". . . himself upon the country as the hero of a better era".<sup>4</sup> The possibilities for such a man who could successfully fill the nation's leadership vacuum were enormous. There were also very grave dangers.

Sectional tensions simmered under a deceptive calm. Since its first publication in 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin had sold over 300,000 copies and its sales were ever increasing.<sup>5</sup> Few things better symbolized the potential disruptive power of the slavery question among the country's sections than the wide Northern interest in this effective antislavery novel. It was not the only symbol. The highly vocal abolitionists clamored for an immediate end to slavery. They openly and sometimes dramatically advocated the use of violence in resisting enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law.<sup>6</sup> Impetuous Southerners were all too ready to attribute these actions to the whole North rather than to a small beleaguered group of abolitionists. The Free Democrats who had inherited the Free Soil principle of anti-extension of slavery, strove heartedly to keep the slavery question before the electorate.<sup>7</sup> They charged the Compromise of 1850 as being a Northern sell-out to the slave interest, and generally, encouraged non-violent resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, active Northern resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law, though slight, was well publicized, upsetting Southerners who were already uniting

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<sup>4</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup>F. J. Blue, The Free Soilers: Third Party Politics, 1848 - 1854 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1973), p. 270.

<sup>6</sup>Jane and William Pease "Confrontation and Abolition in the 1850's", Journal of American History, Vol. LVIII No. 4 (March, 1972), pp. 928 - 929.

<sup>7</sup>Blue, Free Soilers, p. 250.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

as a section in defense of slavery.<sup>9</sup> Any new course or policy that deviated from the compromised solutions - in particular, the Missouri Compromise and the Compromise of 1850 - could easily spark sectional tensions into an uncontrollable tempest. There was no situation more potentially disruptive to the nation's uneasy sectional unity than the political organization of slavery and its status in the Nebraska Territory.

Prior to the 1850's, American colonization or expansion had been marked by a heel-and-toe process sweeping the frontier steadily westward.<sup>10</sup> But with the settlement of Oregon and the California gold fields, this process was suddenly terminated. No longer was America's march across the continent in the form of a steady stream. Separating the new Pacific settlements and the Eastern States was a vast tract of land populated by powerful hostile Indian tribes.<sup>11</sup> Comprising the bulk of the region was the area known as Nebraska. By February of 1853, Nebraska had been given the limits south of the 43rd degree latitude, north of latitude 36° 30' running east of Missouri and Iowa to the crest of the Rocky Mountains.<sup>12</sup> The territory, however, had not been organized for settlement, which by the end of 1853 was long overdue.<sup>13</sup>

Based on similar experiences, the organization of the territory seemed to be a relatively simple matter. It was generally assumed that

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<sup>9</sup>For a detailed discussion of Northern resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law, see Stanley A. Campbell, The Slave Catchers: Enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law, 1850 - 1860 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1970).

<sup>10</sup>Allen Johnson, Stephen A. Douglas: A Study in American Politics (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), p. 220.

<sup>11</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 88.

<sup>12</sup>The National Era, February 17, 1853.

<sup>13</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, pp. 88 - 89.



the territory would be organized, the Indians pushed out, the area settled with a view toward the eventual formation of states in the Union. Unfortunately, it was the last part of this assumption which formed a formidable stumbling block.

The whole territory was protected from slavery by the thirty-three year old and generally revered Missouri Compromise which forbade slavery north of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  latitude.<sup>14</sup> While the restriction line was originally intended only to be applicable for the Louisiana Territory, moderate Northerners had come to think of the line as stretching into the lands of the Mexican Cession to the Pacific Coast. The sectional tensions were only deceptively calm. The compromises of the past had been predicated as are all compromises on the fact that both sides had basic priorities which could be either fulfilled or essentially guarded. The very existence of the entire Nebraska Territory above  $36^{\circ} 30'$  meant that one section - the South - had nothing to gain and much to lose from the settlement and eventual division of the territory into free states. Southern fear and the special hostility of Missouri slave owners to the emergence of free states on their western boundary and the constitutional view held by Southerners that they could take their property - slaves - wherever they wished, made the situation enormously explosive.<sup>15</sup> It would require leadership of vast talents with limitless depths of foresight to see the way clear. Such qualities, unfortunately, were not the natural product of this generation's politicians.

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<sup>14</sup>Annals of Congress, 16th Congress, 1st Session (February 18, 1820), pp. 427 - 430.

<sup>15</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 88.



The task of formulating a solution to the settlement of the Nebraska Territory fell naturally to the Senate Committee on Territories, whose chairman was the ambitious Stephen A. Douglas. The Democratic Senator from Illinois was not new to the problem. In 1844, 1848 and 1852, he had proposed a territorial government for the territory ostensibly as a means of strengthening the emigration lines to the Pacific Coast.<sup>16</sup> The last bill had passed the House of Representatives in 1853 only to be tabled by the Senate because of Southern opposition and the absence of over twenty senators.<sup>17</sup> While many senators obviously did not find the Nebraska question a palatable dish, Douglas had many reasons to pursue the question in the next session.

Douglas's motives were complex. On the surface, at least, Douglas proceeded to plan the organization in fulfillment of the desire to populate the whole continent with white Americans.<sup>18</sup> In a letter of December 1853, Douglas stated that the area should be organized in order to: prevent a permanent Indian barrier; extend white settlement to the Pacific; establish the American system of civil, political and religious institutions in the heart of the continent "under the protection of the law"; and finally, to hasten the establishment of the transcontinental railroads leading eventually to as thorough a railroad network as in the East.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Nevins, House Dividing, p. 87.

<sup>17</sup> P. Orman Ray, The Repeal of the Missouri Compromise: Its Origin and Authorship (Boston: J. S. Canner and Co., Inc., 1965), p. 239.

<sup>18</sup> Gerald Capers, Stephen A. Douglas: Defender of the Union (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1959), p. 97.

<sup>19</sup> James C. Malin, "The Motives of Stephen A. Douglas in the Organization of the Nebraska Territory: A Letter dated December 17, 1853", Kansas Historical Quarterly, XIX, November, 1959, pp. 351 - 352.

There were few Americans who would quarrel with this reasoning in so far as what was to be done. It was in the manner of doing it that was fraught with dissension. So astute a politician in the affairs of the West as Douglas, who had had a primary role in the actual acceptance of the Compromise of 1850, could not have failed to recognize the danger and the limits to this line of reasoning. His real motives went much deeper and revolved around his own personal circumstances.

There could be no doubt that the organization of Nebraska would strengthen the chances of a central transcontinental railroad route with a terminal in Chicago.<sup>20</sup> Such a route would further strengthen his support in his own State of Illinois, as well as increasing the value of his own personal land and railroad stock holdings.<sup>21</sup> The opposition to the central route was formidable. President Pierce, himself acting in accord with the wishes of Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, preferred a southern route.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, plans for the route were already underway. If Douglas was to secure the support needed to open Nebraska and secure the central railroad route, he would need the support of the Southern members of his party. Failing that, as would be probable, he would at least need the support of those in the border states. In this way, the local political struggle of Missouri Democratic Senator David R. Atchison with Thomas Hart Benton became inextricably entangled with the organization of Nebraska.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Capers, Stephen A. Douglas, p. 102.

<sup>21</sup> Johnson, Stephen A. Douglas, p. 234.

<sup>22</sup> Avery Craven, The Coming of the Civil War (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 330.

<sup>23</sup> Ray, Missouri Compromise, p. 202.

Douglas had long been on friendly working terms with Atchison. In his struggle with Benton, Atchison had stubbornly asserted that he would "sink in hell" before Nebraska would be organized excluding slavery and Atchison, as President of the Senate, had the ability to rally a solid block of senators from the South to aid him.<sup>24</sup> Atchison's irrevocable commitment to the repeal of the 36° 30' slavery line of the Missouri Compromise, meant that if necessary, he would replace Douglas as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories.<sup>25</sup> In this era when politicians felt insecure, any advantages which could be acquired were eagerly exploited to the fullest.<sup>26</sup> Douglas could ill afford to lose the prestige of one of the most important of all the Senate Chairmanships. This was especially true since he hoped to secure the Democratic Presidential candidacy in 1856.

Douglas decided to act. He was not troubled by the thought of repealing the 36° 30' restriction demanded by Atchison. A common belief of the times rested upon the assumption that slavery was a local affair which "the benevolence" of time would correct.<sup>27</sup> Douglas, himself, believed that the Nebraska Territory was beyond what he considered to be the

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<sup>24</sup> Nevins, House Dividing, p. 102 and Jay Monaghan, Civil War on the Western Border: 1854 - 1865 (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1955), p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Ray, Missouri Compromise, p. 201.

<sup>26</sup> Roy Franklin Nichols, "The Kansas-Nebraska Act: A Century of Historiography" in Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. XLIII, No. 2 (September, 1956), p. 197.

<sup>27</sup> Martin Duberman, "The Northern Response to Slavery" in The Anti-slavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists, edited by Martin Duberman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 396 - 397.



natural limits of slavery.<sup>28</sup> That very argument had been used effectively by Daniel Webster in defense of the Compromise of 1850 as in regard to slavery in California and New Mexico.<sup>29</sup> To allow slavery to enter would, therefore, not necessarily mean that it would thrive or even survive in Nebraska. Even if it did, Douglas was not particularly adverse to sacrificing the region to slavery if it could accomplish his ends.<sup>30</sup>

Of course, Douglas was not so naive as to believe that the majority of other Northern Democrats and Whigs would accept such abstract reasoning for repealing the Missouri Compromise restrictions. There was, of course, the broad justification that settlement of the territory would link the Pacific to the rest of the nation. But such reasoning could hardly be relied upon to withstand more particularized arguments from the expected opposition of various northern groups. What was needed was a precedent. Douglas found this precedent in the Compromise of 1850. In resolution two of that Compromise, Congress had avoided the slavery question in the territory acquired from Mexico, stating that since slavery was unlikely to exist there, it would be inexpedient to provide law either to introduce or exclude slavery.<sup>31</sup> The section further stated that "territorial governments ought to be established by Congress in all of the said territory . . . without the adoption of any restriction or condition

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<sup>28</sup>Capers, Stephen A. Douglas, pp. 100 and 103.

<sup>29</sup>Richard N. Current, Daniel Webster and the Rise of National Conservatism (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1955), pp. 169 - 170.

<sup>30</sup>Johnson, Stephen A. Douglas, p. 234.

<sup>31</sup>"Compromise of 1850" in Union and Liberty: A Documentary History of American Constitutionalism, edited by Donald O. Dewey (New York: McGowan-Hill Inc., 1969), p. 127.



on the subject of slavery".<sup>32</sup> On that basis, provided that one overlooked the fact that the Missouri Compromise dealt with the Louisiana Purchase and the Compromise of 1850 with the lands of the Mexican Cession, Douglas could argue that the Compromise of 1850 had, in fact, set aside the 36° 30' line.

The committee decided to adhere as close to the second resolution of 1850 as possible. The report to the Senate on the organization of Nebraska, merely recommended that since the "same grave issues" of 1850 existed in 1854, there should neither be affirmation nor repeal of the 36° 30' restriction.<sup>33</sup> They implied that this question was more properly confined to the courts or the respective territories themselves.

If Douglas thought that the ambiguous language repealing the Missouri Compromise on the basis of the Compromise of 1850 would be sufficient to have the organization of Nebraska pass calmly into reality, he was mistaken. The second resolution of the Compromise of 1850 had dealt only with the slavery restrictions in the abstract since California had sought admission as a free state anyway.<sup>34</sup> The issue of Nebraska was to put that abstract into actual application. Making the idea work was much different, as numerous individuals in the North were about to make clear. One of these was Gamaliel Bailey, an obscure editor of the Free Soil Journal, The National Era.

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<sup>32</sup>Dewey, Union and Liberty, p. 127.

<sup>33</sup>The National Era (February 2, 1854), p. 19.

<sup>34</sup>Dewey, Union and Liberty, p. 127

## CHAPTER II

## THE IDEOLOGY OF GAMALIEL BAILEY

The first stage in the exploration of the lands of the Louisiana Purchase had just been completed when a young Methodist minister named Gamaliel Bailey and his wife, Sally, delivered their first born on December 3, 1807.<sup>35</sup> They named the boy, Gamaliel. For seven years, the family lived in Mount Holly, New Jersey, until finally their financial difficulties forced Gamaliel, Sr., to secure a parish in Philadelphia where he could supplement his meagre income by making watches.<sup>36</sup> Their financial problems were exaggerated by their having ten children, of which only the parental namesakes survived to the first son's sixteenth birthday. Gamaliel, Jr., himself, was sickly - a circumstance which led him early into a studious regimentation. Under the loose guidance of the popular young minister Thomas Stockton, young Bailey was introduced to the classic literature and philosophy of antiquity which he studied with great interest.<sup>37</sup>

At age eighteen, young Bailey entered the Jefferson Medical School instead of following the advice of Stockton and his father to go into the ministry. Having seen the early death of eight brothers and sisters, he

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<sup>35</sup>"Death of Dr. Giacon [sic] Bailey" in the New York Times, June 22, 1859.

<sup>36</sup>Joel Goldfarb, "The Life of Gamaliel Bailey Prior to the Founding of The National Era: The Orientation of a Practical Abolitionist" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1958), p. 7.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 8 - 11.

no doubt, hoped that he could save others from similar, useless fates. He spent three years there and received his diploma in June of 1828. But upon graduation, he was thoroughly disillusioned with the state of medicine and decided that rather than practice it, he would try his hand at teaching. If he had been disillusioned with Nineteenth Century medicine, teaching conditions brought him into an outright depressive state. Finding himself more a disciplinarian than a dispenser of knowledge, he became physically ill and gave up his position before completing the term.<sup>38</sup>

It was the first major crisis of his life and he found no real solutions to it. Still resolved not to practice medicine, he signed on board a merchantman as a common seaman, bound for China.<sup>39</sup> Whether he was enraptured by that well known Nineteenth Century romanticism of the sea or simply thought it was therapy for his depression, it was certainly an odd choice for a man who even in the best of health could hardly endure the rigorous life of a seaman.<sup>40</sup> While on board, cholera broke out upon the ship and Bailey utilized his medical knowledge and treated the crew.<sup>41</sup> When the ship returned from China to Philadelphia, he at last began practicing medicine.

His practice was unsuccessful and when Stockton approached him with an offer to establish him as the Editor of the Baltimore journal, Mutual Rights and Methodist Protestant, Bailey readily accepted the

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<sup>38</sup> Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 12 - 16.

<sup>39</sup> "Death of Bailey", New York Times.

<sup>40</sup> For a picturesque and factual account of the life of American seamen, see Richard Henry Dana, Two Years Before the Mast.

<sup>41</sup> Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", p. 17.



post.<sup>42</sup> He put himself into the work strenuously. With a good editorial sense, he shortened the title to Methodist Protestant and broadened its appeal to capture the attention of female as well as male readers. The prime interests of the entrepreneur ministers had been religion, but Bailey soon secularized the journal. He sought literary contributions from known and unknown writers and even wrote a fictionalized account of his sea voyage.<sup>43</sup> However, the major focus of its columns was political reporting. Bailey was keenly interested in reform movements and in the spreading of democracy throughout the world.<sup>44</sup> Domestically, he advocated expanded rights for women. Only in the relation of white and black Americans did his support for democratic reform falter. After a conference of free Blacks held in Boston called for immediate abolition of slavery and recognition of all blacks as full citizens, he dismissed them as "childish".<sup>45</sup> The only solution he countenanced for black Americans was to colonize them outside the borders of the United States.<sup>46</sup>

Despite his efforts to appeal to as many readers as possible, the paper's circulation was never substantial and it soon became apparent that it could not support the salary of a full-time editor. For a time, Bailey's salary was paid by collections taken by a group of Methodist women. However, his transformation of the journal had not particularly endeared him to the sponsors and finally, the financial burdens were acute

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<sup>42</sup> Mutual Rights and Methodist Protestant was sponsored jointly by Stockton and two other prominent Philadelphia ministers, Samuel K. Jenning and John J. Harrod.

<sup>43</sup> Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", p. 20.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 22 - 26.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.



enough for the owners to request and receive his resignation.<sup>47</sup>

It must have been a most difficult time for the young man. He had tried teaching and had found it depressing. He had gone to sea and had found it too rigorous. He had tried practicing medicine and had found too few patients and now, he had been dismissed from a paper, partly owned by a life-long friend. Once again, he sought a solution in changing his geographic environment. It was as romantic and as inexplicable as his prior choice and it ended in disaster. He went to St. Louis where he was to join an expedition heading for Oregon. The expedition failed to develop and he found himself destitute.<sup>48</sup> He literally walked to Cincinnati where he had some acquaintances. There, thanks in part to an epidemic of cholera, he again began to practice medicine - this time successfully.<sup>49</sup>

The "Queen City" was thriving but chaotic. Situated on the Ohio River, there was substantial commerce with the South and the population had a large southern contingent. It also boasted nearly a third of all free blacks in the state of Ohio and its streets were often the scene of violence, generally stemming from the raids of slave catchers.<sup>50</sup> Strangely enough, the city was one of two centers in Ohio of antislavery sentiment with such notables as James Birney, Theodore Weld, Harriet Beecher Stowe,

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<sup>47</sup>Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 23 and 38.

<sup>48</sup>"Gamaliel Bailey", Dictionary of American Biography, 1928, I, p. 496.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>In 1829, a large scale race riot occurred resulting in nearly half of the city's 2,200 free blacks being forcibly driven from the city.

and Elijah Lovejoy, to name a few.<sup>51</sup> Bailey's first active involvement in the slavery controversy in the city came through his involvement as a lecturer on physiology in the Lane Seminary.<sup>52</sup>

The bulk of the student body had been organized by Theodore Weld - himself a student - into an antislavery society.<sup>53</sup> The society had set up schools for religious and educational purposes for the free black of the city.<sup>54</sup> The slavery issue was freely discussed from the outset, but in 1834, a general debate on the subject occurred which lasted eighteen consecutive nights and included the testimony of many former slaves.<sup>55</sup> Soon the whole city had become involved and the trustees, fearful of the "Abolitionist" stigma and of the fierceness with which it was arousing the public, ordered a halt to the debates.<sup>56</sup> Despite the efforts of the Seminary's President, Lyman Beecher, over half the students led by Weld promptly left the seminary and established their own school for the remainder of the term in a building supplied by Salmon P. Chase's father-in-law.<sup>57</sup> Bailey, who had followed the debate closely, went with them.

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<sup>51</sup> Albert Bushnell Hart, Salmon Portland Chase (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1899), p. 31.

<sup>52</sup> Founded in 1829 under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church with substantial contributions by Arthur Tappan, the seminary consisted of two buildings on Walnut Hill and contained approximately 100 students.

<sup>53</sup> Weld had come to Cincinnati as an agent for the National Manual Labor Society. He was ardently religious and followed the Garrisonian school on slavery. In 1838, he wrote The Bible Against Slavery.

<sup>54</sup> Constance Mayfield Roushe, The Trumpets of Jubilee (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1927), pp. 56 - 57.

<sup>55</sup> Hart, Salmon Portland Chase, pp. 39 - 40.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. and Roushe, The Trumpets of Jubilee, pp. 58 - 59.

<sup>57</sup> Hart, Salmon Portland Chase, pp. 41 - 42.

While the dissident students remained in Cincinnati, Bailey, whose own thoughts on slavery had been radically changed during the course of the debates, took an active role in their society.<sup>58</sup> It is doubtful that the debates alone created this change. He was good friends with Weld who no doubt exerted considerable and persuasive pressure on Bailey. Perhaps, the real reason lay in the man's character. His life to this point was anything but concerted and the only stable item seems to have been his marriage to Margaret Shands in 1833. At this time, he strikes one as a man searching for something he could put himself into a cause.

Events moved rapidly. In April of 1835 at Putnam, Ohio, the Antislavery Society of Ohio was founded with Bailey as its secretary. By the end of the year, it had nearly 120 local societies and 10,000 members.<sup>59</sup> In April of 1836, Birney moved his journal Philanthropist from Richmond, Ohio to Cincinnati where it was promptly destroyed by a mob twice in one month. The attacks made the journal even more popular and it was soon the organ of the Ohio Antislavery Society. Birney, whose prime interest was public speaking, soon consented to have Bailey assist him. Bailey seems to have readily given up his practice again and within a year, he became sole proprietor of the journal.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>The following year, the majority of the dissident students moved to Oberlin, as did Tappan's substantial financial assistance. There, Charles Finney was persuaded to lecture and eventually serve as President.

<sup>59</sup>Hart, Salmon Portland Chase, p. 44.

<sup>60</sup>Betty Fladeland, James Gillespie Birney: Slaveholder to Abolitionist (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955), pp. 133 - 146. Birney, who had freed his slaves in 1834, had moved to New York to be Secretary of the Antislavery Society.



It was from the Philanthropist and later, a second but daily paper, the Herald (both printed concurrently), that Bailey became the spokesman for the rank and file antislavery members in the West.<sup>61</sup> Through the columns of his papers, he made his own feelings and thoughts felt in personal editorials which he collected in a random publication called "Facts for the People".<sup>62</sup> The publications reflected his own opinions and there seems to have been little attempt on Bailey's part to incorporate an open forum for the ideas of others in the Ohio Society.

Bailey had now thoroughly committed himself to the antislavery movement, though his ideas had not solidified at this point.<sup>63</sup> During his tenure with the Philanthropist, the recurring Cincinnati mobs attacked and destroyed his printing office on two separate occasions.<sup>64</sup> Such attacks were common on antislavery journals, especially on those which were generally labelled "Abolitionists" by their attackers. Bailey's journal carried that stigma in Cincinnati.<sup>65</sup> Nor were the attacks confined to dumping the printing presses into the nearest river. On December 7, 1837, Elijah Lovejoy, editor of the Observer was killed by a mob while defending

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<sup>61</sup>Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 116 - 120.

<sup>62</sup>This was the first journal of the same name, containing reprinted as well as new editorials expressing his opinions on a subject in a single paper.

<sup>63</sup>The term antislavery will be used throughout this essay as a label for those persons who, to varying degree, opposed the extension of slavery and who had in mind its extinction ultimately but not immediately.

<sup>64</sup>Louis Filler, The Crusade Against Slavery, 1830 - 1860 (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 78.

<sup>65</sup>Paxton Hibben, Henry Ward Beecher: An American Portrait (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1927), p. 125.

his press in Alton, Illinois.<sup>66</sup> Bailey had known Lovejoy since he had first arrived in Cincinnati and the two had frequently corresponded, with Bailey's last letter telling Lovejoy to remain firm.<sup>67</sup> He knew first-hand of the dangers he faced, especially in Cincinnati and to his credit, he nonetheless persisted.

While he jealously maintained the Philanthropist as a reflection of himself, he by no means tried to stand against the winds of change that were occurring in the antislavery movement. In this, his course was closely akin to that followed by his close friend Salmon P. Chase. The most striking change to come across the antislavery movement in the late 1830's was the move toward political activism through a third party. In 1838 and 1839, he was vehemently opposed to the formation of an anti-slavery party. Always a staunch believer in the Constitution, he argued that abolition could not be brought about by political action, since the Constitution forbade national interference in the states where it existed.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, he feared that such a party would be quickly taken over by "unprincipled demagogues" and the "humanitarian" cast out.<sup>69</sup> He was joined in this position by Lewis Tappan and Theodore Weld.<sup>70</sup>

The alternative, Bailey thought, was to continue as they had been doing by exerting pressure upon both Whigs and Democrats to incorporate

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<sup>66</sup>Russell B. Nye, A Baker's Dozen: Thirteen Unusual Americans (E. Lansing: Michigan State University, 1956), pp. 263 - 273.

<sup>67</sup>Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 108 - 110.

<sup>68</sup>Richard H. Sewell, Ballots for Freedom: Antislavery Politics in the United States, 1837 - 1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 46.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>John L. Thomas, The Liberator: William Lloyd Garrison (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1963), p. 278.

antislavery facets into their platforms so that the antislavery elements could hold the balance as they had with Ohio Senator Thomas Morris.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, he feared that western antislavery men were too tied to their respective parties to leave them except temporarily for a clear antislavery issue.<sup>72</sup> Finally, he feared that the ties to the national parties of many antislavery men would keep them from joining the new party and, thus, make it appear that antislavery sentiment was weaker than it actually was.

These were all very pertinent arguments against the formation of a new party, and were certainly held by more antislavery men than Bailey. However, suddenly, by the beginning of 1840, Bailey had changed his mind and had come out in the Philanthropist for the new party and James G. Birney as its nominee. It was a quick shift and was due to the peculiar circumstances in which he found himself. The Ohio Antislavery Society meeting at Hamilton had resolved to support Birney, despite the objection of Leicester King (its president), Benjamin Wade and Joshua Giddings, all of whom remained with their former parties and without whom the Ohio leadership of the new party could fall naturally to Bailey.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, a rift had developed between Bailey and the Whig nominee Benjamin Harrison with the effect of making Birney the only viable candidate who Bailey could support.<sup>74</sup> As Bailey's editorials increased their attacks

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<sup>71</sup> Fladeland, James Birney, p. 183.

<sup>72</sup> Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", p. 168.

<sup>73</sup> Francis P. Weisenberger, The Passing of the Frontier, 1825 - 1850, Vol. III in The History of the State of Ohio, Edited by Carl Wittke (Columbus: Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1941), pp. 385 and 386.

<sup>74</sup> Theodore Clarke Smith, The Liberty and Free Soil Parties in the Northwest (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967), p. 41.



upon Harrison, there was a corresponding withdrawal from the Philanthropist of Whig supporters, who comprised the bulk of the journal's advertisers.<sup>75</sup> To keep the journal from collapsing financially, it was apparent that he must align himself with the embryonic party.<sup>76</sup> In the end, the personal advantages of joining the party movement which was gaining strength and the seemingly ineffectual results of exerting pressure by indirect means convinced him to give the party method a try.

Clearly, he did not look upon the alignment as necessarily permanent. As his previous arguments against a third party showed, he was very fearful of the effects which a durable third party could have upon the antislavery movement. He certainly did not wish at this time to confront western antislavery persons with an either/or choice between the new party and their former political allegiances. Instead, he argued that by voting for the third party in 1840, antislavery men would ". . . win for their cause a consideration that could be attained in no other way, and multiply adherents to it far more than a thousand lectures or high sounding resolutions. . . ." <sup>77</sup> By temporarily dissenting from their parties, antislavery men would force the major parties to consider the expediency of adopting antislavery principles.<sup>78</sup> In this way, Bailey could rationalize that by supporting the third party movement in 1840, he was merely strengthening the methods of antislavery political activism which he had supported in the past.

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<sup>75</sup>Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 199 - 237.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Philanthropist, July 21, 1840, quoted in Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 81.

<sup>78</sup>Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 83.

The showing of Birney and the third party had certainly not been encouraging. While Bailey's support had brought over some western Whig votes, it had come far too late to be effective.<sup>79</sup> Certainly, the support of Bailey and his journal was the most valuable acquisition in favor of the third party in the whole northwest.<sup>80</sup> As is so often the case in any endeavor, Bailey soon found that once he had joined the movement, there were good reasons for remaining. For one thing, he had indeed come to be recognized as one of the directors of the new party.<sup>81</sup> As such, he had a vested interest in seeing it grow, rather than remain stagnant.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, many of his personal friends such as Chase and Leicester King were now belatedly joining the party. In addition, while antislavery journals were notoriously financial liabilities, the Philanthropist was thriving but thoroughly dependent on Liberty Party support.<sup>83</sup>

Bailey's support of the Liberty Party, however, remained moderate.<sup>84</sup> Despite their originally close personal ties, Bailey and Birney were growing apart throughout the early 1840's.<sup>85</sup> Bailey was repulsed by

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<sup>79</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 76. Birney secured about 7,000 of the 70,000 antislavery votes in Ohio. The fact that Bailey's shift at so late in the campaign had brought any votes to the Birney camp is an indication of his influence among western antislavery voters.

<sup>80</sup> Théodore Clarke Smith, The Liberty and Free Soil Parties in the Northwest (New York: Russell and Russell Co., 1897), p. 41.

<sup>81</sup> James Brewer Stewart, Joshua R. Giddings and the Tactics of Radical Politics (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1970), p. 66.

<sup>82</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 113.

<sup>83</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 109 and Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", p. 237.

<sup>84</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 133.

<sup>85</sup> The rift between the two men became complete when Birney publicly charged that Bailey had plagiarized his (Birney's) ideas. See Fladland, James Birney, pp. 219 - 220.

Birney's lack of faith in democracy and universal suffrage and his admitted opposition to immigrants.<sup>86</sup> To Bailey, the immigrant ". . . fleeing for refuge to our shores. . . ." was the backbone of democracy who by his "republican simplicity" exemplified ". . . Democratic institutions in all their purity".<sup>87</sup> He could not tolerate Birney's position, which he felt bordered on despotism.<sup>88</sup>

But Bailey's moderate position on the Liberty Party was due to more than his personal animosity with Birney. He still hoped that a coalition of all antislavery men could be formed and he used his position to influence such men as the Whig Senator Joshua Giddings to take antislavery positions publically.<sup>89</sup> He, along with Chase and other more pragmatic minded Liberty men, sought a position which could be acceptable to antislavery Whigs and Democrats.<sup>90</sup>

It was not a case of Bailey bartering his principles simply to secure a majority coalition. He began with the premise that any ultimate political solution to slavery had to conform to the Constitution.<sup>91</sup> In this regard, he showed radical opposition to William Lloyd Garrison and

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<sup>86</sup> Fladeland, James Birney, p. 220 and Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", p. 256.

<sup>87</sup> The National Era, January 12, 1854.

<sup>88</sup> A more detailed discussion of the importance which Bailey held immigrants will be found when dealing with the concepts of democracy and gradual constriction.

<sup>89</sup> Stewart, Joshua Giddings, p. 41.

<sup>90</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 107; Blue, Free Soil, pp. 7 and 13; and Joseph G. Rayback, "The Liberty Party Leaders of Ohio: Exponents of Antislavery Coalition", in The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, LVII (Columbus: Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1948), pp. 168 - 169.

<sup>91</sup> Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 84 and 260.



other less politically oriented antislavery men. To Garrison, the Constitution was "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell".<sup>92</sup> Feeling that it was "impossible for men to be moral reformers and politicians at the same time", Garrison, while acknowledging Bailey's editorial talents, dismissed him as a man "with a lack of moral abhorrence of wrongdoing".<sup>93</sup> By the same token, Bailey felt that any attempt to achieve abolition which ignored or attempted to transcend the Constitution, would be unacceptable to the vast majority of Americans and doomed to failure.<sup>94</sup>

Certainly, the recognition of slavery in the three-fifths clause (Article I, section 2), created a formidable obstacle to abolition to anyone who upheld the Constitution as Bailey did. However, he felt that the Constitution could be amended to rectify such items once "favorably sustained by a decided majority" of the people.<sup>95</sup> The task was to achieve that "decided majority" and the proposition which he, along with Chase, reasoned could accomplish this was to divorce slavery completely from the Federal Government.<sup>96</sup> To propandize that position on the necessary national level, Bailey, with financial backing from Chase and Tappan, moved to the nation's capital in 1847 and began publishing The National Era.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Filler, Crusade, p. 216.

<sup>93</sup>Russell B. Nye, William Lloyd Garrison and the Humanitarian Reformers (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1955), p. 148.

<sup>94</sup>Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 84 and 260.

<sup>95</sup>"Amendments to the Constitution" in The National Era, January 5, 1854.

<sup>96</sup>Blue, Free Soil, p. 13 and Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 85 - 86.

<sup>97</sup>Goldfarb, "Gamaliel Bailey", pp. 390 - 392. The concept cannot be attributed to any one individual. While Chase seems to have been its most publicized exponent, the ultimate relationship of the two men, no doubt, led to an interchange and borrowing of ideas so as to make the position of one often inseparable from the other.

Bailey summarized his view of the "divorce" solution in 1853 in an article which he entitled "The Paramount Question".

The only way to settle the question of Slavery, so far as the Federal Government and the Union of the States are concerned, is, for all parties to agree to regard and treat it as a system strictly within State authority, without claim to any protection beyond that limit - for which the Federal Government should assume no responsibility, and in relation to which it should relieve itself of whatever responsibility it has assumed. Adopt this principle, and there will be an end to Federal Fugitive Laws, to Slavery in territory of the United States, to any regulations or laws sanctioning, or giving countenance in any respect or degree to, Slavery and the slave trade. The entire question will then be committed to the several States in which the system exists, and the only way in which it can be "finally settled" therein, will be by the enfranchisement of all classes of their population, and their investiture with the rights of freemen.<sup>98</sup>

While Bailey envisioned that the "divorce" concept could lead through a series of steps to abolition, the main thrust of the concept was to reconcile his faction of the Liberty Party members with men who were less inclined to antislavery but still interested in limiting the extension of slavery.<sup>99</sup>

The "divorce" concept was not envisioned as an end in itself by Bailey. It was the first step toward the gradual abolition of slavery. Without Federal support, Bailey felt slavery would cease to expand.<sup>100</sup> Without Federal assistance in apprehending them, the whole North could be a haven for fugitive slaves.<sup>101</sup>

He believed that the census records indicated a significant influx of immigrants into Missouri, Delaware, Maryland and the western

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<sup>98</sup>The National Era, December 22, 1853. Underlining is Bailey's.

<sup>99</sup>Blue, Free Soil, pp. 13 - 15.

<sup>100</sup>The National Era, December 22, 1853.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., April 7, 1853.

counties of Virginia.<sup>102</sup> Reasoning that the immigrants generally opposed slavery - because it degraded labor - it was likely that as their power increased, an antislavery movement would begin and eventually overthrow slavery from within these respective States.<sup>103</sup> Slavery would then be restricted or confined to the deep South where it would face an acute problem. The population of slaves was growing, Bailey felt, at an appalling pace with a corresponding exodus of whites westward.<sup>104</sup> Faced with this prospect, ". . . it could not be long before the citizens of the slave States, two-thirds of whom have no interest in the support of Slavery, would begin to manifest their opposition to it".<sup>105</sup> He foresaw the formation of an "Emancipation Party" in the remaining slave States, which would oppose the "perpetration of the Slave system . . . and finally assume the form of legislation for its extinction".<sup>106</sup>

The containment of slavery was the necessary prerequisite to Bailey's scheme of abolition. The strength in the North of those who favored limiting the extension of slavery was already apparent when, in August of 1846, Representative David Wilmot of Pennsylvania proposed an amendment to President Polk's bill seeking funds to indemnify Mexico for its territorial losses. The Proviso - as it came to be called - stipulated ". . . that, as an express and fundamental condition to the acquisition of any territory from the Republic of Mexico . . . neither slavery nor

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<sup>102</sup>The National Era, April 7, 1853.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., January 19, 1854.

<sup>104</sup>Facts for the People, March, 1854.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., May, 1854.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.



involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part of said territory . . . ." <sup>107</sup> Despite its subsequent defeat - after months of debate - the effect of the Proviso was to help factionalize its supporters from the major parties and to set the limiting of slavery expansion as the focal point on which political antislavery men and anti-extensionists could meet. <sup>108</sup>

The furor over the Proviso had set for many loyal northern Whigs and Democrats, the hopes that their parties would recognize their interests in the limiting of slavery extension. But in 1848, after the respective conventions of each failed to make concessions to their anti-extensionist wings, a series of conventions of those wings were held culminating in Buffalo, New York in August. The result was the formation of the Free Soil Party, based not on antislavery, but upon the containment of slavery. <sup>109</sup>

The formula of nonextension seemed to be the perfect device for uniting under one banner even the mildest antislavery sympathizers with the notable exception of Garrison and other immediatists. <sup>110</sup> Bailey certainly saw it as such and joined the new party movement in earnest. From the time he joined the Free Soil Party, Bailey labored to balance the antislavery principles which he had come to hold with the day to day concessions which political activism demanded. The task was not always an easy one. In December of 1849, Joshua Giddings, who had earlier sought

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<sup>107</sup> The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1217.

<sup>108</sup> Blue, Free Soil, pp. 16 - 43.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., pp. 44 - 80.

<sup>110</sup> Duberman, "Northern Response to Slavery", p. 402.

advice from Bailey on antislavery, introduced a bill intending an immediate plebescite in Washington, D. C. in which all males - white and black - would vote upon the continuance of slavery there. Through The National Era, Bailey charged the bill to be too extreme. Stunned by Bailey's opposition, Giddings inquired as to his reasons and Bailey responded that he had done so to maintain his position among the Free Soilers.<sup>111</sup>

The position of the Free Soilers on the inequality of the black race was only slightly more liberal than that of the Whigs and Democrats.<sup>112</sup> Bailey's refusal to support Gidding's proposal was an unfortunate concession to that political reality. Indeed, it was tragically in opposition to his own expressed beliefs as found in his editorials. Just six months before, he had attacked prejudice because of its tending to "perpetuate inequality of natural rights".<sup>113</sup> He saw the assumption of white supremacy as the very foundation of slavery itself. Once it was admitted that "the Negro is a man", Bailey argued, there could be no question that "to deprive him of any of the inalienable rights of man, is a wrong without justification or apology".<sup>114</sup> He dismissed the commonly held assumption that members of the black race were "less gifted intellectually" as "assumed rather than proven".<sup>115</sup> When a proposed Louisiana law stipulated that more than one-sixteenth black blood made a person

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<sup>111</sup> Stewart, Joshua Giddings, p. 168.

<sup>112</sup> Blue, Free Soil, p. 101.

<sup>113</sup> The National Era, June 28, 1849.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., January 27, 1853.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., November 9, 1854.

black, he suggested that if the white race was so superior ". . . it is somewhat odd that it should require a little more than fifteen-sixteenths of white blood to overcome less than one-sixteenth of black".<sup>116</sup>

More despicable to Bailey than the attempts to set a quantitative scale to race, was the belief circulated in many religious sects that "the Negroes are the descendants of Cain. . . ." which he said was "utterly illogical, on orthodox, Scriptural ground". Even if they were Cain's or Ham's descendants, they certainly were not "more deserving of the curse of eternal slavery than those of Adam". Bailey felt that there simply was no basis for the dominance of whites over blacks.

The thing is self-evident, that the Negro has every claim to manhood, in every respect, if not in as high a degree, that the Caucasian race has. He has a conscience, a faculty of reasoning, of reckoning, of imagination. He reads, writes, makes speeches, buys and sells, and manufactures. In fact, a man must be an unblushing, cold-hearted atheist, as destitute of truth as of goodness, who can deny the humanity of the Negro.<sup>117</sup>

Bailey would have no part of any arguments of innate inferiority of the races. By the same token as the preceding quotation indicates, Bailey was prone to couch his pronouncements upon the race issue in qualifying phrases. It is indicative of an internal struggle in his own mind. While he could attack those racist pronouncements of others which he felt outrageous, he admitted that he made ". . . no claim to being one of the 'peculiar friends' or champions of the free people of color".<sup>118</sup> They were not ". . . quite so intelligent or agreeable as their white brethren".<sup>119</sup> However, he did not feel that this was an irremediable condition.

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<sup>116</sup>The National Era, March 9, 1853.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., August 17, 1854.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid., April 19, 1849.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., November 28, 1850.



He did recognize the implications and formidable difficulties which enslavement brought upon blacks. "No class", he wrote, "can be neglected without becoming a source of annoyance and mischief, just in proportion to its ignorance and corruption."<sup>120</sup> He greatly admired Frederick Douglass for overcoming those handicaps. After hearing Douglass's address at the Western Reserve College's commencement of 1854, Bailey called it "one of the marvels of the age, that a fugitive from Slavery, reared to manhood under all the weight of its depressing influence, should be the author of this able and learned address".<sup>121</sup> He looked forward with hope that society could assist others to acquire "the manners and refinements of civilization".<sup>122</sup> Not because he felt that society owed it to the black man, but because he felt "Society owes it to itself, to its own peace, safety and comfort to promote the elevation of its humblest members".<sup>123</sup>

Such direct assaults upon the prevailing opinion of prejudice were certainly beyond the bounds which most Northern anti-extensionists were willing to accept. As his response to Giddings's proposal demonstrates, Bailey himself was not always willing to go far beyond those bounds. Only when he calculated that the issue at hand was sufficiently remote or otherwise unlikely to cause an emotional uproar, was he willing to speak out. Thus, he could vehemently attack the policy the United States followed in regard to Haiti. He saw his government supporting the

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<sup>120</sup> The National Era, March 27, 1856.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., August 3, 1854.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., November 9, 1854.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., March 27, 1856.

"monarchies of Europe" against a republic which would have been unthinkable "if Haiti had been a white Republic".<sup>124</sup>

This manifest refusal to support the rights of blacks, when he feared that to give such support was likely to hinder the political struggle against slavery, stemmed from his own outlook upon the movement. Unlike so many spokesmen against slavery, Bailey had not been led to that conviction as much by a profound moral or religious impulse, as he was by his belief in democracy and America's mission to "extend and perfect Free Institutions for the benefit of mankind".<sup>125</sup> It was an article of faith with Bailey that American institutions - excluding slavery - would be "universal in this North American continent" bequeathing upon all therein its foremost principle, that of "universal equality".<sup>126</sup> Universal equality, he felt, was "the foundation of justice, of law, and of equity" and was the fundamental "expression of the common sense of mankind".<sup>127</sup> The duty of every reformer, he wrote, was "to set his face against every form of oppression" and to support "every right movement, whatever its special object" because "one reform always prepares the way for another, by . . . throwing light upon the fundamental principle of universal equality . . ." <sup>128</sup>

Bailey was first and foremost motivated by this spirit of democracy and it pervaded his thinking upon all the relevant subjects of his times. The abolition of slavery was the most pressing reform because it was ". . . as much a political question as a moral question . . . bearing

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<sup>124</sup>The National Era, January 6 and 13, 1853.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., January 13, 1853.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., January 13 and September 4, 1856.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., September 4, 1856.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., March 17, 1853.

on . . . every practical question that can engage the attitude of the voter".<sup>129</sup> But, there were other reforms needing concurrent attention. Along with his associate editor, John Greenleaf Whittier, he called for increased political awareness and activity by "freedom-loving women".<sup>130</sup> Bailey called for the direct "election of officers of the Federal and State Governments, by the People" as well as "Universal Education, Opposition to Monopolies, Jealousy of Centralization . . . removal of all restrictions on Commerce, Sympathy with the Cause of Republicans in Europe; Liberal Laws in regard to Foreign Immigrants" and the "Maintenance of State Rights and Strict Construction of the Constitution".<sup>131</sup> Many of these views were in direct conflict to immediate abolition. If the Federal Government was to be decentralized and the rights of the separate States upheld, it was impossible for the Federal Government to make any direct mandates on slavery to the States. The Constitution itself, by a strict construction interpretation, forbade any such action. Bailey was, therefore, led to endorse evolutionary abolition in the form of the gradual constriction concept which was least likely to affect his other views.

On the surface, the concept of gradual constriction may have seemed to be a logical, effective and essentially bloodless solution to slavery. But, Bailey and its other supporters failed tragically to grasp the immediacy with which the slave desired and deserved freedom. Because he approached slavery from a philosophical view rather than from a deep moral or religious position, he was never really able to see slavery as the

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<sup>129</sup>The National Era, December 15, 1853.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., January 27, 1853.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., April 13, 1854.



slave did - from the bottom up. Because of that, he could await the evolutionary abolition of slavery with little thought to the generations who would have to await its final culmination. In fact, he did not even ponder the equally grave and complex problem of how the emancipated slave was to fit into American society. The closest that he came was the abstract concept of society's duty to upgrade even its humblest citizen. He never really envisioned how that was to be done and seems to have thought that they should rely, educate and act for themselves.<sup>132</sup> He even continued to toy with various schemes for colonization, though he generally opposed the idea.<sup>133</sup> His usually clear and precise mind had left the problem of the assimilation of the emancipated slave essentially unexplored. To Bailey, the immediate problem at hand was not the abolition of slavery, but slavery's removal from its position of ". . . paramount power and consideration in this model Republic. . . ."<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 188.

<sup>133</sup> Gamaliel Bailey to James S. Pike, June 6, 1854, in James S. Pike, First Blows of the Civil War (New York: American News Co., 1879), p. 247.

<sup>134</sup> Facts for the People, May, 1854.

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CHAPTER III

OPPOSING THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA BILL

By 1853, the political antislavery movement seemed as ineffectual as ever. Most of its hard core members, who had witnessed the rapid demise of the Free Soil Party, were now isolated and calling themselves the Free Democratic Party. They certainly remained vocal as Bailey's The National Era showed, but their audience had undergone a drastic shrinkage. The degenerative process may well have continued had it not been for, in the words of Frederick Douglass, ". . . the aid rendered them unwittingly by the aggressive character of slavery itself". "It was in the nature," he continued, "of the system never to rest in obscurity, although that condition was in a high degree essential to its security." He felt that slavery was "forever forcing itself into prominence" and by so doing, heating ". . . the furnace of agitation [against slavery] to a higher degree than any before attained". Viewing it, as he was from over a decade after the Civil War, the "aggressive character" could well have been construed to be a gross disadvantage to slavery. However, in the 1850's, such reasoning was anything but apparent to people like Bailey.<sup>135</sup>

Certainly, Bailey deeply believed in the innate aggressiveness of slavery, but to him, it was that very facet of its nature which was the most awesome. Since the formation of the United States, he held, there had been an earnest struggle between ". . . the best organized, most deeply

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<sup>135</sup>Frederick Douglass, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass Written by Himself (Hartford: Park Publishing Co., 1882), pp. 360 - 361.

rooted, most extensive, and most powerful system of Slavery, and most beneficent system of Free Institutions that the world has ever witnessed".<sup>136</sup> During that struggle, slavery had shown itself by far to be the most aggressive and correspondingly, the most powerful. To his mind, slavery's position had progressed by the early 1850's to the point where it indirectly subjected ". . . the Non-Slaveholders of the country under the yoke of three hundred thousand Slaveholders".<sup>137</sup> It accomplished this feat, Bailey attested, through its control of both national political parties - Whigs and Democrats - who oddly enough ". . . uniformly overlooked the inherent aggressiveness of slavery".<sup>138</sup> Already, Bailey felt, slavery's dominance had gone to the extent that America's all important image "in the eyes of the world is one of humiliation".<sup>139</sup> Nor did he foresee an end to slavery's aggressive policies. It demanded "homage and supremacy" and would not be satisfied until it had converted the government ". . . into a petty Police Power for the guardianship of Plantation Slavery".<sup>140</sup> That guardianship was not passive either. To Bailey, it meant that all "extension of the American Empire" would be forestalled, except for those areas such as Cuba where "the price of cotton and negroes" could be raised and new "slave markets" and "slave States" could be added.<sup>141</sup> It would, thus, make America, not as Bailey so ardently desired, the procreator of

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<sup>136</sup>Facts for the People, May, 1854.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid.

<sup>138</sup>The National Era, April 13, 1854.

<sup>139</sup>Ibid., February 3, 1853.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1854 and January 13, 1853.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid., January 13, 1853.



first, hemispheric and then, worldwide democracy, but the incubus of a "remnant of Barbarism".<sup>142</sup>

To keep this from happening, Bailey had long espoused the "divorce" concept. However, the problem was in securing the political clout to drive the wedge which would effect that "divorce". He believed that northerners generally manifested too "exclusive devotion to their own material interests" and were far too deluded "with the illusion of Nationality" to effectively combat slavery.<sup>143</sup> While the South had uniformly made its own peculiar sectional interests paramount, there was ". . . very little sectional feeling at the North".<sup>144</sup> Despite some pleas to "spurn sectional dominance", he pictured the Union, "not as a necessity or an end, but as subserving certain interests of equal importance to both sections; not that these interests might not be secured without it. . . ." <sup>145</sup> If northern sectionalism meant a dissolution of the Union, Bailey felt, ". . . it could not permanently and seriously affect the peculiar interests of the free States. . . ." <sup>146</sup> But since so much of the power of slavery accrued from its dominance of the Federal Government, a dissolution of the

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<sup>142</sup>The National Era, January 13, 1853.

<sup>143</sup>Facts for the People, May, 1854 and The National Era, March 30, 1854. Bailey was not always consistent in locating absolute dominance of the "Slave Power" over the nation as something to occur in the future. He would sometimes write as if it had already achieved its final aims. However, generally he recognized its dominance in degree with its power continually increasing.

<sup>144</sup>The National Era, April 13 and September 21, 1854.

<sup>145</sup>Ibid., May 4, 1854.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid.

Union ". . . would in all probability, produce the most disastrous effects upon . . . the Slave States".<sup>147</sup>

The basis Bailey had in mind for northern sectionalism was, of course, antislavery. That this would come about did not seem particularly hopeful in 1853. The elections of 1850 had shown that most voters believed that the solution to the slavery question had been settled by the Compromise of 1850.<sup>148</sup> The presidential candidate of the Free Democratic Party, John P. Hale, had polled less than five percent of the nation's voters and the political movement against slavery was still a distinct minority.<sup>149</sup>

There were, however, many antislavery men who looked hopefully upon the future. While he recognized that the antislavery movement was "weak in political circles", Horace Greeley, the antislavery Whig editor of the New York Daily Tribune, felt it "was never stronger with the masses of the people".<sup>150</sup> Many Free Democrats, despite the poor showing of their party, looked forward to making gains from the Whigs whose defeat in the election of 1852 was beginning to appear disastrous.<sup>151</sup> Bailey was not among them. He warned his colleagues not to take the apparent dissatisfaction of many Whigs too seriously. He believed that soon,

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<sup>147</sup>The National Era, May 4, 1854. The "disastrous effects" would not only be economic as Bailey firmly believed in the fragility of the Southern cotton economy, but would, from the principles espoused in the gradual constriction concept, result in the final abolishment of slavery.

<sup>148</sup>Blue, Free Soil, pp. 232 - 233.

<sup>149</sup>Ibid., p. 255 and Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 253.

<sup>150</sup>New York Daily Tribune, January 6, 1854.

<sup>151</sup>Blue, Free Soil, p. 270.

forgetting their dissatisfaction, they would follow a few leaders and remain within the Whig ranks.<sup>152</sup> With an uncharacteristic lack of optimism, he concluded that the party must "be patient, and hope for the best".<sup>153</sup> Indeed, Bailey's belief that the Whig Party would survive its serious defeat in 1852 may have well been correct, had it not been for the torrent of discontent unleashed by the controversy over the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Few people could have foreseen the tragic effects leading directly into fratricidal war which the organization of the area of Nebraska would entail. The eventual opening of the area for settlement was almost universally popular. Bailey, himself, felt it was "the duty of the Government to bring this wilderness [Nebraska] into subjection to the rule of civilization".<sup>154</sup> He believed that it was necessary to accommodate the influx of immigrants and to bind ". . . together in indissoluble bonds the new States of the Pacific and the old States of the Atlantic. . . ." <sup>155</sup> "No wilderness" he wrote, "should divide the two extremes of our empire."<sup>156</sup> He had no apprehension of organizing Nebraska because the whole area was "consecrated forever to Freedom" by the Missouri Compromise and, therefore, any eventual states formed from it would be free states.<sup>157</sup>

He supported the bill for organizing Nebraska, which had passed the House of Representatives on February 10, 1853 by a vote of ninety-eight

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<sup>152</sup>The National Era, January 13, 1853.

<sup>153</sup>Ibid.

<sup>154</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1853.

<sup>155</sup>Ibid.

<sup>156</sup>Ibid., November 17, 1853.

<sup>157</sup>Ibid., January 12, 1854 and February 17, 1853.



to forty-three.<sup>158</sup> That bill, he felt, had been a good one as it had opened the area for settlement and at the same time attempted to preserve many of the rights of the Indians there.<sup>159</sup> He attacked Stephen Douglas, whom he felt was responsible for having the bill tabled by the Senate.<sup>160</sup> Douglas's inaction was suspect, Bailey felt, because it had been Douglas who, as a representative in the House, had proposed such action since 1848.<sup>161</sup> Hearing rumors that the Administration was maneuvering for some possible concessions before organizing the area, Bailey demanded that the Missouri Compromise slavery restriction be expressly affirmed into each segment of any future bill.<sup>162</sup> His fears were well founded.

On January 4, 1854, Senator Douglas introduced the new Nebraska Bill to the Senate. As Bailey had feared, there was no reaffirmation of the Missouri Compromise restriction. Despite the fact that the restriction was not specifically repealed, there was an immediate cry of warning by northern journals. Even John Bigelow's New York Evening Post, a Democratic journal, which had supported the election of Pierce, attacked the Bill for giving Nebraska ". . . a civil government, on condition of repealing that part of the Missouri Compromise which forbids slavery north of a certain line of latitude".<sup>163</sup> "We are defrauded of our rights" said the Post, adding that the "Slave Power", having digested the advantages it had received from the Compromise, ". . . now propose to deprive the

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<sup>158</sup>The National Era, April 14, 1853.

<sup>159</sup>Ibid., February 17, 1853.

<sup>160</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1853.

<sup>161</sup>Ibid.

<sup>162</sup>Ibid.

<sup>163</sup>New York Evening Post, January 6, 1854.

free states of theirs".<sup>164</sup> The Tribune joined the Post, describing the proposal as "a breach of solemn compact" while slavery "not content with its own proper limits . . . proposes to invade and overrun the . . . virgin territory whereon a slave has never stood".<sup>165</sup> The Tribune warned the politicians "who place success before principle" that antislavery northerners were waiting for ". . . the occasion for a practical demonstration of their power" and that by supporting the Nebraska Bill, slavery was generating "an explosive force that must blow it to atoms".<sup>166</sup>

Two weeks before Douglas had made his proposals, Bailey had advised his readers of what was in the making. Senator David Atchison of Missouri had stated that he would oppose all proposals to organize Nebraska under the Missouri Compromise. Bailey asked if Atchison would have dared ". . . to take a position so monstrously extravagant, if he were not assured of confederates. . . ." <sup>167</sup> He was certain that there was a conspiracy against the restriction to "trample it under foot".<sup>168</sup> At first, Bailey refrained from including Douglas in the "conspiracy". He felt that border state senators such as Atchison and southern senators were merely using Douglas's proposal as a cover.<sup>169</sup> This was in spite of the fact that on January 10, 1854, through the Washington Sentinel, Douglas had added an additional section (asserting it had been left out by

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<sup>164</sup>New York Evening Post, January 6 and 7, 1854.

<sup>165</sup>New York Daily Tribune, January 6 and 11, 1854.

<sup>166</sup>Ibid., January 6, 1854.

<sup>167</sup>The National Era, December 22, 1853.

<sup>168</sup>Ibid.

<sup>169</sup>Ibid., January 12, 1854.

clerical error), which made the question of slavery in Nebraska a matter for the respective people therein to decide.<sup>170</sup> Bailey did, however, believe that Douglas had acted foolishly by connecting his bill with a ". . . reaffirmation . . . of the Compromise of 1850, which declares that a State applying for admission to the Union, shall be received, whether with or without slavery".<sup>171</sup> By doing so, Bailey felt Douglas had needlessly reopened the whole question which had been settled for thirty-four years. Even John C. Calhoun, Bailey argued, had recognized and accepted that the area of the Louisiana territory north of 36° 30' would be "the nursery of future non-slaveholding States".<sup>172</sup>

On January 15th, section 14 of the Bill was proposed, written by a Whig senator from Kentucky, Archibald Dixon. This section made clear what Bailey and others already knew; the Nebraska Bill's supporters were intent on removing the restriction clause completely. That clause said Dixon's amendment was ". . . superceded by the principles of the legislation of 1850, commonly called the Compromise measures, and is hereby declared inoperative".<sup>173</sup> Douglas, who had wished to keep the elimination of the restriction as ambiguous as possible, was somewhat taken aback by Dixon's direct approach. He considered it politically unwise and

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<sup>170</sup>J. G. Randall and David Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction (3rd ed.; Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Co., 1969), p. 95 and The Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 30, 1854, pp. 2230 - 2231.

<sup>171</sup>The National Era, January 12, 1854.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid.

<sup>173</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., January 19, 1854, p. 133.



". . . too close to being a positive legislation of slavery into the Territory, for under it slaves could certainly be held there. . . .<sup>174</sup>

Reaction to the Dixon amendment was immediate in the leading anti-slavery journals. Greeley, in the Daily Tribune called Douglas and his supporters "traitorous scamps" and declared that they deserved ". . . to be roasted by the fires of the hottest public indignations".<sup>175</sup> The Evening Post warned the North that if it allowed the Bill to pass, slavery would take ". . . every inch of soil . . . consecrated forever . . . to freedom".<sup>176</sup> It was just the start of the torrent of reaction against the Bill and Douglas in particular.<sup>177</sup>

The Dixon amendment convinced Bailey that there was indeed a conspiracy to open the entire western frontier to slavery. He was abashed, however, to realize its origin. He believed that no Southerner would be so blatantly sectional as to initiate a movement to open Nebraska to slavery.<sup>178</sup> Like Chase, he felt that Southerners were essentially reconciled

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<sup>174</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 96 and Capers, Douglas, p. 99. Not everyone agreed with Douglas as to the directness of the Dixon amendment. In an effort to make it clear to everyone that the Bill was actually doing completely away with the Missouri Compromise restriction, Salmon P. Chase, on January 19, 1854, proposed:

"That the Constitution, and all laws of the United States which are not locally inapplicable, shall have the same force and effect within the said Territory of Nebraska as elsewhere within the United States, except the eighth section of the act preparatory to the admission of Missouri into the Union, approved March 6, 1820, which is hereby declared inoperative."

The measure was defeated, though it would reappear later.

<sup>175</sup>New York Daily Tribune, January 26, 1854.

<sup>176</sup>New York Evening Post, January 25, 1854.

<sup>177</sup>Randall and Donald, Civil War, p. 96.

<sup>178</sup>The National Era, January 19, 1854.

to the Missouri Compromise restriction.<sup>179</sup> He based this belief upon his conversations with such Southern Senators as Samuel Houston of Texas who, toward the end of the debate over the Bill, would declare: "I, as the most extreme [meaning geographically] Southern Senator upon this floor . . . will have none of it."<sup>180</sup> Along with Chase, Bailey was convinced that Douglas had ". . . outsouthernized the South; and dragged the tired and irresolute administration along with him".<sup>181</sup> "Thus," wrote Bailey, "always is Freedom stabbed in the house of her professed friends." "Thus, always comes from the North the brain that devises, the hand that inflicts dishonor and injury upon it."<sup>182</sup> Douglas, he hoped, would be committing political suicide by authorizing the Bill to plant "a series of slave States along the track of the Pacific railroad. . . ."<sup>183</sup>

On January 22, 1854, Chase, although he had written it in conjunction with Sumner and Wade, delivered what he considered to be ". . . the most valuable of my works".<sup>184</sup> It was entitled "Address of the Independent Democrats in Congress to the People of the United States" and became known as the Appeal of the Independent Democrats.<sup>185</sup> In one

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<sup>179</sup>Salmon Chase to E. S. Hamlin, January 22, 1854, in Annual Report of the American Historical Association, Vol. II (Washington: 1902), pp. 255 - 256.

<sup>180</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., March 3, 1854, p. 340.

<sup>181</sup>Chase to Hamlin, January 22, 1854, in Annual Report of AHA, pp. 255 - 256.

<sup>182</sup>The National Era, January 19, 1854.

<sup>183</sup>Ibid.

<sup>184</sup>Salmon Chase to E. L. Pierce, August 8, 1854, in Annual Report of AHA, p. 263.

<sup>185</sup>It was signed by Salmon Chase, Charles Sumner, Joshua Giddings, Edward Wade, Gerrit Smith and Alexander DeWitt (a representative from Massachusetts).

cohesive, rhetorical essay, nearly all of the arguments used by Bailey and other spokesmen against the Bill were arrayed.<sup>186</sup> It traced the struggle of slavery historically from the Independent Democratic point of view, and warned that the Nebraska Bill would place the Union in "imminent peril".<sup>187</sup> It ended by declaring that if the Bill passed, the signers of the "appeal" would ". . . erect a new standard of Freedom, and call upon the People to come to the rescue of the country. . . ."<sup>188</sup> The essay was reprinted in its entirety in many Northern newspapers. The Evening Post hailed it as the beginning of what would be a vast armada of agitation over the Nebraska Bill.<sup>189</sup> Bailey, himself, exhausted the language's words of praise and reprinted the entire lengthy address in The National Era on February 2, 1854, and in Facts for the People, March, 1854. It was to be the mainstay of the opposition.

Douglas and his supporters strove to retain the initiative. On February 1, 1854, Douglas announced another change in the Bill. This was the division of the area into two separate portions to be divided at the fortieth parallel.<sup>190</sup> The portion to the south of that line was now called Kansas and the rest remained Nebraska. Bailey presented his ideas

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<sup>186</sup>The style of writing and the arguments used by Chase with their historical inferences are remarkably similar to that written by Bailey in The National Era on January 12, 1854, entitled "Nebraska - Agitation - The Whole Question Re-opened".

<sup>187</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., January 22, 1854, p. 281.

<sup>188</sup>Ibid.

<sup>189</sup>New York Evening Post, January 25, 1854.

<sup>190</sup>The Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 1, 1854, pp. 2230 - 2231.



upon the Bill in a profusion of articles in The National Era.<sup>191</sup> There was no question in his mind that Douglas had made the two divisions so as to insure that Kansas, by its very geographic location, would be settled by slaveholders and eventually admitted as a slave state. This, Bailey charged, was the ultimate object of Douglas and Pierce's Administration from the start. He felt that they had shrewdly disguised this from the public. They had done this by alleging in the Bill itself that they were "not prepared now to recommend a departure from the course pursued in the Compromise . . . either by affirming or repealing the eighth section [slave restriction] of the Missouri Act. . . ." Bailey felt that by not affirming the restriction clause, they were indeed repealing it. But he was troubled by the fact that so many Northerners and journalists alike still did not seem to realize that this was the case. Even after the Dixon amendment made it more clear, Bailey was dismayed to see many Northern papers still "assuming that the Missouri Compromise was left untouched". It had been the purpose of Chase's proposal to make that more clear. But as his editorials show, Bailey felt that the North was asleep. "Sleep on," he said and "the Slave Power should rule from the Lakes to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific." From this point on, he referred to the Bill as "the foul conspiracy".<sup>192</sup>

Bailey was not alone in his fear that the North would not awaken in time to stop the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Theodore Parker, who was a particularly vocal and liberal Bostonian minister, complained

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<sup>191</sup>These editorial essays include numerous citations from the Bill and read much like legal briefs. They are on the whole, far below Bailey's normal performance and seem to indicate at once, nervous excitement and dismay over what was happening.

<sup>192</sup>The National Era, February 2, 1854.

that while the Bill was hated in the North, nothing was being done.<sup>193</sup>

Similar complaints were heard throughout the old Free Soil ranks. Even the generally optimistic Tribune declared that if only the men of the North would make their opposition clear, their representatives "would instantly erase their clamor, and skulk back, and we should hear no more about it".<sup>194</sup>

The efforts to awaken the North were given added impetus by the Bill's supporters. On February 15, 1854, Douglas moved that the fourteenth section be modified by striking the words "which was superceded by the principle of the legislation of 1850, commonly called the Compromise measure, and is, hereby, declared inoperative" and to insert:

. . . which, being inconsistent with the principle of non-intervention by Congress with Slavery in the States and Territories, as recognized by the legislation of 1850, . . . is hereby declared inoperative and void; it being the true intent and meaning of this act, not to legislate Slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to have the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.<sup>195</sup>

As Bailey said, this was a "Distinction Without a Difference".<sup>196</sup> Yet Douglas probably hoped that by invoking the "doctrine of popular sovereignty", he would quiet rather than raise the opposition.

Bailey's reaction was immediate. "Men of the so-called Free States," he called like Antony from the steps of the forum, "behold the fruit of your no-agitation, your peace and harmony, your healing Compromise, and your

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<sup>193</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 256.

<sup>194</sup> New York Daily Tribune, January 26, 1854.

<sup>195</sup> The National Era, February 16, 1854 and The Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 30, 1854, p. 2232.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

Baltimore finalities."<sup>197</sup> The Tribune, in reference to Douglas and Pierce, declared that the Bill now was "the most conclusive evidence of the utter rottenness of the politicians who bear sway at Washington. . . ."<sup>198</sup> Similar cries were heard throughout the North. Even Texas Senator Houston arose against the proposed change. He stated that the Missouri Compromise was part of the constitution of his State and held in Texas with "all the sanctity and solemnity that could be attached to any compact whatever".<sup>199</sup> As for the precedence of the Compromise of 1850, "When I voted for that", said Houston, "I did not suppose that I was voting to repeal the Missouri Compromise".<sup>200</sup>

Nor did the spelling out of "popular sovereignty", which had been a vague part of the Bill from the beginning, ease the reaction. In an article entitled "Squatter Sovereignty", the Post labeled it "an adroit pretense" which Southerners would "universally denounce" if the inhabitants of the territory attempted to exercise the right.<sup>201</sup> Bailey, who believed in direct elections for most everything did not attack the concept directly. He felt that the concept was not popular among the voters.<sup>202</sup> To Bailey, the incorporation of it was indeed a sham. He noted that two

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<sup>197</sup> The National Era, February 16, 1854 and The Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 30, 1854, p. 2232.

<sup>198</sup> New York Daily Tribune, February 28, 1854. It is interesting to note that on May 5, 1853, Bailey had accused the Tribune of supporting Pierce and willing to do anything "to forget the angry controversies of the past".

<sup>199</sup> The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 15, 1854, p. 205.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> New York Evening Post, February 1, 1854.

<sup>202</sup> The National Era, February 16, 1854.



amendments by Chase - one stating the right of the territorial inhabitants to exclude slavery immediately and the other proposing popular election of judges, and the Governor with a clause to deprive an appointed Governor of any veto power - were defeated.<sup>203</sup> "O! Profound regard for Popular Sovereignty" he jibbed at the Bill's supporters.<sup>204</sup>

Popular sovereignty was a lie, but "a lie well stuck to is more potent than a truth feebly spoken. . . ." <sup>205</sup> If the supporters had really believed in it for the "People of Nebraska", then "Congress has no right to constitute them a distinct community, to prescribe them bounds and to give them a Constitution of Government". Congress's duty, he continued, did not go beyond the recognition of the inhabitants' ". . . right to organize themselves, form their own Government, and determine their own laws".<sup>206</sup>

While Bailey and other Northern journalists were attacking the concept of "popular sovereignty" as a sham, the Senate, elected by their State legislature, paid little attention. Michigan's Senator Lewis Cass, who had been the Democratic nominee for President in 1848, and who held a large responsibility for the incorporation of the doctrine, proclaimed that its goal, as well as the Bill's in general, was to establish "Union and tranquility, won beyond the reach of future agitation. . . ." <sup>207</sup> Even those, who had on occasion opposed the extension of slavery, favored

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<sup>203</sup>The National Era, March 9, 1854.

<sup>204</sup>Ibid.

<sup>205</sup>Ibid., April 27, 1854

<sup>206</sup>Ibid.

<sup>207</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 20, 1854, p. 218.

the Bill with its "popular sovereignty" concept. Of these, perhaps, the most visible was the Democratic Senator from Indiana, John Pettit. As a representative in the House in 1848-49, Pettit had been "among the most noisy and ultra Wilmot Proviso men".<sup>208</sup> He proclaimed that with its concept of popular sovereignty, the Bill would ". . . put at rest forever this exciting question of slavery and banish it from these Halls, and bequeath to our successors a peace and tranquility which we have never known here, and never shall know until we pass this Bill".<sup>209</sup>

That a man with the background of Pettit could be so far removed from what time would prove the real beliefs of his constituents, was a sad commentary on the thirty-third Congress. But that he could believe that the Kansas-Nebraska Act would bequeath peace for future generations was outright tragic, as it turned out for the whole nation and for the generation that came of age in 1861 in particular. To Greeley, they were "traitorous scamps" and to Bailey, they were "conspirators" and "back stabbers".<sup>210</sup> That they were men whose vision and foresight into the implication of their actions were drastically limited seems apparent. Perhaps, they were too involved in their own peculiar microcosmic interests or so engrossed in their own rhetoric that they came to believe it thoroughly. Certainly, Dixon exemplifies the latter. The man who succeeded Henry Clay

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<sup>208</sup>New York Daily Tribune, February 22, 1854.

<sup>209</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 20, 1854, p. 218.

<sup>210</sup>Bailey noted that the Kansas-Nebraska Act was essentially the product of Northerners and men from the border States. In this, he seems to have been correct. Douglas was from Illinois. Cass, who had so much to do with the popular sovereignty concept, was from Michigan. Dixon was from Kentucky and Clayton, of whom more will be mentioned later, was from Delaware.

would instruct Charles Sumner before the Senate:

Yes, sir, when slavery is expelled it will sound the death knell to your manufacturing institutions. The effect would sweep over the land like the sirocco of the desert, and your manufacturing institutions would wither and die beneath its consuming fires, and your people would wander about homeless in the streets, instead of finding the employment they now do in your factories. This would be the inevitable consequence, which nothing could prevent. You are dependent upon this very slaveholding population. Without them you would scarcely exist at all; with them you are everything that you are in a commercial and a manufacturing point of view. They have made you what you are. Slavery involves the interest of all the people who thus protect and foster you.<sup>211</sup>

In the face of such beliefs, it was little wonder that the few senators who opposed the Bill, for all their eloquence, failed to persuade their colleagues of the reaction that its passage would invoke.

The senatorial opposition was, of course, led by Chase and the few other anti-extensionist members. Generally regarded as agitators who endangered the status-quo, they had, since 1847, been ignored and ostracized by the Washington society.<sup>212</sup> When Chase rose to speak before the Senate, he referred to those of his mind as ". . . we who are denounced as agitators and factionists".<sup>213</sup> He attempted to turn the charge around. It was the "quietist and the finalist" he said, who were "responsible for this renewal of strife and controversy".<sup>214</sup> "This will not escape the

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<sup>211</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 4, 1854, p. 144.

<sup>212</sup>Blue, Free Soil, p. 39 and Hart, Salmon Chase, p. 134.

<sup>213</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 3, 1854, p. 134.

<sup>214</sup>Ibid., By the terms "quietist and finalist", Bailey was referring to President Pierce and the Democratic Party which at their Baltimore convention had made it mandatory that the slavery question was not to be reopened. They had declared that it had been settled completely by the Compromise of 1850.



observation of the country", he concluded.<sup>215</sup> To which Charles Sumner added that the term Abolitionist "so often applied in reproach" would now be leveled against the supporters, only it would be as "Abolitionists of Freedom".<sup>216</sup>

For the most part, their strategy was to be as vocal as possible on those points of the Bill which appeared the most offensive to Northerners. They were reasonably certain that it would pass the Senate. But as Bailey asserted, they would, by "acting with clear-sighted method . . . if not defeat the Nebraska Bill, at least damage it so as to make it fail in the House".<sup>217</sup> The House of Representatives, he thought, being directly elected, would be more responsive to the popular reaction he and the others were attempting to generate.<sup>218</sup> It was in part for this reason that the Northern opposition in the Senate and Bailey so strongly emphasized the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. As Senator Seward proclaimed, ". . . that compromise of thirty-years duration was . . . invested with a sanctity scarcely inferior to that which hallows the Constitution itself".<sup>219</sup> It is doubtful that Seward or the others felt it to be so themselves, but they did believe that they represented a majority of Northerners and of the country by opposing the repeal.<sup>220</sup> Certainly, it

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<sup>215</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 3, 1854, p. 134.

<sup>216</sup>Ibid., February 24, 1854, p. 263.

<sup>217</sup>The National Era, February 16, 1854.

<sup>218</sup>Ibid.

<sup>219</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 17, 1854, p. 155.

<sup>220</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1854.

was the main reason for their opposition and represented the major rallying point for the expected popular reaction. As the Tribune pointed out, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise would "create an overwhelming Northern Party whose name and title shall be THE REPEALERS sic ", bent on revenge.<sup>221</sup>

The glorifying of the Missouri Compromise by Bailey, manifested in nearly every issue of The National Era, beginning in December of 1853, was due to its political potency in the North. Clearly, he believed that the Compromise had set a limit to the Northern expansion of slavery at 36° 30'. In fact, he declared ". . . that all the compromise did was to expressly forbid slavery above that line".<sup>222</sup> He did not believe, however, that it guaranteed slavery below that line. It merely recognized its existence there.<sup>223</sup> By taking that view, he was essentially holding it in the same manner as his Southern counterparts. They viewed it as safe-guarding slavery, but not as a perpetual barrier to slavery's extension. The difference, of course, was that in 1854, the South appeared - to Bailey anyway - to be the beneficiary of its removal.

One way, in Bailey's eyes, to turn the repeal, if it passed, away from the advantage of slavery, was the tide of immigrants which he expected to settle in the new Territories. He agreed with Seward that the annual immigration of half a million freemen from Europe would turn in the direction of Kansas and Nebraska.<sup>224</sup> "They have no fondness for Slavery,"

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<sup>221</sup>New York Daily Tribune, February 3, 1854.

<sup>222</sup>The National Era, January 12, 1854.

<sup>223</sup>Ibid.

<sup>224</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 17, 1854, p. 155 and The National Era, January 12, 1854.

he believed, "and do not choose to labor with slaves."<sup>225</sup> If they could be turned to augment other free settlers into the area, the chances were favorable that free States would result.<sup>226</sup> "If you are wise", warned Seward, "then the tides of freemen and slaves will never meet, for they will not voluntarily commingle; but if, . . . their repulsive currents must be directed against each other . . . then it is easy to see . . . which one will overcome the resistance of the other."<sup>227</sup>

The men to whom he spoke, apparently took Seward at his word. They responded in the form of Senator John Clayton of Indiana with an amendment to restrict the voting rights in the Territories. The pertinent portion being:

. . . the Constitution demands, and every dictate of sound policy demands, that the right of suffrage and holding office in these Territories should be restricted to citizens of the United States.<sup>228</sup>

Unless this was done, he added, ". . . these very men to whom I have referred, may go there and legislate".<sup>229</sup> Even Douglas balked and voted against the measure, but it passed twenty-three to twenty-one.<sup>230</sup>

To Bailey, it was the final insult. "The anti-alien clause," as he called it, was ". . . repugnant to one of the fundamental principles

<sup>225</sup>The National Era, January 19, 1854.

<sup>226</sup>Ibid., July 27, 1854.

<sup>227</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 17, 1854, p. 155.

<sup>228</sup>Facts for the People, March, 1854.

<sup>229</sup>Ibid. The limitation set a five year residing rule.

<sup>230</sup>Ibid.



of Democracy."<sup>231</sup> It took away their "voice in the election of the Legislation that is to pass laws regulating their property and other relations".<sup>232</sup> The purpose was clear, he said; it was ". . . to deprive them of their just political weight in determining the institutions of our vast Western Territory".<sup>233</sup> By the time the immigrant had become a citizen or a five year resident, the "slaveholders will have already . . . prescribed laws to protect slave labor".<sup>234</sup>

To Bailey, the conspiracy had come to a climax. Having succeeded by subterfuge in repealing the restriction to its expansion and having gained the means to secure that area, it stood proudly, challenging all to try to stop it. "Here and now," he said, "we hold, it is the duty of the North to meet the issue thrust upon it by the Party of Slavery."<sup>235</sup>

If the North was going to meet the issue, it would have to do so other than in the Senate. On March 4, 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill passed that body by a vote of thirty-seven to fourteen.<sup>236</sup> It was a substantial margin and somewhat more than expected by Bailey. He had hoped others in opposition to the Bill such as Senator G. E. Badger of North Carolina would remain firm. Badger had at first opposed the Bill for not

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<sup>231</sup>Facts for the People, March, 1854.

<sup>232</sup>The National Era, March 9, 1854.

<sup>233</sup>Facts for the People, March, 1854.

<sup>234</sup>The National Era, March 9, 1854.

<sup>235</sup>Ibid., March 30, 1854.

<sup>236</sup>The National Era, March 9, 1854. Those senators opposing the Bill were Chase, Sumner, Wade, Seward, Truman Smith of Connecticut, along with Dodge of Wisconsin, Fessenden of Maine, Fish of New York, Hamlin of Maine, Jones, Foot and Walker, all from the North, joined by Houston of Texas and Bell of Tennessee from the South.

sufficiently protecting the claims of the Indian tribes in the area.<sup>237</sup> Last minute changes and the inclusion that all Indian territory recognized by treaty was "exempted out of the boundaries", was sufficient to convince Badger and like-minded senators to vote for it.<sup>238</sup> Their votes had come somewhat as a surprise to Bailey because he had not believed that they really opposed the measure out of concern for the Indians. He felt that Badger and other Southern senators would do as Houston and Bell had done and vote against the Bill. Bailey did not believe their stated reasons. He felt they would oppose the measure because the organization of the area would do "much for a Central Route for the Pacific Railroad" against the plans for a Southern one.<sup>239</sup>

Bailey remained hopeful that the House of Representatives would, if not defeat, at least modify the Bill. His first idea was that the Bill should be referred to the Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union, where he asserted ". . . no trickery, and no usurpation short of revolution, can prevent deliberate action upon it".<sup>240</sup> The point he was making was that, by so doing, every point of the Bill would be discussed before the public, giving added impetus to the growing reaction.<sup>241</sup> In addition, he hoped that time - which was most important if the reaction

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<sup>237</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 16, 1854, p. 145. The concern over the property rights of the Indian tribes was surprisingly extensive. Truman Smith, Seward, E. Everett of Massachusetts and many others, expressed opposition along this line.

<sup>238</sup>Ibid., May 30, 1854, pp. 2228 - 2229.

<sup>239</sup>The National Era, February 16, 1854.

<sup>240</sup>Ibid., March 16 and 30, 1854.

<sup>241</sup>Ibid., March 30, 1854.

was going to be organized - could be acquired by having the opponents leave "the Committee without a quorum".<sup>242</sup> But the opposition was not sufficiently organized to accomplish the latter. "Seventeen bills on the Calendar were successively laid aside for the purpose of reaching the Nebraska Bill" without opposition, he cried.<sup>243</sup>

The opposition in the House was at least vocal. On the whole, it reflected the arguments of the senatorial opponents, but in less academic and legalistic terms. Men such as Charles Shelton of New Jersey - who compared the repeal of the Missouri Compromise with one son taking the inheritance of a younger one - put their arguments in the language of the everyday people who elected them.<sup>244</sup> Bailey, who on the whole was disturbed by the manner in which the House opponents were conducting their strategy, looked with favor upon this tactic.

Bailey was upset by the numerous absences of Representatives which he said was ". . . disgraceful to them, and evincing disloyalty to their constituents".<sup>245</sup> He felt that with their assistance, the Bill had a chance of being defeated and if not defeated, at least, all of its supporters identified.<sup>246</sup> He may have been correct. On Monday, May 22, 1854, the Bill passed the house by a vote of one hundred and thirteen to

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<sup>242</sup>The National Era, March 16 and May 25, 1854.

<sup>243</sup>Ibid., May 25, 1854.

<sup>244</sup>The Congressional Globe, Appendix, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., February 14, 1854, p. 191.

<sup>245</sup>The National Era, April 27, 1854.

<sup>246</sup>Ibid., June 1, 1854.



one hundred with twenty-one representatives absent.<sup>247</sup> Bailey took heart in the fact that not one Northern Whig voted for the measure. The Clayton Amendment also had been altered to read that all white males over twenty-one, residing in the area could vote provided they ". . . declared on oath their intention to become such [a citizen,] and shall have taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the provisions of this act. . . ." <sup>248</sup> Bailey, however, feared that when the Bill went back to the Senate, the Clayton Amendment would be restored.<sup>249</sup>

The House of Representatives had failed to alter the Bill excepting the alteration of the Clayton Amendment. Even that success was marred by the fact that slavery could not be prohibited in the area until

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<sup>247</sup>The National Era, May 25, 1854.

<u>Affirmative</u>		
Democrats from the Northern States	44	
Democrats from the Southern States	55	
Whigs from the Northern States	-	
Whigs from the Southern States	<u>14</u>	113
<u>Negative</u>		
Democrats from the Northern States	43	
Democrats from the Southern States	2	
Whigs from the Northern States	48	
Whigs from the Southern States	<u>7</u>	100
<u>Absentees, and those not voting</u>		
Democrats from the Northern States	5	
Democrats from the Southern States	8	
Whigs from the Northern States	4	
Whigs from the Southern States	<u>4</u>	21

<sup>248</sup>The Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 30, 1854, p. 2229.

<sup>249</sup>The National Era, May 25, 1854.

the time that the state or states sought admission to the Union.<sup>250</sup> This was a key element of timing, for it meant that slavery could penetrate into the area unmolested for some time. To Bailey, once slavery became entrenched, there would be little hope of evicting it.<sup>251</sup> Southerners, too, felt that their best chance for successfully operating "popular sovereignty" for slavery was to have it decided only at the time of admission to statehood.<sup>252</sup> Douglas had wished it to be earlier, but in the end, had relented, leaving it up to the Supreme Court to decide the matter further.<sup>253</sup> Bailey held no hope for a favorable decision from the Court. The Court, he felt, being subject to ". . . Prejudice, Prepossession . . . Education, or the insidious workings of self-interests", would always decide ". . . on question of personal liberty . . . against Freedom".<sup>254</sup>

Bailey's fears that an attempt would be made to reinstate the Clayton Amendment, were well founded. But the Senate, perhaps because of the mounting reaction, voted against it, forty-one to seven.<sup>255</sup> The form in which the House had passed the Bill was quickly affirmed. It then passed to President Pierce for signing. Pierce, who had used all of his influence in Congress to assist in passing the Bill, signed it into law on

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<sup>250</sup>The Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 30, 1854, p. 2231.

<sup>251</sup>Facts for the People, May, 1854. Citations on the point could be numerous, suffice it to say that it was axiomatic to Bailey that the mere fact that slavery could enter the area was sufficient to be fearful that it would dominate it.

<sup>252</sup>Capers, Douglas, p. 97.

<sup>253</sup>Ibid.

<sup>254</sup>The National Era, January 12, 1854.

<sup>255</sup>Ibid., June 1, 1854.

May 30, 1854.<sup>256</sup> As Bailey put it, "This insidious deed is done."<sup>257</sup>

The fight to stop the Act had been defeated, but it was a victory won in the style of Pyrrhus as the North was about to demonstrate. As Charles Sumner said, ". . . it annuls all past compromises with slavery, and makes any future compromises impossible." "It opens wide the door of the Future, when, at last, there will really be a North, and the slave power will be broken. . . ."<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>256</sup>Roy Franklin Nichols, Franklin Pierce: Young Hickory of the Granite Hills (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931), pp. 333 - 338.

<sup>257</sup>The National Era, June 1, 1854.

<sup>258</sup>Jeremiah Chaplin and J. D. Chaplin, Life of Charles Sumner (Boston: D. Lothrop and Co., 1874), p. 222.



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CHAPTER IV

THE PARTY OF FREEDOM

If the "door of the Future" was open, Bailey had some definite ideas as to where that door should lead. Certainly, he would have preferred to have had the door shut on the Kansas-Nebraska Act, but that battle had been lost in Congress. The task was to forge a popular majority which could dispel the "Party of Slavery" from its hold upon the national government and "denationalize slavery . . . from every inch of soil within Federal jurisdiction. . . ." <sup>259</sup>

The "Party of Slavery", as referred to by Bailey, was far more than symbolism. The unfolding of the Kansas-Nebraska Act had, if anything, solidified in his mind that all issues and political persons had to be judged on their effect and outlook upon slavery. Slavery pervaded and composed nearly his entire perspective of the political spectrum. Every issue was described and fixed by Bailey into that spectrum to the point where slavery became its entire criteria. <sup>260</sup> By creating a political

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<sup>259</sup>Bailey to Pike, June 6, 1854, in Pike, First Blows, p. 247.

<sup>260</sup>One of the most interesting examples of this was his opposition to a proposed increase in postal rates. In the May, 1854 issue of Facts for the People, he represented the increase as a sequel to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The increase was an attempt, he felt, to abolish "Cheap Postage, so essential to the comfort and intelligence of a Free Labor population". He wrote, "Free Soil and Cheap Postage are the demand of true Democracy" and he charged the "Party of Slavery" of attempting to do away with both. He added that if an increase was needed, it was because delivery cost was two cents per mile more in the South than in the North. The editorial contained nearly every feasible argument against slavery and the "Party of Slavery" of which Bailey could think. Most probably, he opposed the measure because he paid the delivery cost of his papers from a fixed subscription rate which had not anticipated a postal increase.

spectrum which placed the "Party of Slavery" at one extreme and the "Party of Freedom" at the other, Bailey derived a scheme of things that served a variety of important functions.

The very nature of the spectrum being based upon slavery, was an attempt by Bailey to demonstrate that the source of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and all the other ills which befell the nation and, in particular the North, could only be explained in the context of the historical struggle of free labor versus slave labor.<sup>261</sup> The Kansas-Nebraska Act represented to him the decisive challenge, in which ". . . the slave-holding oligarchy is determined to rule or ruin. . . ."<sup>262</sup> He very much believed that unless the North realized this and united "for freedom", there would be no stopping the "Party of Slavery".<sup>263</sup> It retarded progress and was grasping, defiant, desperate, despotic" and "clutching at the throat of the North".<sup>264</sup> The only way to defeat this rather non-descript "Party of Slavery" was to transform the weak "Party of Freedom" into a vast, solid "Party of Freedom".<sup>265</sup>

Both terms - "Party of Slavery" and "Party of Freedom" - were used by Bailey in extremely broad contexts. Prior to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he had spoken of the "Party of Freedom" as being the Independent Democratic Party.<sup>266</sup> But, as the Act progressed, he gradually dropped the

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<sup>261</sup>Facts for the People, May, 1854.

<sup>262</sup>Bailey to Pike, June 6, 1854, in Pike, First Blows, p. 247.

<sup>263</sup>Ibid.

<sup>264</sup>The National Era, March 30, 1854.

<sup>265</sup>Ibid.

<sup>266</sup>Ibid., December 15, 1853. The terms Independent Democratic and Free Democratic were used interchangeably by Bailey during this period. Chase used Independent and Bailey preferred the name. After the "Appeal of the Independent Democrats", that term became standard.

interchangeability of the two terms. In so doing, he could excuse himself from the charge of simply attempting to further the interest of his own small party while at the same time using the diametrically opposed terms to drive home to his readers the over-riding importance of the slavery issue. The terms could also be used to stigmatize the Act's supporters as members of the "Party of Slavery" and in the same way, permit those Whigs who opposed the Act to be incorporated into the "Party of Freedom". In this way, the terms were aimed directly at the population which opposed the Act.

He declared to that population that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise which they now so vehemently protested, had been fostered by their own apathy and illusions.<sup>267</sup> They had too long maintained the Whig and Democratic Parties when ". . . the practical questions on which they were arrayed against each other [were] virtually disposed of. . . ." <sup>268</sup> They had ignored the "Party of Freedom" which Bailey, by the end of March, 1854, was defining as the entire political antislavery movement beginning with the Liberty Party.<sup>269</sup> He hoped and believed that ". . . the People have been gradually awakening to the real relations of Slavery to the Old Parties, to the use it the "Party of Slavery" has made of them and to its irreconcilable enmity to true Nationality".<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Facts for the People, May 1, 1854.

<sup>268</sup> The National Era, December 15, 1853.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid., March 30, 1854. This helps to explain Bailey's previous and later unhesitating propensity for shifting from one party to another. He viewed the Liberty, Free Soil and Independent Democratic Party as mere stages in the formation of the "Party of Freedom".

<sup>270</sup> The National Era, March 30, 1854.



"Democracy and Whiggery among us," he declared, "are shams, wretched shams".<sup>271</sup> The two parties, he held, "were never instituted for the purpose of dealing with the Question of Slavery. . . ." <sup>272</sup> They had "out-lived the issue which gave them birth".<sup>273</sup> They were "enemies to Freedom, to Personal Independence, to Democracy, to honesty and fair dealing".<sup>274</sup> "We hate, abhor and loath both," he wrote in uncharacteristic emotionalism.<sup>275</sup> The only real parties were the "Party of Slavery" and the "Party of Freedom". To emphasize the point, he wrote - somewhat prematurely - "there is no Whig Party, there is no Democratic Party".<sup>276</sup>

Bailey had seldom permitted himself to become so vehemently hostile against the object of his attacks. But, the stakes were high. The rumblings of a massive popular grass-roots reaction had begun almost simultaneously with the introduction of the Bill. Its growth had astounded even the New York Evening Post.<sup>277</sup> The passage of the Act had accelerated that reaction. Bailey followed the numerous state conventions closely. Within three months after the passage of the Act, Massachusetts, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Maine, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire and New York had all conducted or made arrangements for state wide conventions.<sup>278</sup> There were

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<sup>271</sup>Facts for the People, May, 1854.

<sup>272</sup>The National Era, April 13, 1854.

<sup>273</sup>Ibid., February 16, 1854.

<sup>274</sup>Ibid.

<sup>275</sup>Ibid., April 20, 1854.

<sup>276</sup>Ibid., March 30, 1854.

<sup>277</sup>New York Evening Post, February 13, 1854.

<sup>278</sup>Bailey published many of the drafts of these conventions verbatim in The National Era.

town meetings and other localized conventions throughout the North.<sup>279</sup>

Oberlin College, where the Lane Seminary dissidents had gone, on August 21, 1854, held a massive rally and debate under the name of the "Ohio Kansas Movement".<sup>280</sup>

The only unifying force among these widely divergent popular movements was opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The sponsors themselves, were otherwise motivated from nearly as many unrelated causes as there were separate conventions. A veritable avalanche of "isms" varying from transcendentalism and vegetarianism to feminism and abolitionism were in evidence.<sup>281</sup> Bailey's purpose was to bring these vigorous elements into a wholly new party based on antislavery; that task was not going to be easy.

Bailey might proclaim that the Whig Party was no more, but many Whig members were not quite so willing to see their party disappear. Many of them saw the Anti-Nebraska movement as a means to reconstruct their party after its severe defeat in 1852.<sup>282</sup> Their attempts to capture the reactive forces were numerous. For instance, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the local Whigs in June of 1854, virtually adopted the old Free Soil position on slavery by pledging, "Free Men to Free Labor and Free Lands".<sup>283</sup> They warned that ". . . for the future, the South must take care of

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<sup>279</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 257.

<sup>280</sup> The National Era, September 7, 1854.

<sup>281</sup> Andrew Wallace Crandall, The Early History of the Republican Party, 1854 - 1856 (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1930), p. 14.

<sup>282</sup> Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 261.

<sup>283</sup> Michael Fitzgibbon Holt, Forging a Majority: The Formation of the Republican Party in Pittsburgh, 1848 - 1860 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 136.

itself - take care of its peculiar property, supply its own bloodhounds and doughfaces. . . ." <sup>284</sup> Thereafter, the Pennsylvania State Whig Convention called for ". . . an assertion of Northern rights against the South". <sup>285</sup> It was typical of many local Whig organizations throughout the Northeast.

The main argument by which the Whigs attempted to capture the movement, was by stating that the formation of a new party, based merely upon one issue, could not endure. Even the Democratic Journal, the Evening Post stated, ". . . no party can be durable that is based upon a single question of public policy. . . ." <sup>286</sup> Such a course would be fatal, warned the Post, adding that ". . . any amalgamation of the two . . . parties for the sake of directing public indignation against a particular abuse, is unnecessary and unwise". <sup>287</sup>

As was soon apparent, the Whigs had miscalculated the strength of the opposition to the extension of slavery, which the Kansas-Nebraska Act had initiated. The question ". . . took precedence over every other problem in American political life". <sup>288</sup> Bailey realized that ". . . a change has come over the mind of the North and West". <sup>289</sup> But, he feared that the Whigs might succeed in incorporating it. "God help us if, as

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<sup>284</sup>Holt, Forging a Majority, pp. 136 - 137.

<sup>285</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>286</sup>New York Evening Post, June 8, 1854. The Evening Post generally followed the barnburner faction of the Democratic Party and made definite leanings toward anti-extension.

<sup>287</sup>Ibid.

<sup>288</sup>Eugene H. Berwanger, The Frontier Against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1967), p. 3.

<sup>289</sup>Facts for the People, May, 1854.



preliminary to a union of the North we have all to admit that the Whig party is the party of freedom."<sup>290</sup> He realized that ". . . the great question now upon us must be met by a different kind of organization, by new tactics, by new ideas."<sup>291</sup>

Bailey knew that if the organization was to be successfully completed, it would have to have a focal point under which it could unite. In this, he was aided particularly by the manner in which he had conducted his personal relations since his arrival to Washington, D. C. in 1847. His home had long been the center of the social life of antislavery leaders.<sup>292</sup> Indeed, he had opened the doors of his home to many politicians who were slaveholders, in hopes of persuading them of the ultimate evil of slavery.<sup>293</sup> Over the years, he had made a great many acquaintances which would come of great assistance in putting his ideas into practice. Already, he had utilized those acquaintances in an effort to form a new party.

It was morning on May 9th, 1854, when some thirty men crowded into the rooms of Representative Thomas D. Eliot and Edward Dickinson of

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<sup>290</sup>Bailey to Pike, May 30, 1854, in Pike, First Blows, p. 237.

<sup>291</sup>Ibid.

<sup>292</sup>Hans Trefousse, The Radical Republican: Lincoln's Vanguard for Racial Justice (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1969), p. 55.

<sup>293</sup>Grace Greenwood, "An American Salon", Cosmopolitan, Vol. VIII, February, 1890, pp. 437 - 447. This somewhat sentimental article was written by a young guest of the Bailey family who had lived with them for a number of years. It gives the impression that Bailey's house resembled the salons of the French Revolution era. There, Chase, Giddings, and many other leaders met to discuss the issues of the day, and their strategies for meeting them. There seems to have been a wealthy interchange of ideas among the participants. If one can believe the author, Bailey presided over the discussions and synthesized them for the participants.

Massachusetts at Mrs. Cratchet's boarding house on Sixth and D Streets. All but Bailey were United States Congressmen. Though a majority of them were Whigs, Democrats and Free Democrats were present. Each opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. They met to consider the means of harnessing the popular reaction. The outsider and his friends had an alternative to offer them.<sup>294</sup>

The meeting had been called at Bailey's insistence by his long time friend, Representative Israel Washburn of Maine.<sup>295</sup> Already, Bailey had discussed at length, the prospects of organizing a new party composed of Independent Democrats and Whigs with Washburn, Eliot, and Dickinson.<sup>296</sup> Washburn addressed the group. He called for the formation of a new party in which ". . . all men who thought alike on the vital question of the time - that of slavery extension - should act together".<sup>297</sup> Washburn did the speaking, but the idea was Bailey's. In 1852, Washburn had become impressed with Bailey's idea of a national party based on antislavery principles and staunchly opposed to slavery extension.<sup>298</sup> To Washburn, "other journalists and politicians were fighting slavery." "Dr. Bailey . . . did more - he told men how, and how only, they could fight it successfully."<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>294</sup>Gaillard Hunt, Israel, Elihu, and Cadwallader Washburn: A Chapter in American Biography (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), p. 32. Also see Henry Wilson, Rise and Fall of the Slave Power, Vol. II (Boston: James R. Osgood Co., 1875), pp. 410 - 411 and Allen Nevins, House Dividing, p. 322.

<sup>295</sup>Wilson, Slave Power, p. 411.

<sup>296</sup>Hunt, Washburn, p. 32.

<sup>297</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>298</sup>Ibid., p. 22

<sup>299</sup>Ibid., Washburn was referring to Bailey's belief that a new party should be formed based upon the antislavery principle of the Independent Democrat; but the new party was not to be an appendage of that party.

After Washburn's speech, the meeting settled down into a full discussion. Most of the Representatives attending decided that only a new party could give ". . . any reasonable hope of restricting the arrogant and triumphant "Party of Slavery".<sup>300</sup> Some of the Whigs were reluctant to forsake their old party. They had, like others, hoped that it could be converted into an organization for freedom.<sup>301</sup> But, the majority opinion remained behind Bailey and Washburn. They felt that the Whig Party had outlived its usefulness and that the issues of the greatest importance to the country had gone beyond the power of the old party to confront them.<sup>302</sup> Remembering that Jefferson had written the Northwest Ordinance, they decided that the name of the new party should be "Republican".<sup>303</sup> The name would stick.

Too much importance can be placed upon the May 9th meeting. Many local groups had already forsaken the Whig Party and formed what some called the Republican Party. After all, the Republican Party itself, sprang from the spontaneous, grass-roots movement which preceded it. Nevertheless, the meeting itself was important. It was the first time that men of national prestige from the three different parties had met together to arrange for a merger into a new and fresh party. The meeting brought a block of national Whig leaders to defect from their former party for the fortunes of a potential one. Their defections could not have

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<sup>300</sup>Francis Curtis, The Republican Party, Vol. I (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), p. 178.

<sup>301</sup>Wilson, Slave Power, p. 411.

<sup>302</sup>Hunt, Washburn, p. 33.

<sup>303</sup>Nevens, House Dividing, p. 322. Article 6 of the Northwest Ordinance stated ". . . neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall exist in the said territory. . . ."



helped but to add one more nail to the Whig coffin. Finally, the meeting by the national character of its participants and by its geographic position in the nation's capital, had brought the reality of a truly northern party closer.

Bailey, himself, refrained from over-using the term Republican. He still preferred to use the more ambiguous "Party of Freedom". He wished to avoid anything that would hinder the movement toward the new party. He felt that "party names and prejudice are the cords that bind the Samson of the North".<sup>304</sup> By maintaining the term, he could at once attack the Whig Party and still leave the door open for leaders of that party to merge with those of the May meeting into the "Party of Freedom".

Seeing that the formation of the new party would require time, he called upon Independent Democrats to unite with Northern Whigs and Democrats to defeat those who had voted for the Act.<sup>305</sup> "Let them consent to co-operation with other Parties, in this crisis where an immediate good is to be attained. . . .", he wrote.<sup>306</sup> However, he warned his readers not to permit themselves to merge into the Whig Party.<sup>307</sup> He reminded his readers that the Northern Whigs had their Southern contingent and would, no doubt, attempt to attract that faction back into their party.<sup>308</sup>

Bailey was facing somewhat of a contradiction. On the one hand, his ultimate goal was the formation of a new party which necessarily meant

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<sup>304</sup> Bailey to Pike, May 21, 1854 in Pike, First Blows, p. 233.

<sup>305</sup> The National Era, April 20, 1854.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., April 13, 1854.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid., June 1, 1854.

the dissolution of the Whig Party. On the other hand, he could not unduly offend Whigs who would also necessarily comprise a large segment of the new party once it was formed. He certainly would have preferred that the new party would in reality, though not in name, be the Independent Democratic.<sup>309</sup> Likewise, he was unwilling for the Independent Democrats to scrap their own party until such time as the new party was well underway. He realized that many Whigs disliked the Independent Democrats and were naturally reluctant to desert the party in which they had formed a successful power base.<sup>310</sup> Senator Seward, whom Bailey felt had a good chance of capturing the leadership of the new party, was reluctant to leave the Whigs.<sup>311</sup> But, it must have been obvious to Bailey that, while the Whig power structure remained in tact, its rank and file members were defecting enmasse.<sup>312</sup>

Cooperation with the Whigs, therefore, seemed to be the most practical course to follow for the time being. The Whig leaders would eventually be won over. Such signs, he believed, were already occurring in Ohio.

Ohio leads the movement. The old Whig papers of that State manifest a spirit of wisdom, liberality, and patriotism. They give up old organizations, and formulas, and names. They call for a Party of the People. Laying aside all pretenses of superior policy in the past, they are willing to unite on equal terms with Democrats and Independent Democrats, in a common movement for the redemption of the country from the rule of Slavery.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>309</sup>The National Era, June 8 and September 14, 1854.

<sup>310</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 316.

<sup>311</sup>Bailey to Pike, May 30, 1854 in Pike, First Blows, p. 237.

<sup>312</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 316.

<sup>313</sup>The National Era, June 8, 1854.

If it occurred in Ohio, he felt it was likely to occur everywhere else in the North.

He tried to make it clear that the new party was not to be ruled solely by the Independent Democrats. "For ourselves", he declared, "we care not who are to be the leaders, who the men of mark, who the standard bearers, in this great Party of Freedom. . . ." <sup>314</sup> Trying to set the example which he wished the Whigs and Northern Democrats to follow, he added in a separate editorial, ". . . we care not a straw for the Independent Democratic Party, if its principles and policy in regard to Slavery be adopted by the People". <sup>315</sup> It was one of the advantages of his position as a political journalist that Bailey, not having to labor to create a power base by which to be elected, could so easily leave his organization. In his own mind, he was a member of the "Party of Freedom" of which the Independent Democratic Party was simply the name of one of its stages.

It was not nearly so easy for men like Chase who were elected by the party organization. Chase hoped that the autonomy of the Independent Democrats could be maintained and the reaction absorbed within it. <sup>316</sup> Bailey, whose long relationship with Chase had often made it appear that their ideas were identical, made certain that all of his editorial calls for a new party were clarified. Its base would not be built ". . . upon an old and a worn-out organization" such as the Whigs. <sup>317</sup> He also reiterated that the purpose of the new party was ". . . to place the Federal

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<sup>314</sup>The National Era, June 8, 1854.

<sup>315</sup>Ibid.

<sup>316</sup>Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 261.

<sup>317</sup>The National Era, June 8, 1854.



Government on the side of Liberty".<sup>318</sup> This was the "divorce" concept, an issue of such great importance to Chase as well as to Bailey.

The co-operation of the parties turned out to be in part successful. In Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, Vermont, Maine, Wisconsin, and Michigan, the results were exactly as Bailey had hoped. In those states, the Whig Party had already become so weak that its former members saw little to gain by maintaining it.<sup>319</sup> Bailey looked with satisfaction on those states where the ". . . effort, quite successful on the whole, has been made to unite all the elements . . . under the title, Republican, in disregard of all former organizations".<sup>320</sup>

Unfortunately, co-operation had not had the same effect in other states. In New York and Massachusetts where the Whig Party was especially strong, the Independent Democrats themselves were nearly absorbed by the Whigs.<sup>321</sup> Bailey called upon the Independent Democrats in those states to retain their autonomy.<sup>322</sup> He warned the Whigs there that their continuance threatened ". . . to arrest their beneficent work almost on the threshold".<sup>323</sup> It was, he added, ". . . not too late to correct the error", but he wondered if there was ". . . enough common sense and

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<sup>318</sup>The National Era, June 8, 1854.

<sup>319</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, pp. 317 - 318.

<sup>320</sup>The National Era, September 28, 1854.

<sup>321</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 318.

<sup>322</sup>The National Era, September 28, 1854.

<sup>323</sup>Ibid.

disinterested devotion to the cause of Human Rights . . . to couple a general recognition of the true policy".<sup>324</sup>

Bailey was by no means certain that the Whigs had been sufficiently factionalized to the point where that party could not be resurrected. He viewed the Whig Party much as he did slavery in that he felt as long as it existed, there was a good possibility that it could not be contained. "The effect of maintaining the Whig organization in Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, will not, we fear, be confined to those States." He saw the remnants of the once great party in those areas as the strongest force which could ". . . retard, if not prevent . . . a complete fusion into the Republican Party".<sup>325</sup>

The Whigs did not pose the only threat to the new party in Bailey's eyes. The Know-Nothing Party offered a similar threat. It arose in response to the wave of Irish immigrants of the late 1840's and 50's. As a political force, it upheld a variety of positions depending upon the locale, but was essentially anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic. It appealed greatly to conservative Whigs, who felt that the Irish presented a menace to social order. Many Independent Democrats and members of the new Republican Party looked upon it as a welcome ally in breaking old party affiliation.<sup>326</sup>

In a time when the political arena was chaotic, such a movement as the Know-Nothings was predictably formidable. The election of 1855 saw the party capture the Governorship of Massachusetts and eleven seats in

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<sup>324</sup>The National Era, September 28, 1854.

<sup>325</sup>Ibid., November 9, 1854.

<sup>326</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, pp. 330 - 331.

Congress.<sup>327</sup> To Bailey, they posed the greatest threat to Northern unity and the coming election of 1856, making the North helpless against the unified "Party of Slavery".<sup>328</sup> By their efforts to disenfranchise immigrants, the Know-Nothings represented an extension of the scheme to expand slavery which had been so narrowly defeated in the Clayton Amendment.<sup>329</sup> The immigrants, who felt that the Kansas-Nebraska Act was "Africanizing" the West, had been deserting the Democratic Party in droves.<sup>330</sup> Bailey looked upon them as a nearly inexhaustible reservoir of strength for the Republican Party.

Have they [the Northern Know-Nothings] forgotten that the foreign immigrants direct their steps to the free States? That the vast preponderance of their population over that of the slave States, the superiority of their political power, lend the multiplication of free States, with an increase of their power in the Senate, are largely attributable to the influx of foreign immigrants.<sup>331</sup>

He directly opposed the co-operation which other Independent Democrats were pursuing with the Know-Nothings and by so doing, lost many of his subscribers - especially in Massachusetts where the co-operation was the most intense.<sup>332</sup> The position of the Know-Nothings was intolerable to him. "We are a nation of immigrants," he cried.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>327</sup>Craven, Civil War, p. 346.

<sup>328</sup>The National Era, December 28, 1854.

<sup>329</sup>Facts for the People, March, 1854.

<sup>330</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 128.

<sup>331</sup>The National Era, January 11, 1855.

<sup>332</sup>Nevins, House Dividing, p. 343 and Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 233.

<sup>333</sup>The National Era, October 13, 1854.



Bailey was soon joined in his opposition to the Know-Nothings by Chase and Seward. In response to the Know-Nothings, there arose the "Know-Somethings" and the German oriented, "Say-Nicht". These organizations existed in seven northern states and were used by men such as Chase to effectively combat the Know-Nothings and to reassert the antislavery question. Open to effective criticism because of the domination of its Southern members, the Know-Nothings in the face of the "Know-Somethings" and the "Say-Nicht" gradually lost their influence. Corresponding with the demise of the Know-Nothings, the Republican Party began to rise.<sup>334</sup>

To combat the challenge of the Whigs and the dissension caused by the Know-Nothings, Bailey persuaded Chase to call a meeting of anti-Nebraska Senators and Congressmen. He had already expanded the group of Congressmen which had met in May of 1854, into the Republican Association.<sup>335</sup> This group had been attempting to coordinate the anti-Nebraska elements in Congress. The meeting was held on Christmas Day, 1855, at the estate of Francis Preston Blair, Sr.<sup>336</sup> It was attended by Bailey, Chase, Sumner and others for the purpose of organizing the national convention for the Republican Party.<sup>337</sup> The meeting was fruitful and a convention was planned for February, 1856. Bailey, himself, drafted the call for the convention which was held in Pittsburgh on February 22, 1856.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>334</sup> Crandall, Republican Party, pp. 28 - 29 and Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, pp. 275 - 277.

<sup>335</sup> George H. Mayer, The Republican Party, 1854 - 1964 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 36.

<sup>336</sup> Filler, Crusade, p. 246. Blair was the owner of the Washington Globe, and had been a close associate of Andrew Jackson. His estate, Silver Springs, was in Maryland.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> Foner, Free Soil, p. 129.

Bailey had played a key role in popularizing and bringing about the convention, yet he approached it suspiciously.<sup>339</sup> He feared that the movement was considering some modification of the slavery issue.<sup>340</sup> "The mania of mere success has seized the majority number here," he wrote, "and to accomplish it, they are already talking about taking up some new man, Mr. Availability."<sup>341</sup> The platform, derived at Pittsburgh, was disappointing to Bailey due to its somewhat moderate approach in attacking the Administration and the Fugitive Slave Law.<sup>342</sup> Aside from this, the platform was clearly aimed at establishing the Republican Party on a national level based on the containment of slavery. In that sense, Bailey accepted it.<sup>343</sup> The new party was on its way. When Francis P. Blair, Jr. ran on a Republican ticket and won a seat in Congress representing St. Louis, Bailey hailed it as a landmark. "We no longer stand upon the defensive," he declared punctually. "We have crossed the line and are upon slaveholding ground."<sup>344</sup> He foresaw a massive popular and state majority for the "Party of Freedom" beginning with Oregon and Minnesota.<sup>345</sup> Eventually, he foresaw so preponderant a majority that slavery itself would fall within the foreseeable future.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>339</sup>Foner, Free Soil, p. 129 and Hunt, Washburn, p. 35.

<sup>340</sup>Crandall, Republican Party, p. 163.

<sup>341</sup>Ibid.

<sup>342</sup>Sewell, Ballots for Freedom, p. 279.

<sup>343</sup>Foner, Free Soil, p. 129.

<sup>344</sup>The National Era, August 17, 1856. Francis P. Blair, Jr. was the first son of his father by the same name and had emigrated to Missouri a few years before the election.

<sup>345</sup>Facts for the People, July 1, 1855.

<sup>346</sup>Ibid.

After the Pittsburgh Convention, it was clear that the new party was absorbing more moderate and conservative men into its ranks. Perhaps that circumstance was inevitable by the nature of the movement, for it was constructed by the incorporation of one whole party - the Independent Democrats - with its majority coming from the ashes of the Whig and the splinters of the Democratic Parties.<sup>347</sup> The majority of its members had never accepted the ideas of Bailey and other men on slavery until the Kansas-Nebraska Act had forced a response upon them. While Bailey continued his efforts to keep the party upon the lines he had envisioned for it, his influence steadily deteriorated.<sup>348</sup>

During the remaining three years of his life, Bailey continued to proclaim his ideas through the columns of The National Era. However, as the Republican Party grew in strength, other journals entered its ranks. These newspapers whose tones were moderate and, thereby, more acceptable for the majority of the party's rank and file, steadily gained influence. The radicals such as Bailey, whose careers had been based upon antislavery, found themselves in a struggle with the more conservative elements of the new party.<sup>349</sup> Despite the objections of Bailey and other radicals, the moderate John Fremont was the party's Presidential nominee in 1856. To Bailey, Fremont's candidacy represented the success of the conservatives whom he labeled "place hunters" who were motivated ". . . by a passion for immediate success".<sup>350</sup> Despite their objections, radical Republicans like

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<sup>347</sup> Philip S. Foner, Frederick Douglass (New York: The Citadel Press, 1964), p. 167.

<sup>348</sup> Filler, Crusade, p. 246.

<sup>349</sup> Foner, Free Soil, pp. 105 - 106.

<sup>350</sup> Bailey to Chase, April 18, 1856, in Sewell, Ballets for Freedom, p. 283.



Bailey, closed ranks within the party. Fearing the effects of dissension upon the future of the new party, Bailey himself, started a journal, The Daily Republican, in addition to The National Era to promote the party's platform and candidate.<sup>351</sup>

Throughout the pre-Civil War era of the party, the internal struggle between the radicals and conservatives continued. On the whole, radicals such as Bailey, Chase and Sumner were successful in injecting their antislavery views within the party's platform while the conservatives were successful in nominating more moderate candidates like Fremont and Lincoln. Bailey played an active role in maintaining this loose alliance. The meetings at his home continued to be a forum where political leaders of the party could meet to fully discuss the issues among themselves.<sup>352</sup> His value as a spokesman for the party was recognized when moderates such as Nathaniel Banks, John Sherman and John McLean joined radical leaders in giving The National Era financial support when Bailey became overburdened in 1859.<sup>353</sup> Shortly thereafter, on June 5, 1859, he ended his long struggle with consumption and died at sea where he had hoped to partly recover his health.<sup>354</sup>

While there were some dissimilarities, the policies which Bailey had supported were essentially carried on by the radical wing of the party. This was only natural since the leaders of that segment had formulated their views jointly and often at Bailey's home. Because of the dialogue

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<sup>351</sup>Greenwood, "An American Salon", p. 446.

<sup>352</sup>George W. Julian, The Life of Joshua R. Giddings (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1892), p. 346.

<sup>353</sup>Foner, Free Soil, p. 210

<sup>354</sup>Greenwood, "An American Salon", p. 447.

which had occurred among these men, it is difficult to assess the contribution of any individual among them.

Perhaps, the most clearly associable idea to Bailey was the "gradual constriction" concept. Even it was closely associated and a direct outgrowth of the "divorce" concept so vocally lauded by Chase. Certainly, the combination of these ideas lead to a rational and relatively concise means of abolition within the Constitution. Indeed, gradual abolition was widely accepted by rank and file Republicans.<sup>355</sup> Whether or not Bailey's idea of constricting slavery would have led to abolition cannot be stated since the Civil War intervened. Thereafter, antislavery men no longer viewed the Constitution as applicable upon the rebellious states and the barrier to immediate abolition was removed.

Other facets of Bailey's political views did indeed appear within the Republican Party. Before the outbreak of the Civil War, the Republican Party had adopted into its ideology a belief in the dignity of labor, a preference for the small entrepreneur over monopolies and large business, a belief in the free enterprise system, social mobility and the absence of fundamental class conflict, and a conviction that the West was the key to the future of free labor and the United States itself.<sup>356</sup> All of these were aspects of the ideology which Bailey long expressed both personally and within the columns of his journals.

While antislavery was not vocalized to the extent which Bailey desired, it remained the basis of the Republican Party. It was this fact

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<sup>355</sup>Foner, Free Soil, pp. 145 - 146.

<sup>356</sup>For an extensive analysis of Republican ideology, see Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War on which this short sketch of Republican ideology is based.

which most clearly demonstrates the importance of Bailey. From the time he first entered the political antislavery movement, he had the goal of a national antislavery majority party. In this goal, he had never waived. From his position as a journalist and not a politician, he had avoided becoming tied to a single party because of personal reasons. By confining his efforts essentially to the area which his talents were best suited, he was able to exercise the role of a compromiser and moderator and to use that position to steer those within his circle toward the "Party of Freedom". It was this ability to ". . . unite the scattered forces of antislavery. . . ." into one political force which led Elihu Washburn to declare Bailey as the "immediate founder of the Republican Party".<sup>357</sup> Such an estimation would seem to be excessive. But, it did come from a contemporary of Bailey's. Certainly, The National Era must have followed the normal course for such journals which were often passed about from one reader to another, thus, reaching far more people than would be indicated by its subscribers.<sup>358</sup> In addition, the meetings which were held weekly at his home from 1850 to 1859 of antislavery leaders and many others, had a profound, if intangible, effect upon its participants who included many of the foremost leaders of that decade and the next. As Hannibal Hamlin, the first Republican Vice President wrote of the meeting: "Those meetings were of very great value to the antislavery cause." "I can think of no instrumentality which did so good a service to our cause."<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>357</sup>Hunt, Washburn, p. 34.

<sup>358</sup>The first issue of both The National Era and Facts for the People indicate that it was one of Bailey's hopes that this should occur.

<sup>359</sup>Greenwood, "An American Salon", p. 447.



Like a spoke in a wheel, Bailey's influence upon the Republican Party and the political antislavery movement in general can best be gauged by imagining what would have happened if he had not been there.

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