

and power, and happiness, and all that blesses a nation and a people. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Aye, in one year after that repeal, there was war between conflicting politicians for the people never were conflicting, and we now see the consequences; and now, as one who opposed them then, who oppose them now, and who will oppose them as long as I live, I say to them—"Shake not thy gory locks at me, for thou canst not say I did it." It was their own work, the work of these wise constitutional Gamaliels.

Mr. Clay had his idea and opinion about these men who are turning the Constitution into a hobby-horse, and go tilting on it whenever it suits their partisan purposes; and I will give his opinion in his own language. And I beg gentlemen to mark that out of respect for the gray hairs which cover the heads of some who will take part in this debate, I would use no such language myself, for I am too young a man to make such language pertinent or proper for me. But I give it as the language of Mr. Clay, a man of their own sort, a Southern man by birth, a Southerner of the very strictest and strictest sect, and one of the best of politicians, such another the world has never produced. What did he say to those gentlemen who, in 1850, as he charged upon them on the floor of Congress, were trying for their own purposes to defeat the compromise measures? He told them that they did not want peace, that it did not suit their purposes. He charged upon them that they were then conferring together in Washington city upon the most effective means to keep peace out of the land. If gentlemen will read that speech they will find in it something of Mr. Clay's ideas upon the subject of national unity, and States' rights. And more than all that, they will find something of his ideas of these gentlemen who are all the time screaming out—"O! the Constitution; O! the Constitution." Mr. Clay says:

"Mr. President, it is one of the peculiar circumstances attending my present position, as I remarked on a former occasion, that I am generally called upon to vindicate the measures proposed in this bill against those whom we have regarded as the friends, as well as those who are considered as open, avowed opponents of the measure."

Mr. MILLER. Will the gentleman state who those opponents were?

Mr. SANDS. I will come to that directly. Gentlemen will find out who they were by the time I get through reading.

"I anticipated, the other day, somewhat the argument which I beg leave barely to advert to now. I think amongst our southern friends two or three great errors are occasionally committed. They interpret the Constitution according to their judgment; they ingraft their exposition upon it; and, without listening to or giving due weight to the opposite

interpretation, to the conflicting exposition which is as honestly believed by the opposite interpreters as they believe on their side, they proclaim their own exposition of the Constitution, and cry out, 'All we want is the Constitution.'"

What a master hand drew the portraits of those Southern gentlemen who even then were bent upon the destruction of this Union, according to Mr. Clay, and other gentlemen just as well known in the land as he. They were quibbling at this, and at that, and at everything that the people held venerable and vital and essential. Yet all the while, as Mr. Clay said, they were crying out, "give us the Constitution, give us the Constitution," that is, give them their interpretation of it.

"In the comparison and expression of opposite opinions, infallibility is not the lot of mortal man. It belongs only to Him who rules the destinies of the world; and for any section or any set of gentlemen to rise up and say the 'Constitution means so and so, and he who says otherwise violates the Constitution,' is, in itself, intolerant, and without that mutual forbearance and respect which are due to conflicting opinions, honestly entertained by all who are equally aiming to arrive at the truth."

I say the hand of a master drew the portrait of those miserable politicians, and there it stands to be read of all men for all time.

And what were the results of these pacificating measures of 1850, which were regarded then all over the South as new Southern triumphs, as they were. Three years later, and this country presented this spectacle: Your Congress was debating this proposition—how shall we deplete the Treasury, now filled to overflowing? Well, great heavens! have not those men aided in depleting it since then, not only through the aid of the late Secretary of the Treasury, under Buchanan, but in divers other ways. In 1853, under the working of the peace measures of Henry Clay, the nation presented a spectacle which was the admiration of the world; we were a people free as the air we breathed; powerful as a giant; sitting under our vines and our fig-trees, with none to molest us or make us afraid; a match for the world in arms; and what are we to-day? Almost a by-word and a reproach among the nations, because, being deputed to minister at the altar of liberty, we have, as far as some of us could do, quenched its light in blood and tears.

Now, what is the cause of all this? What but the repeal of the Missouri Compromise? And here I want to say a few words in regard to some remarks of my friend from Prince George's, (Mr. Clarke,) yesterday. When he spoke of commissioners on the part of the United States to treat with the public enemy, and named Franklin Pierce as one of them, I could not believe in his sincerity. Franklin the faithless!