

One from that region with the cloven foot and marked by every indication of the home to which he belonged, would hardly meet a more unwelcome reception than would be afforded to a Boston abolitionist. How is it now? Has there been any change in others? In 1850, who denied the propriety of slavery in this State? We all denounced any interference with it; there was no dissentient voice. Now, who has changed? Not inconsistent! I rather think that a number of gentlemen have changed. I should be most happy, when we come to the 23d article, to find consistency in the views of gentlemen.

Why, sir, we have all of us changed measurably. Mr. Lincoln told us a few months ago that his emancipation proclamation was unconstitutional; now it is constitutional. Not that the proclamation has changed, but the Constitution has changed! Is that so? Mr. Seward undertook to state, in a despatch to Mr. Adams, only a year or two ago, that the Government of the United States recognized the doctrine of secession; he stated so emphatically. I do not think Mr. Seward is of that impression now. I think that Mr. Lincoln on one occasion used some expression of that sort. The President is a man whose sentiments are familiar to us all; he is a man of such importance, that his opinions, whether in jest or in earnest, are eagerly sought for and treasured up. What did Mr. Lincoln say?

"Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right—a right which we hope and believe is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people that can, may revolutionize and make their own of so much of the territory as they inhabit—more than this, a majority of any portion of such people may revolutionize, putting down a minority, intermingled with or near about them, who may oppose their movements; such minority was precisely the case of the Tories of our own revolution. It is a quality of revolution not to go by old lines or old laws; but to break up both and make new ones. As to the country now in question, we bought it of France in 1803, and sold it to Spain in 1819, according to the President's statements. After this, all Mexico, including Texas, revolutionized against Spain; and still later, Texas revolutionized against Mexico. In my view, just so far as she carried her revolution by obtaining the actual, willing or unwilling submission of the people, so far the country was hers, and no farther."

"Any people anywhere have the right to change their government if they can." Well,

sir, I do not think the President thinks so now.

Now, I say in regard to my consistency that I do not mean to speak of it now. I have the pages of the debates of the Convention of 1850, to which reference was made here, by the kindness of a friend whose familiarity with note-taking enables him, I suppose, to note them correctly. But I do not mean that those pages alone shall be considered those in which I expressed my sentiments. I invite the gentleman to examine every page of the debates of 1850, and find if he can, where I have erred. When I shall have explained my creed—which I regret to say will not be found in accordance with that of others—the gentleman, perhaps, will be willing to own that the mistake was on his own part; and which I understand elicited a great deal of merriment and entertainment in this House; it was accompanied with one of those exhibitions of gratification which the stamping of the feet and the clapping of the hands usually indicate in other places. I do not mean to say that such a manifestation was inconsistent with the proceedings here. It was in keeping, for some of the speeches do not profess to be anything else than laughing matter.

Now, while mentioning instances of inconsistency, I would invite the attention of my friends who think it is a serious crime, to one prominent fact in the history of the nation within a short period. A certain Mr. Crittenden, a gentleman whose habitation was in Kentucky—I mention these things because they may have been forgotten; times have so changed, and our memories have been so taken up with other events, that perhaps these things would not be recollected—this Mr. Crittenden thought proper to propose, in the halls of the great legislature of the nation, a system or theory for the acceptance of the government upon which this terrible war was to be waged. He declared it to be the object of the government to conduct the war solely for the purpose of enforcing the observation of the constitutional obligations, the legal obligations of the citizens of the seceded States, without the slightest intention to interfere with any of their peculiar institutions.

Now it shall be my business, in the future part of this debate, if I am permitted, to show that there are certain obligations of the citizen to the State with which the Constitution and laws of the United States cannot interfere. It was to secure those rights, to protect and to preserve them that the resolution of Mr. Crittenden was offered. And it was passed almost unanimously.

The other day a highly respected gentleman from Pennsylvania, seeing that the ship had moved off a little from its moorings, and was steering on rather a different tack, thought proper to call the attention of this