

Compromise, which made a just partition of the common territory between those States which maintained, and those which had abolished the institution of domestic slavery; and further established the great principle, that each new State added to the Union, must be admitted equal and sovereign as all the rest, without condition, or restriction, or limitation upon the right to self-government. The act of 1820 drew a line through the territories, to the south of which slavery was established, and to the north of which it was prohibited by Congress, during the territorial condition; but it equally provided for the right of the people of every territory, north or south of the line, to establish or forbid slavery in their State Constitution. And this it did by asserting the absolute right of the people to form their own Constitution, and exclusively control their own domestic policy; and by denying any power in Congress to impose any conditions of admission.

To William Pinckney, of Maryland, is due, in great part, the glory of the vindication and settlement of this principle; and to his fame we may look with feelings quite different from those with which we contemplate the action of those Marylanders who took part in bringing on the country all the strife, and bitter animosity, and ill will which has been the direct result of that ill-timed, useless, and inexcusable measure known as the Kansas and Nebraska bill. The policy of Maryland was utterly opposed to that measure, and her policy has been the policy of all the great men of the Union, from the time of its establishment till 1854. It was adopted when Texas was admitted. It was repeated at the organization of Oregon. It was reaffirmed in the compromise of 1850. It was complained of by no State, nor by any respectable body of the people. It restored and secured the peace of the nation for thirty years, and until it was ruthlessly pulled to pieces by a petty conspiracy of political aspirants. It was abrogated with the intention of once more alarming the fears of the South, and exciting the prejudices of the North; and was so speciously contrived that it could be used, as it was used, for a bribe to the sectional feelings of both the North and the South. The people of Maryland saw, with alarm, the most powerful sectional and fanatical combination against the interests of the slaveholding States ever known in our history, arise, and grow strong, and attempt to control the Government of the Union. That rise and that strength, and that attempt, which nearly succeeded, was entirely due to the passage of that bill. It secured the success of another sectional faction, which, under pretence of peculiar friendship to the South, and southern institutions, has now, when they had an opportunity of showing their devotion, not only completely failed in their promises, but actually betrayed the very interest they professed to befriend.

It is a matter of congratulation, gentlemen, that in the excit-