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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SENATE  
AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:—

When we compare the condition of the country at the present day with what it was one year ago, at the meeting of Congress, we have much reason for gratitude to that Almighty Providence which has never failed to interpose for our relief at the most critical periods of our history. One year ago the sectional strife between the North and the South on the dangerous subject of slavery had again become so intense as to threaten the peace and perpetuity of the confederacy. The application for the admission of Kansas as a State into the Union fostered this unhappy agitation and brought the whole subject once more before Congress. It was the desire of every patriot that such measures of legislation might be adopted as would remove the excitement from the States and confine it to the Territory where it legitimately belonged. Much has been done, I am happy to say, towards the accomplishment of this object during the last session of Congress.

### SLAVERY.

The Supreme Court of the United States had previously decided that all American citizens have an equal right to take into the Territories whatever is held as property under the laws of any of the States and to hold such property there under the guardianship of the Federal Constitution, so long as the territorial condition shall remain.

This is now a well-established position, and the proceedings of the last session were alone wanting to give it practical effect. The principle has been recognized, in some form or other, by an almost unanimous vote of both houses of Congress, that a Territory has a right to come into the Union either as a free or a slave State, according to the will of a majority of its people. The just equality of all the States has thus been vindicated and a fruitful source of dangerous dissension among them has been removed.

Whilst such has been the beneficial tendency of your legislative proceedings outside of Kansas, their influence has nowhere been so happy as within that Territory itself. Left to manage and control its own affairs in its own way, without the pressure of external influence, the revolutionary Topeka organization and all resistance to the territorial government established by Congress have been finally abandoned. As a natural consequence, that fine Territory now appears to be tranquil and prosperous and is attracting increasing thousands of immigrants to make it their happy home.

### KANSAS.

The past unfortunate experience of Kansas has enforced the lesson so often already taught, that resistance to lawful authority, under our form of government, cannot fail in the end to prove disastrous to its authors. Had the people of the Territory yielded obedience to the laws enacted by their Legislature, it would at the present moment have contained a large additional population of industrious and enterprising citizens, who have been deterred from entering its borders by the existence of civil strife and organized rebellion.

It was the resistance to rightful authority and the persevering attempts to establish a revolutionary government under the Topeka constitution which caused the people of Kansas to commit the grave error of refusing to vote for delegates to the convention to frame a constitution under a law not denied to be fair and just in its provisions. This refusal to vote has been the prolific source of all the evils which have followed. In their hostility to the Territorial government they disregarded the principle absolutely essential to the working of our form of government, that a majority of those who vote—not the majority who may remain at home, from whatever cause—must decide the result of an election. For this reason, seeking to take advantage of their own error, they denied the authority of the convention thus elected to frame a constitution.

The convention, notwithstanding, proceeded to adopt a constitution unexceptionable in its general features and providing for the submission of the slavery question to a vote of the people, which, in my opinion, they were bound to do, under the Kansas and Nebraska act. This was the all-important question which had alone convulsed the Territory; and yet the opponents of the lawful government, persisting in their first error, refrained from exercising their right to vote and preferred that slavery should continue rather than surrender their revolutionary Topeka organization.

A wiser and better spirit seemed to prevail before the first Monday of January last, when an election was held under the constitution. A majority of the people then voted for a Governor and other State officers, for a member of Congress and members of the State Legislature. This election was warmly contested

by the two political parties in Kansas and a greater vote was polled than at any previous election. A large majority of the members of the Legislature elect belonged to that party which had previously refused to vote. The anti-slavery party were thus placed in the ascendant and the political power of the State was in their own hands. Had Congress admitted Kansas into the Union under the Lecompton constitution, the Legislature might, at its very first session, have submitted the question to a vote of the people, whether they would or would not have a convention to amend their constitution, either on the slavery or any other question, and have adopted all necessary means for giving speedy effect to the will of the majority. Thus the Kansas question would have been immediately and finally settled.

Under these circumstances I submitted to Congress the constitution thus framed, with all the officers already elected necessary to put the State government into operation, accompanied by a strong recommendation in favor of the admission of Kansas as a State. In the course of my long public life I have never performed any official act which, in the retrospect, has afforded me more heartfelt satisfaction. Its admission could have inflicted no possible injury on any human being, whilst it would, within a brief period, have restored peace to Kansas and harmony to the Union. In that event, the slavery question would ere this have been finally settled, according to the legally-expressed will of a majority of the voters, and popular sovereignty would thus have been vindicated in a constitutional manner.

With my deep convictions of duty I could have pursued no other course. It is true that, as an individual, I had expressed an opinion, both before and during the session of the convention, in favor of submitting the remaining clauses of the constitution, as well as that concerning slavery, to the people. But, acting in an official character, neither myself nor any human authority had the power to rejudge the proceedings of the convention and declare the constitution which it had framed to be a nullity. To have done this would have been a violation of the Kansas and Nebraska act, which left the people of the Territory "perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States." It would equally have violated the great principle of popular sovereignty, at the foundation of our institutions, to deprive the people of the power, if they thought proper to exercise it, of confiding to delegates elected by themselves the trust of framing a constitution, without requiring them to subject their constituents to the trouble, expense and delay of a second election. It would have been in opposition to many precedents in our history, commencing in the very best age of the republic, of the admission of Territories as States into the Union, without a previous vote of the people approving their constitution.

It is to be lamented that a question so insignificant, when viewed in its practical effects on the people of Kansas, whether decided one way or the other, should have kindled such a flame of excitement throughout the country. This reflection may prove to be a lesson of wisdom and of warning for our future guidance. Practically considered, the question is simply whether the people of that Territory should first come into the Union and then change any provision in their constitution not agreeable to themselves, or accomplish the very same object by remaining out of the Union and framing another constitution in accordance with their will. In either case, the result would be precisely the same. The only difference in point of fact is that the object would have been much sooner attained and the pacification of Kansas more speedily effected, had it been admitted as a State during the last session of Congress.

My recommendation, however, for the immediate admission of Kansas, failed to meet the approbation of Congress. They deemed it wiser to adopt a different measure for the settlement of the question. For my own part, I should have been willing to yield my assent to almost any constitutional measure to accomplish this object. I therefore cordially acquiesced in what has been called the English Compromise and approved the "Act for the admission of the State of Kansas into the Union" upon the terms therein prescribed.

Under the ordinance which accompanied the Lecompton constitution, the people of Kansas had claimed double the quantity of public lands for the support of common schools which had ever been previously granted to any State upon entering the Union, and also the alternate sections of land for twelve miles on each side of two railroads proposed to be constructed from the northern to the southern boundary and from the eastern to the western boundary of the State.

Congress, deeming these claims unreasonable, provided, by the act of May 4, 1858, to which I have just referred, for the admission of the State on an equal footing with the ori-

ginal States, but "upon the fundamental condition precedent" that a majority of the people thereof, at an election to be held for that purpose, should, in place of the very large grants of public lands which they had demanded under the ordinance, accept such grants as had been made to Minnesota and other new States. Under this act, should a majority reject the proposition offered them, "it shall be deemed and held that the people of Kansas do not desire admission into the Union with said constitution under the conditions set forth in said proposition."

In that event the act authorizes the people of the Territory to elect delegates to form a constitution and State government for themselves "whenever, and not before, it is ascertained by a census, duly and legally taken, that the population of said Territory equals or exceeds the ratio of representation required for a member of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States." The delegates thus assembled "shall first determine by a vote whether it is the wish of the people of the proposed State to be admitted into the Union at that time and, if so, shall proceed to form a constitution and take all necessary steps for the establishment of a State government in conformity with the Federal Constitution." After this constitution shall have been formed, Congress, carrying out the principles of popular sovereignty and non-intervention, have left "the mode and manner of its approval or ratification by the people of the proposed State" to be "prescribed by law," and they "shall then be admitted into the Union as a State under such constitution thus fairly and legally made, with or without slavery, as said constitution may prescribe."

An election was held throughout Kansas in pursuance of the provisions of this act, on the second day of August last, and it resulted in the rejection, by a large majority, of the proposition submitted to the people by Congress. This being the case, they are now authorized to form another constitution, preparatory to admission into the Union, but not until their number, as ascertained by a census, shall equal or exceed the ratio required to elect a member to the House of Representatives.

It is not probable, in the present state of the case, that a third constitution can be lawfully framed and presented to Congress by Kansas before its population shall have reached the designated number. Nor is it to be presumed that, after their sad experience in resisting the territorial laws, they will attempt to adopt a constitution in express violation of the provisions of an act of Congress.

During the session of 1856 much of the time of Congress was occupied on the question of admitting Kansas under the Topeka constitution. Again, nearly the whole of the last session was devoted to the question of its admission under the Lecompton constitution. Surely it is not unreasonable to require the people of Kansas to wait, before making a third attempt, until the number of their inhabitants shall amount to ninety-three thousand four hundred and twenty. During this brief period the harmony of the States, as well as the great business interests of the country, demand that the people of the Union shall not for a third time be convulsed by another agitation on the Kansas question. By waiting for a short time and acting in obedience to law, Kansas will glide into the Union without the slightest impediment.

### ADMISSION OF NEW STATES.

This excellent provision which Congress have applied to Kansas ought to be extended and rendered applicable to all Territories which may hereafter seek admission into the Union.

Whilst Congress possess the undoubted power of admitting a new State into the Union, however small may be the number of its inhabitants, yet this power ought not, in my opinion, to be exercised before the population shall amount to the ratio required by the act for the admission of Kansas. Had this been previously the rule, the country would have escaped all the evils and misfortunes to which it has been exposed by the Kansas question.

Of course it would be unjust to give this rule a retrospective application and exclude a State which, acting upon the past practice of the government, has already formed its constitution, elected its legislature and other officers and is now prepared to enter the Union.

The rule ought to be adopted, whether we consider its bearing on the people of the Territories or upon the people of the existing States. Many of the serious dissensions which have prevailed in Congress and throughout the country would have been avoided had this rule been established at an earlier period of the government.

Immediately upon the formation of a new Territory, people from different States and from foreign countries rush into it, for the laudable purpose of improving their condition. Their first duty to themselves is to open and cultivate farms, to construct roads, to establish schools, to erect places of religious worship and to devote their energies generally to reclaim the wilderness and to lay the foundations of a flourishing and prosperous commonwealth. If, in this incipient con-

dition, with a population of a few thousand, they should prematurely enter the Union, they are oppressed by the burden of State taxation, and the means necessary for the improvement of the Territory and the advancement of their own interests are thus diverted to very different purposes.

The federal government has ever been a liberal parent to the Territories and a generous contributor to the useful enterprises of the early settlers. It has paid the expenses of their governments and legislative assemblies out of the common treasury, and thus relieved them from a heavy charge. Under these circumstances, nothing can be better calculated to retard their material progress than to divert them from their useful employments by prematurely exciting angry political contests among themselves, for the benefit of aspiring leaders. It is surely no hardship for embryo governors, senators and members of Congress to wait until the number of inhabitants shall equal those of a single congressional district. They surely ought not to be permitted to rush into the Union with a population less than one-half of several of the large counties in the interior of some of the States. This was the condition of Kansas when it made application to be admitted under the Topeka constitution. Besides, it requires some time to render the mass of a population collected in a new Territory at all homogeneous and to unite them on anything like a fixed policy. Establish the rule, and all will look forward to it and govern themselves accordingly.

But justice to the people of the several States requires that this rule should be established by Congress. Each State is entitled to two senators and at least one representative in Congress. Should the people of the States fail to elect a Vice President, the power devolves upon the Senate to select this officer from the two highest candidates on the list. In case of the death of the President, the Vice President thus elected by the Senate, becomes President of the United States. On all questions of legislation the senators from the smallest States of the Union have an equal vote with those from the largest. The same may be said in regard to the ratification of treaties and of Executive appointments. All this has worked admirably in practice, whilst it conforms in principle with the character of a government instituted by sovereign States. I presume no American citizen would desire the slightest change in the arrangement. Still, is it not unjust and unequal to the existing States to invest some forty or fifty thousand people, collected in a Territory, with the attributes of sovereignty and place them on an equal footing with Virginia and New York in the Senate of the United States?

For these reasons I earnestly recommend the passage of a general act which shall provide that, upon the application of a territorial legislature, declaring their belief that the Territory contains a number of inhabitants which, if in a State, would entitle them to elect a member of Congress, it shall be the duty of the President to cause a census of the inhabitants to be taken and, if found sufficient, then by the terms of this act to authorize them to proceed "in their own way" to frame a State constitution, preparatory to admission into the Union. I also recommend that an appropriation may be made to enable the President to take a census of the people of Kansas.

### UTAH.

The present condition of the Territory of Utah, when contrasted with what it was one year ago, is a subject for congratulation. It was then in a state of open rebellion and, cost what it might, the character of the government required that this rebellion should be suppressed and the Mormons compelled to yield obedience to the Constitution and the laws. In order to accomplish this object, as I informed you in my last annual message, I appointed a new Governor instead of Brigham Young, and other federal officers to take the place of those who, consulting their personal safety, had found it necessary to withdraw from the Territory. To protect these civil officers and to aid them, as a posse comitatus, in the execution of the laws in case of need, I ordered a detachment of the army to accompany them to Utah. The necessity for adopting these measures is now demonstrated.

On the 15th of September, 1857, Gov. Young issued his proclamation in the style of an independent sovereign, announcing his purpose to resist, by force of arms, the entry of the United States troops into our own Territory of Utah. By this he required all the forces in the Territory to "hold themselves in readiness to march, at a moment's notice, to repel any and all such invasion" and established martial law from its date throughout the Territory. These proved to be no idle threats. Forts Bridger and Supply were vacated and burnt down by the Mormons, to deprive our troops of a shelter after their long and fatiguing march. Orders were issued by Daniel H. Wells, styling himself "Lieutenant General, Nauvoo Legion," to stampede the animals of the United States troops on their march, to set fire to their trains, to burn the grass and the whole country before them and on their flanks, to keep them from sleeping by night surprises and to blockade the road by felling trees and destroying the fords of rivers, &c., &c., &c.

These orders were promptly and effectually obeyed. On the 4th of October, 1857, the Mormons captured and burned, on Green river, three