Written by Paul Selby, I believe. See I M T Life of Lincoln, pp. 114-117
See pg. 20 ff. of this MS.

The political conditions prevailing in the United States in 1854 mark a new era in our national history. From this Point may be dated the beginning of that social and political revolution which ultimately swept over the Nation and changed the policy and destiny of the Republic. The period taken as a whole, was one of intense and unintermitting excitement until that stage was reached which marked the transition from the peaceful methods of the hustings and the ballot box to the bloody arbitrament of the sword. Nor were the contests during this earlier period always of a peaceful and bloodless character, as proved by the state of affairs, in the newly organized Territory of Kansas, which ~~was made~~ became a theatre of turmoil and bloody strife between the advocates of slavery and the Free State men, until the final triumph of the latter in the defeat of the attempt to force a fraudulent constitution upon them in 1858.

The occasion for this condition of affairs ~~was attended~~ was the passage by Congress, in May, 1854, of an act organizing the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, to which was attached a provision repealing that portion of the act admitting Missouri into the Union in 1820 (known as the "Missouri Compromise"), which forever prohibited "slavery or involuntary servitude, otherwise than in the punishment of crime," "in all that territory ceded by France to the United States under the name of Louisiana which lies north of 36 degrees 30 minutes of north latitude," except the portion incorporated in the State of Missouri. This compromise had been passed after a struggle which had been protracted with much bitterness in Congress for a period of two years, and was an attempt to settle the contest between the advocates of slavery and the opponents ~~of that institution~~, by a division of territory between them. It applied to all the territory then owned by the United States west of the Mississippi river, excepting the

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State of Missouri, and, with the exception of that State, secured to freedom all territory north of a line projected westward from its southern boundary. From the time of the adoption of the Missouri Compromise to the acquisition of New Mexico and California as the result of the Mexican war, the equilibrium between the free and the slave States had been maintained by the admission of one of each ~~kind~~ about the same time. The application of California for admission as a free State caused a disturbance of this equilibrium and led to the adoption of the Compromise measures of 1850, which were an attempt to satisfy the South for the relative advantage gained by the North by conceding to the former certain benefits, the most important of which was a stringent fugitive slave law. While this law was fiercely assailed, and in some cases forcibly resisted in some of the Northern States, especially New England, the result proved that the South was not satisfied with what it had thus secured. As soon as it became necessary to organize new territorial governments in that portion of the national domain dedicated to freedom, the old controversy was renewed in spite of the Compromise of 1820, and the later Compromise of 1850 was pleaded as a justification of the act of bad faith, on the ground that the former had been abrogated by the latter. It is a somewhat curious coincidence that, whereas one Illinois Senator (Jesse B. Thomas) was the author of the compromise of the Missouri admission act, of which Mr. Clay became one of the most zealous and influential supporters, another Illinois Senator (Stephen A. Douglas) was the sponsor for the act which, thirty-four years later, resulted in its overthrow.

The repeal feature of the Nebraska bill was not incorporated into the original measure, but was an after thought. Early in 1853 a bill providing for the organization of the Territory of Nebraska with boundaries, including the present State of

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Kansas, was introduced in the House and passed that body, but failed in the Senate, being laid on the table on the last day of the session. On December 15, 1853, a new Congress having assembled, Mr. Dodge, of Iowa, presented a bill in the Senate similar to that which had failed at the preceding session. Neither of these measures made any allusion to the subject of slavery, it being tacitly assumed by each that the Compromise of 1820 was still in force. Early in the following month (Jan.4, 1854) Senator Douglas, as Chairman of the Committee on Territories, to whom this bill had been referred, reported it back with certain amendments, but these did not attack the Compromise of 1820. On the 16th of the same month, Senator Dixon of Kentucky, gave notice of the intended introduction by him of an amendment abrogating the Missouri Compromise in the application of the pending bill to Nebraska. Senator Douglas then had the original bill recommitted and, one week later, reported it back in an amended form dividing the proposed Territory into two divisions to be called Kansas and Nebraska, and incorporating Dixon's proposed repeal provision. In this provision it was declared that the Missouri Compromise, "being inconsistent with the principles of non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the States and Territories, as regognized 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 leave 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". In order to understand the remarkable change that had been wrought in Mr. Douglas' mind, it is only necessary to say that, referring to the Missouri Compromise in 1849, he had spoken of it as having

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"an origin akin to that of the Constitution" and as having become "canonized in the hearts of the American people as a sacred thing which no ruthless hand would ever be reckless enough to disturb".

In the ^just form quoted, ~~above~~, after a debate of intense bitterness, the bill passed the Senate March 3, 1854, by a vote of 37 yeas to 14 nays, and the House on May 20, following, by a vote of 113 yeas to 100 nays, and after some ineffectual attempts to amend it in the Senate, was ^finally accepted by that body and signed by the president. ~~May 30.~~ An analysis of the vote in the two Houses shows that, in the Senate the affirmative was made up of 28 Democrats equally divided between the free and slave States, and 9 Whigs from the slave States to 6 Democrats and 6 Whigs from the free States, and one Democrat and one Whig from slave States in the negative; in the House there were 44 Democrats from free States with 57 Democrats and 12 Whigs from slave States on the side of the affirmative, and 44 Democrats and 44 Whigs from free States, with 2 Democrats and 7 Whigs from slave States and 5 Free-Soilers for the negative. The equal division of the vote in each House, both sectionally and politically, indicates very significantly the basis of the reorganization of parties which followed. The passage of the act providing for two Territories instead of one was, of course, with the expectation that the friends of slavery would be able, when the date of admission should arrive, to make sure of one (Kansas), while the other (Nebraska) would ^be surrendered to the free-State men without a struggle.

Such was the train of events which have made memorable in American annals the first few months of the year 1854, and laid the foundation for the organization of the Republican party which was consummated on a national basis two years later. The first

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steps taken for the removal of the Missouri Compromise produced profound alarm throughout the North, not confined alone to anti-slavery communities, but extending to many where conservatism had hitherto been predominant, and protests against the measure began to pour in upon Congress bearing the signatures ~~alike~~ of both conservative Whigs and Democrats. One of the earliest of these came from Chicago, Mr. Douglas' own home, where his political influence had previously been deemed supreme. Following promptly upon the passage of the Nebraska act ~~through~~ by the Senate, it set the note for other communities not only in Illinois, but also in other States. This grew in force and intensity until the final act nearly three months later, when the signature of the Kansas-Nebraska bill by President Pierce made it a law of the land in face of the assurance given in his message of December previous, "That this repose" (induced by the passage of the Compromise measures of 1850) "is to suffer no shock during my official term, if I have the power to avert it, those who placed me here may be assured". The event was followed immediately, as we are informed by the late Vice-President Henry Wilson, by a movement for the organization of a new party, based upon opposition to the extension of slavery, in which some thirty members of Congress participated on the day after the passage of the act, while similar steps were taken in widely separated portions of the country — in some of these the adoption of the name "Republican" being strongly advocated. Claims of priority in this respect have been set up in Wisconsin, Michigan, Northern Ohio, and in one or two counties of Northern Illinois; but to whom the credit is to be awarded of first using the name "Republican" as the distinctive appellation of an ~~organization~~ organized political party it is not the object of this paper to inquire, nor would it be an easy task, at this day, positively to determine. It would be

safer to say that the necessity for a new and compact party organization, based on opposition to the extension of slavery and bearing an appropriate title, was recognized by advanced political thinkers in widely distant sections at the same time, and the adoption of a title came as a matter of gradual development. During this period there were few papers and few prominent politicians of either party who had not taken their stand on one side or the other of the controversy, while many who had not previously manifested any interest in party politics, became the zealous champions or opponents of the measure. Owing to the fact that a Senator from Illinois had been at least nominally responsible for this feature of the act, that State became, in a certain sense the battle-ground in the coming contest; and it was here, too, that its most capable and powerful antagonist was eventually to be found.

One of the first of the politicians of either party in Illinois to take positive ground against the principle of the act throwing open to slavery territory which had previously been declared free in accordance with the provisions of a solemn "compact," was Abraham Lincoln. He was, at that time, pursuing his vocation as a lawyer at Springfield, which had been his home almost from the date of his entrance upon public and professional life. His prominence as a member of the Whig party had been attested by having been twice elected to the State Legislature and once as Representative in Congress, while he had been thrice chosen (in 1840, 1844 and ~~in~~ 1852 - as he was again as a Republican for the State-at-large in 1856) to represent his party as a candidate for Presidential Elector. Although strongly conservative in his views as regarded his obligations to the Constitution and the laws, scarcely any public man in the nation — the pronounced abolitionist

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alone excepted — had expressed his abhorrence of the institution of slavery in stronger terms, and these views he had consistently sustained by his protest against a series of pro-slavery resolutions adopted by the Illinois Legislature in 1837 and by his repeated votes for the Wilmot Proviso while a member of Congress. His reputation as a lawyer — and especially as an advocate at the bar — was already coextensive with his own State and was recognized beyond its boundaries, while his well-known character for fairness, candor and integrity had won for him, among his more intimate friends, the well merited sobriquet of "Honest Abe". The influence of such a man, in such a cause, was destined to be widely felt, and, backed by such abilities as he possessed, to render him a most powerful factor in wiping out the stains of slavery and securing the freedom of a race.

Mr. Lincoln's reentrance into politics at this juncture marked the real beginning of his national career, and it was at this period that my personal acquantance with him began — an acquaintance which still later became somewhat intimate and extended to the fall of 1859, when it was interrupted by my removal to a Southern State. It thus covered the period during which the fragmentary elements of various parties, which had been disorganized by the introduction of this new issue, were crystallizing into the organization which afterwards assumed the name "Republican". At the beginning of this period I was editing a weekly paper at Jacksonville, Illinois — the seat of Illinois College, some thirty-odd miles distant from Springfield, where I was a frequent visitor. The paper with which I was connected had been originally Whig in politics, but on my assumption of its editorship, some two years preceding the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, it had been made "independent". On the introduction of

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that measure in Congress it took an early stand in opposition and became one of the most earnest supporters of the new organization, as it had been one of the earliest to take ground in its favor. This fact brought me in more or less frequent contact with Mr. Lincoln in after years, and made me a close and interested observer of his political career.

While the discussion of the Kansas-Nebraska act continued to be actively maintained by the press during the summer of 1854, there was a comparative lull among the "stump orators" until the approach of the election of members of Congress and a State Legislature in the fall called them into the field. That Mr. Lincoln was not idle ~~however~~, however, during this period, was demonstrated a few months later when the result of his meditations and "mousings about the State library" — as the Democratic organ in Springfield expressed it — was brought to the attention of the public in a series of the most conclusive arguments in refutation of Mr. Douglas' position yet brought before the country. The Hon. Richard Yates — afterwards Governor and a United States Senator — who had been a Representative from the Springfield District in the two preceding Congresses, and had made a valiant and able opposition in that body to the Kansaw-Nebraska bill, was a candidate for reelection and received Mr. Lincoln's vigorous support. The return of Mr. Douglas to the State about the last of August marked the beginning in earnest of the campaign which was to determine whether a Democrat or an "Anti-Nebraska" man was to occupy the seat in the United States Senate then held by his Democratic colleague, Gen. Shields. Of course, the issue was joined on the act of which he was the author and which Shields had assisted to pass. On the evening of the first of September Douglas attempted to ~~make a speech~~ speak in Chicago in vindication of his Congressional record, but so intense had become the feeling against

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him in a city where he had been accustomed to be received not merely with cordiality but with enthusiasm, that, after vainly endeavoring to make himself heard in opposition to the ~~cries~~ taunts of his former political friends who had now become his enemies, he was compelled to desist and leave his defense unspoken. A month later he was in Springfield and spoke on the 3rd day of October in the old Hall of Representatives before a large audience assembled from different parts of the State, the annual State Fair being then in progress. Mr. Lincoln was present and it was announced at the close of Douglas' speech that he would reply to the latter, which he did the following day, delivering his first great speech in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska act. Its success marked him at once as a leader. That it was characterized by all the vigor and enthusiasm of thorough conviction was evidenced by the applause with which it was received by his audience; that it was able and convincing was proved by the fact that Douglas, although he had already spoken, found it necessary to reply, delivering a long and labored speech in the same place the next day. Others who spoke in opposition to Senator Douglas at the same time were the Hon. Lyman Trumbull, afterwards United States Senator; Judge Sidney Breese, who had been Douglas' colleague in the United States Senate and afterwards became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; and Col. E. D. Taylor of Chicago - all Democrats; while John Calhoun, whose name a few years later, became notorious in connection with the attempt to force slavery upon Kansas, and Gen. James W. Singleton, who had been prominent as a Whig politician in Brown County and afterwards represented the Quincy District in Congress, sustained the cause of Douglas. The speech delivered by Lincoln on this occasion was not reported or written out, but its substance has fortunately been preserved in the one which he delivered at Peoria,

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where he again met Douglas on the 16th of the same month. On this occasion Douglas had consumed nearly the whole of the afternoon, speaking over three hours and leaving Lincoln no time to reply. Lincoln then invited the audience to meet him in the evening, which they consented to do, when he delivered the longest and probably the most exhaustive speech of his life, before his series of debates with Senator Douglas four years later. As this was his first speech on the Nebraska question that received publication, and was substantially the same delivered by him in Springfield two weeks earlier, some extracts from it will be pertinent in this connection. After reviewing the history of our national legislation in relation to slavery from the adoption of the "Ordinance of 1787" to the "Compromises of 1850", and describing the effect of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in "letting slavery into Kansas and Nebraska", as "wrong in its direct effect" and "in its prospective principle", commenting upon Senator Douglas' "declared indifference" to the question whether slavery should be "voted up or voted down", Mr. Lincoln said:

"This declared indifference, but, as I must think, covert real zeal, for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world; enables the enemies of free institutions with plausibility to taunt us as hypocrites; causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity; and especially because it forces so many good men among ourselves into an open war with the very principles of civil liberty, criticising the Declaration of Independence and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self interest".

Disavowing all "prejudice against the Southern people", he generously declared:

"They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not exist among them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us, we should not instantly give it up. . . . I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me I should not know what to do as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves and send them to Liberia, to

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their native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me that, whatever of high hope . . . there may be in this in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days, and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough to carry them there in many times ten days. . . . I think I would not hold one in slavery at any rate, yet the point is not clear enough for me to denounce people upon . . . . . It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted, but for their tardiness in this I will not undertake to judge our brethren of the South. . . . The law which forbids the bringing of slaves from Africa and that which has so long forbidden the taking of them into Nebraska can hardly be distinguished on any moral principle, and the repeal of the former could find quite as plausible excuses as that of the latter."

These extracts not only prove the conservatism of Mr. Lincoln's position at this time, but illustrate the candor, fairness and charity so characteristic of the man in dealing with those opposed to him in sentiment. It was an argument addressed to the sober judgment and intelligence of the people, and while it may not have been accepted by all who heard it, there is no one at this day who does not recognize its inexorable logic and the principles of eternal truth upon which it was based, in spite of the charges of "Black Republican" and "Abolitionist" which were then hurled against its author. One other quotation will suffice to illustrate one variety of Mr. Lincoln's style of argument. Towards the close of his speech he said:

"The Judge (Douglas) invokes against me the memory of Clay and Webster. They were great men and men of great deeds. But where have I assailed them? For what is it that their lifelong enemy shall now make profit by assuming to defend them against me, their life-long friend? I go against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; did they ever go for it? They went for the Compromises of 1850; did I ever go against them? They were greatly devoted to the Union; to the small measure of my ability was I ever less so? Clay and Webster were dead before this question arose; by what authority shall our Senator say they would espouse his side of it if alive? Mr. Clay was the leading spirit in making the Missouri Compromise; is it very credible that, if now alive he would take the lead in breaking it? The truth is, that some support from Whigs is now a necessity to the Judge, and for this it is that the names of Webster and Clay are invoked. His old friends have deserted him in such numbers as to leave too few to live by. He came to his own, and his own received him not; and lo he turns unto the Gentiles."

Mr. Lincoln's speeches at Springfield and Peoria had been

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delivered partly in obedience to the earnest solicitations of his most intimate personal and political friends who had entire confidence in his ability to meet and vanquish the champion of the Nebraska bill, and it was expected that he would follow Senator Douglas at his further appointments, of which he had a number in the northern part of the State. At Pedria Douglas acknowledged that Lincoln's pursuit was giving him great trouble and appealed to Lincoln to withdraw from the campaign, promising to do the same himself, cancelling the appointments already made. This Lincoln consented to do; yet two days after, Douglas proceeded to fill an appointment at Princeton - the home of Owen Lovejoy - in violation of this agreement, though he afterwards explained that he was forced into the act by the challenge of Lovejoy, who replied to him.

An incident connected with the history of the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Springfield in the early days of October, 1854 — though only indirectly connected with Mr. Lincoln — was the meeting of the first Anti-Nebraska State Convention held in the State of Illinois, for which a call had been issued some weeks prior, naming October 4 as the day of assembling. In the absence of local county organizations, the meeting assumed the character of a "mass convention", all comers who gave evidence of being in sympathy with the objects of the movement being welcomed. The Hall of Representatives in which the Convention was to be held, being occupied by Senator Douglas, Judge Trumbull and other speakers in debate on the Nebraska bill, the Convention did not assemble until evening, and then only effected an organization, the main business session being held the following day. The number in attendance was not large, but it was made up of earnest men thoroughly committed to the policy of opposition to the further extension of slave territory. It has been represented

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in some quarters that they were a body of "extremists", but while there were undoubtedly some among their number — as Owen Lovejoy, Ichabod Codding and others — who had prominent been Free-Soilers, or even Abolitionists, as one of its members the writer of this sketch is prepared to say that others were as conservative in their position as was Mr. Lincoln himself. This is attested by the character of the platform. As this afterwards became historical in connection with the Lincoln- Douglas debates of 1858, a concise synopsis will be appropriate here. After a preamble charging upon the Democratic majority in Congress responsibility for re-opening the agitation respecting the extension of slavery by repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the resolutions asserted "the right and duty of the General Government to prohibit the extension of slavery in any Territory of the United States"; declared the "doctrine affirmed by the Nebraska bill a complete surrender of all the ground asserted and mentioned by the General Government with respect to slavery" and "an attempt to make it a national institution"; conceded "to neighboring States all the legal rights on our soil oncluded in the sacred compact of the Constitution", but maintained that the rights of trial by jury and of the writ of habeas corpus were "safeguards of personal liberty so necessary" that "no citizens of other States can fairly ask us to consent to their abrogation"; denied the entertainment of "any feelings of hostility" on the part of citizens of the Northern States towards those of the South, but redognized them, "as kindred and brethren of the same national family, having a common origin and a common destiny"; called upon them "to aid in restoring the Government to its primitive usage" as a means of perpetuation of the Union", declared in favor of the improvement of rivers and harbors, and approved the course of citizens of other Northern states in postponing minor differences of opinion and acting together in the

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"cause of freedom, of free labor and of free soil". The third and fourth resolutions, which contained the gist and essence of the declarations on the subject of slavery were as follows:

3. "That, as freedom is national and slavery sectional and local, the absence of all law upon the subject of slavery presumes the existence of a state of freedom alone, while slavery exists only by virtue of positive law.

4. "That slavery can exist in a Territory only by usurpation and in violation of law, and we believe that Congress has the right and should prohibit its extension into such Territory so long as it remains under the guardianship of the General Government".

That the views here enunciated were afterwards repeatedly endorsed by the action of Republican conventions is matter of historical record, as also that they were practically ratified by the action of the Government, a few years later, in prohibiting the extension of slavery into new territory.

The manner in which these resolutions became involved in the debates between Lincoln and Douglas, four years later, was as follows: In the first debate, which was held at Ottawa, August 21, 1858, Mr. Douglas quoted a series of resolutions, which he alleged had been passed at the Springfield Convention of 1854, and which he charged that Mr. Lincoln, as Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions in that body, had assisted in framing. As Mr. Lincoln did not attend that Convention, he had no responsibility for its action, nor did he know what platform it had actually adopted— neither of the papers at Springfield having published an accurate report of its proceedings. The fact was, that the Democratic papers, some ten days after the Convention was held, published a series of resolutions which it represented were those adopted on the 5th of October, but which had really been adopted by a local convention in Kane County some weeks earlier. It was these which Mr. Douglas, accepting as genuine, held Mr. Lincoln responsible for.

Although Lincoln was not able, on the instant, to correct

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Douglas' mistake, at the second debate, which occurred at Freeport a week later, he was in a position not only to state the real origin of the resolutions Douglas had quoted, but also to produce those actually adopted at Springfield. As a result Douglas was compelled to make a lengthy explanation of the manner in which he had been led into error - whether intentionally or otherwise - by his own party organ.* His discomfiture on account of his blunder was all the greater because he had made the spurious resolutions the basis of the seven questions which he propounded to Lincoln at Ottawa, thus furnishing to the latter a welcome pretext for the seven famous questions, proposed in two instalments, which afterwards gave Douglas so much trouble in the subsequent debates. It was these questions of Lincoln's which elicited from Douglas what was called the "Freeport doctrine", which proved the means of weakening his influence in the South during the campaign of 1860.

The further action of the State Convention of 1854 consisted in the endorsement of James Miller of Bloomington, an old-line Whig who was already in the field, as candidate for State Treasurer —the only State officer to be elected that year— and the appointment of a State Central Committee, of whom Lincoln was chosen a member, though in a letter to Codding he declined to accept. Miller was defeated by the Democratic nominee, by less than 5,000 majority in a State which had uniformly since 1840 - with the single exception of 1848 - given Democratic majorities ranging from 12,000 to 20,000, though two years later, on a Republican and "American" nomination, he was elected by over 20,000 majority. The drift of political events in Illinois was shown most distinctly by the fact that in the election of Congressmen in 1854 the opponents of the Nebraska bill elected five out of nine members by majorities aggregating 18,000 votes.

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At the election held in November 1854, Mr. Lincoln was supported by his party for Representative in the General Assembly from Sangamon county for the last time, receiving a majority of about 600 votes, with his friend Judge Stephen T. Logan as his associate, and running considerably ahead of his ticket. With three Anti-Nebraska Democrats in the Senate "holding over" from the previous Legislature, it became evident that the Anti-Nebraska Whigs and Democrats combined, with one or two Free-Soilers, would have a small majority on joint ballot. By virtue of the prominence he had gained in the preceding campaign, Mr. Lincoln was at once recognized as a leading candidate for the United States Senate. As a member of the Legislature, however, he would have been disqualified under the Constitution for the Senate; so, in obedience to the advice of friends who wished to secure his election to that office, he declined his credentials as a member of the General Assembly and a new election was ordered. Much to the surprise of himself and his friends this resulted in the success of the Democratic candidate through the device known as a "still hunt", although there had been a majority of nearly 500 for the regular Anti-Nebraska ticket at the election in November This reduced the Anti-Nebraska majority in the House to seven, while in the Senate the Nebraska Democrats had a majority of three leaving a net Anti-Nebraska majority on joint ballot of four. In the election of Senator, which occurred February 8, 1855, Lincoln led on the first ballot, receiving 45 votes to 41 for Shields, Nebraska Democrat, 8 for Trumbull and ~~eight~~ divided between half a dozen other candidates. In the course of the subsequent ballotings the Lincoln vote fell off while Trumbull's gained, until the ninth, when Shields having been abandoned by the Democrats, Gov. Matteson received 47 to 35 for Trumbull, 15 for Lincoln and one for Archibald Williams - one member (a Democrat) not

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voting. It being apparent now that Matteson would be elected unless the Anti-Nebraska men speedily united, Lincoln manifested his characteristic magnanimity by appealing to his Whig friends, who constituted a majority of the Anti-Nebraska strength, to go to the support of Trumbull and thus save the day. The result was that, on the tenth ballot, Trumbull was elected, receiving 51 votes to 47 for Matteson and one for Williams. Although disappointed in his expectations, the generosity Lincoln had displayed won him hosts of new friends and assisted to consolidate the fragments of the various parties which, having taken ground against the Nebraska act, constituted the material out of which the Republican party was formed.

There is no doubt that Mr. Lincoln's political position at this time (1854 - 5) was that of a Henry Clay Whig with strong convictions in hostility to slavery, and that he hoped to see the reorganization or regeneration of that party on the basis of restoration of the Missouri Compromise, if not absolute opposition to the further extension of slavery. The result of the Senatorial contest of 1855 convinced him, however, that this could not be accomplished without mutual concession on the part of members of all parties who were honestly agreed on this question and the consolidation of these fragments into a compact and harmonious political organization. As late as August, 1855, he wrote to his friend Joshua F. Speed, who wished to know where he stood, "That is a disputed point. I think I am a Whig; but others say there are no Whigs, and that I am an Abolitionist." It is evident that epithets then had no terrors for him, and he was prepared to go wherever his judgment led— to act upon the advice which he had given to his Whig friends at Peoria in 1854, when he told them to "Stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while

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he is right and part with him when he goes wrong." About the same time he was talking to Speed in this way, he indicated the direction his thoughts were taking in a letter to Judge Robertson, another conservative Kentuckian, as follows: "I think that there is no peaceful extinction of slavery in prospect for us. The signal failure of Henry Clay and other great and good men, in 1849, to effect anything in favor of gradual emancipation in Kentucky, together with a thousand other signs, extinguished that hope entirely. . . . So far as peaceful voluntary emancipation is concerned, the condition of the negro slave in America, scarcely less terrible to the contemplation of a free mind, is now as fixed and hopeless of change for the better as that of the lost souls of the finally impenitent. The Autocrat of all the Russias will resign his crown and proclaim his subjects free republicans sooner than will our American masters voluntarily give up their slaves". The following closing paragraph from this letter shows that the sentiment contained in his celebrated "house divided against itself" speech of June, 1858, was even then taking form in his mind: "Our political problem now is, 'Can we as a nation continue together permanently — forever — half slave and half free?' The problem is too mighty for me — may God, in His mercy, superintend the solution". This proves how deeply he felt on the subject — a depth and sincerity that were manifested by few other leading politicians of his time. And yet he, of all men, showed himself best qualified to grapple with this problem, impossible of solution as he then considered it.

Those who have studied Mr. Lincoln's speeches have been struck by the marked change manifest about this time in the style and character of his forensic efforts. Gifted by nature with remarkable analytical powers, the perils which he believed to be threatening the Republic appealed to his patriotism and he became, in a more em-

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phatic sense than ever before, a zealous student of political history and of the science of government. The period was to him one of education and development, and the result was seen in the masterly command of facts and principles with which he met and refuted the arguments of the most adroit of Democratic orators and leaders. His manner as a speaker evinced the intensity of his feelings and impressed his hearers with the depth and sincerity of his convictions. Speaking in a style that was typical in its simplicity and almost entirely devoid of ornamentation, he used few gestures, and none more impressive than the play of his features, especially when he had occasion to indicate earnestness or express his indignation or disgust. He proved himself a master of concise and logical statement — a mere word, an expression of the countenance or happy illustration often answering the purpose of a long argument. It was not art but the force of native intellect in free and natural action, by which he was enabled to reach and impress his influence upon minds that had been blinded by prejudice and by which he proved himself a most potential factor in building up a new party, even before he was willing to acknowledge the necessity for its existence. He led the people while seeming to be led by them. His history was that of the new party itself; in thorough sympathy, on its main issue, with the most advanced thinkers among those who ultimately composed it, he did not hesitate to join in the work of organization when he saw that the hour for organization had arrived.

While there were no elections in 1855 calling Mr. Lincoln to take "the stump," the condition of affairs in Kansas, where the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska act were on trial, gave him an opportunity of studying its practical results. The struggle between the Free-State men and the friends of slavery for possession began promptly on the organization of the Territory, and

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continued almost without cessation for four years, producing an excitement throughout the country scarcely paralleled in its history previous to the war of the rebellion, of which it was merely the fore-runner. In that period six Territorial Governors, presumed to represent the views of the administration when they were appointed, had either been practically driven from the Territory by the partisans of the same administration, had egregiously failed and been removed, or voluntarily retired in disgust, while, during a considerable portion of the time, practical war prevailed ending in the sacrifice of hundreds of lives and many thousands of dollars worth of property. It was not until the attempt to force upon the people the nefarious Lecompton Constitution, legalizing slavery in spite of the opposition of an overwhelming majority of the actual settlers, had been defeated in 1858, that peace was restored and order prevailed. The situation had been one of intense anxiety among the friends of free government, and had most deeply stirred Mr. Lincoln's antagonism to the system which permitted such crimes.

It was while these events were in progress that the necessity of a new political organization began generally to be recognized by the most conservative opponents of the Nebraska act. The first decisive step in this direction in Illinois — after the convention of October, 1854 — took the form of a convention of the Anti-Nebraska editors of the State held at Decatur, February 22, 1856. # This movement, first suggested by "The Morgan Journal" at Jacksonville, having received the approval of a considerable number of the Anti-Nebraska papers of the State, resulted in the issue of the following call:

"Editorial Convention. - All editors in Illinois opposed to to the Nebraska Bill are requested to meet in Convention at Decatur, Illinois, on the 22d of February next, for the purpose of making arrangements for organizing the Anti-Nebraska forces in

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this State for the coming contest. All editors favoring the movement will please forward a copy of their paper containing their approval to the office of the "Illinois State Chronicle", Decatur".

Twenty-five papers endorsed the call, but on the day of the meeting only about half that number of editors put in an appearance. One reason for the small number was the fact that, on the night before a heavy snow-storm had fallen throughout the State, obstructing the passage of trains on the two railroads centering at Decatur. The meeting was held in the parlor of the "Cassell House"—afterwards the Oglesby House", now called the "St. Nicholas Hotel". Those present and participating in the opening proceedings, as shown by the official report, were: E. C. Dougherty, Register, Rockford; Charles Faxon, Post, Princeton; A. N. Ford, Gazette, Lacon; Thomas J. Prickett, Republican, Peoria/ Virgil Y. Ralston, Whig, Quincy; Charles H. Ray, Tribune, Chicago; George Schneider, Staats Zeitung, Chicago; Paul Selby, Journal, Jacksonville; B. F. Shaw, Telegraph/, Dixon; W. J. Usrey, Chronicle, Decatur and O. P. Wharton, Advertiser, Rock Island. In the organization Paul Selby was made Chairman and W. J. Usrey, Secretary, while messrs. Ralston, Ray, Wharton, Dougherty, Pickett and Schneider constituted a Committee on Resolutions. The platform adopted as "a basis of common and concerted action" among the members of the new organization, embraced a declaration of principles that would be regarded in this day as most conservative Republicanism, recognizing "The legal rights of the slave States to hold and enjoy their property in slaves under their State laws"; reaffirming the principles of the Declaration of Independence, with its correlative doctrine that "Freedom is national and slavery sectional"; declaring assumption of the right to extend slavery on the plea that it is essential to the security of the institution "an invasion of our rights" which "must be resisted"; demanding the restoration of the Missouri Compromise and "the restriction of

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slavery to its present authorized limits"; advocating the maintenance of "the naturalization laws as they are"and favoring "the widest tolerance in matters of religion and faith" (a rebuke to Know-Nothingism); pledging resistance to assaults upon the common school system, and closing with a demand for reformation in the administration of the State government as "second only in importance to the question of slavery itself." Mr. Lincoln was present in Decatur during the day, and, although he did not take part in the public deliberations of the Convention, he was in close conference with the Committee on Resolutions, and the impress of his hand is seen in the character of the platform adopted. Messrs. Ray and Schneider, of the Chicago press, were also influential factors in shaping the declaration of principles with which the new party in Illinois started on its long career of almost uninterrupted success.

The day's proceedings ended with a complimentary banquet given to the editors at the same hotel by the citizens of Decatur Capt. I. C. Pugh (afterwards colonel of an Illinois regiment in the war of the rebellion), Dr. H. C. Johns and Maj. R. O. Smith acting as a committee of Arrangements. Speeches were made in response to toasts by Mr. Lincoln, R. J. Oglesby (afterwards Major-General of Volunteers and three times Governor of Illinois - then a young lawyer of Decatur), Ray of the Chicago Tribune, Ralston of the Quincy Whig and others among the editors. In the course of his speech, referring to a movement which some of the editors present had inaugurated to make him the Anti-Nebraska candidate for Governor at the ensuing election, Mr. Lincoln spoke (in substance) as follows: "I wish to say why I should not be a candidate. If I should be chosen the Democrats would say, it was nothing more than an attempt to resurrect the dead body of the

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old Whig party. I would secure the vote of that party and no more, and our defeat will follow as a matter of course. But I can sugest a name that will secure not only the old Whig vote, but enough Anti-Nebraska Democrats to give us the victory. That man is Col. William H. Bissell". Here Mr. Lincoln again displayed his characteristic unselfishness and sagacity. That he would, ~~not~~, at that time, have regarded an election to the Governorship of the great State of Illinois as an honor worth contending for, will scarcely be presumed. He was seeking more important results, however, in the interest of freedom and good government — the ending of the political chaos that had prevailed for the past two years and the consolidation of the forces opposed to slavery extension in a compact political organization. Bissell had been an officer in the Mexican War with a good record; had afterwards, as a member of Congress from the Belleville District, opposed the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and had refused to be brow-beaten by Jefferson Davis into the retraction of statements he had made on the floor of Congress. As will appear later, he was nominated and Lincoln's judgment vindicated by his election and the unification of the elements which afterwards composed the Republican party.

While the banquet was in progress - or perhaps at an earlier hour - several editors who had been delayed by the storm arrived and took part in the festivities. Those remembered were Simeon Whiteley, then of the Aurora (Kane county) Guardian, Edward L. Baker, of the Springfield Journal (for twenty years past United States Consul at Smyrna) and E. W. Blaisdell of the Rockford Register. Some others, who had been snow-bound, returned without reaching Decatur at all.

One of the last acts of the editorial convention was the appointment of a State Central Committee, consisting of one member

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for each Congressional District and two for the State at large. Some of the names were suggested by Mr. Lincoln while the others received his approval. As reported the Committee was as follows: S. M. Church, Rockford; W. B. Ogden, Chicago; G. R. A. Parks, Joliet; T. J. Pickett, Peoria; W. H. Herndon, Springfield; R. J. Oglesby, Decatur; Joseph Gillespie, Edwardsville and David L. Phillips, Jonesboro, with Gustavus Koerner (then Lieutenant Governor), and Ira O. Wilkinson, Rock Island, for the State at large. A supplementary resolution recommended the holding of a State Convention at Bloomington, on the 29th of May following, and requested the committee just appointed to issue the necessary call. With three exceptions the Committee as named accepted the trust confided to them. These were Mr. Ogden who, while in full sympathy with the movement, was compelled to be absent from the State on account of his extensive railroad business; Mr. Oglesby left the State for an extended tour in the Old World, and Lieut. Gov. Koerner was not entirely satisfied with the platform and in doubt about the final attitude of the Democratic party to which he belonged. The place of Mr. Ogden was filled by the appointment of Dr. John Evans, then of Evanston, Illinois, now of Colorado and for several years its Territorial Governor by appointment of Mr. Lincoln; Oglesby was succeeded by Capt. I. C. Pugh and Gov. Koerner's place went unfilled.

It is a coincidence of some interest that, on the day the Illinois editors were in session at Decatur a convention of representatives from different States, with a similar object in view, was in session at Pittsburg, Pa. The latter was presided over by the venerable Francis P. Blair, of Maryland, while among its ~~most~~ prominent members appeared the name of Governor Pugh as one of for the country at large, E. D. Morgan of New York, Horace Greeley, Preston King, David

Wilmot, Oliver P. Morton, Joshua R. Giddings, Zachariah Chandler and many others of national reputation. A National Committee there appointed called the first National Convention of the Republican party held at Philadelphia on the 17th of June.

The State Central Committee appointed at Decatur, following the instructions of its creators, issued the call for the State Convention at Bloomington at the time designated. The name "Republican", though adopted by this time in a few State or county conventions, had not yet been generally accepted by those supporting the principles of the new organization, nor was it distinctly accepted by those who met at Bloomington on the 29th of May, 1856, nor even incorporated in the platform of the National Convention at Philadelphia in June following. While the term Anti-Nebraska was generally accepted as describing the position of the party which had come into existence on the basis of opposition to the principles of the Nebraska bill, the name "People's Party", "Free Soil", "Free Democrat" and "Republican" was in use in many localities, depending upon the previous position or preference of those enlisted in the movement. There was no such uncertainty about the views of the new party, however, as shown by the general unanimity and enthusiasm of those who attended the convention at Bloomington. It was an occasion of intense interest not only on account of the importance of the issues at a time of great popular commotion, but on account of the novelty of an assemblage of those hitherto arrayed against each other politically, and the prominence of many of the men who thus met each other for the first time as members of the same political body. Each of the various parties sent a contingent of their best representative men: Lincoln, Yates, Browning, David Davis, Leonard Swett and Archibald Williams appeared for the Whigs;

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Trumbull, Palmer, Wentworth, Arnold, Judd and B. C. Cook on the part of the Democrats, while Owen Lovejoy, ~~Codding~~ and ~~Farr~~ others ably upheld the Free Soil standard. There was no diversity of sentiment, however, all being agreed as to the principles to be adopted. John M. Palmer, an original Democrat who had ~~been one of the first to~~ early taken position against the Nebraska bill in Central Illinois, was made President and brought the feelings of the Convention to the highest pitch by the fervor and eloquence of his opening speech. The platform, in its leading features, maintained the power of Congress to abolish slavery in the Territories and insisted that this power should be exercised to prevent the extension of the institution into territory heretofore free; condemned the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; favored making Kansas and Nebraska free states; endorsed the admission of Kansas into the Union under the Free State Constitution adopted by its people; contended for liberty of conscience and condemned proscription on account of religious opinions or place of birth. The candidates put in nomination for State officers were William H. Bissell (whom Lincoln had endorsed at Decatur), for Governor; Francis A. Hoffman - afterwards found ineligible and replaced by John Wood - for Lieutenant Governor; O. M. Hatch for Secretary of State; Jesse K. Dubois for Auditor and James Miller for State Treasurer. Several of the candidates for subordinate State offices had already been indorsed by organizations of the American party while Miller had no opposition except the nominee on the Democratic ticket. The speaking which followed the transaction of the regular business has rendered this convention memorable in the history of State politics. Among the orators present, of whom there were many from both the old parties of the most distinguished in the State — including

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Browning, Lovejoy, Yates and others - by common consent Mr. Lincoln bore the palm. Many who heard him on this occasion have pronounced his speech the most brilliant of his life. Unfortunately no report of it was taken and consequently no complete copy has been preserved.

Mr. Lincoln's prominence in the nation at this time, is indicated by the fact that he was the leading competitor of Mr. Dayton in the nomination of a candidate for Vice President in the Philadelphia convention of 1856, receiving 110 votes, although not previously known as a candidate. From this point some of his biographers date his first recognition of the fact that he was to become a prominent figure in national politics, justifying his aspiration to the Presidency, though his natural reserve and self control prevented him from mentioning the subject to his most intimate friends. Having been placed by the Bloomington convention at the head of the ticket for Presidential Elector from the State at large, he took an active interest in the campaign of that year, making over fifty speeches in different parts of Illinois and neighboring States. Although he spoke in nearly every principal town of the State, there is no evidence that any of his speeches were reported except a mere fragment of one delivered at Galena. ~~As this contained a passage identical in~~ style with his celebrated "Lincoln - Conkling Letter", read before a mass meeting of "unconditional Union men" at Springfield, September 3, 1863, which has been construed in some quarters into an intended reflection upon the political fidelity of some of the Republican leaders in Illinois, a brief extract will be of interest. Referring in his Galena speech to a charge of disunionism brought against the Republicans by their opponents, addressing himself to the latter, he said: "You further charge us with being

disunionists . . . . The Union, in any event, will not be dissolved. We don't want to dissolve it, and if you attempt it, we won't let you. . . . . we do not want to dissolve the union and you shall not." Those who heard him at the Bloomington convention say he used substantially the same argument there also. Taken alone it might be inferred that he was speaking to political opponents; yet in both cases he was surrounded by political friends who cheered the sentiment "to the echo".

The campaign of 1856 resulted in the election of the entire Republican State ticket, by pluralities ranging from ~~3,000~~ three to nine thousand, except as to the State Treasurer, who, having but one competitor, was elected by over 20,000 majority. Nevertheless, owing to a division of the opposition vote for President between Fremont and Fillmore, Mr. Buchanan carried the State by a plurality of over 9,000, while an inequitable apportionment, depriving the northern counties of a fair proportion of representation, gave the Democrats a majority of one in each branch of the General Assembly, with five out of the nine Congressmen elected, in spite of an aggregate Republican majority on the Congressional vote of over 15,000.

The success of the Republicans in the election of their State ticket in 1856 had a most inspiring effect upon the adherents of the new party, and it was decided to celebrate the event in a banquet given at the Tremont House in Chicago, under the auspices of "The Young Men's Fremont Club" of that city, on the evening of December 10, 1856. Among the invited guests was a large contingent of the Republican editors of the State, members of the State Central Committee and others who had been prominent in the preceding campaign, ~~either locally or in the State at large~~. The Hon. J. Young Scammon, widely known as a liberal

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and public-spirited citizen and zealous Republican, presided. ~~Of course,~~ Mr. Lincoln occupied the place of honor beside the President, while by his side sat the eloquent Lovejoy, so long known as the apostle of "free speech and free soil". Inspiring letters were read from distinguished leaders who had been invited to be present but were unable to accept, including Salmon P. Chase, Senator William H. Seward, Cassius M. Clay, Gov. J. M. Grimes (afterwards United States senator) of Iowa, Senator Trumbull and others. ~~A large number of~~ Regular and volunteer toasts were proposed and eloquently responded to. One replied to by Mr. Simeon Whiteley, of the Aurora Guardian, who had frlt the effects of the effort to crush out free speech, was as follows:

The Free Press - Reviled, it will remonstrate; murdered, it will revive; buried, it will reascend: the very attempt at its oppression will prove the truth of its immortality.

"Our Adopted Citizens" was replied to by Mr. George Schneider, then editor of the leading German Republican paper of the Northwest, the Chicago Staats Zeitung, while Owen Lovejoy spoke eloquently to the sentiment - "The Northwest: To be the great central power of the Republic ~~—~~ never sectional; forever free". Other speakers were Dr. W. B. Egan, Ebenezer Peck (both local leaders) and Burton C. Cook, afterwards a member of Congress, while the Lombard brothers, popular vocalists, enlivened the occasion with inspiring campaign songs.

The chief speech of the evening, however, as it was also the first, was that delivered by Mr. Lincoln in response to the toast:

"The Union - The North will maintain it; the South will not depart from it".

No one then comprehended the full significance of the prophecy contained in this sentiment, least of all foresaw the part which Abraham Lincoln was destined to play in its ultimate fulfillment. Yet, both the sentiment and his response deserve to

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stand side by side with his prophetic speech in the old Hall of Representatives at Springfield in June, 1858, and his two inaugural addresses. Even then he was deliberating upon the problem in the solution of which he sacrificed his life. Delivered, as it was, on a festive occasion, to an audience full of enthusiasm over their first victory, the speech was in the orators best vein, both in its humorous and more serious passages. Commenting upon the last annual message of President Pierce, which had just been communicated to Congress, and to the rose colored view taken by it of the state of the nation as the result of the recent Presidential election, he said:

"Like a rejected lover making merry at the wedding of his rival, the President felicitates himself hugely over the late Presidential election. He considers the result a signal triumph of good principles and good men, and a very pointed rebuke of bad ones. He says the people did it. He forgets that the people, as he complacently calls only those who voted for Buchanan are in a minority of the whole people by about 400,000 votes - one full tenth of all the votes. Remembering this, he might perceive that the 'rebuke' may not be as durable as he seems to think - that the majority may not choose to remain permanently rebuked by that minority.

The President thinks the great body of us Fremonters, being ardently attached to liberty in the abstract, were duped by a few wicked and designing men. There is a slight difference of opinion on this. We think he, being ardently attached to the hope of a second term in the concrete, was duped by men who had liberty every way. He is the cat's paw. By much dragging of chestnuts from the fire for others to eat, his claws are burnt off to the gristle, and he is thrown aside as unfit for further use. As the fool said of 'King Lear', when his daughters had turned him out of doors, 'He's a shelled peascod'".

The speech concluded with this impressive appeal for union on the part of all those opposed to the policies of the Democratic party:

"In the late contest we were divided between Fremont and Fillmore. Can we not come together for the future? Let every one who really believes and is resolved that free society is not and shall not be a failure, and who can conscientiously declare that in the past contest he has done only what he thought best - let every such one have charity to believe that every other one can say as much. Thus let bygones be bygones; let past differences as nothing be; and with steady eye on the real issue, let us inaugurate the good old 'central ideas' of the Republic. We can do it. The human heart is with us; God is with us. We

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shall again be able not to declare that 'all States, as States, are equal', but to renew the broader, better declaration, including these and much more, that 'all men are created equal'".

This extract, though addressed to all classes of opponents of the doctrine of human servitude, sounds like an earlier echo of the principle which found a clearer, broader and more impressive utterance in the second inaugural, "With malice toward none, with charity for all". In the next four years he saw this appeal responded to in the consolidation of the opponents of slavery in the North with sufficient strength to secure his own election to the seat which had been occupied by the men whose position he then criticised so severely.

A new element of political agitation which gave an added stimulus to the zeal of Mr. Lincoln, as it did to the Republican party generally, was furnished early in 1857, in the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, in the celebrated Dred Scott case, which had been pending in the courts of Missouri and the United States some eight years. Coming, as it did, two days after the inauguration of Mr. Buchanan, it was regarded as having been withheld until this time for political reasons. In substance, it was (1) a denial of the right of a negro descended from slave parents to sue in the United States courts, on the ground that he was not a citizen within the meaning of the Constitution, and (2) an allegation of the unconstitutionality of the Missouri Compromise. The construction put upon it by President Buchanan was indicated in his message transmitting the Lecompton Constitution to Congress, when he declared: "It has been solemnly adjudged by the highest tribunal known to our laws, that slavery exists in Kansas by virtue of the Constitution of the United States. Kansas is, therefore, at this moment, as much a slave State as Georgia or South Carolina." Instead of allay-

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ing the excitement which had prevailed from the passage of the Nebraska bill, this sentiment had the effect to increase it. Added to the tragic events occurring in Kansas about the same time, the decision produced intense indignation throughout the North and eventually went far to insure the overthrow of the Democratic party. In his own State, Mr. Lincoln, with his strong logical sense, took the lead in opposing the monstrous doctrine which it inculcated. His principal, if not only, political speech of 1857 was made at Springfield on June 26, in reply to one made by Douglas, at the same place a few days previous, in approval of the decision. Without advocating resistance to the authority of the Supreme Court, he insisted it was competent for that body to rescind its own action, as it had repeatedly done in other cases. Referring to the aggressions upon the rights of the negro since the Declaration of Independence, of which this decision was an example, he said:

"Now, to aid in making the bondage of the negro universal and eternal, it (the Declaration) is assailed and sneered at and construed, and hawked at and torn, till, if its framers could rise from their graves, they could not at all recognize it. All the powers of earth seem rapidly combining against him. Mammon is after him, ambition follows, philosophy follows, and the theology of the day is fast joining the cry. They have him in his prison house; they have searched his prison, and left no prying instrument with him. One after another they have closed the heavy iron doors upon him and now they have him, as it were, bolted in with a lock of a hundred keys, which can never be unlocked without the concurrence of every key - the keys in the hands of a hundred different men, and they scattered to a hundred and distant places; and they stand musing as to what invention, in all the dominions of mind and matter, can be produced to make the imposibility of his escape more complete than it is."

A more graphic picture of the accumulating horrors of slavery and the increasing strength of the bondsman's chains has seldom been drawn. He closed with a picture of another sort, when contrasting the positions of the two parties, he said:

"The Republicans inculcate, with whatever of ability they can, that the negro is a man; that his bondage is cruelly wrong

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and that the field of his oppression ought not to be enlarged. The Democrats deny his manhood; deny, or dwarf to insignificance, the wrong of his bondage; so far as possible, crush all sympathy for him, and cultivate and excite hatred and disgust against him; compliment themselves as Union savers for doing so, and call the indefinite outspreading of his bondage 'a sacred right of self government'. The plainest print cannot be read through a gold eagle; and it will be ever hard to find many men who will send a slave to Liberia, and pay his passage, while they can send him to a new country - Kansas, for instance - and sell him for $1,500 and the rise".

The advent of 1858 saw the organization of the Republican party in Illinois greatly strengthened if not practically complete. The elements which had been divided in their opposition to the Democratic party, at least in the North, were now practically united, while their opponents were broken up into two factions on the Lecompton Constitution — the larger supporting Judge Douglas in opposition to it, while the smaller endorsed the position of the administration. The fact that it would devolve upon the Legislature about to be chosen to elect a United States Senator to succeed Mr. Douglas, who was already a recognized candidate, gave an almost national interest to the election of this year, which was further enhanced by the peculiar features of the campaign. By common consent, Mr. Lincoln was the choice of his party for the place - a choice which was expressed in the unanimous adoption of the following resolution by the Republican State Convention held at Springfield, June 16 and 17, 1858:

"Resolved, That Hon. Abraham Lincoln is our first and only choice for United States Senator, to fill the vacancy about to be created by the expiration of Mr. Douglas' term of office."

Thus Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Douglas were again pitted against each other, as they so often had been before, but under circumstances which attracted the attention of the whole nation to the contest and brought results far different from those anticipated by either party.

Mr. Lincoln's response to this resolution delivered on the

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evening of the second day of the Convention ~~"popularly known as his "House divided against itself" speech"~~ is generally regarded as the most remarkable effort of his life up to this period, if not during his whole public career. Its startling statements of fact, its logical deductions and its sagacious prediction of results, which were verified within the next seven years, directed the attention of the nation to the dangers threatened by the continued existence of slavery as it never had been before; and while it brought obloquy and reproach upon its author for the time being, its truthfulness and far-reaching provision are now universally recognized and commended. The most striking passages—passing over the argument—are to be found in the opening and closing paragraphs, as follows:

"If we could know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far in the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved - I do not expect the house to fall - but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

And in conclusion, alluding to Douglas' ~~position of~~ avowed indifference "whether slavery be voted down or voted up", he said:

"Our cause then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends - those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work, who do care for the result. . . . The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail - if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but sooner or later, the victory is sure to come."

This speech was delivered in the Hall of Representatives in the old State Capitol (now the Court House) in the city of Spring-

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field. During its delivery Mr. Lincoln stood on the second or lower platform, rather to the north of the Speaker's desk. He spoke with a deliberation and impressiveness exceeding his ordinary efforts showing that he felt the importance of every word he was uttering.

A few days afterward (July 10) Mr. Lincoln spoke from the balcony of the old Tremont House, in Chicago, and one week later at Springfield - on both occasions replying to Senator Douglas in a most effective manner. The following extract from his speech at the latter place will illustrate his line of argument:

"My declarations upon this subject of negro slavery may be misrepresented, but cannot be misunderstood. I have said that I do not understand the Declaration to mean that all men are created equal in all respects. They are not our equal in color; but I suppose that it does mean to declare that all men are equal in some respects; they are equal in their right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Certainly the negro is not our equal in color - perhaps not in some other respects, still, in the right to put into his mouth the bread that his own hands have earned, he is the equal of every other man, white or black. In pointing out that more has been given you, you cannot be justified in taking away the little which has been given him. All I ask for the negro is, that if you do not like him, let him alone. If God gave him but little, that little let him enjoy."

These three speeches - the two at Springfield and one at Chicago - in which he ably met and refuted the arguments of Senator Douglas were but the prelude to the series of joint debates which these two eloquent champions of opposing political policies met during the campaign of 1858. Upon these it is not the design of the present paper to encroach. Although again defeated in his aspirations to a seat in the United States senate by an unfair legislative apportionment, in spite of a Republican plurality on the popular vote - as shown by the success of the Republican State ticket - he had established a reputation as a speaker and debater that was recognized throughout the Nation and two years later made him the successful candidate for the Presidency.

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