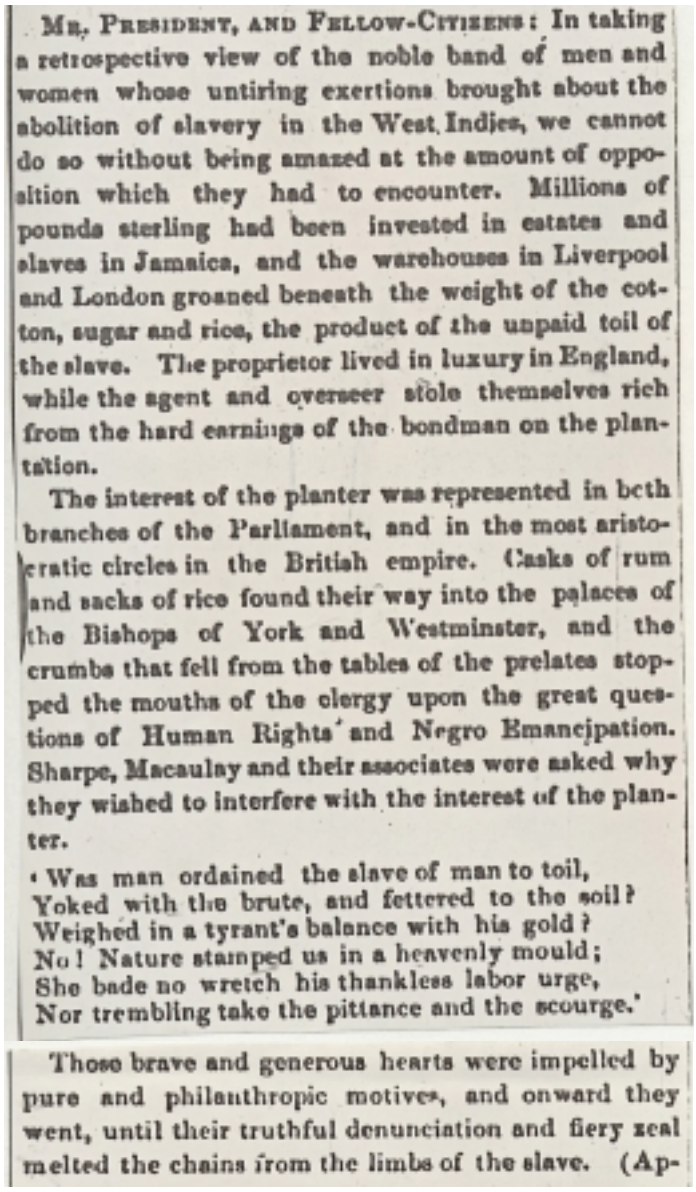
MR. PRESIDENT, AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: In taking a retrospective view of the noble band of men and women whose untiring exertions brought about the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, we cannot do so without being amazed at the amount of opposition which they had to encounter. Millions of pounds sterling had been invested in estates and slaves in Jamaica, and the warehouses in Liverpool and London groaned beneath the weight of the cotton, sugar and rice, the produce of the unpaid toil of the slave. The proprietor lived in luxury in England, while the agent and overseer stole themselves rich from the hard earnings of the bondman on the plantation.

The interest of the planter was represented in both branches of the Parliament, and in the most aristocratic circles in the British empire. Casks of rum and sacks of rice found their way into the palaces of the Bishops of York and Westminster, and the crumbs that fell from the tables of the prelates stopped the mouths of the clergy upon the great questions of Human Rights and Negro Emancipation. Sharpe, Macaulay and their associates were asked why they wished to interfere with the interest of the planter.

‘Was man ordained the slave of man to toil,
Yoked with the brute, and fettered to the soil?
Weighed in a tyrant’s balance with his gold?
No! Nature stamped us in a heavenly mould;
She bade no wretch his thankless labor urge,
Nor trembling take the pittance and the scourge.’

Those brave and generous hearts were impelled by pure and philanthropic motives, and onward they went, until their truthful denunciation and fiery zeal melted the chains from the limbs of the slave. (Ap-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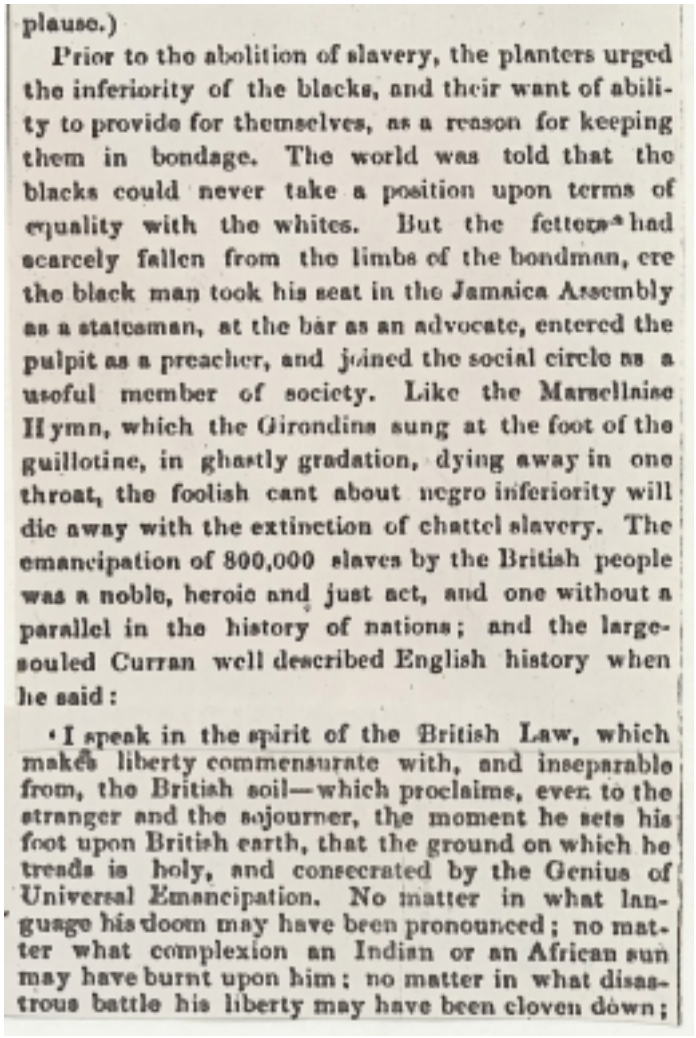
Prior to the abolition of slavery, the planters urged the inferiority of the blacks, and their want of ability to provide for themselves, as a reason for keeping them in bondage. The world was told that the blacks could never take a position upon terms of equality with the whites. But the fetters had scarcely fallen from the limbs of the bondman, ere the black man took his seat in the Jamaica Assembly as a statesman, at the bar as an advocate, entered the pulpit as a preacher, and joined the social circle as a useful member of society. Like the Marsellaise Hymn, which the Girondine sung at the foot of the guillotine, in ghastly gradation, dying away in one throat, the foolish cant about negro inferiority will die away with the extinction of chattel slavery. The emancipation of 800,000 slaves by the British people was a noble, heroic and just act, and one without a parallel in the history of nations; and the large-souled Curran well described English history when he said:

'I speak in the spirit of the British Law, which makes liberty commensurate with, and inseparable from, the British soil—which proclaims, ever to the stranger and the sojourner, the moment he sets his foot upon British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy, and consecrated by the Genius of Universal Emancipation. No mater in what language his doom may have been pronounced; no matter what complexion an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon him; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down;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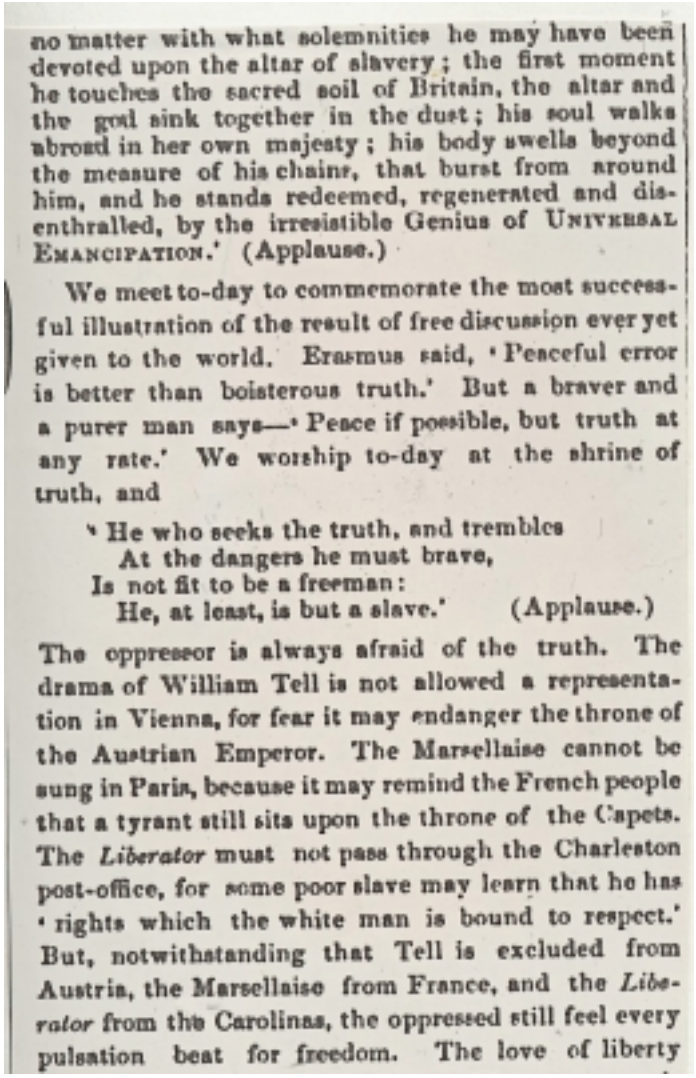
no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery; the first moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the god sink together in the dust; his soul walks abroad in her own majesty; his body swells beyond the measure of his chains, that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled, by the irresistible Genius of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION.' (Applause.)

We meet to-day to commemorate the most successful illustration of the result of free discussion ever yet given to the world. Erasmus said, 'Peaceful error is better than boisterous truth.' But a braver and a purer man says—'Peace if possible, but truth at any rate.' We worship to-day at the shrine of truth, and

'He who seeks the truth, and trembles
At the dangers he must brave,
Is not fit to be a freeman:
He, at least, is but a slave.' (Applause.)

The oppressor is always afraid of the truth. The drama of William Tell is not allowed a representation in Vienna, for fear it may endanger the throne of the Austrian Emperor. The Marsellaise cannot be sung in Paris, because it may remind the French people that a tyrant still sits upon the throne of the Capets. The *Liberator* must not pass through the Charleston post-office, for some poor slave may learn that he has 'rights which the white man is bound to respect.' But, notwithstanding that Tell is excluded from Austria, the Marsellaise from France, and the *Liberator* from the Carolinas, the oppressed still feel every pulsation beat for freedom. The love of liberty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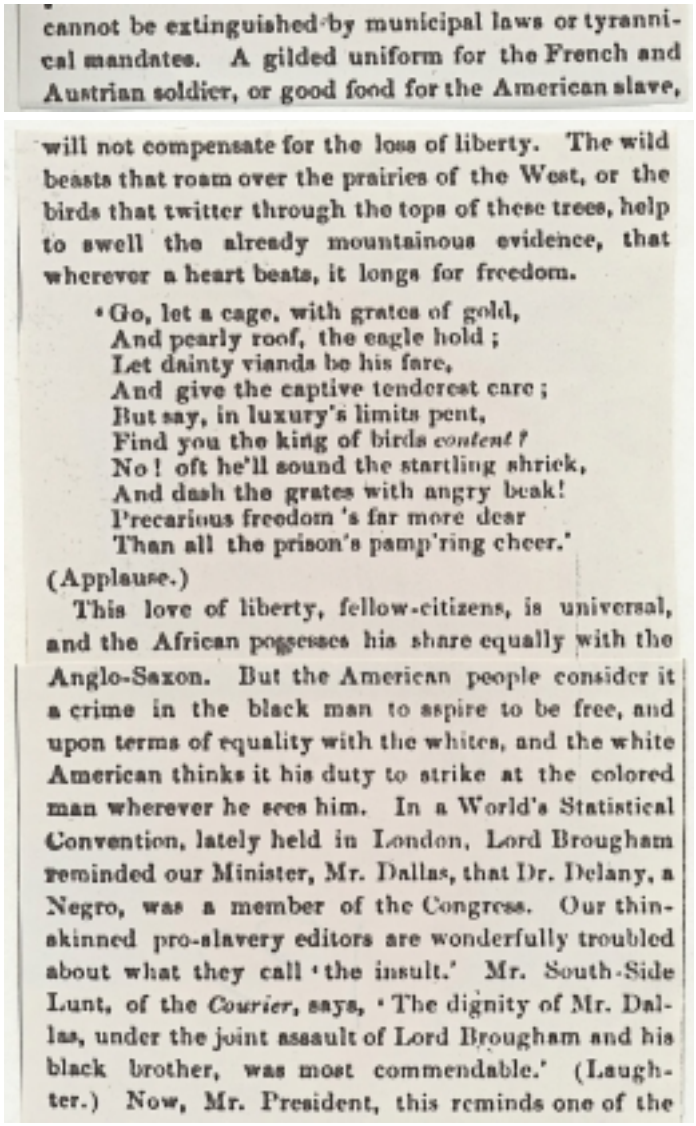
cannot be extinguished by municipal laws or tyrannical mandates. A gilded uniform for the French and Austrian soldier, or good food for the American slave, will not compensate for the loss of liberty. The wild beasts that roam over the prairies of the West, or the birds that twitter through the tops of these trees, help to swell the already mountainous evidence, that whenever a heart beats, it longs for freedom.

'Go, let a cage, with grates of gold,
And pearly roof, the eagle hold;
Let dainty viands be his fare,
And give the captive tenderest care;
But say, in luxury's limits pent,
Find you the king of birds *content?*
No! oft he'll sound the startling shriek,
And dash the grates with angry beak!
Precarious freedom's far more dear
Than all the prison's pamp'ring cheer.'

(Applause.)

This love of liberty, fellow-citizens, is universal, and the African possesses his share equally with the Anglo-Saxon. But the American people consider it a crime in the black man to aspire to be free, and upon terms of equality with the whites, and the white American thinks it his duty to strike at the colored man wherever he sees him. In a World's Statistical Convention, lately held in London, Lord Brougham reminded our Minister, Mr. Dallas, that Dr. Delany, a Negro, was a member of the Congress. Our thin-skinned pro-slavery editors are wonderfully troubled about what they call 'the insult.' Mr. South-Side Lunt, of the *Courier*, says, 'The dignity of Mr. Dallas, under the joint assault of Lord Brougham and his black brother, was most commendable.' (Laughter.) Now, Mr. President, this reminds one of the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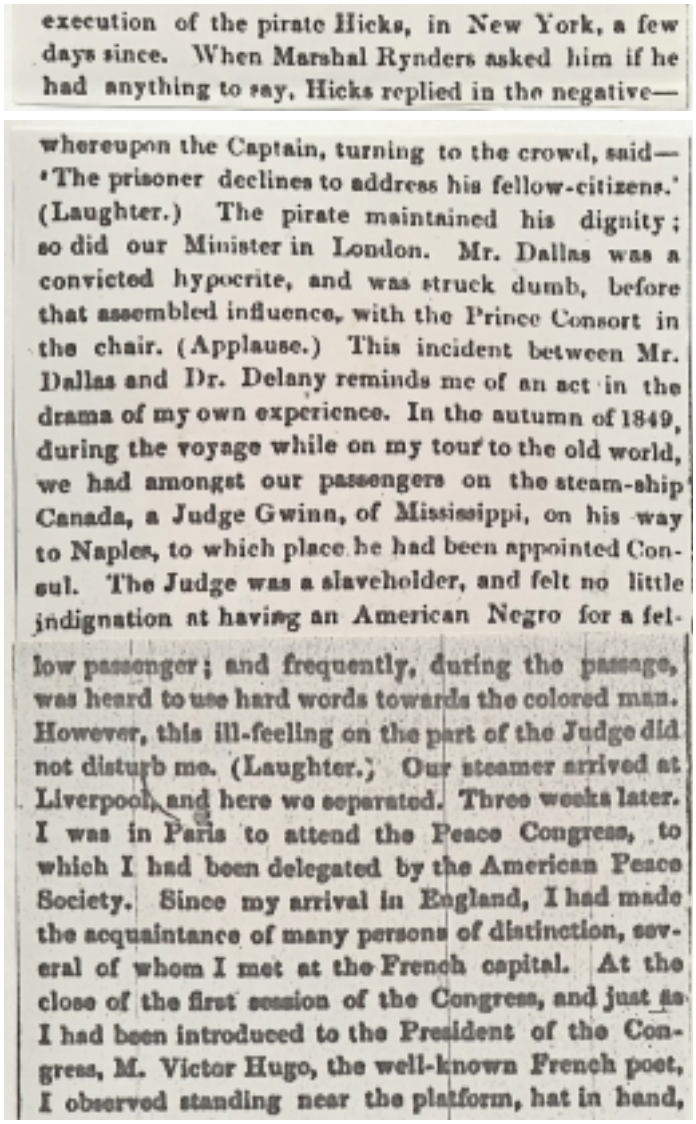
execution of the pirate Hicks, in New York, a few days since. When Marshal Rynders asked him if he had anything to say, Hicks replied in the negative—whereupon the Captain, turning to the crowd, said—'The prisoner declines to address his fellow-citizens.' (Laughter.) The pirate maintained his dignity; so did our Minister in London. Mr. Dallas was a convicted hypocrite, and was struck dumb, before that assembled influence, with the Prince Consort in the chair. (Applause.) This incident between Mr. Dallas and Dr. Delany reminds me of an act in the drama of my own experience. In the autumn of 1849, during the voyage while on my tour to the old world, we had amongst our passengers on the steam-ship Canada, a Judge Gwinn, of Mississippi, on his way to Naples, to which place he had been appointed Consul. The Judge was a slaveholder, and felt no little indignation at having an American Negro for a fellow passenger; and frequently, during the passage, was heard to use hard words towards the colored man. However, this ill-feeling on the part of the Judge did not disturb me. (Laughter.) Our steamer arrived at Liverpool, and here we separated. Three weeks later, I was in Paris to attend the Peace Congress, to which I had been delegated by the American Peace Society. Since my arrival in England, I had made the acquaintance of many persons of distinction, several of whom I met at the French capital. At the close of the first session of the Congress, and just as I had been introduced to the President of the Congress, M. Victor Hugo, the well-known French poet, I observed standing near the platform, hat in hand,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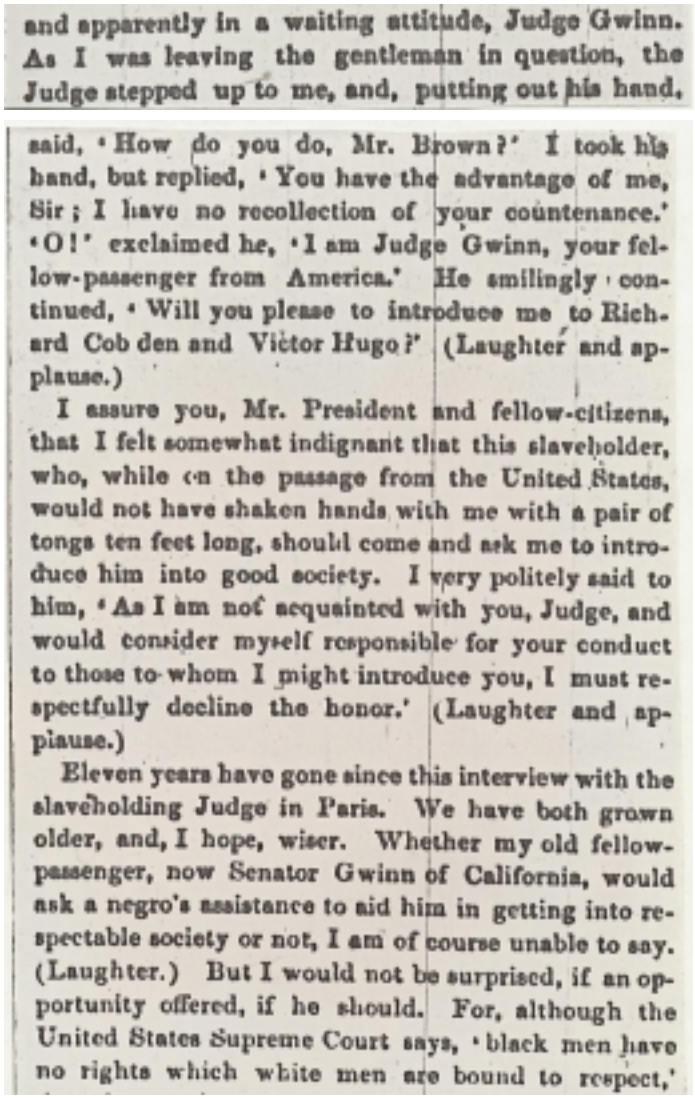
and apparently in a waiting attitude, Judge Gwinn. As I was leaving the gentleman in question, the Judge stepped up to me, and, putting out his hand, said, 'How do you do, Mr. Brown?' I took his hand, but replied, 'You have the advantage of me, Sir; I have no recollection of your countenance.' 'O!' exclaimed he, 'I am Judge Gwinn, your fellow-passenger from America.' He smilingly continued, 'Will you please to introduce me to Richard Cob den and Victor Hugo?' (Laughter and applause.)

I assure you, Mr. President and fellow-citizens, that I felt somewhat indignant that this slaveholder, who, while on the passage from the United States, would not have shaken hands with me with a pair of tongs ten feet long, should come and ask me to introduce him into good society. I very politely said to him, 'As I am not acquainted with you, Judge, and would consider myself responsible for your conduct to those to whom I might introduce you, I must respectfully decline the honor.' (Laughter and applause.)

Eleven yeas have gone since this interview with the slaveholding Judge in Paris. We have both grown older, and, I hope, wiser. Whether my old fellow-passenger, now Senator Gwinn of California, would ask a negro's assistance to aid him in getting into respectable society or not, I am of course unable to say. (Laughter.) But I would not be surprised, if an opportunity offered, if he should. For, although the United States Supreme Court says, 'black men have no right which white men are bound to respect,'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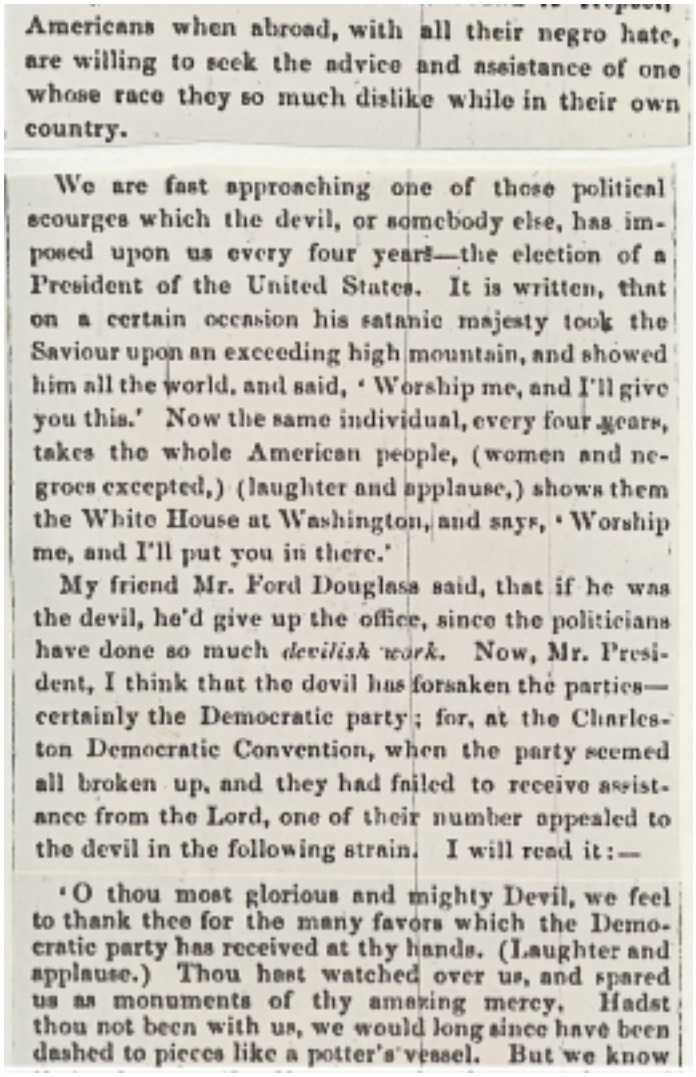
We are fast approaching one of those political scourges which the devil, or somebody else, has imposed upon us every four years—the election of a President of the United States. It s written, that on a certain occasion his satanic majesty took the Saviour upon an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the world, and said, 'Worship me, and I'll give you this.' Now the same individual, every four years, take the whole American people, (women and negroes excepted,) (laughter and applause,) shows them the White House at Washington, and says, 'Worship me, and I'll put you in there.'

My friend Mr. Ford Douglass said, that if he was the devil, he'd give up the office, since the politicians have done so much *devilish work*. Now, Mr. President, I think that the devil has forsaken the parties—certainly the Democratic party; for, at the Charleston Democratic Convention, when the party seemed all broken up, and they had failed to receive assistance from the Lord, one of their number appealed to the devil in the following strain. I will read it:—

'O thou most glorious and mighty Devil, we feel to thank thee for the many favors which the Democractic party has received at thy hands. (Laughter and applause.) Thou hast watched over us, and spared us as monuments of thy amazing mercy. Hadst thou not been with us, we would long since have been dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel. But we know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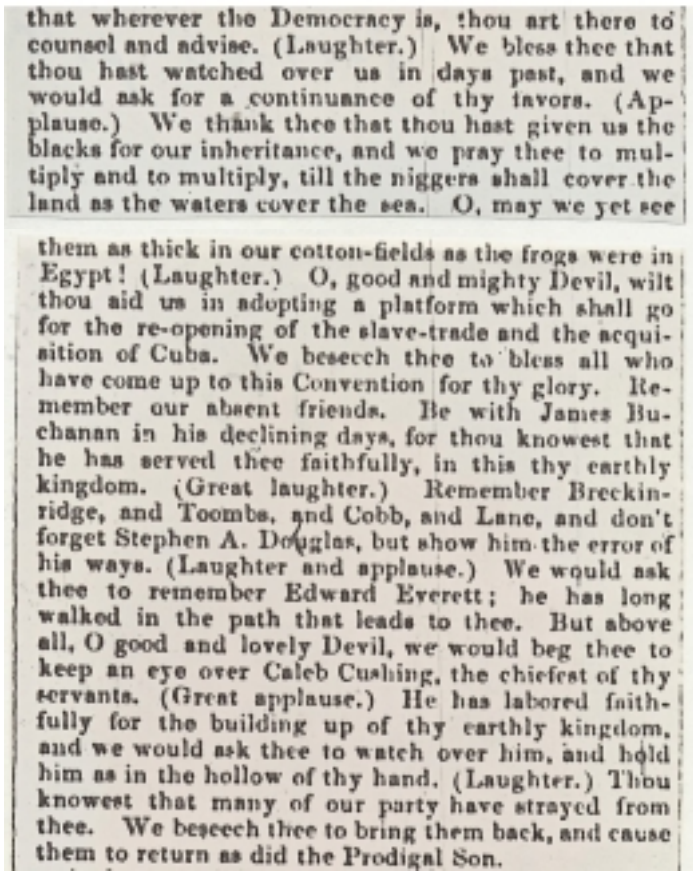
that wherever the Democracy is, thou art there to counsel and advise. (Laughter.) We bless thee that thou hast watched over us in days past, and we would ask for a continuance of thy favors. (Applause.) We thank thee that thou hast given us the blacks for our inheritance, and we pray to thee to multiply and to multiply, till the niggers shall cover the land as the waters cover the sea. O, may we yet see them as thick in our cotton-fields as the frogs were in Egypt! (Laughter.) O, good and mighty Devil, wilt thou aid us in adopting a platform which sall go for the re-opening of the slave-trade and the acquisition of Cuba. We beseech thee to bless all who have come up to this Convention for thy glory. REmember our absent friends. Be with James Buchanan in his declining days, for thou knowest that he has served thee faithfully, in this thy earthly kingdom. (Great laughter.) Remember Breckinridge, and Toombs, and Cobb, and Lane, and don't forget Stephen A. Douglas, but show him the error of his ways. (Laughter and applause.) We would ask thee to remember Edward Everett; he has long walked in the path that leads to thee. But above all, O good and lovely Devil, we would beg thee to keep an eye over Caleb Cushing, the chiefest of they servants. (Great applause.) He has labored faithfully for the building up of thy earthly kingdom, and we would ask thee to watch over him, and hold him as in the hollow of thy hand. (Laughter.) Thou knowest that many of our party have strayed from thee. We beseech thee to bring them back, and cause them to return as did the Prodigal Son.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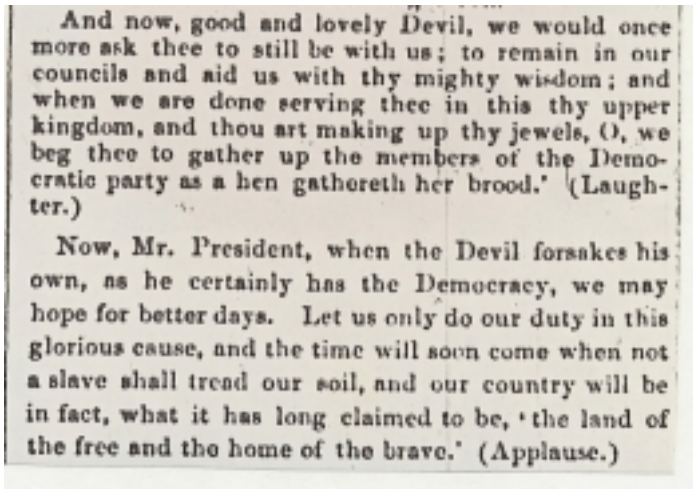
Now, Mr. President, when the Devil forsakes his own, as he certainly has the Democracy, we may hope for better days. Let us only do our duty in this glorious cause, and the time will soon come when not a slave shall tread our soil, and our country will be in fact, what it has long claimed to be, 'the land of the free and the home of the brave.' (Applause.)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