Mr. President,

The question which is presented to us to-night for decision, on account of the intimate connection which it has both with the present and future welfare of our happy and prosperous country, and on account of the influence it may exert upon the cause of popular freedom all the world over, demands our serious and hearty consideration. It is an American patriot, wise in the ways of the world, who, regarding with satisfaction the rapid strides with which this wondrous world has advanced and is now advancing, towards the goal of national eminence, watches with anxiety every attempt which may be made to overthrow the palladiums of our liberties; to the friends of human rights, who see in the success or failure of this experiment of self-government, blessings or miseries, entwined not only with our own people, but also with a large portion of the habitable globe; and to the Christian philanthropist, whose daily prayer is directed to the God of nations for the preservation of our few religious institutions, this question commands itself, with peculiar force and interest.

Conscience, then, of the magnitude of the question and its issues, I enter upon the defense of the negative, with a disposition inspired by a knowledge of my personal instability, yet, at the same time, relying upon the strength of the cause which I express as sufficient of itself to determine a correct decision in my unprejudiced mind. Regarding truth as the end, and the good of our country as the aim of my remarks, I now proceed to examine the arguments and methods of reasoning employed by the Gentleman who has just addressed you in support of the affirmative.

The Gentleman advances his first argument from the fact that we have large public domains yet unpeopled, wide wastes of wilderness untouched, save by the haunts of savages, and would have us encourage immigration from Europe, in order that these wilds may be reclaimed, and that the howl of busy life may be heard, when once around, the Savage warwhoop.