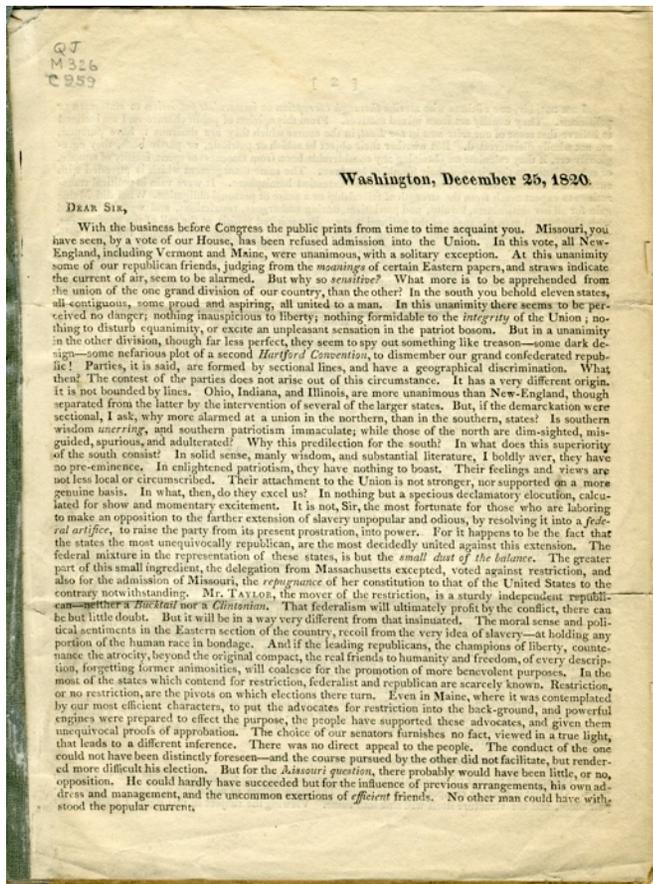


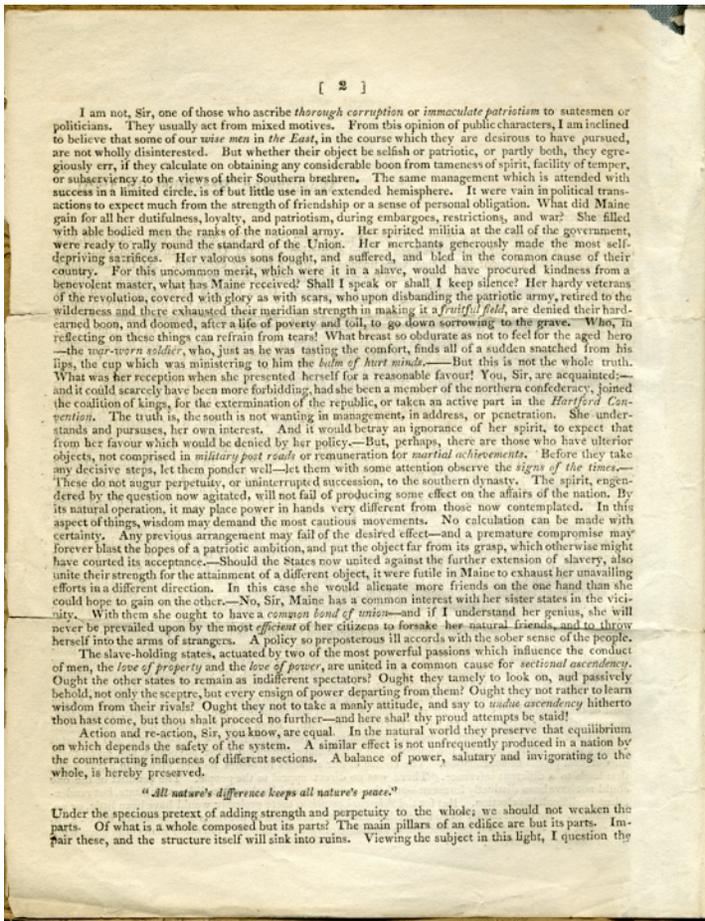
Washington, December 25, 1820

Dear Sir,

With the business before Congress the public prints from time to time acquaint you. Missouri, you have seen, by a vote of our House, has been refused admission into the Union. In this vote, all New-England, including Vermont and Maine, were unanimous, with a solitary exception. At this unanimity some of our republican friends, judging from the *moanings* of certain Eastern papers, and straws indicate the current of air, seem to be alarmed. But why so sensitive? What more is to be apprehended from the union of one of the grand division of our country, than the other? In the south you behold eleven states, all contiguous, some proud and aspiring, all united to a man. In this unanimity there seems to be perceived no danger; nothing inauspicious to liberty; nothing formidable to the integrity of the Union; nothing to disturb equanimity, or excite an unpleasant sensation in the patriot bosom. But in a unanimity in the other division, though far less perfect, they seem to spy out something like treason—some dark design—some nefarious plot of a second Hartford Convention, to dismember our grand confederated republic! Parties, it is said, are formed by sectional lines, and have a geographical discrimination. What then? The contest of the parties does not arise out of this circumstance. It has a very different origin. It is not bounded by lines. Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, are more unanimous than New-England, though separated from the latter by the intervention of several of the larger states. But if the demarcation were sectional, I ask, why more alarmed at a union in the northern, than in the southern states? Is southern wisdom unerring, and southern patriotism immaculate; while those of the north are dim-sighted, misguided, spurious, and adulterated? Why this predilection for the south? In what does this superiority of the south consist? In solid sense, manly wisdom, and substantial literature, I boldly aver, they have no pre-eminence. In enlightened patriotism they have nothing to boast. Their feelings and views are not less local or circumscribed. Their attachment to the Union is not stronger, nor supported on a more genuine basis. In what, then, do they excel us? In nothing but a specious declamatory elocution, calculated for show and momentary excitement. It is not, Sir, the most fortunate for those who are laboring to make an opposition to the farther extension of slavery unpopular and odious, by resolving it into a federal artifice, to raise the party from its present prostration, into power. For it happens to be the fact that the states the most unequivocally republican, are the most decidedly united against this extension. The federal mixture in the representation of these states, is but the *small dust of the balance*. The greater part of this small ingredient, the delegation from Massachusetts excepted, voted against restriction, and also for the admission of Missouri, the repugnance of her constitution to that of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding. Mr. TAYLOR, the mover of the restriction, is a sturdy independent republican—neither a Bucktail nor a Clintonian. That federalism will ultimately profit by the conflict, there can be but little doubt. But it will be in a way very different from that insinuated. The moral sense and political sentiments in the Eastern section of the country, recoil from the very idea of slavery—at holding any portion of the human race in bondage. And if the leading republicans, the champions of liberty, countenance the atrocity, beyond the original compact, the real friends to humanity and freedom, of every description, forgetting former animosities, will coalesce for the promotion of more benevolent purposes. In the most of the states which contend for restriction, federalist and republican are scarcely known. Restriction, or no restriction, are the pivots on which elections there turn. Even in Maine, where it was contemplated by our most efficient characters, to put the advocates for restriction into the back-ground, and powerful engines were prepared to effect the purpose, the people have supported these advocates, and given them unequivocal proofs of approbation. The choice of our senators furnishes no fact, viewed in a true light, that leads to a different inference. There was no direct appeal to the people. The conduct of the one could not have been distinctly foreseen—and the course pursued by the other did not facilitate, but rendered more difficult his election. But for the Missouri question, there probably would have been little, or no, opposition. He could hardly have succeeded but for the influence of previous arrangements, his own address and management, and the uncommon exertions of efficient friends. No other man could have withstood the popular current.



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Date: Dec. 25, 1820
Description: Missouri Compromise



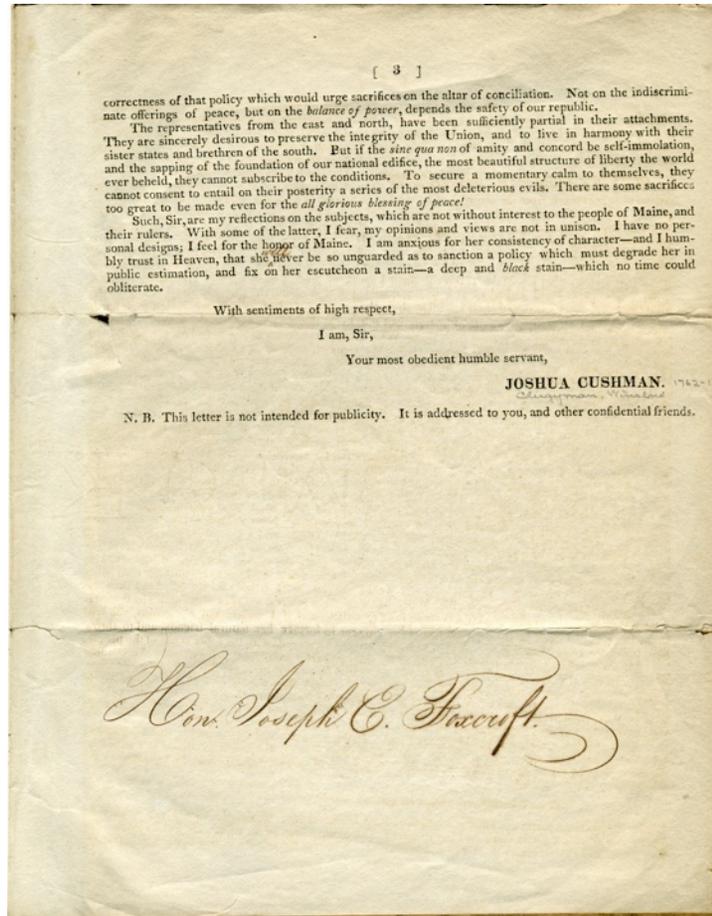
to believe that some of our wise men in the East, in the course which they are desirous to have pursued, are not wholly disinterested. But whether their object be selfish or patriotic, or partly both, they egregiously err, if they calculate on obtaining any considerable boon from tameness of spirit, facility of temper, or subserviency to the views of their Southern brethren. The same management which is attended with success in a limited circle, is of but little use in an extended hemisphere. It were vain in political transactions to expect much from the strength of friendship or a sense of personal obligation. What did Maine gain for all her dutifulness, loyalty, and patriotism, during embargoes, restrictions, and war? She filled with able bodied men the ranks of the national army. Her spirited militia at the call of the government, were ready to rally round the standard of the Union. Her merchants generously made the most self-depriving sacrifices. Her valorous sons fought, and suffered, and bled in the common cause of their country. For this uncommon merit, which were it in a slave, would have procured kindness from a benevolent master, what has Maine received? Shall I speak or shall I keep silence? Her hardy veterans of the Revolution, covered with glory as with scars, who upon disbanding the patriotic army, retired to the wilderness and there exhausted their meridian strength in making it a fruitful field, are denied their hard-earned boon, and doomed, after a life of poverty and toil, to go down sorrowing to the grave. Who, in reflecting on these things can refrain from tears! What breast so obdurate as not to feel for the aged hero—the war-worn soldier, who, just as he was tasting the comfort, finds all of a sudden snatched from his lips, the cup which was ministering to him the balm of hurt minds.—But this is not the whole truth. What was her reception when she presented herself for a reasonable favour! You, Sir, are acquainted:—and it could scarcely have been more forbidding, had she been a member of the northern confederacy, joined the coalition of kings, for the extermination of the republic, or taken an active part in the Hartford Convention. The truth is, the south is not wanting in management, in address, or penetration. She understands and pursues, her own interest. And it would betray an ignorance of her spirit, to expect that from her favour which would be denied by her policy.—But, perhaps, there are those who have ulterior objects, not comprised in military post roads or remuneration for martial achievements. Before they take any decisive steps, let them ponder well—let them with some attention observe the signs of the times.—These do not augur perpetuity, or uninterrupted succession, to the southern dynasty. The spirit, engendered by the question now agitated, will not fail of producing some effect on the affairs of the nation. By its natural operation, it may place power in hands very different from those now contemplated. In this aspect of things wisdom may demand the most cautious movements. No calculation can be made with certainty. Any previous arrangement may fail of the desired effect—and a premature compromise may forever blast the hopes of a patriotic ambition, and put the object far from its grasp, which otherwise might have courted its acceptance.—Should the States now united against the further extension of slavery, also unite their strength for the attainment of a different object, it were futile in Maine to exhaust her unavailing efforts in a different direction. In this case she would alienate more friends on the one hand than she could hope to gain on the other.—No, Sir, Maine has a common interest with her sister states in the vicinity. With them she ought to have a common bond of union—and if I understand her genius, she will never be prevailed upon by the most efficient of her citizens to forsake her natural friends, and to throw herself into the arms of strangers. A policy so preposterous ill accords with the sober sense of the people.

The slave-holding states, actuated by two of the most powerful passions which influence the conduct of men, the love of property and the love of power, are united in a common cause for sectional ascendancy. Ought the other states to remain as indifferent spectators? Ought they tamely to look on, and passively behold, not only the sceptre, but every design of power departing from them? Ought they not rather to learn wisdom from their rivals? Ought they not to take a manly attitude, and say to undue ascendancy hitherto thou hast come, but thou shalt proceed no further—and here shall thy proud attempts be staid!

Action and re-action, Sir, you know, are equal. In the natural world they preserve that equilibrium on which depends the safety of the system. A similar effect is not unfrequently produced in a nation by the counteracting influences of different sections. A balance of power, salutary and invigorating to the whole, is hereby preserved.

"All nature's difference keeps all nature's peace."

Under the specious pretext of adding strength and perpetuity to the whole; we should not weaken the parts. Of what is a whole composed but its parts? The main pillars of an edifice are but its parts. Impair these, and the structure itself will sink into ruins. Viewing the subject in this light, I question the



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correctness of that policy which would urge sacrifices on the altar of conciliation. Not on the indiscriminate offerings of peace, but on the balance of power, depends the safety of our republic.

The representatives from the east and north, have been sufficiently partial in their attachments. They are sincerely desirous to preserve the integrity of the Union, and to live in harmony with their sister states and brethren of the south. But if the *sine qua non* of amity and concord be self-immolation, and the sapping of the foundation of our national edifice, the most beautiful structure of liberty the world ever beheld, they cannot subscribe to the conditions. To secure a momentary calm to themselves, they cannot consent to entail on their posterity a series of the most deleterious evils. There are some sacrifices too great to be made even for the all glorious blessing of peace!

Such, Sir, are my reflections on the subjects, which are not without interest to the people of Maine, and their rulers. With some of the latter, I fear, my opinions and views are not in unison. I have no personal designs; I feel for the honor of Maine. I am anxious for her consistency of character—and I humbly trust in Heaven, that she never be so unguarded as to sanction a policy which must degrade her in public estimation, and fix on her escutcheon a stain—a deep and black stain—which no time could obliterate.

With sentiments of high respect,
I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,
JOSHUA CUSHMAN

N.B. This letter is not intended for publicity. It is addressed to you, and other confidential friends.

Hon. Joseph C. Foxcroft.