Substance of the Speech of the Rev. Robert J. Breckinridge,

February 2, 1838.

ficiently insisted on, which may serve still further | lightest slumbers. to show the grandeur of our enterprise, and the

arrived in its progress.

pathy in the success of our great sister societies, | zens, who may be less thoroughly acquainted with | philosophy. convinced that this scheme was of proportions too vast, to be managed in all its greatness by any colony, and sent out their first emigrants.

good thing to the emigrant, to the country which and gratitude, rather than sue for her reluctant and active efforts to encourage the emigration of ern portions of the continent; and now while the he colonizes, and to that which sends him forth; and scanty bounty. For it has conferred upon her the black race from this state, is just the same thing | Europeans are steadily pressing from both extreor, if for either one of these three signal advantages, present blessings, which no man can too highly as to labour that we may entail on our own state it be pronounced good to send colonies to Africa, appreciate; it promises to her the peaceful and all the evils of that condition of society, which in we must be content to agree in the good, and allow | fortunate solution of the most difficult and agi- | every past age, has been found most unmanagethe utmost latitude in the mode and reasons of tating of all the problems which disorder society; able and dangerous. We discharge a great duty rally, people of Asiatic origin; who in their turn action. We are not able to fathom the whole and it secures to her name and institutions, a re- to Maryland, by favouring the progress of things depths of future time; and therefore let us act | doubled glory and perpetuity, on either shore of | towards a unity of race, and that the white race, with modesty and candour, as well as with perfect | that vast ocean beyond which her wisdom and | no matter how that progress is effected, as touchconscientiousness. The friends of colonization goodness have reached to rebuild the noblest em- | ing the question of free or slave emigration. But north of us, may favour this great attempt, for | blem of human supremacy and majesty, an empire | as we are American citizens, we do a corresreasons which those south of us may entirely in which laws reign, and men are happy! reject; and we in the centre may proceed on In whatever light we regard this subject, it federacy by encouraging a slave emigration into seats. Whence, if not from us, can such an emigrounds quite different from those on either ex- grows upon our contemplations, into proportions them, instead of a free black emigration abroad; gration flow? treme; while the parent board may find it most of surprising grandeur. How short is the span of and we effect, on the other hand, a good to the advisable to take its stand upon principles some- | time run over, since the whole interest which it | whole nation, by favouring an emigration from it what different from all. In this one point we all excited was locked up in a few devoted hearts; of this hostile ingredient. So that, to arrest the agree, that the necessities of the world, and the when the meditations of a score or less of great | current of African colonization, is to gather and strong dictates of wisdom and humanity, require | minds, and the prayers of as many fervent spirits | thicken over the southern country, if not also over | race; we may fail of making any adequate imthe planting of colonies of blacks from this coun. | contained the secret history of these august plans, | all central America, those elements of social debiltry in Africa-and to that grand object we all which to-day Senates receive as fixed principles ity and discord which have proved the most intracdirect our energies. Sir, it gives me peculiar of wisdom, and States engraft upon their settled table to other ages, and to rob us at the same pleasure to bear this open testimony, and to be the codes—and which another age will hail as the moment of the only outlet by which the subject from the country, only the select and choice

these sound and liberal sentiments.

interest at any scheme of operations, which is | seed hardly visible in the palm of the child's hand, | explanation, of their bitter and unreasonable oppoavowedly directed in such a manner, and to such is by and by, the lofty tree, whose branches shel- sition to African colonization. They were not the public order, the social state, and the political some trembling heart, swells onward and up- mocked the slave for his too tardy vengeance; be concealed, that the peculiar geographical posi- | before it the venerable ruins of departed ages. | means to reduce us to such extremes, that if in of these unhappy times, give to the subject before | judged by the stern and erring tribunal of human | fulfilled as they rejoiced over our mangled bodies aim wholly unattainable. No principles are more by the wisdom which cometh from above. dual, and then unaccompanied with the grant of | We look around us, and we confidently demand, - | tainty and security to all that remains behind. It growing party, which deterred by the greatness of forward—and our appeal is to the nations, to pos- cally our duty to all concerned to manifest in the very-deny the necessity of abolishing it at all. | when the altars around which she is worshipped | only the clear right, but the bounden duty, and say; not only is the colonization cause the great | if we be hindered, that gospel is excluded from | the pretext that we do not favour freedom enough

Although, therefore, I have been, and am, the firm | behold the blessed result, in the total freedom from | which we are embarked. delphia and New York—the board of this society, grand experiment whose successful issue we are of men in their bosom; that all attempts at amal-

For ourselves, the good people of this common- is the progress of all that is truly great; it is the foreign and northern incendiaries towards the relations of the whole community. Nor is it to ward into an overflowing sentiment, that sweeps they were careful at the same time, to seek by all us, an unusual importance, and to the public sen- power, is in truth the very point, in which all earth- and desolated firesides; or if we triumphed, our ness. After what we have heard to-night I shall ly involved. And so with us, another sacred les- of that other great wish of their benevolent hearts, not attempt to speak particularly of the principles, son is exhibited, rebuking all contempt of the day in our condemnation at the bar of the human race! the spirit, or the aims of the abolition party. I of small things, and putting to shame that restless, That wisdom, which is represented by the greatest fully believe that their principles are false, their | daring, and impatient ignorance, that will not be | of poets to be supremely diabolical, consists in the spirit in the highest degree fanatical, and their guided in its prompt and vehement madness, even ability to dash wise counsels.'

interests of humanity, not well understood. I can the equator, on the western coast of Africa, then most vulnerable point, by concentrating upon it a solemnly declare, after much personal experience, the mighty prize is won! From that instant, the warlike population, hostile to us by reason of

the cry against the country, and every inducement | pose we intermit all our efforts, and leave the vast ments; and that the principles on which the case | gone forward calmly, steadily, and nobly. Great | pressure. The most casual glance at the evils

being so, have deplored its reverses, and now cor- our borders, in times and upon subjects, that con- holding states are more united in opinion, than that hostile points. dially rejoice in its returning prosperity, I was | vulse nearly all our sister communities. Let us | there ought not to be any attempt to liberate the for the production of an independent action on the | we may do so, let us cherish the grand interest, | of an emigration somewhat proportioned to the part of other societies, as being imperatively re- which perhaps more than all things else confers | number set free. It may not be of especial consequired, by all the great interests involved. And upon us our present enviable peace and unity. | quence to Maryland, at the present moment, whe-I see, that if our efforts to secure this principle of ensue, if the favourable progress of this cause be New England; nor indeed whether the black race, separate action had unhappily failed, we should arrested-or worse still, if it be divorced from the as a point of state policy, be removed free or bond. have assailed us, either of success abroad or defence and the state patronage which has made it so sta- the commonwealth, that the interests of the whites, great central board, and should as sensibly regret | ing greatness of the subject, for discussion and | are by no means favoured, by accumulating still its withdrawal from the field, as the failure of our settlement, in our pulpits, through our presses, further the free coloured population amongst us: own cherished principle. In the same manner, before our popular assemblies, in our courts of but that on the other hand, the strongest argument springing up over the face of the country,-I the conflicting interests and views which enter the whole black race could be removed from the rejoice to behold in them, the successive develop- | into the composition of society, as it exists with | state. I concur to a great extent in the wisdom reaches that result by a different process. Espe- | cause of freedom, be considered the enemy of free- | no single fact has proved in all ages more dangercially, as it regards the united societies of Phila- dom itself! Let him who would unsettle the ous to states than the existence of distinct races ed! As it regards the commonwealth of Mary- never can occur, while human nature remains ponding damage to other portions of the con-

Nor should we forget, how greatly the difficlear to my mind, than that slavery never can be, From the point which we have reached, we culties of our undertaking may be augmented by and never should be attempted to be abolished in look back, almost with awe, to the slight agencies | delay; while the speedy and striking accomthis country, except in a manner exceedingly gra- | upon which so great results have been staked. | plishment of the first stages of it, will give cerpolitical and social equality to the blacks, but can the black race, can the great interests of the is due to the free coloured population of the counattended as far as possible with foreign coloni- nation, can the christian feeling of the country try that they should not be allowed for one mozation. This conviction, is I think universal afford to part with our principles, or to give up | ment to entertain the idea, that the pretensions set throughout the slave country. But at the same our succour, or to surrender our victories won up on their behalf can ever be realized, especially time, there is a considerable, and of late years a over so much prejudice and ignorance? We look | in any of the slave-holding states. It is emphatithe difficulties and sacrifices which the enterprise | terity and to God; and we abide the issue in joy- | clearest and most decided manner, that as in our involves, or not convinced of the general injustice, | ful confidence. We are laying the foundations of | opinion the best interests of all the parties, require impolicy, and unprofitableness of a state of sla- republics, where liberty may dwell in safety, their early and permanent separation, so it is not For our part, Mr. President, we do not, nor does | now, are left desolate; they who would obstruct | fixed purpose of the community to effect that your society, nor does our commonwealth, consent our labours, are her foes. We are upbuilding result; and that all opposing pretensions whether to the principles of this party. It must indeed be | what forty centuries have not been able to pro- on the part of the free blacks, or on that of the confessed, that the atrocious conduct of the aboli- | duce, a civilized people of the race of Ham; they | slaves, or on that of a handful of dissatisfied cititionists, has greatly increased this party, and are the enemies of a third part of mankind who zens on either extreme of opinion, must bend greatly weakened ours throughout the country; | would stop our progress. We are toiling for what | before the great necessities of the case. It is our and that it would scarcely be prudent to attempt | the world never yet saw, a powerful, well-ordered, | duty to the cause itself to rally round it, and urge the application of any principles of gradual eman- | enlightened state within the tropics; the earth | it forward, while the obstacles that oppose it are cipation,—perhaps it would be unwise even to itself, if it could utter its voice, would rebuke the only such, as moral means may overcome. The argue them before the people, in the face of such | folly that dares to resist so great a purpose. We | increasing violence of our enemies; the growing a storm of fire and brimstone as is now sweeping are planting the gospel of God, where a wide and strength of opposite parties which, agreeing in over the north. But this, sir, is what I would | effectual door is opened to our attempts, and where | nothing else, mutually denounce us, the one on platform on which the friends of the country and | millions of souls; let their blood be required, not | and the other, because we favour it at all; the of man every where, may meet and unite; but of us, but of those who in the name of Christ deny growing excitability of the public mind, upon the especially, in this commonwealth, at the present | him to those who stretch out their hands and raise | whole subject, and the evil tendency of this conmoment, every consideration should impel every | their piteous lamentations for the long delay of his | tention and uncertainty upon the spirit of the class of our citizens to rally around this enterprise, promised coming. We see already, almost the blacks; the mixture of questions, which ought to and carry it forward with constancy and vigour. | certainty of complete success in these magnificent | be purely local and municipal in their decision, This idea appears to me, to be unspeakably designs. We have planted germs; we know not with national politics, ecclesiastical agitations, important. The abolition fanaticism, is not a which will bear fruit, nor can we read the future and even with questions of war and peace, allinational, nor even an indigenous monster. It is a | to foretell that any will grow into a free, civilized, | ance and treaty with foreign states; all these foreign, an English scheme, engendered more in | christian state of tolerable power. But this we | things show, that our work brooks no unnecessary hereditary animosity towards this republic, than know, that the moment one city, one single city delay. The accumulation of the Indian tribes on in any enlightened, or even serious regard for the of free, civilized, christian blacks, is planted near our slave frontier, making doubly defenceless our

that I found no man in England who seemed to whole problem in all its complexity and vastness hereditary wrongs, and more inclined by nature to Delivered at the Sixth Anniversary Meeting, of the be half as attentive, or half as much excited in as to the black race is solved. The slave-trade sympathize with the dark man, than with the pale Maryland State Colonization Society, held at Annapolis, regard to the evils of British slavery, diffused dies; the civilization and conversion of Africa is faces: the growing jealousy of the Spanish-Amealmost every where over their immense colonies, fixed; the destiny of the race of Ham redeemed; rican states along the southern edge of this conti-At this late stage of our meeting, Mr. President, and every where more terrible than any that exists the equatorial region of the earth reclaimed; and nent, against us; states, in no sense deserving to and after hearing the full and able presentation of in any part of the United States, as all seemed to the human race itself launched into a new and be called white, and whether we consider the our cause, to which we have all listened with de- be upon the subject as it affects us! Evils they glorious career, of which all the triumphs of the Spanish, the negro, or the Indian origin of their lighted attention—it would be exceedingly unbe- can cure, and which are personal to themselves, past afford no parallel. Ages may be required to population, equally inclined to hate, above all coming in me, to attempt a regular defence of the are little regarded, and except in the West India render all these triumphs perfect; but ages are races, that illustrious Anglo-Saxon, whose destinies society whose annual meeting this is, and of the Islands not even cared for; while their bowels nothing when continents are the subjects of their are so deeply staked on ours; the critical state of immense interests staked upon our success. I yearn over us with inexpressible tenderness, and tuition, and nations sit their willing pupils. Once the immense black population in the West India shall be excused however, in offering a few con- language fails them to express their horror for that plant the leaven thoroughly, then fear not but that islands; and the great, though imperfectly forederations, not yet suggested, or not perhaps suffi- in us, which in themselves disturbs not their it works. Remember Plymouth. For a hundred seen influence, which future developments in those and sixty years from its settlement, light had not | islands must have upon the southern portion of The party with us, is but the reflector of this scaled the Alleghanies, though almost visible from this continent, and particular upon the interests deep importance of the crisis at which we have foreign malignity, and every sentiment of patriot- its rock. Their summit reached, in less than of the black race; the necessity, which the very ism and national wisdom should impel us at the thirty years more, the tide had already crossed the nature of the political scheme on which the great No sentiment could be more congenial to my same time that we rebuke this anti-national spirit Mississippi. Who doubts that it will one day, family of European nations in our times regulates feelings, than that expressed in the resolution I at home, and despise and defy it from abroad, to penetrate to the shores of the Pacific? The facts its various, conflicting, and nicely balanced intehave been requested to submit—of cordial sym- take out of the way of our immediate fellow-citi- of history are but the illustrations of a profound rests, forcing upon them all, a ceaseless vigilance over every element which enters into the compoin the work of colonization. I have long been the posture of affairs, every temptation to mingle in Let us for a moment reverse the subject. Sup-sition of modern states, and inclining them all to take advantage of every crisis, to weaken our to do aught that even in appearance could give interests staked upon them to the decision of posture at home, and to arrest the progress of our single board; that the interests involved were too countenance to our enemies, either at home or chance, or to the guidance of those adverse influgreat to be trusted to a single series of experi- abroad. Heretofore, the people of this state, have ences, which exert already so severe and bad a exterior considerations, no less than the whole tendency of all our interior affairs, urge us with proceeds are too diversified to be capable of suc. | unanimity of sentiment, great fixedness of public | which would ensue, is enough to fire every heart | importunate earnestness to give redoubled vigour cessful application by any single organization. opinion, has every where exhibited itself; and we amongst us with redoubled zeal in the cause in to efforts, which by prompt success may disarm so many difficulties, but which lukewarmness and friend of the parent Society at Washington,—and all commotion, and every scene of violence in all There is no point upon which the entire slave- delay may endanger from so great a variety of

If we turn our regards to the continent of Africa, one of those, who at a very early period laboured preserve this honourable distinction. And that slaves without a certain and immediate prospect no thought of withholding our hands from this good work, can find a lodgment in any christian heart, which is not pre-occupied with some strange fanaticism. If America has any work to do for now, while in looking around me, I see, or think Who is there that doubts what must immediately ther our liberated slaves remove to Africa or to the earth, if American patriots are under any obligations to enlarge the boundaries of civilization and liberty—if American christians are bound by any be in a position incapable, amid the storms which state policy, which has given it so much strength, But I believe there is no difference of opinion in tie to spread abroad to benighted men, the knowledge and the truth of their divine Lord, then above at home,—I am still sincerely the friend of the ble, and be thrown open again in the whole impos- as well as those of the blacks, both bond and free, all other lands, is Africa committed to us for redemption, and above all other trusts, that to enlighten and to save her, ought to be considered the most sacred. If the past history of man, affords us when I look to those independent societies which, since ours, have sprung up, and are continually since ours, have sprung up, and are continually its settlement, effected a great compromise of all of Africa, is destined in some way, and by some race to be still farther colonized to an immense extent: and if that portion of it inhabited by the ment of principles and grounds of action, which, that he may more rapidly advance the though they all terminate in one result, yet each moment, that he may more rapidly advance the suaded after much examination of the case, that race, the native population must inevitably be exterminated. These are the testimonies of all past knowledge: this the result of all unkindred colonization. Already in various portions of that great and the individual who now addresses you, have a ready to command, because our plans too much gamation are immoral and impracticable; and that continent, these truths have received, and are still right to be 'partakers of their joy,' as we were not | incline towards ultimate emancipation, be con- | a harmonious residence together on equal terms, | receiving additional confirmation; and new inteidle labourers with them, in communicating the sidered the enemy of the state, and of all the inter- has never occurred in any civilized state, where rest is imparted to the subject by the conviction, original impulse which founded their flourishing ests whose advocate he would desire to be esteem- the respective parties were nearly equal—and that even now, the fate of the black race in Africa itself begins to tremble. For ages the native race The truth is, that if the fact of colonization be a land, this cause may justly challenge her confidence unchanged. For us to stop short then, in our fixed has been driven alike from the northern and southmities towards the equator, the tribes which perish or flee before their advancing steps, are not themselves the aboriginal inhabitants, but most geneencroach upon the great interior native race. All the information which the public possesses in regard to that unhappy country, conduces to prove that a large emigration into central Africa, of a civilized black race, within no distant period, can alone suffice to save the black man in his native

And yet, Mr. President, I would not be misunderstood, nor would I utter a syllable that can cause the most irresolute mind to faint. We may fail of draining Maryland of the whole black pression on that degraded class of persons scattered over the central and southern sections of the United States; we may be able to withdraw means of thus fully committing this society to glory of this, and the grand engine of enlarging can escape, at last, a bloody solution. The intense individuals found scattered amongst them, leaving the bounds of knowledge and civilization! This hatred, which has marked the whole conduct of the great mass as much undiminished and unaffected as if no emigration had taken place; and thus wealth must be expected to look with intense | mode in which God himself proceeds. The small | southern states, affords the most direct and natural | we may never be allowed to accomplish the whole extent of good to our beloved country, of which our plans were capable, and for which our hearts results, as must affect at least one-third of her ter, and whose fruit nourishes mankind. The content to prove us worthy of infamy and death, yearned. So far we may come short through the entire population, and through these, the wealth, feeble impulse stricken by celestial power from and to stimulate the hate of all nations, while they ignorance of wicked men, and the perversity of untoward events. If so, let posterity judge between us and our opponents.

But there are points of unspeakable interest on tion of Maryland, and the vehement contentions The idle question of mere names and words, as the issue our ruin occurred, their first wish was which we cannot fail. If we be even prevented from doing what we would and might have done for the black race, and the African continent, as sibilities regarding it, a greatly increased keen- ly blessedness, and all heavenly glory, lie secret- necessary severity might enure to the gratification well as for our own homes and kindred, much we have already done-much we are in the act of doing, which is beyond the reach of malice to undo, or folly to recall. We have illustrated before the eyes of our countrymen, a noble lesson of practical justice, wisdom, and benevolence: in other times God may incline their hearts to follow it, and beyond our hopes, enable them to do so. We have set before the faces of the free black race throughout the earth, the surest, the shortest, the most effectual way, to their own happiness, and to the redemption of their scattered brethren, and their ancestral land; and when the fullness of the time is come, they may yet reap the benefits which now they seem, to so great extent to be, and to deem themselves unworthy of. We have planted communities where laws were unknown before; we have diffused light where the darkness of midnight rested; we have hid the leaven of civilization amid the mass of African ignorance and barbarism; we have sown the precious seed of the gospel of God, on the face of dark and turbid waters, where misery and sin only dwelt before. These are triumphs of which nothing can rob us; labours over which we have rejoiced, and will still rejoice. It is a work absolutely good, in and of itself, full of mercy and of good fruits, to whatever extent it can be pushed; capable of illimitable development and application, and yet unspeakably excellent in the narrowest possible limit of its exercise. It may embrace nations of heathens, and continents of slaves; it may be diminished to a single village, or like the church of God in its day of darkness, to a single family. But great or small, it has no rule but a wise beneficence, proposes no result but to bless!

Such is our cause. Who shall dare deny to it the favour of God!

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