

Primary Source Documents 1850–1856

DOCUMENT A

The bill for the organization of Nebraska, like the Compromise Measures, is common ground upon which all sections can meet.—It forever sets at rest a mischievous question, and carries out a great democratic doctrine—the doctrine of the right of the people of the incipient [new] States of the Union to pass their own laws and make their own regulations.

—From article in the *Free Press*
(Detroit, Michigan)

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DOCUMENT B

I WISH TO SPEAK TO-DAY, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American, and a member of the Senate of the United States . . . It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations [tensions], and are surrounded by very considerable dangers to our institutions and our government . . . Instead of speaking of the possibility or utility [benefit] of secession . . . let us come out into the light of day; let us enjoy the fresh air of Liberty and Union . . . We have a great, popular, constitutional government . . . This republic now extends, with a vast breadth [size], across the whole continent. The two great seas of the world wash the one and the other shore.

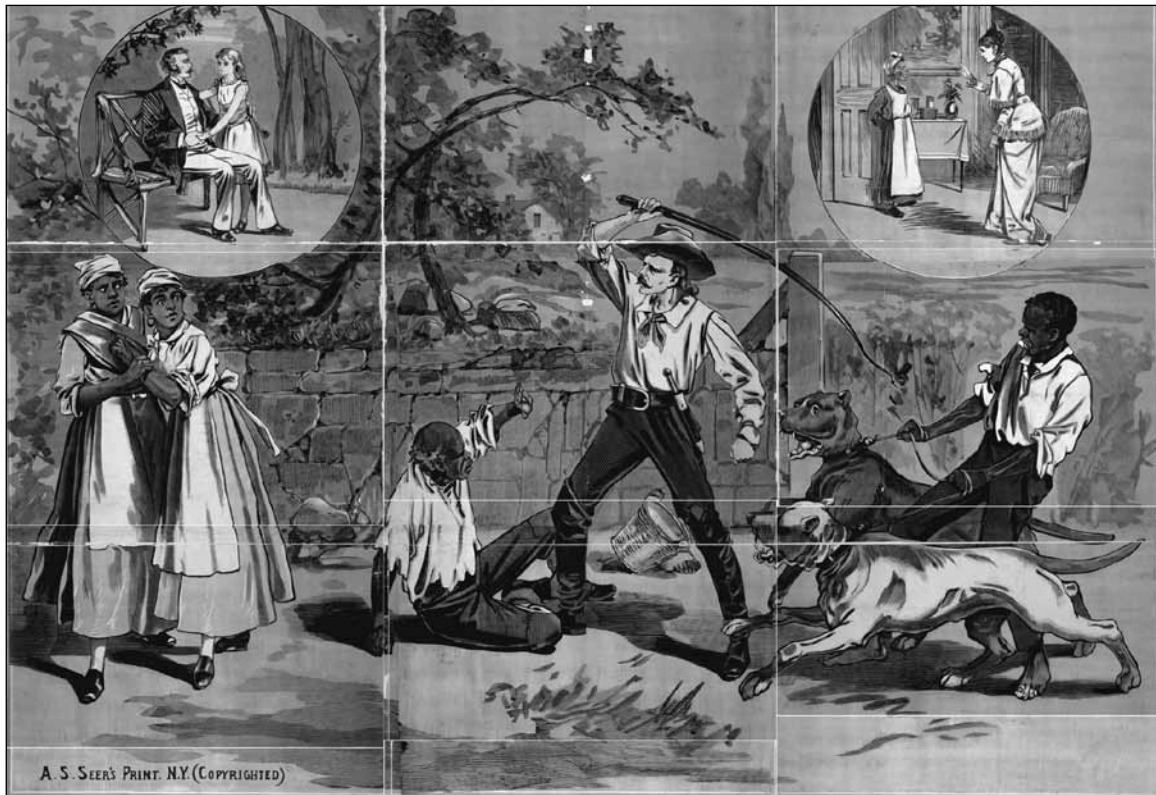
—Senator Daniel Webster

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DOCUMENT C

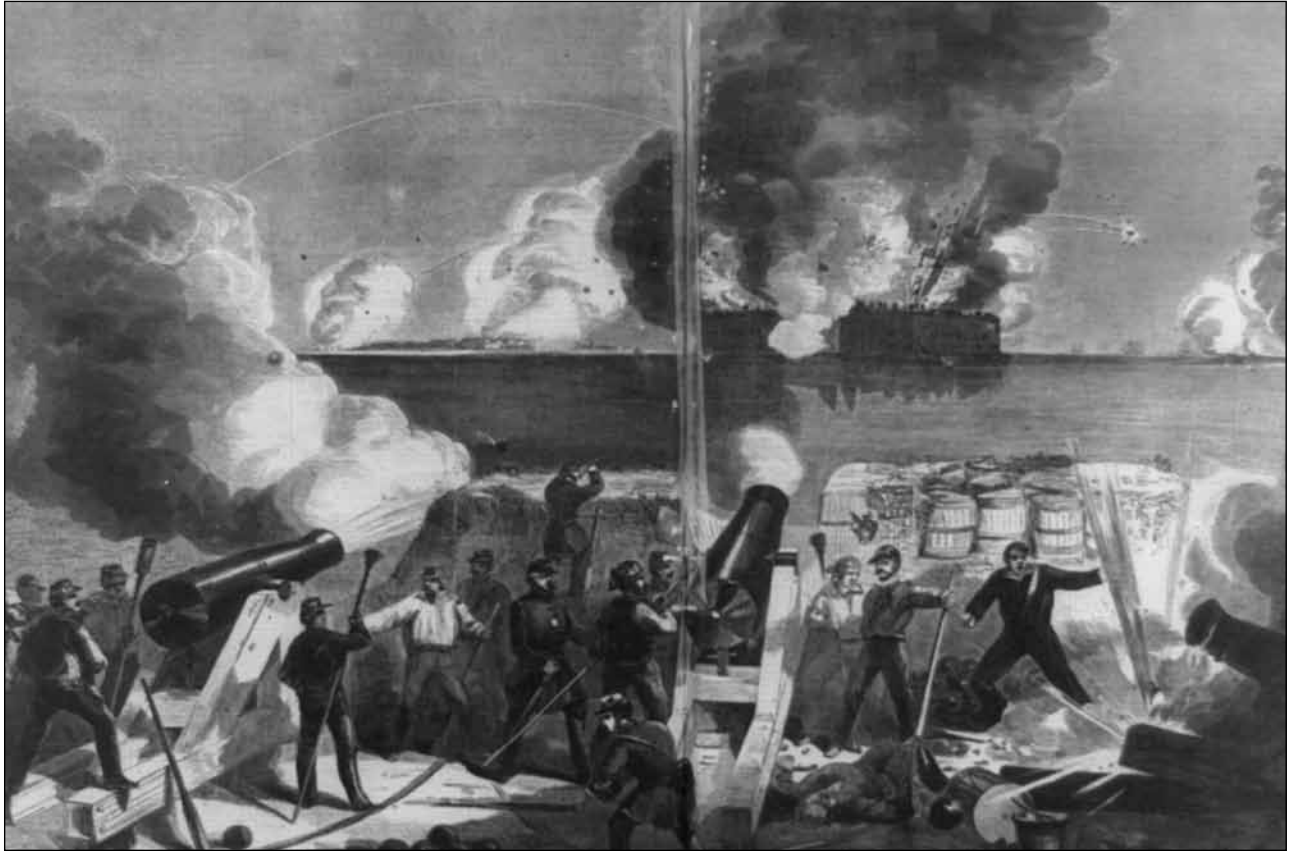
I have recently read “Uncle Tom.” What a book! It is, in its line, the wonder of wonders. How its descriptions stir the blood, indeed almost make it leap out of the heart! . . . Let us take this to our hearts, at least, that slavery is a national sin.

—William G. Allen,
in a letter to Frederick Douglass



Primary Source Documents 1857–1861

DOCUMENT D



Primary Source Documents 1857–1861

DOCUMENT E

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Astounding Triumph of Republicanism.

THE NORTH RISING IN INDIGNATION
AT THE MENACES OF THE SOUTH

**Abraham Lincoln Probably Elected President
by a Majority of the Entire Popular Vote**

Forty Thousand Majority for the Republican Ticket in New-York

One Hundred Thousand Majority in Pennsylvania

SEVENTY THOUSAND MAJORITY IN MASSACHUSETTS

Corresponding Gains in the Western and North-Western States

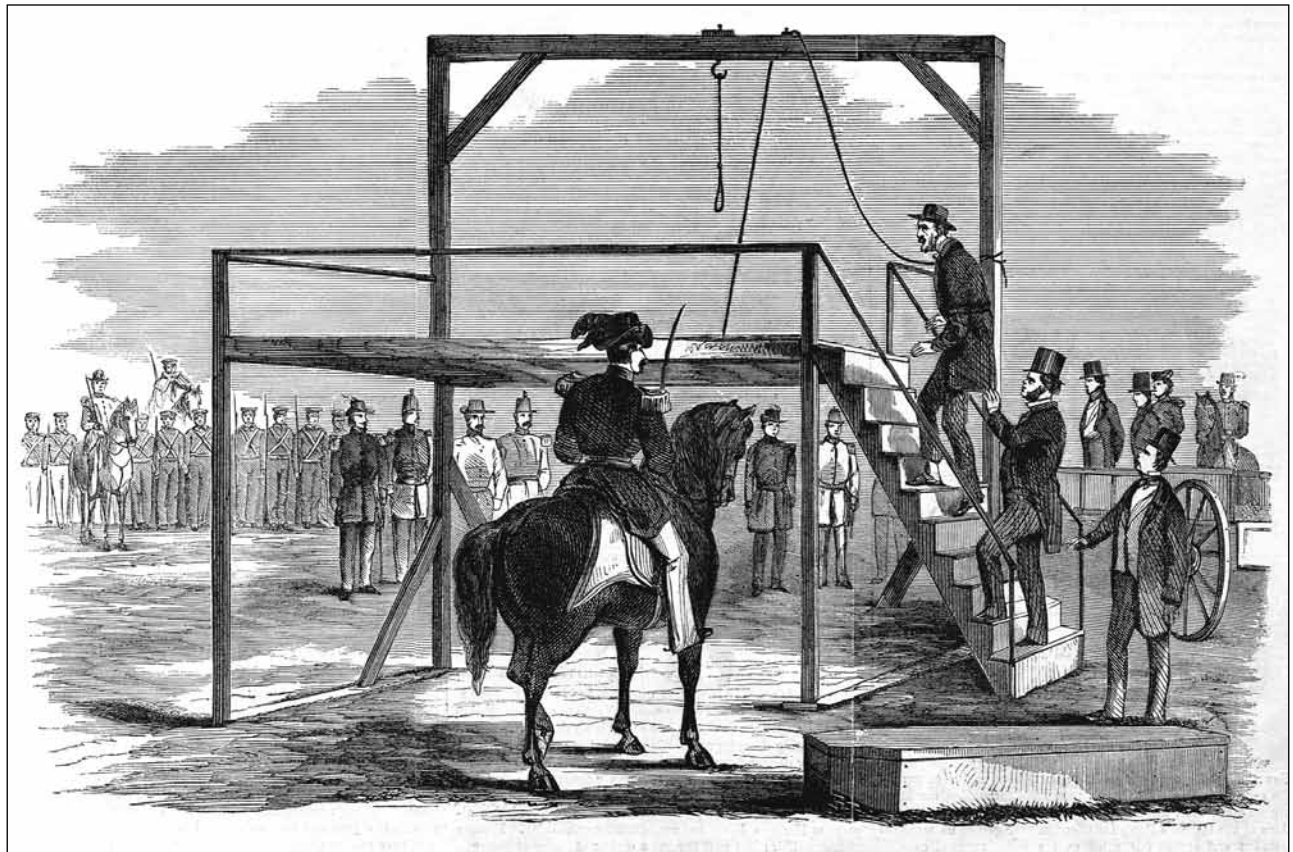
**Preponderance of John Bell and
Conservatism at the South**

Results of the Contest upon Congressional and Local Tickets

- Front page headline of *The New York Times*

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DOCUMENT F



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DOCUMENT G

The language of the Declaration of Independence is equally conclusive . . . “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among them is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

The general words above quoted would seem to embrace the whole human family, and if they were used in a similar instrument at this day would be so understood. But it is too clear for dispute, that the enslaved African race were not intended to be included, and formed no part of the people who framed and adopted this declaration.

—Opinion of Chief Justice Roger Taney
in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*