

in the United States Senate. What would the American people say if such a dastardly and villainous attack was made on a senator in his seat today? The entire people, irrespective of party, would send such a cry of disapprobation to our national capitol that the most fanatical of our representatives would hasten to clear his skirts of any affiliation with such a wretch. But when Mr. Sumner was attacked, there was not a man in the Democratic party, in the House then dominant, who had manhood enough in his contracted soul to introduce even a resolution of censure, and such an advanced and enlightened man as Stephen A. Douglas said, in giving his testimony before a committee of investigation that had been appointed at the instigation of the Republican members, that he "heard the row but thought Sumner was receiving nothing more than he deserved, and did not wish to identify himself with a lot of brawlers;" but even that was an advance on the policy of a few decades before. And so we may go back indefinitely, and we will find a gradual improvement, but not equal to our own time.

Civilization and advancement are like the avalanche that starts on the top of the mountain, first as a little snowball, gaining strength and velocity each moment as it descends.

NATIONAL CHARACTER.

Whatever is desirable, and not possessed, becomes an object of search; or, when possessed, and its future absence regarded as possible, an object of retention. We enjoy a great many things and are not able to appreciate them, from the fact that we know little or nothing of the inconvenience of being without them. The great national blessing we enjoy in our national character may properly come under this list.

Ever since we assumed a station among the powers of the earth, we have held a respectable rank; therefore we cannot

know but by looking abroad that the loss of a firm national character, or the degradation of a nation's honor is the inevitable prelude to her destruction. But at this time many excellent persons, if we may judge from their repeated declarations, have come to entertain very desponding views respecting the condition and prospects of the American people.

But why the need of these fears? Is our character degenerating? Whoever is familiar with the proceedings of Congress in early times, and with the angry collisions in the army of the Revolution, and recalls the menaces and violent language uttered during the presidency of Washington and his immediate successors, will agree with us in the opinion, that, as domestic quarrels do not always result in the dissolution of family ties, so also, flip-pant paragraphs, resolves of associations, and oratorical flourishes do not always portend the separation of states and the division of a nation.

Those who insist that we are the degenerated sons of worthy sires, do but echo the predictions that the loyalists uttered one hundred years ago.

Possibly, no one cause has so much contributed to the belief in the degeneracy of our people as the increased facilities of communication. By these increased facilities the acts of each day are heralded all over the country. What transpires to-day, tomorrow is known all over the land; hence, there is a shadow, (but only a shadow,) of a reason for the belief in the terrible increase of crime. It is the misfortune of some to be able to see but one side of the picture, and that the dark side. They fail to observe that through the same medium all parts of the country are brought into closer relationship; people of all parts of the country come to know each other better, and as they become better acquainted a better and more friendly feeling springs up between them. In order that friendship may spring up between persons, or countries, or different parts of the same country, there must be