



**The crime against Kansas: Speech of Hon. Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts. In the Senate of the United States, May 19, 1856**

*Charles Sumner*

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Roman name has been recognized has listened to the accusation, and throbbed with condemnation of the criminal. Sir, speaking in an age of light, and in a land of constitutional liberty, where the safeguards of elections are justly placed among the highest triumphs of civilization, I fearlessly assert that the wrongs of much abused Sicily, thus memorable in history, were small by the side of the wrongs of Kansas, where the very shrines of popular institutions, more sacred than any heathen altar, have been desecrated; where the ballot-box, more precious than any work, in ivory or marble, from the cunning hand of art, has been plundered; and where the cry, I am an American citizen, has been interposed in vain against outrage of every kind, even upon life itself. A re you against sacrilege? I present it for your execration. A re you against robbery. I hold it up to your scorn. A re you for the protection of American citizens I show you how their dearest rights have been cloven down, while a tyrannical usurpation has sought to install itself on their very necks! But the wickedness which I now begin to expose is immeasurably aggravated by the motive which prompted it. Not in any common lust for power did this uncommon tragedy have its origin. It is the rape of a virgin territory, compelling it to the hateful embrace of slavery; and it may be clearly traced to a depraved longing for a new slave State, the hideous offspring of such a crime, in the hope of adding to the power of slavery in the national government. Yes, sir; when the whole world, alike Christian and Turk, is rising up to condemn this wrong, and to make it a hissing to the nations, here in our republic, force, aye, sir, FORCE has been openly employed in compelling Kansas to the pollution of slavery, all for the sake of political power. There is a simple fact, which you will vainly attempt to deny, bu

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