SELECTIONS.

SPEECH

HON. CHARLES SUMNER.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

IN DEBATE ON THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE TO REPEAL THE PREVOST LAW OF 1851.

Mr. President—We are assembled here to-day to consider the resolutions of the Senate to repeal the Prevector Law of 1851. This law, passed by the United States Congress in 1851, was designed to prevent the introduction of foreigners into this country, and to prohibit the introduction of negroes into the District of Columbia. It was passed at a time when the country was divided on the question of slavery, and when the leaders of the abolitionist movement were endeavoring to secure the passage of a law that would prevent the importation of negroes into the District of Columbia. The law was not only offensive to the negro population of the District of Columbia, but it was also a violation of the Constitution of the United States, which provides that the District of Columbia shall be governed by Congress, and that Congress shall have the power to regulate the admission of foreigners and aliens.