

N Carolina Legislature.

SPEECH OF

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On the Caucus Resolutions, introduced by Mr. Fisher.

Mr. Bynum said, he rose with peculiar diffidence, to submit to the consideration of the House, those reasons which would influence him to vote in favor of the indefinite postponement of the resolutions on the table. On this occasion he should have preferred giving a silent vote. But silence in him, at this time, might be construed into a dereliction of duty. Having not been much in the habit of addressing public bodies, he was apprehensive of experiencing some difficulty in communicating his sentiments to the House on so important a subject; but courage, said he, should regard only the cause it advocates; being conscious of the correctness of that, it should despise the perils and dangers that attend its pursuit. No gentleman on this floor, said Mr. B. more truly regretted the introduction of this distracting question than he did; but as it had been brought before the House, he was disposed to contribute his mite in disposing of it in the briefest manner possible, which he conceived would be effected by postponing it indefinitely.

In reply to the remarks of the honorable gentleman from Rowan, which he believed were mostly taken from the Preamble and Resolutions then on the table; who commences by telling us, that a meeting of the members of Congress, to consult together on the question of the Presidential Election, which meeting he has seen proper to term a *Caucus*, is contrary to the letter and spirit of our Constitution. But, Mr. Speaker, said he, I defy that gentleman or any other on this floor, to lay his finger on any clause in that instrument, which prohibits the holding of such a meeting.

The gentleman has also told the House, that the Washington Caucus, in effect, chooses the President by the nomination they make. But is this the fact? Is it obligatory on the people to ratify or sanction a recommendation of a meeting of their members of Congress? As well might we say, it is obligatory on us to adopt the advice of a friend, or to marry the woman who is recommended to us by our parents. That gentleman further observed, that the Constitution of the United States prohibits members of Congress from being Electors, and therefore, it might be inferred, that it was not intended that they should, in any way, interfere in the election of a President. But, what appears to me a contradiction in terms, in the next breath, he informs us that any previous expression of their opinions might have an improper influence on their final vote, which belongs to them agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution. So that it seems in one place they have something to do with the election, and in another they have not. In support of his opinions, the gentleman makes a long quotation from Mr. Niles's Register, which he seems to consider as perfectly orthodox. But who is Mr. Niles? He is the Editor of a paper, whose sentiments readily accommodate themselves to his own interest, and whose opinions vary with the times. The gentleman goes on to state that *Caucusses* give rise to intrigue and bribery. But I would enquire, said Mr. B. of that

gentleman, if it would not be easier to bribe thirteen men, than one hundred and thirty? And if no election is made by the people, the question may be decided by a majority of twenty-four votes—that is, a vote for each state in the Union.

It was observed, by my friend from Stokes, continued Mr. B. that my motion for the indefinite postponement of the resolutions, was an infringement of parliamentary decorum. Sir, I came not here to attend to the rules of foreign parliaments, or to be bound down by the etiquette of courtly ceremonies; but to guard the interest and protect the rights of the people, whose servant I am. He has told us too, that *Caucusses* are no new things. I perfectly agree with that gentleman. *Caucusses* of the very kind that he now so loudly condemns, have been constantly resorted to for twenty-four years in all cases where several candidates have offered for any important office; nor have we ever heard of any mischief arising from them; but, on the contrary, much good, by preventing a division of strength in those who have the same end in view. But, Mr. Speaker, regardless of every other consideration, when I reflect upon the present happy and prosperous situation of our country, and compare it with the distracted and disturbed condition of the different powers abroad, I confess that I am influenced by a double incentive to oppose any measure whose object is an alteration in our present political system. While England and Ireland have groaned under the yoke of poverty and oppression. While France has been drained of her richest treasures, and poured out her dearest blood on the altar of ambition. While Germany, harassed by divisions and contentions, has been compelled to impose her gag-laws to prevent the free circulation of knowledge. While the proud Autocrat of Russia, has not dared to venture himself amongst his own subjects, for fear that vengeance might overtake his acts of oppression, the American people have continued to reap the benefits of a government, at whose head has stood for twenty-four years, a President, placed there by the recommendation of a Caucus nomination.

But, gentlemen have called those meetings conspiracies. Is this, asked Mr. B. the fact? If he understood any thing of the nature of these meetings, they consisted of a number of members of Congress, who meet together, in order to express their opinions on the fittest man in the Union, to be trusted to preside over the nation as supreme magistrate. And who, he asked, could better determine this question, than a set of men chosen by the people themselves, for their virtues, their talents, and their patriotism, many of whom, probably are well acquainted with all the different candidates for that office? It is impossible that the mass of the people, in every quarter of the Union, can be personally acquainted with the candidates, and they are therefore dependent on those who are, for proper information on that subject. And who are better qualified to inform them than their immediate Representatives? he thought none, though, gentlemen had held up these meetings, as a "*raw-head-and-bloody-bones*," to alarm the people, and to enlist on their side the prejudices of the vulgar.

The most violent opposers of

these meetings themselves, hold similar ones annually, for the purpose of nominating Members of Assembly and Members of Congress. Mr. B. alluded to the Tammany Society of New-York, where the first alarm respecting *Caucusses* was made; and he had been informed that Mr. Grundy, the author of the Tennessee Resolutions, which was the prototype of those which lie on our table, was himself once the warmest advocate for the Caucus system; but, as the proposed Caucus will not, it is believed, promote his views in relation to the next Presidential election, he is now violently opposed to it.

To abandon a system at this time, which has been uniformly acted upon with success, by the Republicans of the Union, would be yielding up the sword of victory into the hands of our political enemies—it would be clipping off the locks from the head of our political Sampson, and drawing on our shoulders hordes of conquering Philistines.

Besides, said Mr. B. I would enquire what right has this House, to instruct our Senators and Representatives in Congress? His our Constitution given us any such privilege? If so, I would be glad that gentlemen would point it out. If indeed we have a right to instruct our Representatives in Congress, they have the same right to instruct us, for we derive our authority from the same source, and are both amenable to the people for our conduct. But how would such instructions be received by this House? Would they not be treated with that contempt which they would most richly merit? They certainly would. What benefit do gentlemen expect to derive from defeating the good old course of a recommendation by a majority of our friends at Washington? He had yet heard of no advantage to be derived from such an event. The result would certainly be, that there would be no election by the people. We know that there are five candidates for the Presidential Chair, and no gentleman on this floor can say, if they be all voted for, that any one of them has any chance of being elected. And if there be no election by the people, the election must, of course, go into the House of Representatives. He had been taught, that aristocracies were the worst of all governments. Here we should see the few govern the many, contrary to every Republican maxim of government. The thirteen small States, containing a population less than three millions, would have it in their power, to give the United States a President, contrary to the wishes of eleven of the largest States, containing more than seven millions and a half of inhabitants. Would this be a result consistent with Republican government? Surely it would not, and a President thus elected, might have views directly opposed to those of a majority of both Houses of Congress; which would be pregnant with the greatest dissatisfaction to a large majority of the Nation, and evils might emanate from it which our latest posterity might rue. But, sir, said Mr. B. I do trust that this country will be preserved from such a state of things, by holding fast to the good old course hitherto pursued. I do trust, that the Republicans of the present day, will not prove themselves the unworthy offspring of their honored and venerated progenitors, whose blood and treasure have purchased those

liberties, of which we now so proudly boast. I do hope, said he, that the fire of '76, is not yet entirely extinguished in the breasts of my countrymen. Mr. B. had no doubt that incendiary agents were now travelling to and fro, throughout this country, preaching up discord and division, in order to divide the strength of the unsuspecting Republicans of the Union, in relation to the pending Presidential election. Let us, said he, look around us, and see if there be no *Judas* amongst us by whom we may be betrayed into the hands of our enemies.

It has been asserted by an honorable gentleman on this floor, that those who composed the *Caucusses* at Washington, were a combination of intriguers and traitors. If so, they have been of a very friendly character to this Union; for they have given us a Jefferson, a Madison, and a Monroe, than whom, Athens nor Sparta, Rome nor Carthage, have never boasted of profounder politicians, or more accomplished statesmen. While *Caucusses* continue to produce such blessings to the Nation, he implored gentlemen to leave it unhurt, as an ancient oak of the forest, whose fostering branches have afforded us a shelter and a shade, from the scorching rays of party animosities. But before I conclude, added Mr. B. let me remind gentlemen of the following trite, but correct maxim, which is applicable to this, as well as to other occasions, "*united we shall stand, but divided we must fall.*"

FOREIGN.

SOUTH AMERICA.

A letter from Para, Brazil, Nov. 24, received in England, relates the following horrible occurrence on board of a prison ship:

About nine, of the night of the 10th, the sentinels on deck heard a great noise below, and repeatedly ordered quietness, without effect. In a short time they found the prisoners were forcing the hatches, and they immediately fired one or two volleys among them, after which every thing was quiet. In the morning they took off the hatches to remove the dead, if any, when they found only four out of 256 alive! The place presented a most appalling spectacle of lacerated and mangled bodies. Some had their eyes thrust out; the tongues of some hung out of their mouths; others had their ribs stove in; others their mouths torn ear from ear. Some were hanging by their hammock string by the neck; others by their middle, with their heads down; and some had undergone mutilation too horrible to be described. The writer had this account, at which human nature shudders, from an eye witness, the first lieutenant of the brig, who was first on board in the morning. It appears the carnage commenced by a party of them wishing to murder all the Europeans who were their fellow prisoners, (about 10 or 12 in number,) but, that being in the dark, they despatched many who were not, which excited ill-blood. They did not, moreover, all agree upon escaping by force, which increased the animosity among them, and a mutual massacre of the most savage nature commenced; for they had no edged weapons, nor any thing but their hands and their hammock ropes. They were all naked, their clothes being torn from their

backs. They had piled up the dead bodies under the hatches to form a kind of platform to enable them to reach the gratings, and most of these were Europeans. About 20 were killed by the discharge of musketry. The four who were found alive had hidden themselves under water casks at the commencement of the fray, and had not, it appeared, suffered in health. One man was found nearly strangled, yet still alive; but he died on the way to the hospital, from a slight fall.

* Another account supposes they had destroyed each other in a fit of insanity or desperation.

ENGLAND.

WAR WITH ALGIERS.

Admiralty-office, Feb. 21.—Despatches, dated the 31st of last month, have this morning been received at this office, from the Hon. Capt. Spencer, of his majesty's ship Naiad (who had been directed to proceed to Algiers, to make, in conjunction with his majesty's Consul at that Regency, a remonstrance against some late proceedings of the Dey,) stating that his negotiation had ended unsatisfactorily, and that the Consul was obliged to strike the British flag, and embark on board his majesty's ship.

Capt. Spencer further reports, that having met an Algerine corvette, he felt it his duty to attack her, and that she was laid on board and captured in the most handsome manner, by his majesty's brig Camelion, when Capt. Spencer had the satisfaction to find that he had rescued 17 Spaniards, whom the Algerines were carrying into slavery.

The causes of this warlike declaration on our part, are it appears two-fold—one, on the refusal, on the part of the Dey, to make reparation for an insult offered to the British Consular flag, of what nature does not yet appear; the other, a declaration that he was no longer to observe the terms of a treaty made with him, not to retain any Christian captives of any nation in a state of slavery. Capt. Spencer's exploit, recorded above, was the immediate consequence of the latter determination.

The decree of the Spanish King, in favor of a free commerce in the Spanish colonies, and the comments of the Paris papers thereon, have caused a great panic on the London Exchange. They say the British government must now declare whether the South American States are, or are not, independent.

GREECE.

The Augsburg Gazette contains intelligence from Smyrna to the 19th of January. The Turkish squadron fitted out at Constantinople, to afford succor to Smyrna, had been destroyed by a tempest in the sea of Marmora. The Greeks are filled with joy. Five frigates and six brigs stranded. The Turks regarded this event as a chastisement from Heaven, and they had not been guilty of any acts of violence to the Greeks in consequence. The Greeks had become masters of the Gulph. The Turks considered there was no longer any security in the waters of the Archipelago.

The Turkish garrison at Patras has retired to Lepanto. The Hellenists, to the number of 7 or 8000, have planted the standard of the Cross in the Isle of Mitylene.