

SOUTHERN CITIZEN.

WHAT DO WE LIVE FOR, BUT TO IMPROVE OURSELVES, AND BE USEFUL TO ONE ANOTHER?

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SPEECH

OF SENATOR PRESTON, (OF SOUTH CAROLINA.)

There was, on Tuesday, 7th July, an immense gathering of the friends of Gen. Harrison at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, who were addressed by Senator TALLMADGE, Mr. KETCHUM, of New York, and Senator PRESTON of South Carolina. Mr. Preston succeeded Mr. Ketchum, and his appearance was the signal for a round of cheers that made the welkin ring again, as we learn from the New York American. When silence was restored, Mr. P. thus began, as reported by the American:

Fellow citizens—Gentlemen of New Jersey: I appear before you under so many disadvantages, some of which are obvious, and others I shall mention, that I should, under any ordinary circumstances, content myself with acknowledging, in brief but grateful terms, my deep sense of the kindness and cordiality with which I have been welcomed by you. But there is something in my heart that I would fain speak out, and which forbids my leaving the soil of New Jersey without relieving my breast of the burden which oppresses it. I come from a recent rapid tour, not unaccompanied by labor. I have been up the noble Hudson, and in the spirit of the People, at Poughkeepsie, on its shores and, in its wide and deep current, I have seen emblems of the progress, of the sure and irresistible progress, of the principles for which we are contending. Last night, too, in New York, I addressed an assembly, only smaller than this because the inclemency of the weather circumscribed it within the walls.—Hence I appear before you worn down; and this is one of the disadvantages to which I referred. I am a stranger to—(General exclamations of "No, no, you are no stranger.")

I take back the word, exclaimed Mr. P., with energy: I am not a stranger to New Jersey. I have read you in your history. I have heard from the lips of my own ancestors, who stood shoulder to shoulder with yours on your own soil, of the heroism and the sufferings of New Jersey; and from the days of my boyhood, I have longed to tread the fields consecrated by so much gallantry and endeared by so many associations. I am, too, a citizen of the United States, and therefore no stranger; a Whig, and therefore your brother.—But under what circumstances do we meet? How shall I recur to the gallant deeds of your ancestors, and reconcile your present position with the fact that scarce a field but has been trodden by the foot of Washington—that not a spear of grass but was wet with the blood of your fathers—that

Every sod beneath your feet
Has been a soldier's sepulchre!

How is it that the spirit of those days has not roused you to unanimous opposition to the outrages you have been made to suffer? What did your ancestors fight for? Read the enumeration of the evils and wrongs they rose to avenge, and then ask yourselves if those now inflicted on you are fewer in amount, or less exasperating in character; and yet you are tame! You are expelled from the Union, and yet you endure! *Fellow-citizens*, did I say? I am not your fellow-citizen. You are not citizens of the United States—you are not members of the great Union.—You have been turned out of it!—and a manufactory of representatives has been set up at Washington which turns out subjects as the machine turns out tuppenny nails.

I am aware that, in general, much allowance is to be made for what is done at Washington, and that judgments are not hastily to be formed of measures there adopted; but the case with you is so flagrant; you have been so contemptuously, and for base party purpose, driven out of the Union, that even I can ill suppress the indignation I feel, or accurately define the proper limit of opposition. But had it been my state instead of yours, had it been South Carolina instead of New Jersey, I should have been at no loss, and, even now, I am disposed to apply the language of Lord Chatham, in reference to the American Colonies, and say, were I a Jerseyman, as I am a South Carolinian, while my rights as a member of this Union are violated, I would never lay down my arms, never, never! I speak not of the arms of violence and blood, but the arms of the law and of the ballot box—and these arms you will not, I trust, lay down till you have reconquered your position, gathered up the fragments of your broken seat, and put them again together in beauty and unity; till you have rescued your dragged flag from beneath the feet of the mercenaries who have trampled on it, and borne it onward in triumph even to the dome of the Capitol.

The sympathies and heart of the nation are with you, and the very wrongs you suffer have advanced the Whig cause. Nowhere have I addressed any public meeting where an allusion to the outrage upon your State did not bring forth the response, "We will aid New Jersey." On, then, Whigs of New Jersey, on, I say—but on whom? [Several voices from the crowd exclaimed, "The Tories!"] Ay, ay, the Tories! the Tories! Now, as in the days of '76 the Tories you are to overthrow, and as your fathers did. Be earnest, then, in the contest. You have gallant leaders and brother soldiers. There is Harry of the West, [the announcement of this name was rapturously cheered,] the gallant and magnanimous Harry, of the West, baring his bosom to every shaft, intercepting from his party every poisoned arrow, scarred all over with wounds received in defence of his friends, and of his and their principles. With laurel led brow, if not with the victor's chaplet, there is he, without envy, without repining, yielding precedence to another, and spreading out to William Henry Harrison the flag of the Union, bids him give it to the breeze, and claims only the honor of serving as a soldier under him. Where shall we find greater disinterestedness, more glorious magnanimity?

There, too, is the graver and heavy armed array of the East, led on by Daniel Webster, [his name again brought forth loud cheering,] like the Macedonian phalanx of old, in serried order and of overwhelming force. There, too, is the Empire State, with her gallant and eloquent son who has this day addressed you. [Another burst of cheering.]—There, again, is your own fervid and eloquent son, Southard, [more cheers,] a friend beloved; a statesman worthy of all praise, and worthy to lead the Whigs of New Jersey; and if I do not now mention that name under which we all rally, it is only that I may introduce it more fully hereafter. The cause, too, is a holy and exciting one. Think you that any ordinary occasion could have brought me from the sand banks and long leaved pines of South Carolina to address a New Jersey audience? It is

a cause that appeals to us all; that is second to none but the cause of God. It is the cause of the country, of the Constitution, of liberty.

Time will not allow me to go into an examination of the long, black catalogue of crime which lies at the door of the Administration, and which all their trained bands are drilled and disciplined to defend. The battle will be fierce, but it will be decisive. We are, indeed, but militia. We are not organized nor paid. We fight on our own hook—not for money nor for bread—but we fight for our rights, for our firesides, for the liberty our ancestors transmitted to us, and for our property; and can we fail? They have blighted our prospects, as though blasted by the curse of Heaven. They have touched with a paralysis every interest; the very demon of destruction seems to preside over their councils. Mr. P. here at some length, examined the effect of the experiments of the Administration upon the industry, manufactures, and mechanic arts of the country, and particularly of towns like Newark, which flourishes in proportion to the general prosperity, and of which the adversity was only a type of the adversity that had overtaken all classes, both rich and poor, the manufacturer of carriages and those who were wont to buy and ride in them. The administration seemed to have reversed the order of Providence, which blesses the labor of man, and acts as though impelled by the very Genius of Desolation.

Is this picture (said Mr. P.) too darkly shaded? Who is there among you all that has escaped loss or suffering? [None, none, was the cry.] Even so; not one of you. Are there any manufacturers here? [Enough of them, for they have nothing to do at their factories.] Ay, enough, indeed; and your democratic friends, who profess so much affection for the hard handed workman, are determined to give you time enough to get your hand soft. Are there laborers here? Their turn is now come.—They have heretofore felt lightly the evils of misgovernment, and they have too long supported those who, in striking at the employers, affected to be influenced by regard for the poor laborer.—But now the principle of the party is, that the wages of labor are too high;—that the laborer must be made to work cheaper; and that the country can only prosper when the rates of labor assimilate with those of other nations.

But where, say we, is the example by which we are to be regulated; to what country do you design to point us for a model? Why, say my colleague, and Mr. Walker of Mississippi, to—Cuba! Ay, to Cuba!! the land ofquisition and 6 1/2 cents a day for labor! Once liken our condition to that of Cuba, and the time may soon come when we shall be as productive as that favored Island—of bloodhounds. If, however, we decline the example of Cuba, and insist, with our Anglo-Saxon partialities, that England, the land of our fathers, of liberty, of law, and of commerce, affords better models and examples, they exclaim, "See these British Whigs!! they want to ape British fashions and precedents!" and then, as an alternative, they point us to China, as a hard money cheap labor country—a fine country, indeed, where wages are 3 cents a day!!

But this is an alternative which America will not be driven to; and this will be shown next November. No Presidential election has heretofore been gone into with wheat 50 cents a bushel and cotton at six cents! and the disasters of the times will re-act against those whose folly or whose wickedness has produced them. What contrast, indeed does our position now present with that before the reign of experiments began! Then, all was smiling, happy, prosperous industry. Now, care, and suffering, and haggard want. The stately palatium is withering, its branches dying, and its trunk blasted. We feel that the worm is gnawing at its root, and that it must soon perish. You must apply to the remedy while there is yet time—dig that worm up, and crush it beneath your feet.

What, fellow-citizens, is the contest? It is between the People and the office-holders, led on by the chief office holders at Washington—a clothed, fed, and trained corps of janissaries, with fortresses all through the land—on the seaboard in

the shape of custom houses, in the interior and every where in the shape of post-offices, from which the incumbents issue, stealthily prowling about, seeking like the evil one of old, whom they may seduce, whom they may devour. Led on by the Chief Spoiler, at Washington, whose doctrines are openly proclaimed, they fight for plunder. They feel no distress—they experience no solicitous misgivings about providing for their families.

They have money enough, fellow-citizens, though you can get none—good money, counted out to them quarterly—drawn from the treasury, where it is placed after having been first drawn from your hard earnings. Their pockets are round and full, while yours are shrunk and lean, and little heed they, or believe they, therefore, of the distress which prevails in the land. If the farmer says to one of them that the price of his produce hardly repays the cost of production; that he can only get half price, indeed, for his wheat, the pampered hireling replies that such things will happen and must be submitted to, and admonishes him that resignation is becoming to all mortals. But if the farmer continues, and asks his comforter if his salary is reduced, in proportion to the fall of commodities, "God forbid," is his reply, "God forbid that it should be diminished, it barely supports me now." And yet he can get twice as much for his money as before. It is easy enough, therefore, for him to bear the afflictions of the community, and natural enough that he should sustain a policy which snatches the dry crust from the hungry lips of the laborer's child, that it may feed the children of your pure democrat with pound cake. Well indeed may the President, in his marble palace, amid luxurious appliances, with well paid salary, exclaim "The people expect too much from the government."

We behold the government and its officers growing richer, while each of us is growing poorer. Their riches are derived from the oppression of the people. They plunder that they may have the more to dispense in bribes.—While you see your substance wasting away, this administration has received and squandered some 130 millions of dollars. This enormous sum has been sweated out of the blood of the hard hands of the country, to be lavished upon mercenaries, parasites, panders about the palace. Thirty-nine millions annually are paid to those who are waging this war against us, and who pays?—You and I, and all of us. It is drawn from a soil already exhausted, and all for the benefit of a part only, and not of the whole. Our condition is worse than that of the Israelites in the desert, for when it rained manna and quails, all could equally hold out their platters.—But when the manna of government falls here, it falls not into your platters.

Do any of you catch a quail, or a cake of this manna? Oh! no. Or, if perchance a portion, however small, should fall to one of you, the officer through whose criminal infidelity such a boon should be vouchsafed to a Whig, who was detected in allowing one of the proscribed to taste of this government manna, would immediately be reported to his Chief, and handed over for the crime of dealing with a Whig!

Mr. P. said it was impossible, without a feeling of burning shame and indignation, to advert to this condition of things, or to reflect that such a country as this should be thus dishonored under the government of a popinjay, who had done nothing, thought nothing, looked nothing, for its benefit or renown.—Something may be excused to a gallant old soldier like Jackson; and even oppressions then have had something redeeming; but, to be wormed to death! Pahaw! It was not possible to think with patience of this great country's being trodden under foot by such men as Van Buren, and Kendall and Blair—a corrupt trio that makes the heart sink.

The honorable Senator from New York has told you he was once a supporter of this Administration, and that he felt called upon at an early period to denounce the mischiefs of their course; and how was he listened to? Mr. Van Buren heeded not, and resented the warnings of such a counsellor as N. P. Tallmadge, and, tingling his bell, forthwith the kitchen councillors appeared, and he

said to them piteously, "See what Mr. Tallmadge has done!" and Kendall replied, he would mark him, and Blair said he would turn the waste-pipe of the kitchen on him, and smother him with fish. Gentlemen, against all this we must act vigorously, we must act offensively. We have a cause and a candidate that needs no defence. Abandon, therefore, the defensive, and assault, assault continually.

Assault them at all times, in all places. Press onward; you may gain little, but little by little you will gain, and what you gain you will hold. Assault Mr. Van Buren, assault Kendall, assault Mr. Buchanan, assault the office holders. [A voice from the crowd said, "and garget Wall." Ay, assault Mr. Wall, if I may be permitted to say so to you. [He is too insignificant, said another voice.] No, no, gentlemen; no one, nothing in such a cause is too insignificant. It is not the tempest that destroys the lofty tree, but the insect gnawing at its root. It is not the flood nor the earthquake that desolates the wheat field, but the mildew and the rust. It is an error to ascribe great consequences to great causes. A little spark will kindle a mighty conflagration, and the meanest things are not therefore the least powerful; therefore, again I say, act on the offensive and assault, assault.

And then, gentlemen, as to a comparison between the two candidates, the preference and superiority are all on our side. Who will point to any marked honor done, or benefit conferred, or service rendered, by Mr. Van Buren to the republic? On the other hand, the history of Gen. Harrison is that of a public benefactor. He is, in the first place, that noblest work of God, an honest man; and I say, emphatically, in the beginning of this matter, let us try an honest man. Would that, in the many experiments our opponents have proposed, they had at once thought of this one, of trying an honest man.

Wm. H. Harrison was early brought under the eye of Washington, and the intuitive sagacity of that great man saw in him the qualities that fitted him for honor, and laying his hand upon the head of the youth, he blessed him to the service of his country.

The elder Adams came—an honest, able, and bold man—and I say this the rather, for that I never belonged to his party—and he ratified the judgment of Washington by continuing young Harrison in the public service.

Mr. Jefferson succeeded, after a contest, as you all know, that overthrew completely the opposing party—but Jefferson did not misapprehend or underestimate the merit of Harrison, and, after employing him through his eight years, handed him over to Mr. Madison. What that great and good man's estimate of him was you all know. He was selected from among many, to defend the region he had so long ruled over as Governor; and the Northwest then owed its safety to the military conduct, as it had before owed its prosperity to the civil virtues, of William H. Harrison.

But perhaps, no instance of confidence in the high qualities of a man can be cited equal to that manifested by Kentucky in General Harrison. You all know Kentucky—her gallant Clay—her Shelby, and other such spirits.—Well, Kentucky, in the darkest hour of war, looking around for a commander to whom she could entrust her own defence, and the command of the troops she was about to raise, after canvassing the merits of all, passed by all others, and devolved that honorable and most responsible command upon William H. Harrison, although a citizen of another state. Yet this is the man whom party malevolence now stigmatises as a doctard, a coward, a petticoat hero! and whom they are using every art, lawful and unlawful, to beat back.

Why, gentlemen, they have even disturbed the repose of the Hermitage—called forth General Jackson to bear witness, in a letter, just published, against General Harrison. I think I see in that letter the hand of Amos Kendall, and the old soldier has been made the catspaw of the monkeys of the palace, who thus degrade one distinguished man into an instrument of disparaging another distinguished soldier and patriot. But, there is no sense of shame of