

GEORGIA.

Answer received by the Richmond County (Georgia) Committee of Correspondence on the subject of Nullification.

Albemarle county, Virginia, Sept. 4.

Gentlemen: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your circular of the 20th ult. bearing the Augusta post mark of the 24th. You ask me at the instance of a public meeting of my fellow citizens of Richmond County, to communicate to them, through you, my sentiments in regard to Nullification, and forward me the proceedings of the meeting, as the best explanation of the acts and motives of those who composed it. Such a request, so urged, demands, for my own credit, an immediate and explicit answer. The election is rapidly approaching, and any intentional delay or disguise, would be inconsistent with my habits, and unworthy of your Representatives.

I consider nullification, as a proposed remedy for the evils of the Tariff, unsound in theory, and unsafe in practice. This opinion, probably of little consequence to any one but myself, though uttered frankly, is I hope without any thing of arrogance or dogmatism.

Having answered the question put to me, as one in the catalogue of candidates I might, if this were an ordinary occasion, be permitted to conclude with the approved formula, of gratitude and devotion to my generous constituents, and to the personal friends, through whom their communication has been made. But the time—the circumstance—the great interests at stake—the danger of the crisis to our country and the cause of freedom—all admonish me not to deal in the common places of holiday ceremony, or to shelter myself behind dry and barren generalities.

My sentiments are not demanded, on account of any personal suspicion, or the apprehension of peculiar danger from nullification in Congress. They have been required most probably from a flat ering but mistaken estimate of their possible influence with the public; and as in our day and land, every man judges, well or ill, for himself, you look not for opinions only, but some reasons to support them.

Though usually regarding the insignificance of mere party controversies with contempt, and their intolerance and malignity with disgust; every personal wish, and taste and feeling is lost in a question like the present. Its intrinsic magnitude and enduring effects to one will deny; and my views of it, although neither novel nor profound, are due to the solicitation of a community among whom the best and longest part of my life has passed, in the interchange of mutual good-will, and to the companions of my youth or boyhood. In such an intercourse, concerns would be pitiful—professions misplaced. Thoughts opened without reserve—emotions the deeper for suppression, may be safely commended to the favorable interpretation of men, whose experience of the world most ere this have taught them, there is always least heart where there is most tongue.

It is impossible for me to defend, palliate or deny the evils of a protective tariff. At every stage of my political life I have borne testimony against them. But I cannot—dare not say, they are unendurable—irremediable—or entirely to be imputed to the grasping avarice of any portion of our country. Writing within view of Monticello, once the home and now the grave of Jefferson, I may not profane the air I breathe with the language of submission. Neither must I bear false witness against my neighbor, for his name reminds me, that some five and twenty years ago, the Patriarch of American Freedom, assisted by southern politicians, laid in the exclusion of all commerce with foreign nations, the foundation of protection to domestic manufactures. "We must bring our workshops from Europe!"—"We must not consume the productions of those who injure and insult us."—"Perish commerce! let our constitution live!"—Such was the language which for years found an echo in every southern bosom, from the Potomac to the Mississippi. Such was the feeling that bore us through Embargo—Non-Importation—War. Need I tell you, gentlemen, that it was southern votes which, in eighteen hundred and sixteen, carried a tariff partly for revenue partly protective, against the strenuous opposition of the navigating interest? And must I protest, even to you, that this reciprocation, is not made to defend or accuse, the past or present—to inculpate or exculpate, any man, or party, or people—but simply because it is the truth.

"The thorns we reap, are of the tree we planted;" they may not wound us the less; but surely we have no right to impute all the injury to others. I do not say we ought to bear them patiently—or at all. I will not presume to tell a whole commonwealth what it can or cannot bear. But I will recall to the recollection of my countrymen, even at the risk of some odium to myself, that the manufacturing states were made such by our legislation. We destroyed their shipping and they turned to manufactures.—Must we destroy their manufactures that they may return to their shipping?

It is natural enough that we should seek to remove restrictions which are hurtful to our industry; but it is equally natural they should strive to retain what they imagine beneficial to theirs. Considering when—by whom—and under what circumstances they were imposed, it is asking too much of human nature, to expect they will be readily abandoned. A part of the population on which they were forced, once spoke of seceding from the Union if they were persisted in. But the union has survived their discontent. They converted our folly to their benefit; and now we meditate secession unless they will instantly relinquish their advantage. Perhaps they have enjoyed it long enough. Perhaps they have more than indemnified themselves for the losses which we made them suffer. Certainly our injuries, if we omitted any, cannot justify theirs. Most undoubtedly the interchange of wrong for wrong is impolitic—inhuman—unchristian. Still the practical question recurs: Must we not suffer something from our own imprudence? Can we expect instant secession? Shall we not be satisfied to win back again step by step, and with the arms of truth and reason, the ground which we lost by an abandonment of both?

But are we to endure forever? What right have we to expect relief from those who are interested to oppress us? This is my answer. Either the theory of free trade is not true; or if true, it must ultimately triumph.

If we assume that man cannot distinguish right from wrong, truth from error—in incapable of self-government—will not pursue his own happiness—or can promote it by injustice, our institutions are a lie, and federal representative republic, the very misadventure madness of driveling imbecility. Tell me not of constitutional restrictions and concurring majorities! Man's universal, eternal laws, are those of Reason, or Habit, or Force. All the checks and balances of government, practically resolve themselves into these; and every other device for bending the will of the greater, to that of the smaller number, however subtle and ingenious, is too delicate to be useful. Had habit established nullification as a remedy for federal usurpations, it might be submitted to, just as long as the constitution could remain unaltered; but no longer. If it is so hard for a minority to submit, would the hardship be diminished if a majority had to bear it? From habit however, nullification has no sanction. Is it an appeal to the Reason of the Tariff states? After the obnoxious law has been solemnly annulled as unconstitutional by one member of the confederacy—in an assembly of the whole collected people, unanimous, if you please—and until the requisite majority of the other states decide whether it is constitutional or not, is the offensive statute to be operative or inoperative on the state which has annulled it? To concede its operation, would be a solecism reducing the proposed remedy to a more formal method of remonstrance. To suspend its execution, is giving to the dissent of one state, a veto on the common legislation of all; a veto assuming in its exercise, the unconstitutionality of the statute, which yet remains confessedly *sub jure*, and hale to be confirmed by the requisite majority of states. Nothing short of ancient usage or the most explicit constitutional provision, could prevail on the majority, to acquiesce in such a state of things; and every dispassionate observer will perceive, that in the absence of such usage or provisions, a tempo would be—must be made, by those administering the government, to execute in the dissenting state, the same law which prevailed in all the others. However conducted, and however opposed, this must end in force—force used to uphold the law, and force employed to resist it.

Long then, before the complicated post nullifying process of revision could pass through its labyrinth of tribunals—its maze of forms—before three and twenty legislatures could assemble, de-

liberate, and decide, the sword, that keen and clear interpreter of right and just, would have solved the constitutional difficulty, and when the snail-paced resort came, it would come to men, clad in sturdy steel, to be burned in derision by the torch of civil war.

Nullification, however qualified, disguised, or explained, has then this attribute of an evil spirit. It is swift of foot only on bad errands. It flies to scatter discord; it limps to bring peace. Let me not be misunderstood. In speaking freely, of what I feel strongly, the dangers of the doctrine: it is far from my intention to impeach the motives of its advocates. I have heard it maintained with arguments the most plausible, and eloquence the most seductive, by men whose talents may receive my humble admiration, but to whose unquestionable patriotism I cannot, without insolence, even offer to bear witness.

In the heat of conflict—in the exasperation of defeat—the sense of southern wrongs has often overcome my own habitual calmness. And is it possible for me to deny indulgence to the words or projects of fellow combatants embarked in the same cause—contending with the same adversary—men of more ardent tempers, and only resentful perhaps, in proportion as they are brave and generous? Such spirits are never first in an unworthy feud.—If it becomes so, the blame must rest with a portion of their followers. Nor is it hard to draw the line. The envious, desperate, or interested are soon known. They court every party and betray all. As for those amiable enthusiasts, bearing in their veins the blood of liberty's martyrs, who are indifferent counselors, it may be, at the commencement of a difficulty, but excellent companions to stand by you in the end, they are not more to be checked than cherished. That they have failed to convert me to their favorite faith, may perhaps be owing to my phlegm or dullness. Certainly not to any want of ability in them, or any prejudice in me. Far from reproaching what I believe to be their errors, I do not even think it wonderful, that in honestly seeking a remedy for the disorders of the republic, many should engage themselves in refinements that confuse when they do not convince. Yet the very subtlety of the argument is its great defect. When the logic is too acute, the edge turns. If we want it for common use it must be coarse and stronger. Shall I be cited to show that the tariff is unjust—be told that it unjust we ought to resist it—and it resisted, according to my own argument, that resistance must be effectual. What I said concerns appeals to reason only. When force becomes the arbiter, it is not justice or even courage that decides. My profit is in our word—POLAND! Were it otherwise, trial by combat and judicial combat should be restored, and the victor in battle would once more become right by the judgment of God.

But what hope have we of redress, if not in nullification? How can we expect to convince men rendered deaf by interest to every remonstrance? I answer, the interest against us, is less real than apparent. The gain of the farming states by the tariff is imaginary. A European war would, in all probability, disperse their attention at once. A constitutional amendment in favor of roads and canals might dissolve the combination of the East and West. It is not impossible, that in the disposition of the public lands, means might be found to restore the harmony of our country.—Even the necessity of exporting an immense and annually increasing surplus of domestic products, and of importing lawfully, or illicitly, in good or in specie the corresponding millions for which it is exchanged, must at no distant day occasion new reductions of our imports. But before, and above all, if we are right, we have the weapons which seldom fail. Am I asked when did reason and justice conquer interest and prejudice? I point to all the triumphs of truth and time. To a reform in the English reformation restoring civil privileges to a persecuted sect—to such an extension of the elective franchise, as Chatham dared not meditate, and Fox could not accomplish. To revolutions less bloody, and codes less barbarous—to the liberty of the press—to our own institutions, the hope and admiration of all that is liberal in Christendom—in a word, to the extended and extending empire of opinion.

We have heard to be sure, that a total, immediate, unconditional abandonment of the principle of protection is our right, that we ask nothing more; will take nothing less; and must not stoop to buy justice. These are lofty and captivating sentiments; yet a doubt may be indulged, who but they are practical. Justice is a rare commodity, even among friends and neighbors; and though forbidden to be sold, he is thought lucky who pays dearly, and gets it at last, after enduring the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, the law's delay, the insolence—and what to some, is worse the *fecus* flies.

If indeed we are resolved to yield no pretension—brook no compromise—if the tariff is really insupportable; and a nostrum must be found to cure it now—at once—and forever—

secession and not nullification, is the melancholy, but appropriate remedy. I no more approve of the one than I justify the other. If Heaven hears my prayers, both will be spared me. My life, though short, and more fortunate than happy, will be far too long, should I survive to bear part in a civil war, or to witness a dissolution of the Union. Yet the last I am persuaded would be the least evil. It may be effected without the guilt of home-shed blood; which is to me, of itself, a sufficient ground of preference. It is probable that if Georgia or South Carolina, or both should think proper to withdraw, no attempt would be made to prevent them. They may be allowed to depart into obscure independence, if they can maintain it; to settle quietly as a petty principality; or sink into appanage of European power. I cannot believe that the secession of the whole south would be seen with equal indifference. Of this our antagonists suppose there is no danger; and they hug themselves with the belief, that unless all made common cause, the new government will hardly be formidable enough for freedom. Without the Chesapeake it would scarcely have a port into which a frigate could enter; and New Orleans would be wanted as an outlet for Mississippi, and the means of a favorable alliance with the west. But I will not conjecture the effects of such a change. May God avert it! Still less will I imagine that questions so serious and afflictive can be agitated merely for intimidation, or to serve or thwart the ambition of any party. It is doubtless important that our brethren; our unjust and selfish brethren, if you choose; but still our brethren; should know the intensity of our feelings and our sufferings; our deep, settled, and unanimous hostility to the protective system. It may be worth reflecting, nevertheless, how far, at this time, unfounded suspicions may be thrown upon our motives, by the pendency of a Presidential election—the pledges contemporaneously given to certain candidates, and the eager discussion of even contingent pretensions, which four years yet, are wanting to mature.

In this allusion however, as in all I have said or omitted, it is my earnest desire to estrange no ally, to provoke no opponent. More than enough of scolding and reproach has already past between the members of this Union. Its integrity has been shaken as much perhaps, by mutual taunts, as by real injuries. Sharp sayings, at all times, leave behind them bitter recollections; but they are especially unseasonable at a crisis like the present.

Indulge me with a remark or two on the tone of this reply. It may be thought too mild for the temper of the times. Anger will not bear, that his antagonist should be only gently censured, and exhortations to moderate counsels, grate harshly on the ears of injured men. Yet, after all, when delusions, not heads, must be broken, the best words for service, sound the least like blows. I admit, it is not enough, that he whom you honor with your confidence, should faithfully represent your rights, your wishes, your interests. There should be chords in his bosom, responsive to your every passion. But their echoes need not reach you, to swell the notes of discord. He who would appease, if he cannot reconcile, contending parties, must be careful not to augment their mutual prejudices.—He should rather strive to abate their respective claims and animosities. Too many will be found in every country, to flatter and inflame the indignations of the sovereign—whether people or despot: Comparatively few to argue with the masters of votes or legions. As the apostles of political toleration are scarce, if one should chance to gain the public ear, he ought to improve the occasion, to beat down, in whatever party may be his hearers, that self sufficient obstinacy, which will allow nothing to be fit, or right, or bearable, but what we ourselves approve. For the reason then, that if I were the representative of a manufacturing state, addressing at this crisis, implicit believers in the beneficent magic of the restrictive policy, I should attempt to mitigate their fire and confidence—for the same reason, appealing to those who are convinced of its malignant influence, it is my duty to soothe if possible their just indignation. Unless this course of conduct is pursued by all who aspire to be thought honest and patriotic, must not alienation spread and become incurable?

If an opportunity were afforded me to confine the circulation of this letter to that region for which alone it is intended, I would add much,

which I now suppress. But as that may be impossible, I will not run the risk of being quoted any where, as the apologist of restriction, or nullification; or of craven acquiescence or frantic opposition. The consequences are obvious, and I am not insensible to them. No navigator, however skillful, can turn his sails to every wind at once. I have but one consolation. I have not sought to catch any. My notions being probably in many respects disrelished by all parties, will, at least, not draw down on me the suspicion of seeking popularity, the last worst ridicule that can befall one, whose honest ambition is much more to serve his countrymen than to please them.

I have thus, gentlemen, endeavored to perform what fit is presumed was expected of me. In such communications, it is hard to avoid speaking more of one's self, than is either pleasant or graceful.—You, I am sure, will be the first to pardon the egotism into which you have betrayed me; for few know better, how humbly I estimate myself and my opinions. It is useless to wish that more time had been allowed me; and vain to regret that I could not mingle in your deliberations. Could I have anticipated the state of public feeling in Georgia, the honorable employment which detains me, accepted as it was, not merely on the score of health, but for the gratification of my colleagues and constituents, must have been refused. Were I now able to support a long journey, I should still feel myself bound to return. But the hope of reaching home in a condition to engage in an active duty, is yet more feeble than that of being serviceable by my presence. Nothing remains for me then, but to recommend you and our common country, to the protection of that Power without whose aid all wisdom is but folly. If the chalice at her lips must in no wise pass away, her destiny is my destiny, for good or for evil.

I am, gentlemen, with great respect, and sincere esteem, your friend and fellow-citizen.

RICHARD HENRY WILDE.

To Col. Wm. Cumming, Hon. John P. King, Augustin Slaughter, Esq. Augusta, Geo.

From the Columbia (S. C.) Hive.

CHAPTER OF ERRORS.

MR. EDITOR—Some of our statesmen say, when we import more than we export, it is an evidence that we as a nation have made money. This error is made under the supposition that we send out our produce as an adventure. Whereas the truth is, our principal trade is done by sending orders for goods and our exports are remittances to pay for the same.

And the assertion that the southern states pay two thirds of the revenue, is another monstrous error, and is predicated upon the supposition that we lay out every dollar of our cotton and rice money for imported goods. I have inquired from a number of persons what proportion of their cotton money they lay out for goods, and cannot find that upon an average more than one dollar out of four is paid for necessary articles of every description. About one half the money received for cotton goes to North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland for negroes. A considerable part, also, goes to the new countries, by emigrations.

It astonishes me, Mr. Editor, that some of our great men fall into such glaring errors. I have latterly concluded that they have every kind of sense but common sense—an opinion others beside myself think mightily mixed with the truth.

But here is another position advanced by some, which is, that the producer, and not the consumer, pays the duties. This appears to stand upon a tolerable foundation, and if it be true that the producer pays the duties, then of course we get all our imported goods free of duties. The foreigner is the producer, and pays the tariff. I believe this to be the fact in many articles, but in some others I think the consumer pays. I make errors sometimes myself, Mr. Editor, though I am not a great man, and therefore am charitable to those that err also.

This year I planted my corn too thick, (a monstrous error,) and nearly ruined my crop, and I can hardly suppose the result of their errors will be much more disastrous to them than mine was to me, except it be in the case of Nullification, which I understand has been strangled by Judge Smith.

A PLOUGH BOY.

Nullification in N. Carolina.—This article is at a low ebb in this State. Already are the people taking the matter seriously in hand. Meetings