

Western Carolinian.

It is even wise to abstain from laws, which however wise and good in themselves, have the semblance of inequality which find no response in the heart of the citizen, and which will be evaded with little remorse. The wisdom of legislation is especially seen in grafting laws on a conscience. *Dr. Channing.*

(BY BURTON CRAIG.)

SALISBURY, ROWAN COUNTY, N. C., MONDAY JULY 9, 1832.

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TERMS.

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SPEECH OF

MR. McDUFFIE, OF S. CAROLINA:

On the bill proposing a reduction of the duties on imports. Delivered in the House of Representatives, May 28, 1832.

Mr. McDuffie rose, and said: I propose, sir, to submit some explanations, in addition to those already presented; in a different form, of the views and principles which I adopted the committee of Ways and Means to report the present bill as an adjustment of the great subject of the tariff. I must, however, in this outset, candidly acknowledge that I have not the least glimmering of hope that any thing I may utter at this time, or which any human being can advance in this Hall, will induce the majority to adopt the measure now proposed, or any other measure founded on similar principles. Nay, sir, I am reluctantly compelled to go still farther, although I have been disposed to hope even against hope, that some providential coincidence of circumstances might yet intervene to incline the hearts of the majority to justice, and lead their deliberations to some propitious result; yet the developments and the experience of every day have rendered it more and more apparent that all such expectations are utterly vain and delusive. As to any adjustment of this great question, therefore, which shall give tranquility to the public mind, and restore the broken harmony of this Union, "my final hope is flat despair." Under these circumstances, it may seem singular, but it is nevertheless true, that it is precisely because I do not hope to produce conviction upon the minds of this committee, and have no expectation that this great question will be adjusted here, that I am more particularly anxious to set forth, in the clearest and most distinct manner, the principles which will govern me, and as I believe, those who are associated with me, as well as the States we in common represent, in all the vicissitudes of this great contest for our unalienable rights. Sir, it is vain, it is worse than vain, to attempt to put by, to evade, or to talk with this question. It can no longer be disguised, that there does exist, under the unjust and oppressive legislation of Congress, and without any agency of providence to that effect, a radical hostility of interests between the two great subdivisions of this confederacy. And if the power of the majority, and not their sense of justice, is to decide the present controversy, it will be impossible ever to reconcile these conflicting interests. Such being the case, God only knows what is to be the end of this great political drama. One thing is certain; an eventful political era is at hand, and whether it shall be signalized by the civil triumph, or by the catastrophe of constitutional liberty, history will record that triumph or that catastrophe, and posterity will pronounce judgment on the authors of it.

That my views and principles may be understood and appreciated by that august tribunal, and the record which history shall make up, may present the true issue between the two great contending parties, the oppressors and the oppressed, I will attempt, before I take my seat, to demonstrate how grievous are the wrongs we have too patiently endured, and how vital and sacred are the rights for which we are contending.

But, before I proceed to examine the equality and gross injustice of this combined system of taxation and protection, I shall ask the attention of the committee to a brief exposition of my views as to the amount of revenue which, under existing circumstances, I deem it expedient to provide for defraying the necessary and proper expenses of this Government.

In deciding this question, there is no better criterion to which we can resort than the average expenditures of a former period, which all must acknowledge to furnish a proper basis for such a calculation. In 1821, our army was reduced from a war to a peace establishment. From the year following this reduction to the close of Mr. Monroe's administration in 1824, inclusive, I have made a calculation of the average expenses of this Government for all objects, both permanent

and contingent, and the result is, that these expenses amounted, annually, to a less sum than ten millions of dollars. Many of those who bear me will bear me out when I say, that, when I first took my seat in this body I was regarded as very extravagant in my address in regard to the public expenditure, because I justified the expenditures of that administration, Sir, Mr. Monroe's administration was denounced by a large party in this country for this extravagance. It was accused of preparing the way for a great and splendid government, instead of regarding those principles of economy laid down by the fathers of our political church. I did not think so then, and I do not think so now; and I shall hail the day when the present or any future administration shall bring back the expenses of the Government to the annual sum of ten millions, which I believe to be an ample provision for all the exigencies of the country. But, sir, so far from wishing to dismantle our fortifications, suffer the navy to rot upon the docks, and leave the nation entirely defenceless, as has been suggested in a report recently offered to the House, I am for maintaining all the institutions of the country on a respectable footing, and am willing, and have ever been willing, to raise whatever amount of revenue may be necessary for that purpose, though I am aware that the burthen will be very unequally distributed, even by this bill.

The essential institutions of the country are the army, the navy, and the civil establishment. These I regard as indispensable; I hold them to be necessary at all times, in peace and in war; for I fully recognize the truth of the maxim, that the best way to preserve peace, is to be prepared for war. Now, sir, during the last three years of Mr. Monroe's administration, it was denouced, as I have said, for its extravagance; and yet the total annual expenditures for the army, the navy, and the civil list, amounted, during those years, to less than seven millions of dollars. I repeat it, sir, emphatically, that, when our army was more efficient, its ranks better filled, and its officers as numerous and competent as they now are, the annual expenses of the government for these three objects was less than seven millions of dollars. When you add to this the expenditure of the Indian department, and for other objects of a miscellaneous kind, each amounting to a little upwards of a half a million, it will be found, that, exclusive of pensions, the whole average expenditure of the United States, during those years, amounted to but little more than \$8,000,000.

Assuming this as a basis, and I am satisfied that the amount will be more than sufficient, especially as our fortifications are nearly completed, and I hope never hereafter to see more than \$500,000 annually expended upon them; and as the improvement of our navy yards also are nearly completed; I affirm that more than eight millions of dollars will not be annually required for objects of a permanent nature.

Then, as to pensions, I shall confine my views, in the first place, to the laws as they now stand, and not as it has been proposed to extend them. During the three years I have mentioned, the pension list was very large; since then, however, the number of pensioners has been rapidly diminished by death. So that, whereas, in 1822, the sum expended on this object was nearly two millions, it is now less than one million, notwithstanding the great number of pensioners since put upon the roll, by special acts of Congress, and the relaxed rules of the War department.

It may fairly be presumed, calculating upon the probable mortality among men; one of them less than seventy years of age, that in the course of some five years, this branch of expenditure will be reduced to a very considerable sum.

It is to be remarked, that, after paying off the public debt, there will be a large surplus, not less than eight or ten millions, of the income of the year 1833; because the income of that year will be principally derived from duties which accrued during the present year, under the existing tariff. Moreover, as the proposed reduction of the duties will be gradual—and I am willing to make it still more so, by extending the period of final reduction to three years—it is obvious that the surplus revenue must be considerable during all these years, and that the sufficiency of a revenue derived from average duties of 12 1/2 per cent. will not be brought to the test in less than four or five years. Even if we suppose that the pension bill, now pending, should become a law, it is not probable that the whole pension establishment, four or five years hence, will require an expenditure of more than two millions. But be that as it may, eight millions will be amply sufficient for the permanent institutions and ordinary expenses, and all the revenue over that sum will be applicable to pensions and other objects.

The next inquiry in order, is what amount of revenue a duty of 12 1/2 per cent. upon all imports will bring into the Treasury? If we assume, as the basis of our estimate, the average amount of the merchandise imported for consumption during the last seven years, we shall have something less than sixty-nine millions as

that average. The revenue from this amount of imports, at 12 1/2 per cent. duty, would be something less than nine millions of dollars. But we are inquiring what will be the amount of the revenue, four or five years hence, after all the surplus shall be exhausted; and I think it may be safely estimated that the amount of the dutiable imports, under this bill will not be less than eighty millions. There will be at least fifteen millions now annually applied to the payment of the existing duties, that will be disengaged from that object, and will be applicable to other purposes. It is a reasonable supposition that this amount, at least, will be applied to the purchase of foreign imports, in addition to the sum now thus applied. According to this view of the subject, making all proper allowances, which I believe that the amount of the imports for consumption will be more than eighty millions the very first year the 12 1/2 per cent. duty goes into operation; and, from the inveterate progress of population and wealth, that amount must increase considerably every year afterwards.

We shall have, then, an income of ten millions from the imports; and even if we estimate the income from the public lands at one-half its present amount, that and the bank dividends will yield two millions more. Having shown that only 8 millions will be required for the ordinary and permanent expenses of the Government, it follows that, with a revenue of twelve millions, there will be an annual surplus of four millions applicable to pensions & other objects of a contingent nature.

In presenting this brief view of the future income and expenditure of the Government, I will take occasion to remark, that if I should ever return to this body, I intend to propose a general system of retrenchment and economy; a system not founded on an indiscriminate hostility to our existing establishments, but on a deep conviction that these establishments can be maintained in purity and vigor only by the observance of a strict but judicious and liberal economy.

I am fully satisfied that, without reducing either the army or the navy, and without injuriously curtailing the salaries of any of the officers of Government, a saving may be effected of at least one half a million of dollars. Without going into details, I will barely suggest, that the Treasury Department alone opens a field in which retrenchments and reforms may be employed with very great advantage to the country. Sir, under the complicated system of high minimum duties, the expenses of collecting the public revenue have increased enormously within the last ten years. At a former period, when our revenue from the imports was equal to what it is now, the whole annual expense of collecting it did not amount to more than \$700,000. Now, sir, it has swelled up to nearly double that amount.

The proposed reduction of the duties will enable the department to dispense with the greater part of that host of custom-house officers which almost darken our coast; and in this item alone several hundred thousand dollars may be annually saved. Upon the whole, sir, I am well satisfied that the amount of revenue which this bill will produce, with that derived from other sources, will be amply sufficient for all the exigencies of the country, and that considering it as a mere revenue measure, no one can justly take an exception to it.

I will here remark, sir, that the people of the south, (whether correctly or not, I will hereafter consider,) are firmly impressed with the belief, that under any system of duties, while the revenue is derived almost exclusively from imports, their proportion of the burthen imposed by federal taxation, will be much greater than it ought to be according to the principle of the constitution which regulates the apportionment of direct taxes. Under these circumstances, they think they have a right to insist that the aggregate burthen of taxation shall be as light as possible, and that not a dollar shall be expended by the Government that can be avoided by a rigid economy.

Having now disposed of these preliminary questions, I shall proceed to consider how far the provisions of this bill have been dictated by a due regard to the principles of justice and equality in the fiscal operations of this Government.

With the exception of certain articles admitted free of duty, nearly all of which are the imports and consumption of the northern States, all imported merchandise will be subjected to the moderate and equal duty of 12 1/2 per cent. Now, sir, I desire to know whether any objection can be justly urged against this scheme, on the score of inequality? Regarding it as a southern measure, can any other portion of the Union allege, with the semblance of truth, that it will be subjected to an undue share of the public burthen? I put the question emphatically, and desire that it may be fairly met and fully answered, is there a manufacturing State, or a manufacturing county in the Union, that will be compelled to pay a larger proportion of public burthen, by this bill, than justly and equitably falls to its share?

Let us examine this matter. Our

ports of foreign merchandise may be divided into two great classes. The first consists of articles which are exclusively produced in FOREIGN countries; the second, of articles partly produced abroad, and partly in the United States. The former are usually designated the unprotected, and the latter the protected class of articles. Now, as the former class comprising tea, coffee, silks, wine, and a variety of other imports, I will assume, that from these, one half of the federal revenue will be collected, though, in point of fact, it would be more correct to say one third only.

As to this portion of the revenue, no one has ever pretended that the burthen is not equally distributed over the Union in proportion to the consumption of the articles from which it is derived. It must be apparent that the manufacturing States have no grounds for alleging that the duties upon silks, waxes, tea, and coffee, expose them to an unequal or oppressive burthen. With a solitary voice be raised to denounce this part of the bill under consideration? Assuredly there will not. What, then remains? What is the subject of complaint against this bill, and who are they by whom the complaint is made? The part of the bill which is obnoxious to the denunciation of the manufacturing States, is that which imposes a duty of 12 1/2 per cent. and no more, on cotton and woolen manufactures, on iron and iron manufactures, and on all the other articles that fall within the scope of the protecting system. Yes, sir, this is the source of the complaints against the proposed measure. And who, do you suppose, are the persons that make them?

If an impartial foreigner, just arrived in our country, should be informed that a very deep and threatening excitement exists in relation to this part of the proposed tariff, he would very naturally suppose, that, as the excitement was against a tax bill—it was the indignation of those who were called upon to pay the taxes, or upon whose productions the duties were proposed to be levied. Upon being informed that the productions of the southern States furnished the exchanges for this class of imports, he would take it for granted that these States were clamorous against so unequal a scheme of taxation. But how would this impartial foreigner be astonished, on discovering that the excitement was confined to that part of the Union which paid no part of the taxes in question; and the cause of the excitement was, that the taxes proposed were not forty or fifty, instead of 12 1/2 per cent. upon the value of the imports! In other words, how great would be the astonishment of this impartial "looker-on" from Europe, when he learned that the complaint against the proposed duty on cotton, woolen, and other manufactures, proceeded exclusively from the domestic manufacturers of these very articles, on whom the duty would operate, not as a burthen, but as a bounty. He would be apt to exclaim, "What an extraordinary people the Americans must be! In Europe governments are shaken by the complaints of the people who pay the taxes. Here, the Union seems likely to be shaken to its very foundation, by the clamors of those who receive them. In Europe, the people cry out that the taxes are too high; here, they seem to be regarded as a great blessing, and the cry is, that they are about to be reduced too low."

Sir, in the spirit of peace and harmony, and, I will add, in the spirit of unanimity, the people of the south now say to you "We know that it is very unequal and oppressive upon us, that the production of our industry should pay even 12 1/2 per cent. to support the government, while the very same productions of your industry pay no contribution at all; but receive on the contrary, a beneficial bounty from the tax levied upon our productions. But if you will limit the burthen to the necessary expenses of the Government, we are willing to submit to it as a revenue measure, unequal as it obviously is, and will cheerfully consider the pecuniary loss we shall sustain as a peace offering at the shrine of the Union." And what do the people of the north say to this generous & liberal overture?

"We will not assent to your terms. We have calculated the value of this tax upon your productions; and we have ascertained that a tribute of 12 1/2 per cent. is not enough to keep up our establishments in the high state of profit and prosperity which we desire. We cannot let you off with a less tribute than 45 per cent. and it follows that you will have to pay it."

Sir, language cannot convey, nor imagination conceive any thing that would exhibit the horrible enormity of this system more clearly than the simple statement of the real condition of the interests involved, and the true point of the controversy. Now, sir, I will put this matter to a very plain test. If my views are not correct, the whole tariff question can be upon settled between the gentleman immediately on my right, (Mr. ARZOOZEE,) who, as I understand, is one of the largest manufacturers in the United States, and myself. I turn to this gentleman, then, and say to him, "Sir, I will now make a

bargain with you for the adjustment of this difficulty. You admit that one half of this bill is perfectly just and equal; that I mean which levies half of the federal revenue from waxes, silks, and other unprotected articles. The entire portion of your complaint is directed against the other half of the bill; that which levies the remaining half of the revenue from protected articles. Now, sir, in tender consideration of the oppressive operation of this part of the tax bill upon the manufacturing States, I will agree to strike it out altogether, and raise the remaining half of the revenue, by doubling the duties on unprotected articles, or by direct taxes, let it be a bargain, sir? "No! no! no!" replies the gentleman, "that would be infinitely worse than the bill as it now stands; for, in that case, the tariff States would lose all their protection, and have to pay their quota of the increased duties on unprotected articles, or of the direct taxes besides; whereas, by the bill in its present form, they certainly have a protecting bounty of 12 1/2 per cent."

The truth is, Mr. Chairman, that the manufacturing States would not agree to strike out these duties on any terms. Even if it were demonstrated that the Government did not need a dollar of the revenue derived from this source, or if the southern States would agree to raise this half of the public revenue by direct taxation among themselves, still the manufacturing States would not accede to such a proposition.

And what, sir—I ask for no idle purpose—does this fact prove? The plain and naked question is presented to them—will you be satisfied to adjust this controversy, by being relieved entirely from one half of the burthen of the federal revenue, paying only your due proportion of the other half; and they, indignantly spurning the offer, reply that they will not.

Can any power of human reasoning more clearly demonstrate that they feel, and know that they will pay no part of the duties proposed to be levied on the entire class of protected articles? The matter is absolutely too plain for argument, and it comes palpably to the ears of the people of the south, charged with disloyalty to the Union, agree that a tribute of 12 1/2 per cent. should be levied upon their productions; for the double purpose of relieving the manufacturers from so much taxation, and giving them so much bounty; while the Union-loving people of the north are resolved to put the Union itself in imminent jeopardy, unless their brethren of the south will reduce themselves to absolute vassalage, by consenting to bring to the pecuniary altar of this manufacturing idol three times the proposed amount of the tribute.

It must be obvious, sir, that vital as are the pecuniary interests involved in this controversy, they are quite secondary when compared with the principles involved in it.

Its true character and importance cannot be seen until we consider it, not only as a question of interest, but as a question of right and justice. It is justice and not interest that consecrates the struggles of men and of nations. It will not do, therefore, to show us, however clearly, that the passage of this bill will destroy your interests and desolate your country, as the existing system has destroyed and desolated mine. I am not now considering your interests, but your rights; I am not going to try this question by the barbarian test of power and numbers, but by the principles of eternal justice.

And in this sacred forum, I put these questions to every manufacturer in the Union; What injustice will this bill inflict upon you? What right of yours will it violate? What particle of your property will it confiscate, and to whom will it unlawfully or wrongfully transfer it? I beg, sir, that these questions may not be evaded by empty and unmeaning generalities, but that they will be openly and fairly met, and distinctly answered. I admit, sir, that this bill, should it pass, will do very great damage to the manufacturing States, but it will be, in legal phraseology, damage without injury, unless they will show that some legal or moral right will be violated.

Let us now inquire whether there is a shadow of ground for alleging that such is the fact; and, to give the inquiry a practical form, I will first ask, in what mode, and by what process, will the northern manufacturers be injured by the passage of this bill? They are ready to inform us, in reply, as we have heard it a thousand times echoed and re-echoed from every source, in every form and in every quarter of the Union, that they are waging a great national contest in favor of domestic industry and against foreign industry, and that they are bound, upon their allegiance, to take sides with the domestic against the foreign belligerent.

Now, sir, as this idea of a contest between domestic and foreign industry is the lurking fallacy which has at the very foundation of the American system, I solicit the calm and dispassionate attention of the committee to a plain and practical analysis, by which I think it will be clearly demonstrated, that, in this as in other

instances, men and nations have been carried away by mere names, and have permitted the holier dictates of common sense to be overwhelmed by one of the most arrogant impostures and delusions that has ever smothered in the chambers of policy. It is a delusion, sir, an anti-social, and I will add, an anti-Christian, as that which induced an eminent jurist of England to express the opinion, that every subject who held certain religious opinions, not conformable to the established faith, should be regarded in law as an alien enemy.

Let us look, then, into the *modus operandi* by which this great public enemy, foreign industry, is to invade our peaceful shores by pouring in a flood and torrent of foreign manufactures, that will sweep away, with irresistible force, all our domestic establishments, leaving the land desolate, without a vestige or memorial of its present prosperity!

Let us ascertain the true springs of action—let us trace out the operation into its details, and see what are the means by which this scourging flood of foreign manufactures will get into our happy country. And now, sir, mark by "how plain a tale" this fondly cherished delusion will be made to vanish. I affirm, then, and will hazard the whole contest upon the truth of the proposition, that foreign manufactures never can come into the United States, and be brought into competition with domestic manufactures, until they have ceased to be the productions of foreign industry, and have become the productions of American industry. It is in the very nature of things, morally, commercially, and politically impossible that they should.

According to my poor powers of analysis, there are but three modes in which foreign manufactures can be brought into this country for consumption. The first is, by gratuitous donation; the second, by robbery and plunder; and the third, by purchase. The wit of man can scarcely devise any other mode. Now, sir, as to voluntary and gratuitous donations from foreign Governments or foreign manufacturers, I admit that this would be the most ideal of all the modes of acquisition to the interest of the domestic manufacturers. It would absolutely destroy the entire value of all their investments in building and machinery, and they would doubtless preach us most eloquent and moving sermons to prove that it would be utterly ruinous to the wealth of the country to obtain manufactures for nothing.

But the manufacturers are perfectly secure from any danger of this sort. The time will never arise when missionary zeal will be transferred from religion to commerce, and when the filly or the philanthropy of foreign manufacturers will induce them to plough our land with their goods by this process.

Then, sir, as I have too much confidence in the prudence, to say nothing of the honor and integrity of this Government, to suppose that its powers can ever be prostituted to rapine and plunder, the only mode of acquiring foreign manufactures, which deserves to be gravely considered is that by purchase.

Here, then, we come to the real point of the controversy. When foreign manufactures are purchased and brought into the United States for consumption, they must be so purchased with the productions of the domestic industry of the United States. It is obvious, therefore, that there can be no possible conflict between foreign and domestic industry in our own markets; however it may be in foreign markets; but that the real contest is between one branch of domestic industry and another. In the case we are considering, it is a contest between the domestic producer of the article which is exchanged for the foreign manufactures, and the domestic manufacturer.

If, for example, the cotton planter of the south send his cotton to Liverpool, exchange it for manufactures, and bring these into the United States, I beg to know whether they would not be, to all intents and purposes, as truly and exclusively the productions of domestic industry, as they would be sacredly and exclusively the property of the planter? If he had a lawful title to his cotton, he must have the very same title to the manufactures he has obtained for it. If the former was exclusively the production of his industry, so, also, must the latter be, precisely in the same sense and to the same extent. It results, self-evidently, from the reciprocity of commerce, being an exchange of equivalents, that each nation receives as much encouragement to its own industry as it gives to the industry of any other. When a planter exchanges his cotton for foreign manufactures, these manufactures become the productions of domestic industry by the same act which makes them so to become the production of foreign industry. It is, as if the planter were gifted with the power of necromancy, and could transmute his cotton into manufactures by the mere touch of his wand. In this case, no doubt, the planter would be denounced for dealing with the devil, precisely for the same reason that he is now denounced and probered for dealing with England; and that is, because manufactures could be thereby, obtained and sold by the labor of

the same hands, and by the same process, as they are now obtained and sold by the labor of