

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. Dr. Channing.

BURTON CRAIG, JR.

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TERMS.

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SECOND SPEECH

of MR. McDUFFIE, of S. Carolina, on the 24th proposing a reduction of the Duties on Imports. Delivered in the House of Representatives, June 1832. (Continued.)

Barons of the nobility inferred that the cotton business must be more prosperous than any other, because the annual production of that article had increased from 24 millions of pounds in 1818, to the enormous quantity of 475 millions of pounds in 1831. Nothing can be more utterly delusive than superficial and partial notions of this kind, as the House will perceive when the whole case is presented. When I inform you, sir, that the 91 millions of cotton which we produced in 1819, was sold for 32 millions of dollars, and that the 275 millions produced in 1831, sold for only 25 millions, you will be able to form some estimate of the weight which ought to be attached to such loose statements and inferences from gentlemen, who, however well they may understand their own country, know very little about ours. The fact of the extraordinary increase in the production of cotton, connected with the no less extraordinary decrease in its price, furnishes the most conclusive demonstration of the decline, the suffering, the decay, the ruin, and the ultimate prostration of the cotton planting States.— To fall, sir, in the price of agricultural staples from forty-four to 91 dollars a hundred, in the short period of thirteen years, is a thing for which there cannot be found any precedent in the history of the world. As regards manufactures, the productive power and the improvements of machinery are so progressive and illimitable, that the rate of progress furnishes no evidence at all of the diminished prosperity of the manufacturing classes. It proves nothing but that efficiency of manufacturing labor has been increased by human invention, and that the cost of production has been proportionately diminished. But widely different is the case with the productions of agriculture, which in the progress of society, labor becomes more and more productive in manufactures; it must, in the very nature of things, become less and less productive in agriculture. The improvements made in the implements and the operations of agriculture are very inconsiderable, even to the course of a century. A field laborer can now do very little more in a day than he could have done by a field laborer one hundred years ago. But this is not all. The productive power of the soil is perpetually diminishing; so that, while the machinery with which the manufacturer operates is constantly deteriorating, hence it has been laid down as a principle, by writers on political economy, that the price of grain varies less, from century to century, than that of other articles; and that, in the progress of population, this price should gradually increase instead of being diminished. Now let us apply this reasoning to the production of cotton in the United States, and the condition of the southern cotton planter.

States, has undergone comparatively, but a very inconsiderable decline. For the four years preceding the tariff of 1824, the average price of the whole crop exported was 54 dollars per barrel; the four following years, it was 51 dollars; and for the last four years, it has been about the same. And, sir, it is in the face of these undeniable facts, which demonstrate that the cotton planters do not receive one half income from a given amount of capital and labor that they received ten years ago, that the people of the south are very calmly told by their oppressors that they must be prosperous because of the great increase of their production! What better can be given of the oppression and slavery of a people than to say, it is that condition in which their labor and productions are rapidly increasing, and their aggregate income at the same time diminishing? Yet this is the precise state of things pointed out by gentlemen as the indication of prosperity.

It has been said by one gentleman that he cannot conceive it possible that the production of cotton, if their prosperity were on the decline. I am not at all surprised that those who know nothing of our condition, and whose lot has exempted them from our melancholy experience, should be unable to conceive that a people could endure as much as we have endured. In the northern States, if one branch of industry, from any cause, becomes less prosperous than the average of other employments, the persons engaged in it have the easy and obvious resource of abandoning it, and embarking in some more profitable branch of industry. In such a community, any extraordinary burden thrown upon a particular employment, which should reduce the profits below the common average, would be promptly followed by a withdrawal of capital and labor from that employment, and a consequent decrease of production. But the very fact to which the gentleman referred, the rapid increase of production under a no less rapid decrease of price, conclusively proves that the people of the southern States cannot avoid the oppressive burthens which have destroyed their prosperity, by abandoning the employment upon which those burthens are imposed. The whole capital and labor of the country are engaged in the proscribed employment, and, from obvious causes, cannot be transferred to any other employment without involving the loss of one-half of their value in the first instance, to say nothing of the unmitigated ruin of southern labor and southern habits for the business of manufactures. The southern States are precisely in the condition that England would be in if united with France under a common government, and if that Government should levy a discriminating tax upon English manufactures, while those made in France were exempted. The English manufacturers could not avoid the tax without deserting their country; and, in like manner, the southern planters cannot avoid the discriminating burthens to which they are subjected, without sacrificing, in the aggregate, one half of the capital of the community, and then embarking in an untried pursuit. A tax laid upon a particular trade or calling may be avoided, but a tax laid upon the whole community never can. The southern States, therefore, are precisely in the condition of a description of manufactures whose productions are subjected to an enormous duty, from which all other productions are exempted, and who are yet placed under a legal compulsion to continue in the same employment. The only resource, in such a case, is to make up by increased labor and exertion for the burthens imposed; and to compensate for the diminished value of the taxed production, by an increased quantity of it. And such has been precisely the case in regard to the production of cotton. The more heavy and oppressive the duties imposed upon our exchanges have been, the more active and efficient has been our industry; and the less the exchangeable value of our staples the greater has been the amount of our production.

The property of the great body of the cotton planters consists in a soil and climate peculiarly adapted to produce cotton—the most valuable staple of the earth; and not adapted to produce wheat, the other great staple of agriculture; and it consists, also, of a description of labor adapted only to the operation of agriculture. Owing to the heat and dryness of the climate, soil of a given fertility will not produce much more than half the quantity of wheat, or other grain, that soil of the same quality will produce in the northern States. The law of nature, therefore, as well as their own peculiar domestic institution, have not only decreed that the southern State should be an agricultural people, but that they should pursue those branches of agriculture in which they are now engaged, and which depend principally upon foreign countries for a market. The remarks which have been made in relation to cotton are even more applicable to rice. The value of the rice lands would be worth, comparatively, nothing for the production of any other staple. If the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Davis) will consider those things, he will be at no loss to account for what seemed to him to be an incredible

phenomenon in political economy, that South Carolina and Georgia cultivate cotton in competition with the new States of the southwest, when the latter can as well afford to make cotton at eight cents a pound as the former at ten. The truth is, the people of South Carolina and Georgia are obliged to cultivate cotton under all the disadvantages of a double competition, created by the legislation of this Government, or to do what would be worse. I say they are subjected to a double competition by the legislation of Congress. If we consider them as producers of cotton, they are exposed to the unequal competition of those who obtain from the Government, at a dollar and a quarter, lands that are more productive than those which cost ten dollars in South Carolina and Georgia. If we consider them as producers of the manufactures for which their cotton is exchanged, labor and they are compelled by the government to sustain a still more unequal competition with the northern manufacturers; for, in this case, the cost of their production is 40 or 50 per cent. more than that of their northern rivals, owing exclusively to the impolitic of this Government, and yet they are obliged to sell these productions for the same price.

Sir, there never was a community of men, who bore the name of freemen, so minutely oppressed by the curse of misgovernment as the southern Atlantic States of this Union. And yet, sir, when we tell the story of our wrongs and sufferings, a gentleman who cultivates the alluvial soil, and represents the sugar-planting nabobs of Louisiana, (Mr. BARKER) rises up with general complacency, and utters as the most elegant mockery for our consolation by telling us of the wonderful operations of the cotton planters in Louisiana, and that they can afford to make cotton at three cents a lb. Pray, sir, can any reason why I should patiently submit to be plundered of one-third of my income by this protecting system, be fairly deduced from the fact that the cost of producing cotton in Louisiana is not half so great as it is in South Carolina? On the contrary, it is not this strongest of all reasons why the people of South Carolina should be permitted to enjoy the fruits of their own industry, and not have them taken away by the unconstitutional exactions of this Government, and given to the favored objects of its bounty in another region of the confederacy! If the cotton planters of Louisiana, and not the cotton planters of Louisiana, and not the cotton planters of Louisiana, and not the cotton planters of Louisiana, are to feel the oppression of the protecting system, or if they are induced to fear it, in consideration of an annual bounty of a million and a half of dollars given to the sugar planters, it certainly furnishes no sufficient motive for their representatives here to exist in the advantages they enjoy over the southern Atlantic States, and to rebuke the people of those States because they will not tamely submit to this system of plunder and oppression. [Here Mr. BURLINGAME disclaimed any feeling of exultation in what he had said; he had simply stated facts.] Mr. McDuffie said: I am glad, sir, to be informed that I have mistaken the tone of the gentleman's remarks. I was perhaps misled by the peculiar manner and emphasis with which he delivered that his constituents had never participated in this false clamor about robbery and plunder. One of the gentlemen from Massachusetts (Mr. Everett) has been pleased to refer the House to another proof of the prosperity of the southern States: the increase of their population. This, sir, is a much more fallible criterion of prosperity than the increase of their productions. There is no part of this Union, thanks to Providence, and not to the wisdom of our Government, in which the preventive check upon population, as Malthus expresses it, has yet begun to operate. And I think any gentleman might have been induced to distrust the application of this theory to the United States, by a fact stated by himself in regard to South Carolina. He said the slaves had increased more rapidly than the whites; and it would follow, if his argument be worthy of being followed, that the slaves are also more prosperous than the masters.

But the gentleman groups together the whole of the southern and south-western States, and appeals to the increase of their aggregate population, as a proof of their prosperity. Now, does not the gentleman know that Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, are new States, and have been peopled principally by emigration since the late war? Does he not also know that about one-half of the territory of Georgia, and that the most fertile and productive, has been acquired from the Indians, and brought into cultivation within the last twenty-five years? And has he not himself admitted that the population of South Carolina—a State which has had no new lands to bring into cultivation—has actually fallen off in comparison with that of the other States?

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, the citizens of South Carolina have a strong attachment to their native soil. All of them would desire that their bones should be deposited with those of their ancestors. Yet, sir, they are constrained by their necessities to break those powerful ties of feeling and of patriotism, and to fly to the wilderness to obtain a temporary relief from the exhausting operations of this op-

pressive scheme of legislative plunder. For the last ten years our population has been increasing, and almost literally, in shape, equal by their poverty and not by the wealth, to a first edition to the homes of their fathers, and all that emigrating association connected with them.

But, sir, they cannot get out of the reach of oppression, however they may mitigate their sufferings for a time; and, in the course of a few years, when their lands shall begin to be exhausted, they will be too fatally convinced that no climate, however propitious, no soil, however productive, can repel tyranny and oppressive legislation from them.

I will now draw an exemplification of the practical effect of this restrictive system upon the productive industry of the planting States, from a subject with which this House is, unfortunately, but too familiar; I mean Internal Improvements. Europe, sir, is the natural market of the southern planters, and they have precisely the same interest in maintaining and improving the channels and facilities of a cheap intercourse with England, France, Holland, and Germany, that the farmers and manufacturers of the United States have in maintaining and improving those channels and facilities by which the internal commerce of the country is carried on. The ocean is the great highway by which the planting States carry their produce to market, and free trade navigation, with strict philosophical propriety, he compared to a railroad, which diminishes the cost of transportation. Commercial restrictions, on the other hand, may, with the same propriety, be compared to obstructions thrown into that highway, increasing the cost of transportation. A protecting duty of 50 per cent. has precisely the same injurious effect upon the planters as would be produced by destroying the railroad which conveyed their produce to market, and thereby adding 50 per cent. to the expense of transporting it. The protecting system is nothing more than a permanent blockade of our ports, declaring the foreign exchanges of the southern States to be contraband, and rigorously exacting the penalty of 40 or 50 per cent. on the value of every cargo imported in violation of it. If a duty of 40 or 50 per cent. were levied upon the domestic exchanges of the country, if the farmers of Massachusetts or Pennsylvania had to pay that duty for the privilege of exchanging their grain for cotton manufactures or for iron, they would at once perceive that it was equivalent to adding 40 or 50 per cent. to the expense of transporting their grain to its proper market, by locking the turnpike gates, tearing up the bridges, and compelling them to travel over worse and more circuitous roads. But the avowed purpose and inevitable tendency of the American system is to accomplish the twofold result of obstructing and blocking up, by enormous tolls, the great natural highway which a kind Providence has provided for the planting States to communicate with their peculiar markets, and at the same time, opening ten thousand artificial highways to facilitate the internal commerce of the manufacturing States, with the tolls unjustly levied on the productions of southern industry, passing over the national highway. If the Government should tear up the foundations of my private way to market, in order to obtain materials to build a turnpike for a rival producer, it would not be guilty of an act of more outrageous injustice.

This bill, sir, is the final consummation of the protecting system, and it is necessary to remark the effect of it on the commerce of the manufacturing States. While the advocates of this system have been denouncing free trade as a great national curse, they have studiously established, for all the States north of the Potomac, the most perfect system of free trade that ever has existed upon the face of the earth. I defy the historical research of gentlemen to produce a parallel. What production of southern industry is subject to the slightest possible restriction in seeking its proper market, whether that market be at home or abroad? As to the home market, which is the great market of the manufacturing States, the Government not only imposes no restriction upon its exchanges, but grants enormous bounties upon them, unconstitutionally and unjustly levied on the exchanges of the planting States. This great branch of their trade, therefore, is not only perfectly free, but it is more than free. Then, as to the foreign exchanges of the northern States, I have heretofore shown that, with some trifling exceptions, they are exempted from all duties or restrictions by this bill. But while the whole trade of the manufacturing States is thus entirely free, all the exchanges of the planting States, without a single exception, are subjected to the most enormous impositions, for the double purpose of supporting the Government, and of sustaining the manufacturing interests. In a word, sir, the planting States are compelled to pay 40 or 50 per cent. for the privilege of exchanging the entire mass of their staple productions, while the manufacturing States not only pay nothing, but are absolutely authorized by the Government to demand and receive from the planting States 40 or 50 per cent. more for

their manufactures than they are intrinsically worth.

With all these facts before him, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Davis) stands with great complacency, what interest could possibly maintain itself with a protection of only 25 per cent. This is certainly a most extraordinary question. What interest can exist without a protection of 50 per cent. I will tell the gentleman: This whole planting interest of the southern States not only exists without a protection of 25 per cent., but without any protection at all; it not only exists without protection, but it goes abroad upon the face of the deep, to encounter the competition of the whole world, under restrictive duties averaging nearly the double of 25 per cent. Yes, sir, while there is not a single branch of northern industry that can command even the home market, with all the advantages of proximity, without a protecting bounty of 50 per cent., the whole of the productions of southern industry have to go abroad under the oppressive burthen of the same rate of duty, and not only to encounter foreign competition, but foreign duties also. The ingenuity and the wickedness of man could not possibly devise a scheme more perfectly adapted to impoverish and desolate the southern States, and enrich the northern States by their spoils.

It is a system, sir, which regards the planters of the southern States as aliens, and their industry as foreign industry.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, referring to the cheap rate of slave labor in the planting States, asks, with a very significant emphasis, "do you expect the free labor of the north to contend upon equal terms with mere machines?" Sir, in this the language for one freeman of the same common country to hold to another? How dare the gentleman to ask me if I expect that his labor will contend on equal terms with mine? and by what authority does he propound an interrogatory so arrogant and insulting? It is the very language, sir, of a master, and cannot but cause the blood to boil in the veins of every southern man who has the spirit of a freeman. In the better days of the republic, before the spirit of the revolution had departed, this single question would have roused millions of freemen to vindicate their rights. Let me tell the gentleman, once for all, that I utterly disclaim his right to make any inquiry or question as to the description of labor employed in the southern States, and to assure him, that if God gives the people of the south the spirit of his ancestors and mine, he will be obliged to compete with just such labor as they choose to employ, and upon terms, too, of perfect equality.

But, sir, I can, at the same time, assure the gentleman that I look with no envy on the northern people. God forbid. On the contrary, I would rejoice if they could receive ten times as much for their labor as they now do. But I never will consent that the price of their labor shall be enhanced to an unnatural price, by the disguised appropriation of one-third of the proceeds of southern labor for their own benefit.

It is in vain, sir, to discuss this matter or to conceal the true nature of this contest. It is no affair of speculative theory, but a plain business concern. And I will now tell the gentleman from Massachusetts, if he will pardon the liberty, what is the natural price of the manufacturing labor of the northern States estimated in money. It is precisely the same as the manufacturing labor of England, and not a cent more.

Let us examine the elements of the comparison. The English and the northern manufacturers are employed in making the same articles. Does the English machinery, the great agent of production, cost any more than the American? Not near so much, sir. Iron the principal material used in its construction, does not cost half so much. Is the interest of money higher in England than in the United States—but little more than half as high. Is the raw material of manufactures higher in England than in the United States? Cotton, to be sure, is a little higher, but all other raw materials, particularly iron and wool, are a great deal lower. The aggregate, therefore, of all the other elements of price, except the wages of the laborer, is decidedly less in England than in the United States. Does it not follow, with demonstrative clearness, that in a free competition for the market of the United States, the wages of the manufacturing labor in the northern States, must be reduced at least as low as the wages of the same labor in England? The cost of importation is fully counterbalanced by the superior advantages of England in capital and machinery. I will now examine this subject in another aspect. The English manufacturer says to the southern planter, "my poor operatives have to labor for about ten cents a day, and I can, therefore, afford to give you the product of four days' labor for the product of a single day's labor of your slaves."

Now, is not this the most beneficial of all exchanges for the cotton planters? Is it not better that they should receive the product of four days' foreign labor in exchange for one, than be compelled to receive only the product of one day's domestic labor, and that less efficient and pro-

ductive in the proportion that twelve hours are less than sixteen?

Nothing can be more absurd and unphilosophical than the doctrine of Mr. Niles and the Massachusetts Convention, which contends that a nation whose labor is dear, cannot, without ruin, carry on a commerce with one whose labor is cheap. The very reverse is most obviously the fact. The cheaper the labor of the nations with which we carry on commerce, the more profitable must that commerce be, not only to the persons immediately engaged in producing its exchanges, but of consequence, to the country at large. It is true, sir, that if the interest of the domestic manufacturers is to be considered the great master interest, to which the planting and exporting interests of the Union are to be sacrificed up as a sacrifice, the cheapness of foreign labor may be regarded as an evil, and the manufacturers may properly say to their liege subjects, the planters, "you are hereby prohibited from exchanging one day's labor of your slaves for four days' labor of the English manufacturing operatives, in order that you may be compelled to give the same days' labor for a single one, of the manufacturing operatives of your very worthy and approved good masters."

Such, sir, is the plain language of the doctrine embodied in this bill, which dooms the people of the south to eternal slavery; and whatever others may do, I here solemnly declare that I never will submit to it.

I feel that I am called upon to notice some of the remarks of another gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Appleton) of which I did not hear when they were delivered—if, indeed, they were delivered—but which I saw, for the first time, a few days ago, in a newspaper.

The gentleman was pleased to say that he could regard me in no other light than as an exponent of the doctrines of political economy, and to add that the "notable discovery," that the tariff impoverishes the south, and enriches the north, is "a miserable fallacy, hardly worthy in itself of a serious argument."

The House will doubtless recognize, in the great intellectual superiority and standing of the gentleman, his title to speak, in such terms as these, of so humble an antagonist as myself. I must be permitted to say, however, that if any miserable fallacy be worthy of any argument at all, it is certainly worthy one more serious, and less important, than that with which we have been favored by the honorable member.

He has very fairly quoted, in his speech, the substance of the doctrine which he denounces so contemptuously; and I am perfectly willing that it should go down to posterity embodied in the commentary, being well assured that it will stand as firm as a rock amidst the fields and mudily current that ripples harmlessly around its base.

The gentleman was also pleased to say that, to call the manufactures obtained for southern staples, "the productions of southern industry, was to confound all common sense." I doubt not that he prizes by the standard of his own intellect, and I have only to remark, that common, indeed, must that sense be, which can be confounded by a proposition so plain and obvious. He also said that the idea that the protecting duties diminished the exchangeable value of cotton, required "an effort of the imagination beyond his comprehension." On this point, sir, I have too much politeness to doubt the word of the honorable member. I can very well imagine, and that too without straining the doctrine of presumption beyond reasonable bounds, that there are many truths in political philosophy, neither very profound nor abstruse, that are quite beyond his comprehension.

The honorable member has taken frequent occasion to allude sneeringly to the expositions of political economy. Now, sir, while I perfectly agree with the gentleman that mere men of books are not the proper persons to regulate the political affairs of Empires, I must be allowed, at the same time, to say that it is not in the order of Providence that more men of spindles should be elevated to that high destiny. For myself, sir, it will give the gentleman any consolation, I here openly confess, with all proper humility, that I never read but one book on political economy in my life, and that was the work of Adam Smith, which fell into my hands before I went to college. And, though I have made occasional reference to the standard works on this subject since, I have never estimated their labors very highly, believing that they are too speculative, and have not sufficiently looked into the actual operation of government restrictions upon the different classes of productive industry, and upon the principles of human liberty.

Alluding to the dialogue, which I supposed to take place between the planter and the collector of the customs, the gentleman asks if an English manufacturer would not "run the risk of being made a laughing stock," who should alledge that the Genessee wheat, which he had obtained for Yorkshire goods, was the produce of his own industry, and remunerate with the collector of the English