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### SPEECH OF MR. WEBSTER, UPON THE TARIFF.

Delivered in the House of Representatives of the United States, April, 1824.

CONTINUED.

Sir, I should not have gone into this prolix detail of opinions from any consideration of their special importance on the present occasion; but, having happened to state, that such was the actual opinion of the government of England at the present time, and the accuracy of this representation having been so confidently denied, I have chosen to put the matter beyond doubt or cavil, although at the expense of these tedious citations. I shall have occasion, hereafter, of referring more particularly to sundry recent British enactments, by way of showing the diligence and spirit with which that government strives to sustain its navigating interest, by opening the widest possible range to the enterprise of individual adventurers. I repeat that I have not alluded to these examples of a foreign State as being fit to control our own policy. In the general principle, I acquiesce. Protection, when carried to the point which is now recommended, that is, to entire prohibition, seems to me destructive of all commercial intercourse between nations. We are urged to adopt the system upon general principles; and what would be the consequence of the universal application of such a general principle, but that nations would abstain entirely from all intercourse with one another? I do not admit the general principle; on the contrary, I think freedom of trade to be the general principle, and restriction the exception. And it is for every State, taking into view its own condition, to judge of the propriety, in any case, of making an exception, constantly preferring, as I think all wise governments will, not to depart, without urgent reason, from the general rule.

There is another point in the existing policy of England, to which I would most earnestly invite the attention of the Committee, I mean the warehouse system, or what we usually call the system of drawback. Very great prejudices appear to me, to exist with us, on that subject. We seem averse to the extension of the principle. The English government, on the contrary, appear to have carried it to the extreme of liberality. They have arrived, however, at their present opinions, and present practice, by slow degrees. The transit system was commenced about the year 1813, but the first law was partial and limited. It admitted the importation of raw materials for exportation, but it excluded almost every sort of manufactured goods. This was done for the same reason, that we propose to prevent the transit of Canadian wheat through the United States—the fear of adding the competition of the foreign article with our own, in foreign markets. Better reflection, or more experience, has induced them to abandon that mode of reasoning, and to consider all such means of influencing foreign markets as nugatory; since, in the present active and enlightened state of the world, nations will supply themselves from the best sources, and the true policy of all producers, whether of raw materials, or of manufactured articles, is, not vainly to endeavor to keep other vendors out of the market, but to conquer them in it, by the quality and the cheapness of their articles. The present policy of England, therefore, is, to allure the importation of commodities into England, there to be deposited in English warehouses, thence to be exported in assorted cargoes, and thus enable her to carry on a general export trade to all quarters of the globe. Articles of all kinds, with the single exception of tea, may be brought into England, from any part of the world, in foreign as well as British ships, there warehoused, and again exported, at the pleasure of the owner, without the payment of any duty, or government charge whatever.

While I am upon this subject, I would take notice also of the recent proposition in the English Parliament to abolish the tax on imported wool; and it is observable, that those who support this proposition, give the same reasons as have been offered here, within the last week, against the duty which we propose on the same article. They say, that their manufacturers require a cheap and coarse wool, for the supply of the Mediterranean and Levant trade, and that, without a more free admission of the wool of the continent, that trade will fall into the hands of the Germans and Italians, who will carry it on through Leghorn and Trieste. While there is a duty on foreign wool to protect the wool growers of England, there is on the other hand a prohibition on the exportation of the native article, in aid of the manufacturers. The opinion seems to be gaining strength, that the true policy is to abolish both.

Laws have long existed in England, preventing the emigration of artisans, and the exportation of machinery; but the policy of these, also, has become doubted, and an inquiry has been instituted in Parliament into the expediency of repealing them. As to the emigration of artisans, say those who disapprove the laws, if that were desirable, no law could effect it; and as to the exportation of machinery, let us fabricate and export it, as we would any other commodity. If France is determined to spin and weave her own cotton, let us if we may, still have the benefit of furnishing the machinery.

I have stated these things, sir, to show what seems to be the general tone of thinking and reasoning on these subjects in that country, the example of which has been so much pressed upon us. Whether the present policy of England be right or wrong, wise or unwise, it cannot, it seems clearly to me, be quoted as an authority for carrying further the restrictive and exclusive system, either in regard to manufactures or trade. To re-establish a sound currency, to meet at once the shock, tremendous as it was, of the fall of prices, to enlarge her capacity for foreign trade, to open wide the field of individual enterprise and competition, and to say, plainly and distinctly, that the country must relieve itself from the embarrassments which it felt, by economy, frugality and renewed efforts of enterprise; these appear to be the general outline of the policy which England has pursued.

Mr. Chairman: I will now proceed to say a few words upon the topic, but, for the introduction of which, into this debate, I should not have given the Committee, on this occasion, the trouble of hearing me. Some days ago, I believe it was when we were settling the controversy between the oil merchants and the tallow chandlers, the *Balance of Trade* made its appearance in debate, and I must confess, sir, that I spoke, of it, or rather spoke to it, some what freely and irreverently. I believe I used the hard names which have been imputed to me; and I did it simply for the purpose of laying the spectre, and driving it back to its tomb. Certainly, sir, when I called the old notion on this subject nonsense, I did not suppose that I should offend any one, unless the dead should happen to hear me. All the living generation I took it for granted, would think the term very properly applied. In this, however, I was mistaken.—The dead and the living rise up together to call me to account, and I must defend myself as well as I am able.

Let us inquire, then, sir, what is meant by an unfavorable balance of trade, and what the argument is, drawn from that source. By an unfavorable balance of trade, I understand, is meant that state of

things in which importation exceeds exportation. To apply it to our own case, if the value of goods imported, exceed the value of those exported, then the *balance of trade* is said to be against us, inasmuch as we have run in debt to the amount of this difference. Therefore, it is said, that, if a nation continue long in a commerce like this, it must be rendered absolutely bankrupt. It is in the condition of a man that buys more than he sells; and how can such a traffic be maintained without ruin? Now, sir, the whole fallacy of this argument consists in supposing that, whenever the value of imports exceeds that of exports, a debt is necessarily created to the extent of the difference; whereas, ordinarily, the import is no more than the result of the export, augmented in value by the labor of transportation. The excess of imports over the exports, in truth, usually shows the gains, not the losses, of trade; or, in a country that not only buys and sells goods, but employs ships in carrying goods also, it shows the profits of commerce, and the earnings of navigation. Nothing is more certain than that in the usual course of things, and taking a series of years together, the value of our imports is the aggregate of our exports and our freights. If the value of commodities, imported in a given case, did not exceed the value of the outward cargo, with which they were purchased, then it would be clear to every man's common sense, that the voyage had not been profitable. If such commodities fell far short in value of the cost of the outward cargo, then the voyage would be a very losing one; and yet it would present exactly that state of things, which, according to the notion of a *balance of trade*, can alone indicate a prosperous commerce. On the other hand, if the return cargo were found to be worth much more than the outward cargo, while the merchant having paid for the goods exported, and all the expenses of the voyage, finds a handsome sum yet in his hands, which he calls profits, the *balance of trade* is still against him, and whatever he may think of it, he is in a very bad way. Although one individual, or all individuals gain, the nation loses; while all its citizens grow rich, the country grows poor. This is the doctrine of the *balance of trade*. Allow me, sir, to give an instance tending to show how unaccountably individuals deceive themselves, and imagine themselves to be somewhat rapidly mending their condition, while they ought to be persuaded that, by that infallible standard, the *balance of trade*, they are on the high road to ruin. Some years ago, in better times than the present, a ship left one of the towns of New England, with 70,000 specie dollars. She proceeded to Mocha, on the Red Sea, and there laid out these dollars in coffee, drugs, spices, &c. With this new cargo she proceeded to Europe; two-thirds of it were sold in Holland for 130,000 dollars, which the ship brought back, and placed in the same bank from the vaults of which she had taken her original outfit. The other third was sent to the ports of the Mediterranean, and produced a return of 25,000 dollars in specie, and 15,000 dollars in Italian merchandise. These sums together make 170,000 dollars imported, which is 100,000 dollars more than was exported, and is therefore proof of an unfavorable *balance of trade*, to that amount, in this adventure. We should find no great difficulty, sir, in paying off our balances if this were the nature of them all.

The truth is, Mr. Chairman, that all these obsolete and exploded notions had their origin in very mistaken ideas of the true nature of commerce. Commerce is not a gambling among nations for a stake, to be won by some and lost by others. It has not the tendency necessarily to impoverish one of the parties to it, while it enriches the other; all parties gain, all parties make profits, all parties grow rich, by the operations of just and liberal commerce. If the world had but one climate, and but one soil; if all men had the same wants and the same means, on the spot of their existence, to gratify those wants; then, indeed, what one obtained from the other by exchange, would injure one party in the same degree that it benefited the other; then, indeed, there would be some foundation for the *balance of trade*. But Providence has dispersed our lot much more kindly. We inhabit a various earth. We have reciprocal wants, and reciprocal means for gratifying one another's wants.—This is the true origin of commerce, which is nothing more than an exchange of equivalents, and from the rude barter of its primitive state, to the refined and complex condition in which we see it, its principle is uniformly the same; its only object being, in every stage, to produce that exchange of commodities between individuals and between nations, which shall conduce to the advantage and to the happiness of both. Commerce between nations has the same essential character, as commerce between individuals, or between parts of the same nation. Cannot two individuals make an interchange of commodities which shall prove beneficial to both, or in which the *balance of trade* shall be in favor of both? If not, the tailor and the shoemaker, the farmer and the smith, have hitherto very much misunderstood their own interest. And with regard to the internal trade of a country, in which the same rule would apply as between nations, do we ever speak of such an intercourse being prejudicial to one side because it is useful to the other? Do we ever hear that, because the intercourse between New York and Albany is advantageous to one of those places, it must therefore be ruinous to the other?

May I be allowed, sir, to read a passage on this subject from the observations of a gentleman, in my opinion one of the most clear and sensible writers and speakers of the age upon subjects of this sort? "There is no political question on which the prevalence of false principles is so general, as in what relates to the nature of commerce and to the pretended *balance of trade*; and there are few which have led to a greater number of practical mistakes, attended with consequences extensively prejudicial to the happiness of mankind. In this country, our parliamentary proceedings, our public documents, and the works of several able and popular writers, have combined to propagate the impression that we are indebted for much of our riches to what is called the *balance of trade*." "Our true policy would surely be to profess, as the object and guide of our commercial system, that which every man who has studied the subject, must know to be the true principles of commerce, the *interchange of reciprocal and equivalent benefit*. We may rest assured that it is not in the nature of commerce to enrich one party at the expense of the other. This is a purpose to which, if it were practicable, we ought not to aim; and which, if we aimed at, we could not accomplish." These remarks, I believe, sir, were written some ten or twelve years ago. They are in perfect accordance with the opinions advanced in more elaborate treatises, and now that the world has returned to a state of peace, and commerce has resumed its natural channels, and different nations are enjoying, or seeking to enjoy, their respective portions of it, all see the justice of these ideas; all see, that in this day of knowledge and of peace, there can be no commerce between nations but that which shall benefit all who are parties to it.

If it were necessary, Mr. Chairman, I might ask the attention of the Committee to recur to a document before us, on this subject, of the *balance of trade*. It will be seen by reference to the accounts, that, in the course of the last year, our total export to Holland exceeded two millions and a half; our total import

\*Mr. Huskisson, President of the English Board of Trade.

from the same country was but 700,000 dollars. Now can any man be wild enough to make any inference from this of the gain or loss of our trade with Holland for that year? Our trade with Russia for the same year, produced a balance the other way; our import being two millions, and our export but half a million. But this has no more tendency to show that Russia trade a losing trade, than the other statement has to show that the Dutch trade has been a gainful one. Neither of them, by itself, proves any thing. Springing out of this notion of a *balance of trade*, there has been another idea, which has been much dwelt upon in the course of this debate; that is, that we ought not to buy of nations who do not buy of us; for example, that the Russian trade is a trade disadvantageous to the country, and ought to be discouraged, because, in the ports of Russia, we buy more than we sell. Now allow me to observe, in the first place, sir, that we have no account showing how much we do sell in the ports of Russia. Our official returns show us only what is the amount of our direct exports to her ports. But then we all know that the proceeds of other of our exports go to the same market, though indirectly. We send our own products, for example, to Cuba, or to Brazil; we there exchange them for the sugar and the coffee of those countries, and these articles we carry to St. Petersburg, and there sell them. Again; our exports to Holland and Hamburg are connected directly or indirectly with our imports from Russia. What difference does it make, in sense or reason, whether a cargo of iron be brought at St. Petersburg, by the exchange of a cargo of tobacco, or whether the tobacco has been sold on the way, in a better market, in a port of Holland, the money remitted to England, and the iron paid for by a bill on London? There might indeed have been an augmented freight, there might have been some saving of commissions, if tobacco had been in brisk demand in the Russian market. But still there is nothing to show that the whole voyage may not have been highly profitable. That depends upon the original cost of the article here, the amount of freight and insurance to Holland, the price obtained there, the rate of exchange between Holland and England; the expense, then, of proceeding to St. Petersburg, the price of iron there, the rate of exchange between that place and England, the amount of freight and insurance home, and finally, the value of the iron, when brought to our own market. These are the calculations which determine the fortune of the adventure, and nothing can be judged of it, one way or the other, by the relative state of our imports or exports with Holland, England, or Russia.

I would not be understood to deny that it may often be our interest to cultivate a trade with countries that most require such commodities as we can furnish, and which are capable also of directly supplying our own wants. This is the simplest and most original form of all commerce, and is, no doubt, highly beneficial. And some countries are so situated, doubtless, that commerce, in this original form, or something near it, may be all that they can, without considerable inconvenience, carry on. Our trade, for example, with Madeira and the Western Islands, has been useful to the country, as furnishing a demand for some portion of our agricultural products, which probably could not have been bought, had we not received their products in return. Countries situated still further from the great marts and highways of the commercial world, may afford still stronger instances of the necessity and utility of conducting commerce on the original principle of barter, without much assistance from the operations of credit and exchange. All I would be understood to say is, that by no means follows that that must be a losing trade with any country, from which we receive more of her products than she receives of ours. And since I was supposed the other day, in speaking upon this subject, to have advanced opinions which not only this country ought to reject, but which also other countries, and those the most distinguished for skill and success in commercial intercourse, do reject, I will ask leave to refer again to the discussion which I first mentioned in the English Parliament, relative to the foreign trade of that country. "With regard," says the mover of the proposition, "to the argument employed against renewing our intercourse with the north of Europe, namely, that those who supplied us with timber from that quarter, would not receive British manufactures in return, it appeared to him futile and ungrounded. If they did not send direct for our manufactures at home, they would send for them to Leipsic and other fairs of Germany. Were not the Russian and Polish merchants purchasers there to a great amount? But he would never admit the principle, that a trade was not profitable, because we were obliged to carry it on with the precious metals, or that we ought to renounce it, because our manufactures were not received by the foreign nation, in return for its produce. Whatever was received, must be paid for in the produce of our land and labor, directly or circuitously, and he was glad to have the noble Earl's marked concurrence in this principle."

Referring ourselves again, sir, to the analogies of common life, no one would say, that a farmer or mechanic should buy *only* where he can do so by the exchange of his own produce, or of his own manufacture. Such exchange may be often convenient; and, on the other hand, the cash purchase may be often more convenient. It is the same in the intercourse of nations. Indeed, Mr. Speaker has placed this argument on very clear grounds. It has been said, in the early part of the debate, that if we cease to import English cotton fabrics, England would no longer continue to purchase our cotton. To this Mr. Speaker has replied, with great force and justness, that, as she must have cotton in large quantities, she will buy the article where she can find it best and cheapest; and that it would be quite ridiculous in her, manufacturing as she still would be, for her own vast consumption, and the consumption of millions in other countries, to reject our uplands, because we had learned to manufacture a part of them for ourselves. And would it not be equally ridiculous in us, if the commodities of Russia were both cheaper, and better suited to our wants, than could be found elsewhere, to abstain from commerce with her, because she will not receive, in return, other commodities which we have to sell, but which she has no occasion to buy?

Intimately connected, sir, with this topic, is another, which has been brought into the debate; I mean, the evil so much complained of—the exportation of specie. We hear gentlemen imputing the loss of market at home to a want of money, and this want of money to the exportation of the precious metals. We hear the India and China trade denounced, as a commerce conducted on our side, in a great measure, with gold and silver. These opinions, sir, are clearly void of all just foundation, and we cannot too soon get rid of them. There are no shallower reasons, than those political and commercial writers, who would represent it to be the only true and gainful end of commerce, to accumulate the precious metals. These are articles of use, and articles of merchandise, with this additional circumstance belonging to them, that they are made, by the general consent of nations, the standard by which the value of all other merchandise is to be estimated. In regard to weights and measures, something drawn from external nature, is made a common standard, for the purposes of general convenience; and this is precisely the office performed by the precious metals, in addition to those uses to which, as metals, they are

\*Marquis of Lansdowne. †Lord Liverpool.

capable of being applied. There may be of these, too much or too little, in a country, at a particular time, as there may be of any other articles. When the market is overstocked with them, as it often is, their exportation becomes as proper and as useful as that of other commodities, under similar circumstances. We need no more repine, when the dollars, which have been brought here from South America, are despatched to other countries, than when coffee and sugar take the same direction. We often deceive ourselves by attributing to a scarcity of money, that which is the result of other causes. In the course of this debate, the honorable member from Pennsylvania has represented the country as full of every thing for money; but they will sell for money as quick as for any other article which happens to be in demand. They will sell for money, for example, as easily as for coffee, or for tea, at the prices which properly belong to those articles. The mistake lies in imputing that to want of money, which arises from want of demand. Men do not buy wheat because they have money; but because they want wheat. To decide whether money be plenty or not, that is, whether there be a large portion of capital unemployed or not, when the currency of a country is metallic, we must look, not only to the prices of commodities, but also to the rate of interest. A low rate of interest, a facility of obtaining money on loans, a disposition to invest in permanent stocks, all of which are proofs that money is plenty, may nevertheless often denote a state not of the highest prosperity. They may, and often do, show a want of employment for capital; and the accumulation of specie shows the same thing. We have no occasion for the precious metals as money, except for the purposes of circulation, or rather of sustaining a safe paper circulation. And whenever there be a prospect of a profitable investment abroad, all the gold and silver, except what these purposes require, will be exported. For the same reason, if a demand exist abroad for sugar and coffee, whatever amount of those articles might exist in the country, beyond the wants of its own consumption, would be sent abroad to meet that demand. Besides, sir, how should it ever occur to any body, that we should continue to export gold and silver, if we did not continue to import them also? If a vessel take our own products to the Havana, or elsewhere, exchange them for dollars, proceed to China, exchange them for silks and teas, bring these last to the ports of the Mediterranean, sell them there for dollars, and return to the United States; this would be a voyage resulting in the importation of the precious metals. But if she had returned from Cuba, and the dollars obtained there had been shipped direct from the United States to China, the China goods sold in Holland, and the proceeds brought home in the hemp and iron of Russia, this would be a voyage in which they were exported. Yet every body sees, that both might be equally beneficial to the individuals and to the public. I believe, sir, that, in point of fact, we have enjoyed great benefit in our trade with India and China, from the liberty of going from place to place all over the world, without being obliged in the meantime, to return home—a liberty not heretofore enjoyed by the private traders of England, in regard to India and China. Suppose the American ship to be at Brazil, for example—she could proceed with her dollars direct to India, and, in return, could distribute her cargo in all the various ports of Europe, or America; while an English ship, if a private trader, being at Brazil, must first return to England, and then could only proceed in the direct line from England to India. This advantage, our countrymen have not been backward to improve; and in the debate to which I have already so often referred, it was stated, not without some complaint of the inconvenience of exclusion, and the natural sluggishness of monopoly, that American ships were at that moment fitting out in the Thames, to supply France, Holland, and other countries on the continent, with tea; while the East India Company would not do this of themselves, nor allow any of their fellow countrymen to do it for them.

There is yet another subject, Mr. Chairman, upon which I would wish to say something, if I might presume upon the continued patience of the Committee. We hear, sometimes, in the House, and continually out of it, of the rate of exchange, as being one proof that we are on the downward road to ruin. Mr. Speaker himself has adverted to that topic, and I am afraid that his authority may give credit to opinions clearly unfounded, and which led to very false and erroneous conclusions. Sir, let us see what the facts are. Exchange on England has recently risen one or one and a half per cent. partly owing, perhaps, to the introduction of this bill into Congress. Before this recent rise, and for the last six months, I understand its average may have been about seven and a half per cent. advance. Now, supposing this to be the *real*, and not merely, as it is, the nominal par of exchange, between us and England, what would it prove? Nothing, except that funds were wanted, in England, for commercial operations, to be carried on either in England or elsewhere. It would not necessarily show that we were indebted to England; for, if we had occasion to pay debts in Russia or Holland, funds in England would naturally enough be required for such a purpose. And even if it did prove that a balance was due England, at the moment, it would have no tendency to explain to us whether our commerce with England had been profitable or unprofitable. But it is not true, in point of fact, that the *real* price of exchange is seven and a half per cent. advance, nor indeed, that there is, at the present moment, any advance at all. That is to say, it is not true that merchants will give such an advance, or any advance, for money in England, more than they could give for the same amount, in the same currency, here. It will strike every one, who reflects upon it, that, if there were a real difference of seven and a half per cent. money would be immediately shipped to England; because the expense of transportation would be far less than that difference. Or, commodities of trade would be shipped to Europe, and the proceeds remitted to England. If it could so happen, that American merchants, should be willing to pay ten per cent. premium for money in England, or in other words, that a real difference to that amount, in the exchange, should exist, its effects would be immediately seen in new shipments of our own commodities to Europe, because this state of things would create new motives. A cargo of tobacco for example, might sell at Amsterdam for the same price as before; but if its proceeds, when remitted to London, were advanced as they would be in such case ten per cent. by the state of exchange, this would be so much added to the price, and would operate, therefore, as a motive for the exportation; and in this way, national balances are, and always will be, adjusted.

To form any accurate idea of the true state of exchange between two countries, we must look at their currencies, and compare the quantities of gold and silver which they may respectively represent. This usually explains the state of the exchange; and this will satisfactorily account for the apparent advance, now existing, on bills drawn on England. The English standard of value is gold; with us, that office is performed by gold, and by silver also, at a fixed relation to each other. But our estimate of silver is rather higher, in proportion to gold, than most nations give it; it is higher, especially, than in England, at the present moment. The consequence is, that silver,

which remains a legal currency with us, stays here, while the gold has gone abroad; verifying the universal truth, that, if two currencies be allowed to exist, of different values, that which is cheapest will fill up the whole circulation. For as much gold as will suffice to pay here a debt of a given amount, we can buy in England more silver than would be necessary to pay the same debt here; and from this difference in the value of silver arises wholly, or in a great measure, the present apparent difference in exchange. Spanish dollars sell now, in England, for four shillings and nine pence sterling per ounce; equal to one dollar and six cents. By our standard, the same ounce is worth one dollar and sixteen cents; being a difference of about nine per cent. The true par of exchange, therefore, is nine per cent. If a merchant here pay one hundred Spanish dollars for a bill on England, at nominal par, in sterling money, that is, for a bill for £22 10, the proceeds of this bill, when paid in England, the legal currency, will there purchase, at the present price of silver, one hundred and nine Spanish dollars. Therefore, if the nominal advance on English bills do not exceed nine per cent. the real exchange is not against this country; in other words, it does not show that there is any pressing or particular occasion for the remittance of funds to England.

As little can be inferred from the occasional transfer of United States stock to England. Considering the interest paid on our stocks, the entire stability of our credit, and the accumulation of capital in England, it is not at all wonderful that investments should occasionally be made in our funds. As a sort of countervailing fact, it may be stated that English stocks are now actually held in this country, though probably not to any considerable amount.

I will now proceed, sir, to state some objections which I feel, of a more general nature, to the course of Mr. Speaker's observations.

He seems to me to argue the question as if all domestic industry were confined to the production of manufactured articles; as if the employment of our own capital and our own labor, in the occupations of commerce and navigation, were not as emphatically domestic industry as any other occupation. Some other gentlemen, in the course of the debate, have spoken of the price paid for every foreign manufactured article, as so much given for the encouragement of foreign labor, to the prejudice of our own. But is not every such article the product of our own labor as truly as if we had manufactured it ourselves? Our labor has earned it, and paid the price for it. It is so much added to the stock of national wealth. If the commodity were dollars, nobody would doubt the truth of this remark; and it is precisely as correct in its application to any other commodity as to silver. One man makes a yard of cloth at home; another raises agricultural products, and buys a yard of imported cloth. Both these are equally the earnings of domestic industry; and the only questions that arise in the case are two: the first is, which is the best mode, under all the circumstances, of obtaining the articles; the second is, how far this first question is proper to be decided by government, and how far it is proper to be left to individual discretion.—There is no foundation for the distinction which attributes to certain employments the peculiar appellation of American industry; and it is, in my judgment, extremely unwise, to attempt such discriminations. We are asked what nations have ever attained eminent prosperity without encouraging manufactures? I may ask what nation ever reached the like prosperity without promoting foreign trade? I regard these interests as closely connected, and am of opinion that it should be our aim to cause them to flourish together. I know it would be very easy to promote manufactures, at least for a time, but probably only for a short time, if we might act in disregard of other interests. We could cause a sudden transfer of capital, and a violent change in the pursuits of men. We could exceedingly benefit some classes by these means. But what, then, becomes of the interests of others? The power of collecting revenue by duties on imports, and the habit of the government of collecting almost its whole revenue in that mode, will enable us, without exceeding the bounds of moderation, to give great advantages to those classes of manufactures which we may think most useful to promote at home. What I object to is the immoderate use of the power—exclusions and prohibitions: all of which, as I think, not only interrupt the pursuits of individuals, with great injury to themselves, and little or no benefit to the country, but also often divert our own labor, or, as it may very properly be called, our own domestic industry, from those occupations in which it is well employed and well paid, to others, in which it will be worse employed, and worse paid. For my part, I see very little relief to those who are likely to be deprived of their employments, or who find the prices of the commodities which they need, raised, in any of the alterations which Mr. Speaker has presented. It is nothing to say that they may, if they choose, continue to buy the foreign articles; the answer is, the price is augmented: nor that they may use the domestic article; the price of that also is increased. Nor can they supply themselves by the substitution of their own labor. How can the ship owner grow his own hemp?

But I have yet a stronger objection to the course of Mr. Speaker's reasoning; which is, that he leaves out of the case all that has been already done for the protection of manufactures, and argues the question as if those interests were now, for the first time, to receive aid from duties on imports. I can hardly express the surprise I feel that Mr. Speaker should fall into the common modes of expression used elsewhere, and ask if we will give our manufacturers no protection. Sir, look to the history of our laws; look to the present state of our laws. Consider that our whole revenue, with a trifling exception, is collected at the custom-house, and always has been; and that the very propriety there is in calling on the government for protection, as if no protection had heretofore been afforded. The real question before us, is in regard to all the important clauses in the bill, is not whether we will lay duties, but whether we will augment duties. The demand is for something more than exists, and yet it is pressed as if nothing existed. It is wholly forgotten that iron and hemp, for example, already pay a very heavy and burdensome duty; and, in short, from the general tenor of Mr. Speaker's observations, one would infer that, hitherto, we had rather taxed our own manufactures than fostered them by taxes on those of other countries. We hear of the fatal policy of the tariff of 1816; yet the law of 1816 was passed avowedly for the benefit of manufacturers, and, with very few exceptions, imposed on imported articles very great additions of tax, in some important instances, indeed, amounting to a prohibition.

Sir, on this subject it becomes us at least to understand the real posture of the question. Let us not suppose that we are beginning the protection of manufactures, by duties on imports. What we are asked to do is, to render those duties much higher, and therefore, instead of dealing in general commendations of the benefits of protection, the friends of the bill, I think, are bound to make out a fair case for each of the manufactures which they propose to benefit. The government has already done much for their protection, and it ought to be presumed to have done enough unless it is to be shown, by the facts and considerations applicable to each, that there is a necessity for doing more.

(To be concluded in our next.)