

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT

An adjourned meeting of the friends of Internal Improvement was held this day, at the court-house in this place; Dr. James Webb presiding.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read, the committee appointed for the purpose reported the following Address.

To the Free People of Orange County.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

The subject of Internal Improvement is one in which you have already given unequivocal evidence that you are deeply interested. The advantages of cheap and quick transportation, for all sorts of produce and merchandize, are daily becoming as familiar and well understood, and the yearly losses we sustain by the want of them, are so severely felt, that a general conviction prevails, of the wisdom, not to say the indispensable necessity, of instantly discovering, if possible, and adopting as soon as the discovery shall be made, some effectual means of relief.

Last December this was made a subject of deliberation at the seat of government, by a number of our fellow citizens from different parts of the State. Committees of agency were then appointed in every county, whose duty it should be actively to spread intelligence on the objects of Internal Improvement, to explain its methods, and to effect union of sentiment, and co-operation in action, among all the people. A central committee was also appointed, consisting of members from different parts of the country, to hold its meeting annually in the city of Raleigh, to be an organ of communication to the county committees, and to concentrate their efforts. To us these measures appear to have been well chosen, and they have our cordial approbation. In conformity with them our meeting has been called, and we have cheerfully obeyed the summons. After a comparison of our views, we are prepared to give our firm and united opinion, not only in behalf of Internal Improvement generally, but pointedly and practically on the importance of commencing, without delay, such a plan, whatever it may be, as after due enquiry and opportunity of choice shall be most eligible for opening to all the people a free and unexpensive passage into the market of the world.

We are now at a period when all around and without is loudly calling us into action. The forest is falling before the axe of the husbandman, the earth is subdued by an improved culture, and made to yield a better increase, new resources are developed for augmenting the means of growth and wealth to our population. All these would be of little value, would be labours unrewarded, and must languish and die for want of vital action and impulsive power, without the arteries and veins of commercial intercourse, giving a free circulation to the quickening principles of individual and public interest through the various members of the political body.

In reflecting on this subject, it vividly occurs to us, that we rank with the old and primitive States of the Union. By the last census we were inferior to three others only in population. Not only those who with us constituted the original confederacy, and with whom we passed thro' the fiery ordeal of the revolutionary struggle, but many other States recently formed, have, by Internal Improvement, made large advances in a career of national prosperity and glory, while our condition is scarcely altered from that in which nature originally placed us. She has put much in our power, but little or nothing

has been done. For the space of forty-six years, almost half a century, we have enjoyed, with little interruption, peace with the richest privileges of liberty, both civil and religious, and what is the example which we have exhibited to the world? We have buried our talents in the earth, and lived without improvement upon the bounties of Providence. Nay, do we not hear annually and almost habitually, from multitudes of our people, and from those who represent them in the Legislative body, murmurs ascending to heaven at the hardness of their lot, even while a payment is required of us yearly of no more than half the sum necessary for the support of government? For we must remember that one half of the present annual funds of the treasury are not collected from the people, but are derived from Banks and other resources. Did we not witness as many as two attempts made in our last Legislature, to coin money, or which is still worse, to issue treasury notes to such an amount as sixty or seventy thousand dollars, to relieve the people even from the moiety which they now pay for the support of government? Had we bullion on hand, to coin money would be an appropriate use of it, but to issue treasury notes, is to tax future generations for our support, while we are avowedly in possession of the highest privileges which Providence ever bestowed in its bounty upon a nation. It is true, our discontents did not push us to the adoption of such measures, but these are not the only testimony which we have exhibited of complaint amidst all the advantages we enjoy as a people. Can the opinion of numbers then be correct, that we are labouring under an oppressive load of taxation? If to furnish a bare sufficiency for the subsistence of government be really burdensome to us, more than to any other people, we know not where to look for the cause, if it be not in our unyielding perseverance to withhold every thing in the form of a tax, small and reasonable as it may be, for the creation of commercial and other advantages. We cannot believe that our condition is thus desperate, or that in reality we are so oppressed, as is implied in the groans and discontents heard among us. As a State we possess not only vast physical powers, but resources for the formation of a liberal public treasury, by which we might make large and visible advances from year to year, in a course of Internal Improvement. Surely all that is necessary to these mighty effects, is a deliberate and determined purpose to give action to these capacities. Under the impelling force of such a spirit, the oppression would cease with the feelings of reluctance and apprehension in which alone it exists. In the exercise of such energies as animate a public spirited people, we shall discover that we must proceed far beyond the payment necessary not only to the maintenance of our government, but for the annual supply of a generous fund for Internal Improvement, before we ever approach even the borders of oppressive taxation.

This is a part of the subject on which we would not be understood to touch lightly or timidly. When we address the people of the county of Orange, we confidently believe that we address none who do not claim the honourable distinction of being friends to internal improvement. Let us not imagine, however, that we can support any proper claim to this distinction, if we maintain an unconditional opposition to every law calling upon us to aid in forward with our funds. Every tax that is to bear unreasonably upon any man for this or any other object, we shall as strenuously resist in our Legislature as any other people in the State. But it evidently is, and evidently must be vain for us to assert ourselves the advocates of internal improvement, if we resist it in every shape in which it is practicable. We repeat it then emphatically and distinctly, and cannot doubt that you will concur with us in the conclusion, that a fund must be created by taxation for the purpose of internal improvement, and that, if we are not prepared to pronounce heartily and earnestly for this determination, we do but amuse ourselves with the phantoms of a fond imagination, and assert to ourselves a character which belongs to us not in reality, but in name only. To this day, and at this late period of our existence, it is an undeniable, and must it not be felt to be a mortifying fact too, that in no instance has a law ever been enacted by the Legislature of North-Carolina, the object of which was to raise a contribution in the form of a tax for the purposes of Internal Improvement. Is it because the peculiar advantages which we originally enjoyed from nature made it unnecessary to us, in comparison with other States? The truth is confessedly the very reverse of this: While we have been under a stronger necessity than most if not all others, to prosecute some efficient plan for opening to ourselves commercial facilities, must we not admit that we are the very people, who have been most remiss and motionless in regard to these great objects absolutely essential to our welfare?

We make not these remarks to dwell on a subject which must be ungrateful to us all. But if such considerations have any effect upon you, as they have upon us, to stir in us a spirit of activity, and an inflexible purpose to enter practically, at as early a period as possible, on the most advisable plans of Internal Improvement, they will not have been presented in vain.

We are aware that this subject of Internal Improvement still continues, in the minds of some, to be clouded with difficulties. We sometimes hear it asserted as strenuously, as if it had been completely ascertained, that the trade of North-Carolina is not sufficient to justify the expense necessary to any plan of sufficient extent to open the market of the world to the interior parts of the State. On what foundations are such conclusions built? Certainly nothing more than vague conjecture and gratuitous assumption.—Yet if we ask Legislative measures for determining such questions as these, an utter aversion instantly appears to the most obvious and costless methods of resolving them. The number of inhabitants in North-Carolina is at least seven hundred thousand. Virginia, the largest of the Southern States, probably has little more than ten hundred thousand, South-Carolina five hundred thousand, and Georgia four. In all these and other States around us, Internal Improvements have been long advancing with rapid and uninterrupted strides. In such as have far inferior numbers of people, none of these speculations, doubts and balking questions have arisen, whether their commerce is large enough to authorise the expense of providing the means of carrying it on. In Virginia their rivers have long been made navigable into the mountains, where they extend so far; and were we to mention Lynchburg alone, with its vast growth, its wealth and capital, its enterprising spirit, and the mart of lucrative trade which it furnishes to the people most remote from the seashore, it would display with practical and magnificent evidence the fertilizing virtues of Internal Improvement. The same is

true of S. Carolina, in regard to the construction of roads, the preparation of canals, and clearing obstructions from its rivers.—Both Virginia and S. Carolina have ever been at vast expense to provide these commercial opportunities even for such portions of our trade as they could hope to secure along the contiguous borders of our State, while we are disputing, nay positively assuming and acting upon it as a selfevident principle, that the whole trade of North-Carolina is not worth the expense of providing for it. But it must be enough to put an end to these fanciful difficulties, if every farmer feels convinced that he will be so benefitted by the reduction of carriage to a few cents on the hundred miles, that his net profits upon his very first load will be more than enough to return the whole payment he would have to make for completing the object.

This you will say is a most important truth, if it can be made to appear. It is fortunate for us that the present is a period when the advantage of Internal Improvement have been incontrovertibly established by actual experience, not only by the nations of Europe, but in their application to our own country and in our peculiar circumstances. By the different methods of canals, and rivers, and railways, the transportations of trade are effected in different States at the rate of one, two, three, and at the utmost four cents a ton per mile. When goods are conveyed a mile at a cent a ton, it is the same as five cents a hundred for a hundred miles. When it is done for two cents a mile for a ton, it is ten cents a hundred for a hundred miles. At three cents a ton a mile, it is carrying a hundred weight a hundred miles for fifteen cents; and at four cents a ton per mile, it is twenty cents a hundred for a hundred miles. When we consider that one of the great effects of Internal Improvement, especially by some of the methods practised, especially by canals & railways, is greatly to shorten distances, it may safely be assumed, that where carriage now costs a dollar a hundred, it would by the methods of Internal Improvement, cost no more than five, ten, fifteen, or at the utmost twenty cents.—These rates of toll and transportation are taken from the laws passed in different States where such works are actually advancing, or else already exist.

If transportation be effected by means of Internal Improvement at five cents a hundred for a hundred miles, it is a saving to the farmer of twenty-eight dollars and a half upon every load of thirty hundred weight; at ten cents a hundred weight for a hundred miles, it is a saving of twenty-seven dollars for the load of thirty hundred; at fifteen cents a hundred the same distance, he saves twenty-five dollars and a half; and at twenty cents it is less costly than by the present mode of carriage by twenty-four dollars for the same load of thirty hundred weight. And can we be reconciled to lose from twenty four to twenty-eight dollars and a half upon every load of thirty hundred weight which we carry a hundred miles, when a farmer of moderate possessions would, by the very first load he should send into the market by the facilities of Internal Improvement, be more than recompensed for all that he could be called upon to pay for the purchase of such privileges in perpetuity afterwards? As we are now situated, who does not know that, as to most of our productions, we are in common years under a complete interdict; and in the articles imported from abroad, the evil is renewed in the heavy terms on which they are conveyed by the most disadvantageous methods short of carrying them on pack-

horses as in our western forests. Our wagons are the most unwieldy and expensive machines which the first commencing civilization of a people can furnish; and this is a necessary consequence of our roads, which have not risen one step in improvement from their first natural state. The rocks still lie in our rivers, for the most part, in the same beds which they occupied more than a century ago, when they were left to us by the original sons of the forest. So long as commercial intercourse with the rest of the world is conducted by such instrumentality as this, & labours under these disadvantages, we may look for national or individual prosperity, but every hope with which we flatter ourselves, will be directly in conflict with the laws of nature itself, pronouncing anew a sentence of frustration of every effort we can make to contend with others in a market, into which they enter by means of Internal Improvement, while we must make good our way without them. We may heroically or perseveringly sustain ourselves with a persuasion that the difficulties thrown in our way by this difference, may be somehow reduced in magnitude, or at least borne with patience, but every struggle with obstacles so real and immutable, must inevitably terminate in disappointment and loss, and when our endurance shall have been worn threadbare, and less costly methods could be compassed by human ingenuity than those of Internal Improvement, as it is now proved and practised by other men and in other parts of the world, it is but little probable, it may be counted as absolute certainty, that the invaluable discovery would not be left to be now made by us.

Let us for a moment imagine our State to be traversed through its whole extent by a navigable river, wide and deep, and an interdict of its use by the law of some imposing power, as burdensome or obstructive as that which the want of internal improvement makes us feel every year of our existence, do you think, fellowcitizens, that we should continue to submit to such oppression because of the treasure that must be pur in requisition, or even of the blood which must be made to flow, to establish ourselves in the enjoyment of such inestimable privileges? If by an expenditure less in magnitude, and far less terrible in its nature, we can secure to ourselves for ever the same privileges, how shall it appear that in withholding the efforts necessary to their attainment, we are not conspicuously the authors of our own oppression? In the one case we should delay no longer than it would be necessary to prepare for action. How then in the other, so much easier alternative, shall we be reconciled to an indefinite procrastination of that, without which it is impossible that we can ever flourish as a people, or even cease to suffer incalculable loss?

With respect to the various methods open to our choice, whether by turnpike roads, or by clearing our rivers, by preparing canals, or constructing rail ways, we should think it wiser to employ & hear the report of skillful & scientific engineers, respecting the most expedient means of opening the channels of commerce to the people of the State, than to attempt to form an unaided opinion for ourselves.—As we apprehend the greatest difficulty to be in effecting a cordial disposition and determined purpose to unite for the general good, it is to this, and the means of surmounting it, that we would principally unite your consideration and your efforts. After so long and useful an experience as ours has been of the misery and depression consequent on divided counsels, and an in-

considerate indulgence, may we not say, of personal views, and partial interests and local prejudices, shall we not hope that our citizens will consent to surrender small peculiarities of opinion, to effect so necessary and honorable a condition of strength as that which has for its object to exalt our State in the scale of rank and privileges. Let those of us whose lot it still is to be shut out from the market of the world, or to go into it with the immense sacrifices which we now endure, never remit our assertion of those rights and privileges, which it is the proper object of civil society, and of a humane and wise government, to guarantee to its citizens.

CRUEL EXPERIMENT.—A report of a steam-boat accident was circulated in Baltimore, on the 2d inst. said to have been made by a person, for the purpose of ascertaining what would be the effect on the mind of a young lady, who was supposed to be attached to a gentleman, then a passenger in the boat.

"In conversation with her, he stated that on the passage of the vessel to Baltimore, her boiler burst, and killed two persons; one of whom was a tall man, and described the individual in such a manner, as to carry conviction to the young woman, that her lover was one of the unfortunate sufferers. The effect of this sudden and afflicting intelligence upon an ardent imagination, produced the most unpleasant consequences, and the shock received, has rendered her recovery doubtful. The habit which some persons indulge, of heaving their acquaintance, cannot be too decidedly reprobated; and when even a remote possibility exists of exciting unpleasant feelings, to attempt it, betrays a heart devoid of all honorable and correct sentiment."

SHOCKING.—The *Chalborne Herald* states that a gentleman in Marengo county in that State, while on his knees at evening prayer, a few weeks since, was shot thro' the heart by some unknown assassin, and immediately expired.

Yesterday forenoon a young man was brought to the Bellevue Hospital in a most deplorable state of mental derangement, and died in a few hours after. It appears that he had been discovered that morning in a swamp, up to his middle in mud and mire, and concealed by the high grass, somewhere in the neighborhood of the Hospital, where he had been for three days, and where it is presumed, he had remained the whole time without food or any thing to satisfy the cravings of nature, other than the vegetation which surrounded him. He was completely exhausted when found, with scarcely the breath of life in his body, and exhibited a most pitiful spectacle. He had been laboring under insanity for some time, and although closely and tenderly watched by his parents, in this city, succeeded in eluding their vigilance, and made his escape to the place above described which proved his grave.

Evening Post.

We are informed that a Gold Mine has been recently discovered in Davidson Co. containing a vein of the precious metal, eighty feet in width. This is the largest vein ever heard of either in this or any other country. They generally vary in width from two to five feet.

Rail Reg.

QUITE CLEARED OUT.—A gentleman returned home from the Gloucester *Admiral*, a few days ago, having lost his case, his shirt, great coat and spent all his money.

Warwick Advertiser.