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The Editor was not present during the greater part of the debate in the House of Representatives on the bill for arming the whole body of the militia of the United States.—He had, however, the good fortune to hear the following able and eloquent speech of Mr. MASTERS, of New-York, on that subject, and takes a pleasure in presenting it to his readers.—*Washington Federalist.*

Mr. MASTERS said, he wished to bring the House to the consideration of the situation in which we stood, with respect to France and Great-Britain. If ever there was a time in which the mind of every man, who has any feeling for the present, or hope for the future happiness of his country, the present is the time for its exertion. Nothing can be said upon the subject of our foreign relations, that does not involve questions of the most extensive and serious importance to this nation.

All candid and impartial men will acknowledge the undisputed justice of our cause, and the unjust and wanton aggressions on the part of Great-Britain and France. I know and admit, that the insults of Great-Britain are greater than those of France; hence the danger of being associated in the war on the side of France; whose military Leader, at the head of more than one hundred million of inhabitants, is fighting for universal conquest, while fifteen millions of inhabitants on the part of Great-Britain, are fighting for their national existence. There are symptoms on our part of going to war with Great-Britain. In order, therefore, to avoid a war with that nation and being drawn in on the side of France, he would resist France and adjust our differences with Great-Britain. Let us beware that prejudices have no share in deciding this question; he trusted that sudden gusts of passion would be subdued by sober reason.

France has long been determined we should be drawn into her vortex—after the outrage on the frigate Chesapeake, she then enforced her decree of November, 1806, to make us the mere instruments of French artifice and ambition. She has always first held out the means of seducing other nations, and then proceeded to follow up those means by open and direct acts of aggression, by violation of treaties, and finally by a declaration of war. Mr. Masters said, he trusted the people of this enlightened nation would never be the blind and deluded instruments to take part in the war on the side of France, and doomed to be compelled to abandon the society and comforts to which we have been accustomed.

The events of war in Europe will bring us into this dreadful alternative, shameful humiliation and hopeless despondency, unless you resist by every consideration of policy, and feeling of honorable pride—All governments alike fall under the vengeance of France.—They will leave us no choice in form or in substance. If you in the least accommodate her views, and do not resist her decrees, she will look upon you as an abject, mercenary people, mere instruments, who would sacrifice all pride, dignity, national safety, and superior interests of yourselves and posterity.

Let us take one sober view of the question. Reason and reflection will always lead to that knowledge which is necessary to the salvation of this and all other countries. The demands of the Emperor of France is a proof of the absence of all morals, of all justice, and every principle, which does honor to human nature, and arises out of the most detestable and abominable military despotism. He has outgun thought, and transcended the utmost imagination. He has overturned the altar of all society—he has laid aside those elements which contribute to form the social state of man—an energetic republic, or mixed form of government.—He has interfered with the governments of all neutral nations. He has by his words and actions manifested a determination for universal conquest and aggrandisement.—This is demonstrable—it is indisputable. His great moving principle is the love of power, devastation and plunder.—He seeks to establish new governments by fire and sword.—His ambition will allow no rest to any established government on earth. We ought attentively to observe his means and disposition. It is easy to perceive that that government avows hostility to all others: the only way to judge of a government is to judge of it fully and fairly in all its bearings. The dispatches from Mr. Armstrong laid before this house on the 27th of March contains a fair illustration, and confirmation of the designs of France. Whenever their arms come, they effect a utter and absolute subversion of its form of government; and then tells you all this is done by the will of the people; that will in fact, is the power of the French, and all the world must learn their ideas of justice and models of government from the mouths of their cannon. If any man of common sense entertains a doubt of their designs, let him look at the dispatches to which he had alluded, and the different countries in Europe which they have conquered, and what has seen their plans and practice.

Who can think without horror on the deso-

lation of some of the finest countries in Europe, which are groaning under the great afflictive scourges of the Emperor of France, who has entered into impious confederacies to divide without pretence, the kingdoms of unoffending governments; to gratify his ambitious passions for power, for blood and for conquest. If you do not resist his designs, this is a ruined and undone country. Our citizens will weep over the Temple of Liberty, reared under a government the noblest that human wisdom ever framed, built on such a foundation as none of us would wish to destroy. And I am sure, that we cannot reconcile ourselves to his decrees and Imperial edicts. And I conjure you by every tie of interest, every motive of dignity, and every principle of an American, and by all that is either dear or sacred, to resist them, and I hope that God in his infinite mercy, will protect this nation against them.

Every spark of public sentiment and public virtue is lost and extinguished in the unbounded lust for power in that tyrant. Every country he has conquered has felt heavily the weight of that conquest—there has been one general scene of rapine, contribution and plunder. He has violated the peace and harmony of all society and trampled upon the rights of man—he has tortured the feelings, the lives and the honor of the innocent; he has overturned almost all the governments in Europe, and has raised his own brothers and minions to monarchs on their ruins. And he intends to destroy this government—his eyes are upon you. Nothing in this world can read so awful and instructive a lesson as his conduct towards the people and nations he has conquered.

Sir, these circumstances ought to excite every sentiment of jealousy and precaution, and induce the house to effectually provide for the safety of the nation which is so indispensably necessary—Arm the great body of the militia—avoid association on the side of France and you are safe. The pride of this nation is so natural and so great, I trust they will never consent that any foreign power shall attempt or even dare to nourish a hope of dictating to us. Such violation of rights as both France and Great-Britain have been guilty of, would be difficult to find in the history of the world. The conduct of these nations is in the highest degree arbitrary, and founded upon no one principle of reason or justice. One of them does not retain a just sense of the solemn faith of treaties, and no reliance can be placed on their explanations. You have seen all Europe attacked—you have seen a system established violating all treaties and disregarding all obligations.

If you go to war with Great-Britain and associate yourselves on the side of France, and unite their views and concentrate their vigor, you will endanger the liberty, the constitution, the independence and very existence of this nation.

They strike at the security, peace and happiness of all independent nations; and pursue their system in open defiance of every principle of justice, moderation and good faith.

We have pushed to its utmost extent our system of moderation; which has been slighted, insulted and abused by both nations. They have come to actual aggression by seizing our vessels, not only on the high seas, but in their very ports, without the least provocation on our part. Sir, such is the conduct they have pursued; such is the situation in which we stand.

It remains to be seen whether, under divine providence the efforts of a free, brave and happy people will not be successful by a manly resistance.

Let the house reflect whether our appropriations and plans for defence, have been undertaken with judgment and conducted with energy; and how many sailors we have raised to man our gun boats and infant navy, we shall yet have to stem the torrent with which all the world is threatened to be overwhelmed. Let us adopt the salutary precautions of former ages. Mr. Masters said he dreaded a war with Great-Britain, the more on account of the danger of association, with the combined powers; and—treated the house to avoid a course of measures which would bring the nation into that dilemma.

Every man both in the house and in the U. States, who is possessed of the feelings of an American is interested in the event.

Mr. Masters said he was determined to adhere to what he conceived to be the true interest of this country and the honor of the nation, and was willing to stand with it to the last, or perish in the ruins.

NEW-YORK, May 24.

VERY LATE FROM LONDON.

Yesterday arrived at this port from Liverpool, the ship Dryade, captain Parker. She left Liverpool on the 20th of April, & brings London papers of the 14th ult. from which the editors of the New-York Gazette have made the subsequent extracts.

Captain Parker informs, that the American packet ship OSAGE, capt. Duplex, which arrived at L'Orient on the 22d of March, had not arrived in England as late as the 18th of April; and that the general opinion in England was, that she had been SEIZED by order of the French government; as, not a syllable had been heard from her since her arrival at L'Orient.

Capt. B. further states, that petitions against the orders in council were pouring in from all quarters of England, and that two of the ministers who were in favour of them, had altered their opinion and were about to bring forward a motion for their repeal—and, it was the general opinion in Liverpool, that the orders would be rescinded.

We have seen a letter from a respectable house at Liverpool, to the owner of the Dryade, stating that the British ministry had already been convinced, that the orders in council had not yet been productive of any single advantage which had been expected from them—and the writer observed, that, in his opinion, the day of the orders being rescinded was not very distant.

LONDON, April 11. We understand, on Saturday, the arrival of the Coquette, at Portsmouth, after a remarkably quick passage of four days, with dispatches from Admiral Sir Charles Cotton, off Lisbon. The dispatches state that there is a famine at Lisbon. In this dreadful situation, a deputation of the merchants has been sent, in a flag of truce, to Admiral Cotton imploring a suspension of the blockade as the only means of procuring provisions to save the inhabitants from general starvation. Various letters have been received, descriptive of these horrors. The following is from one of the gentlemen appointed to the deputation, and was written before he set off:—

LISBON, March 21. "I have only time to inform you of my having been authorized, with several others, by this government, to proceed to the English fleet now blockading our port, for the purpose of prevailing on Admiral Cotton to permit provisions to be brought hither, as we are absolutely on the eve of a famine. Under these dreadful circumstances we rely on the humanity and liberality of a generous nation, and we trust that his Excellency will commiserate the distressed situation of the inhabitants of this devoted city and its environs, and grant liberty for provisions to enter the port, otherwise we must literally starve. Should we succeed in this object of our mission, it will revive the drooping spirits of the people, & save the lives of thousands, & tens of thousands, who otherwise must meet their fate in the worst and most terrible of all deaths—a death from hunger."

The Deputation accordingly took place. Sir Charles Cotton was deeply affected at the sufferings of our ancient Allies; but, as an immediate suspension of the blockade would have been an act of disobedience to his instructions, he could only promise to submit the prayer of the unhappy Portuguese to the British Government. With this view he despatched the Coquette cutter.

Sir Charles Cotton has ten sail of the line with him, which are all victualled and watered for seven months. The Russian squadron are laying in the Tagus, ready for sea, but there is no expectation of their coming out.

April 12. We have received a regular series of Dutch Papers to the second instant.

We have, among other important communications, received the Dutch King's message to his Legislature, on the state of the Finances for the year; in which he acknowledges the deplorable state of the country, and that they cannot hope for an amelioration of their circumstances, until the establishment of a maritime peace. In this deplorable state of their commerce and finances, his majesty has thought proper to acquaint them, that the French emperor has given them assurances that, in the peace to be negotiated with England, he is to stipulate for the restoration of the Dutch colonies, particularly of Guiana.—This notice would seem to imply that a negotiation was actually on the tapis, and that Napoleon even spoke with confidence of the terms he expected to obtain.

The Dutch papers contain recent intelligence from Copenhagen, that they are proceeding with the utmost activity in their preparations to invade Sweden; and they even assert, that a body of troops has been actually able to cross over to Scania; but this we totally discredit.

The Princess Elizabeth's packet, with mails from Sicily and Malta, has put an end to all doubts respecting the fleet of Sir Richard Strachan. He and his squadron joined Admiral Collingwood and Adm. Thornborough, off Palermo, when the combined fleets amounted to sixteen sail of the line. They had seen no enemy's fleet; but it was ascertained at Gibraltar, that the Carthagea squadron were at Port Mahon, by the latest accounts. One of the ships, under the command of the Sirius,

saw the Rochfort squadron pass the bay of Pallas near Carthagea on the first of March; and it is therefore thought, that they may have joined the Toulon fleet, but it is not ascertained.

April 13. Lord Castlereagh last night submitted his plan for the internal defence of the country. He proposes a local militia, as a substitute for the present system by the training act, to be raised by means of a ballot, in the same way as the regular militia. This new force is to consist of 60,000 rank and file, to be officered by gentlemen of property throughout the country. No substitution of service is to be permitted, except on payment of a very large sum; and the troops thus raised are to be collected in the principal towns in the country, there to be trained to the use of arms for the space of 28 days each year. He also proposes to add to the regular and militia force an addition of 50,000 men, by filling up the companies in each regiment to 100 rank and file.—Those only are liable to be balloted into the local militia who are above the age of 18 and under 35.

It appears from the statement of the noble lord, that the whole of our force, of every description, for the defence of the country, will be as follows:

| | |
|---|---------|
| Regular army for home defence, | 200,000 |
| Militia—British | 330,000 |
| Irish | 70,000 |
| ----- | 400,000 |
| Local militia, | 60,000 |
| Making a regimental force for home defence, independent of volunteers, of | 660,000 |
| Volunteers, | 290,000 |
| Total of the force for home defence, | 950,000 |

LONDON, April 12. The following instructions to the commanders of his Majesty's ships of war and privateers, appeared in the Gazette of Tuesday evening:

(COPY.) "GEORGE R. "Instructions to the commanders of our ships of war and privateers: given at our Court at Windsor, the 11th day of April, in the forty-eighth year of our Reign.

"Our will and pleasure is, that you do not interrupt any neutral vessel laden with lumber and provisions, and going to any of our colonies, islands, or settlements in the West-Indies, or South America, to whomsoever the property may appear to belong; and notwithstanding such vessel may not have regular clearances and documents on board; and in case any vessel shall be met with and be in her due course to the alledged port of her destination, an endorsement shall be made on one or more of the principal papers of such vessel, specifying the destination alledged, and the place where the vessel was so visited. And in case any vessel so laden shall arrive and deliver her cargo at any of our colonies, islands, or settlements aforesaid, such vessel shall be permitted to receive her freight and to depart, either in ballast, or with any goods that may be legally exported in such vessel, and to proceed to any unblockaded port, notwithstanding the present hostilities, or any future hostilities which may take place; and a passport for such purpose shall be granted to the vessel by the governor, or other person, having the chief Civil Command in such colony, island or settlement.

"G. R."

BAKERS OF THE ELBE, March 1. The expedition against Sweden appears to be for the present abandoned. On the 27th ult. the French and Spanish troops received notice, that though they ought to hold themselves in constant readiness to march, the expedition would not take place as was intended at the beginning of the present month, but further orders from Paris was waiting for. Some attribute this to the negotiations which have lately taken place by expresses between marshal Bernadotte and the Prince Royal. We have heard a report here from Elsinour, that 8,000 men of the Hanoverian Legion, in 31 transports, conveyed by two ships of the line and a frigate, had landed near Gottenburgh, and that more troops are expected. There are now, it is said, four English ships of the line, four frigates, and some smaller vessels in the harbour of Gottenburgh; and, according to some private letters, fifteen more British ships of the line, and a considerable body of British troops were speedily expected there. The Swedish consul, Gram, who has been under an arrest for some time at Copenhagen, has been sentenced to pay a fine of 3000 rix dollars for his imprudent conduct during the stay of the English ships of war there. A merchant of the name of Luskins has likewise been condemned to a fine on a similar charge. A very respectable commercial house in this part of Germany has received advices from its correspondent at Marseilles, that ever since the beginning of last month all the carriages in the South of