

North-Carolina Free Press.

Whole No. 386.

Tarborough, (Edgecombe County, N. C.) Tuesday, January 17, 1832.

Vol. VIII—No 22.

The "North-Carolina Free Press,"

BY GEORGE HOWARD,

Is published weekly, at *Two Dollars and Fifty Cents* per year, if paid in advance—or, *Three Dollars*, at the expiration of the year. For any period less than a year, *Twenty-five Cents* per month. Subscribers are at liberty to discontinue at any time, on giving notice thereof and paying arrears—those residing at a distance must invariably pay in advance, or give a responsible reference in this vicinity.

Advertisements, not exceeding 16 lines, will be inserted at 50 cents the first insertion, and 25 cents each continuance. Longer ones at that rate for every 16 lines. Advertisements must be marked the number of insertions required, or they will be continued until otherwise ordered. Letters addressed to the Editor must be post paid, or they may not be attended to.

Communications.

FOR THE FREE PRESS.

"None so blind as he that will not see,"—so consistent as he who is not guilty of a solecism.—*Sic Opinor.*

Mr. Editor: A wise man ought not to be "much concerned" about "the most bungling, nonsensical budget of jargon"—a "heterogeneous comminglement of contrarities;" nor pronounce jargon to be oratory—notice what does not deserve notice—deny pride, and then extol it; nor be too charitable to believe me guilty, yet identify me with "Garretson, *et id omne genus.*" He wishes me to prove what I have said. To prove—to explain: The toleration of slavery does not prevent the form of our Constitution from being a happy one: (but, "Do unto all men as you would they should do unto you;") nor does the violation of that Constitution prevent its being a good one. The present Tariff of duties, the present system of Internal Improvement, Corporations of every description, &c. are in discordance with the spirit of the Constitution; *quid vide.* I did not intend to deny the seeing-man the exercise of his thinking powers; but only wish that X, Y, Z, the next time he sees, would think also. If pride is all that distinguishes man from brute, he must be a brute also, *alias*, a devil. The brutes may possess pride.

"The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his Lord the pleasure and the pride."—*Pope.*

It ennobles man in the following manner:

"Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools."—*Pope.*

"Pride is the master sin, and first-born of the devil." Butterworth.—"Let the proud be ashamed." David.—"He is proud, knowing nothing." Paul.—"Let us not confound pride with virtuous emulation, and heartfelt benevolence." See Stew. Mor. Philosophy.

I did not intend any thing of an incendiary character, nor do I think it is such: therefore I cannot but view the censure of X, Y, Z, as harsh and unjust. If, however, my language was so incautious as to justify such a construction, I have committed a fault. He acknowledges slaves to be "fanatic incendiaries," that they "prowl around us at midnight, anxious to act over again the massacres of St. Domingo and Southampton." Is this a desirable situation? Yet that which suggests a rem-

edy, is termed "ill-timed and improper language." I am ready to shoot any negro, white or black, whom I may discover moving or abetting designedly an insurgency among our slaves. If the slaves shall again assay to do what X, Y, Z, believes or intimates they are ready to do, I hope that, if *least*, I shall not be *last*, in hastening to subdue them. One or two more attempts at insurrection, and I am ready to begin the work of extermination. Meanwhile I subscribe myself,

VIDEO.

Note. X, Y, Z, will please correct his orthography in the word, *abettor*,* and then ask me to parse for him. V.

[On referring to the manuscript of X, Y, Z, we find that this word is spelt correctly, *abettor*—consequently the *Printer's Devil* must be saddled with this blunder.—*Editor.*]

[BY REQUEST.]

From the Banner of the Constitution.

The Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury will be found in our paper of this day. From it we learn that the Public Debt of the U. States will be, on the 2d day of January, 1832, \$24,322,235 13. We also learn that the Government will be in possession of available funds to discharge the whole of this debt, if it thinks proper, on or before the 3d of March, 1833.

In anticipation of this event, so desirable to the true friends of American industry, the Secretary recommends a reduction of the duties upon imported commodities, to such an extent as will bring down the revenue to the annual sum of fifteen millions of dollars, the amount at which he estimates the future expenses of the Government. We regret, however, to observe, that the mode in which the Secretary recommends the reduction to be made, is not such as can meet the views of the sound political economists of the country. Instead of assuming the broad and liberal ground taken by the President—that is, an immediate reduction, which should operate in favor of "all our national interests," he is willing to show special favor to the very monopolists whose privileges constitute nine-tenths of the grievances which have brought the nation to its present crisis. His language is this: "The propriety of reasonably protecting the domestic industry is fully conceded." The objects more particularly requiring the aid of the existing duties, upon the principles of this Report, are believed to be wool, woollens, cotton, iron, hemp, and sugar, as comprehending those articles in which the agricultural and manufacturing industry are more particularly interested." Now when we take these sentiments in connection with the assertion that "it is deemed to be comparatively unimportant whether it [the duty] be collected from many or from few articles of importation," we are forced to conclude that the Secretary would be willing to collect the whole of the revenue, for some years to come, from these few articles, if their prohibitory character would allow them to produce a sufficient sum. And here we will take

occasion to express our dissent from the opinion expressed in these words: "Happily for the U. States, the sum to which it is now proposed to limit the revenue, is not likely to be oppressive on any class, even according to the present numbers of the American population." Oppression is a relative term, having reference to the principle upon which a burden is imposed. A tax of two dollars a head upon the people, for the support of Government in the discharge of its legitimate functions, would not be oppressive; but a tax of six-pence, if unequally and wrongfully imposed, not for the support of Government, but for the advancement of one particular interest, at the expense of all other interests, would be oppressive. If, then, the mode of taxation recommended by the Secretary partake of the character we have described, it is oppressive. Now what are the facts?

The duty on wool is an unequal tax, because it is not imposed in proportion to the value of the article. The duty on the coarsest quality pays the highest duty, and, as those who wear the coarsest clothes are the poor and working classes, it falls more heavily upon them than upon the wealthy.

The duty upon woollen cloths is an unequal tax, as it is highest upon the coarsest cloth, and falls more heavily upon the poor and working classes than upon the rich. Indeed, the inequality of its operation, as the law now stands, is a crying sin against this nation, and one which every philanthropist, who has a heart capable of feeling for the sufferings of those who are only half clad at this inclement season of the year, is bound to raise up his hands against.

The duty upon cottons is of the same unequal character. It falls upon the poor, precisely in proportion to their inability to pay. The most expensive muslins pay but 25 per centum duty, whilst coarse calicoes pay 50 to 100 per centum.

The duty on iron is an unequal tax, because it falls almost entirely upon the working classes and upon navigation. The duty on sheet iron, which is \$78 40, falls heavily upon the article of stoves and stove-pipes, which are more used by the poor than by the rich. It also deprives of employment many thousands of blacksmiths and manufacturers of hardware, who, on account of the high duty, are prevented from maintaining a successful competition with the foreign manufacturers.

The duty on hemp is an unequal tax, inasmuch as it operates chiefly on ship-building. It also deprives rope-makers of employment, by driving ship-owners to foreign countries to be rigged.

The duty on sugar is an unequal tax, for the same duty is imposed upon the lowest quality of Brazil sugar, that is imposed upon the finest quality of St. Croix or Jamaica sugar, varying from 75 to 200 per centum *ad valorem*.

Thus, then, it would appear that every one of the articles enumerated is characterized by

inequality in the duty; and, to retain the duties upon them as they now stand, even for a moment after the present session of Congress, would, we conceive, be an act of injustice to the great body of the people; and, so far from occupying the middle ground which a spirit of compromise would call for, would leave the whole of the wrong, against which the friends of Free Trade are protesting, and against which we trust they will never cease to protest, altogether unredressed. There can be no termination put to the present contest, we humbly conceive, upon the principles thus recommended. So far from satisfying the just demands of the opponents of monopoly, it would only tend to confirm their opposition: for they are too conscious of their strength, armed as they are with truth and justice, to yield a point so destructive of the best interests of the country. Had it not been for the strong and decided language of the President, on this subject, it would look as if there were almost an identity of views between the Administration and the Tariff Convention of New-York. That body says, in their Address, "Let those who acknowledge this great bond of union never forget, that, 'united, we stand—and, divided, we fall;' that *sugar and iron, hemp and lead, wool and cotton*, and the other productions of our diversified soil, elaborated by our own indefatigable industry, and protected by our own free Government, are, in effect, the Government that holds us together, and make us one people." The Secretary seems to be pretty much of the same opinion, or he would hardly have seconded, so identically, the very monopolies so prominently put forth by the Manufacturers' Convention.—Now can it be believed, by any sensible man, if he will give the subject a little reflection, that five or six monopolies, of the most odious character, and bearing most unequally upon the laboring classes, shall, in this free country, by a free people, be permitted to stand out, in bold relief, as an eye-sore to all who have a regard for the eternal principles of justice, or even for the "abstract doctrines of political economy?" We think not. So sure as any pretended compromise is forced upon the Free Trade Party, founded upon an adherence to the very monopolies deprecated by them, so sure will the warfare which has for three years been carried on, with such effect as to *arrest the onward march of the American System*, be continued, without relaxation, until the end be accomplished of bringing back the Government to its legitimate sphere of action.

But perhaps we do injustice to the Secretary. Perhaps he intends, as his business is to recommend the ways and means for raising a revenue, that the duties on the articles named by him should also be reduced, as a mode of increasing revenue. There can be no doubt that an abolition of the fraud called a minimum, in the cotton and woollen duties, by which it was

intended to prevent the people from knowing how much they were taxed, would greatly increase the revenue. The same result would follow from a reduction of the duty on wool, iron, hemp, and sugar. The duties on all these articles are too near the point of prohibition to produce the greatest amount of revenue which a judicious adjustment of the Tariff is capable of producing; and, as the Secretary's knowledge of Finance must render him familiar with this matter, we are in hopes that he has a considerable reduction in view, at some early day, if not at present, upon these very articles. Indeed, there are detached parts of his Report, which would seem to imply that such may be his intention. In one place he says: "Regarding, at the same time, the diversity of interests resulting from the peculiar situation of the United States, the manufacturing interest itself should be content with a moderate and gradual protection, rather than, by extreme measures, to endanger the public tranquility." And again: "These duties could not be materially changed at present, without the effect already deprecated. No objection is perceived, however, to such gradual reduction of them, in future, as may withdraw the aid thus afforded, as the growth and stability of our manufactures will enable them to dispense with it." It would, however, we think, have added to the reputation of the Secretary as a sound expositor of matters of fiscal concern, had he divested himself of the practice, so common with our public men, of expressing opinions in so equivocal and mystified a style that nobody can exactly tell what they mean.

We honestly confess that we have been puzzled more than a little to find out what were the precise views of this Report, and, if we have erred in giving them an interpretation, we shall be highly gratified. Had the Secretary said that Congress ought, without delay, to abolish the minimums on cottons and woollens, as one step now demanded by a spirit of conciliation, it would have conveyed a definite expression that any one might understand. As he has not done this, and as he must know that the existing duty on coarse cottons, and on some coarse woollens, is entirely prohibitory, we have found it difficult to imagine how he expects a revenue to be raised out of a prohibitory law.

Upon the whole, we are not able to perceive any material difference between the doctrines of the Secretary and those at present held by Mr. Clay; and, should the friends of each unite in such a modification of the Tariff as will not be calculated to meet the views of those who believe that no system ought to prevail which shall not consult the benefit of "all our national interests," we think, without the spirit of prophecy, that no such modification can long stand against the assaults which will be made upon it.

Call me cousin—but count on me not.