



AND

North-Carolina State Gazette.

Down are the plans of fair delightful peace,
Unwarlike party rage, to live like brothers.

Vol. VII.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1865.

No. 334.

By Authority.

An Act, making an additional appropriation for the naval services, during the year one thousand eight hundred and five.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That in addition to the sum heretofore appropriated for that object, the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars be, and the same hereby is appropriated towards defraying the expenses of the navy of the United States during the year one thousand eight hundred and five.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That the aforesaid sum shall be paid first, out of the monies accruing at the end of the year one thousand eight hundred and five, from the duties laid by the act, passed on the twenty fifth day of March, one thousand eight hundred and four, intitled, "An act further to protect the commerce and seamen of the United States against the Barbary powers;" and secondly out of any monies in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

NATH. MACON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives
S. SMITH,
President of the Senate, pro tempore
December 11, 1865—Approved.
TH. JEFFERSON.

An Act, supplementary to the "Act making provision for the payment of claims of citizens of the United States on the government of France, the payment of which has been assumed by the United States by the Convention of the thirtieth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and three, between the United States and the French republic.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the balance of the appropriation of three millions seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, made by the act to which this is supplement, which may remain unexpended on the thirty first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and five, shall not be carried to the credit of the surplus fund, but shall remain appropriated to the same purpose for which it was originally appropriated; any act to the contrary notwithstanding.

NATH. MACON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives
GEO. CLINTON,
Vice President of the U. States and President of the Senate.
Approved—December 21, 1865.
TH. JEFFERSON.

Defence of our Ports and Harbours.

Debate concluded from our last.

Mr. DANA. Seven weeks have elapsed since the President addressed Congress, representing the aggressions made upon the rights of our citizens. During these seven weeks, Congress have not informed the nation of any thing they have done; nor have they announced that any thing will be done for the effectual maintenance of the violated rights of our citizens. Now, in considering this resolution, we are called on to decide on the first point mentioned in the message; not a mere effect to be produced by paper, the authorising a detachment of 100,000 militia; but on a real and substantial defence against foreign powers. On viewing the message of the President, it will be seen that we have embarrassments with all the principal powers of Europe; that we are beset with difficulties on every side. Our ports are insulted, our territory invaded, and our seamen impressed. With regard to the whole of these, the message affords us no reason to expect a speedy adjustment; and since the delivery

of the message, we have received nothing which justifies a reasonable expectation of it.

"In reviewing" says the President, "these injuries from some of the belligerent powers, the moderation, the firmness and the wisdom of the legislature will be called into action. We ought still to hope that time and a more correct estimate of interest as well as of character, will produce the justice we are bound to expect. But should any nation deceive itself by false calculation, and disappoint that expectation, we must join in the unprofitable contest, of trying which party can do the other the most harm. Some of these injuries may perhaps admit a peaceable remedy. Where that is competent it is always the most desirable. But some of them are of a nature to be made by force only, and all of them may lead to it. I cannot therefore but recommend such preparations as circumstances call for. The first object is to place our seaport towns out of the danger of insult. Measures have been already taken for furnishing them with heavy cannon for the service of such land batteries as may make a part of their defence against armed vessels approaching them. In aid of these it is desirable we should have a competent number of gunboats, and the number to be competent must be considerable."

This is the first recommendation made in the message, and on this subject, however on minor topics our citizens may be divided, on this point the President comes forward and assumes a tone and firmness which might well be expected to unite all varying opinions. Whatever divisions may exist among us on minor subjects, we might well expect a general concurrence in measures calculated to defend our rights. Farther, it should be recollected, that executive power under our government is of a limited nature. We all know, that to be efficient, it must be sustained by the legislature. If, then, when the President comes forward, appealing to the legislature, with all the influence of his name and the weight of argument, what will the world think, if we, the representatives of the people, should shrink from taking the measures necessary for the defence of their rights. I hope we shall not exhibit such an example of hostility to the President of the United States in a matter so infinitely important to our national character and the maintenance of peace. If you do nothing on this point, it is evident you will do nothing effectual on any other recommended by the crisis of affairs, and you will proclaim to the world, that notwithstanding the millions of which you are plundered, and notwithstanding the loud and just complaints of the violations committed on your rights, you are determined to do nothing. If so, I hope gentlemen will at least agree to vote that we are no longer an independent nation.

Mr. NELSON. It is true sir, that we have been seven weeks in session, and that we have not decided on any great national question. But if we had been in session seventy-seven weeks, and were unprepared, I should vote against coming to a decision on any question, however important. Is it a reason, because we have been seven weeks in session, without acting upon this subject, that we

should now decide blindly on a question of more importance than any which for a considerable time past, has presented itself for our consideration? Shall we do it merely to gratify a few gentlemen, who are for hurrying us into the adoption of precipitate measures. It is a piece of respect due from one gentleman to another, who is not prepared to vote understandingly on any subject, to indulge him with a moderate allowance of time. One gentleman has stated that the secretary of war made certain communications to the committee. If he possesses any useful knowledge on the subject, I should wish it communicated directly to the house and printed; that every gentleman may stand on equal ground. I will ask how many ports and harbours it is necessary to protect? Where they lie? How many men it will take to fortify them, and the number of guns necessary for them? Have we any information on these points? Is any gentleman on this floor ready to say he possesses it? Perhaps the secretary at war is unacquainted with all these details; it is his duty to possess them, and no doubt he does possess them. But I should be glad to have them laid before the legislature. It is not necessary for me at this time to give an opinion on the proposed measure. It will depend on the information I shall receive whether I shall approve of the expenditure of a dollar. My vote will depend on this. Are the people prepared to expend millions, to guard against that which may be but an imaginary evil? Is our treasury in such a situation, as to authorise our appropriating millions for the protection of harbours whose situation we know not? I wish to see the estimates. If the thing can be effected by the expenditure of a moderate sum, I may agree to it; but if the sum required shall be so enormous as not only to eat up our existing revenue, but to require new burthens, I will not vote for a dollar. We know that the House has already appropriated a considerable sum; more than it will probably have at its disposal; and that they have refused to continue a certain tax. I will ask—

Mr. MACON (Speaker) was sorry to interrupt the gentleman, but he would submit whether in the remarks he had just made, he was in order.

Mr. NELSON. I apprehend that in the remarks I have just made, I have not yet been out of order. If the committee or the chairman say so, I will stand corrected.

The Chairman. The gentleman will proceed.

Mr. NELSON. I say that it is incumbent on us, if we consider ourselves as the true representatives of the people, before we lay an enormous tax on them, to be sure that it will be of some use. Suppose we appropriate now five millions to the protection of our harbours, and shall be told, after these are expended, that ten millions more are necessary to complete their protection. Are the people of the United States in a situation to pay fifteen millions for this purpose? With the gentleman from Georgia, I am for having correct information before I take a step in this business. If a sum not burthensome to the people will do, I may vote for it; but if the sum necessary shall be so enormous as to subject them to a heavy burthen, I will not vote a

dollar. The gentleman from Connecticut has brought forward a powerful argument, by asking us if we will not do that which the President recommends to us? How long the honorable gentleman has felt this respect for the President, I know not; but for myself I answer, I would not vote for what I thought wrong, though recommended by the President. If the President should recommend what I think a burthen on the people, I should hold up both my hands against it, and his recommendation would be no inducement with me to favor it. So far as I think his recommendation accords with the good of the community, I am for supporting it. When I think it injurious, I must vote against it. I hope the committee will rise; & I appeal to the candour of gentlemen, whether it is not right and friendly to allow some little time to those who declare themselves uninformed on the subject.

Mr. SMITH. I am well pleased the subject has been thus brought before the committee, as it affords the first opportunity we have had of knowing the opinions of each other on it. I am of opinion that our time will not be ill-spent in proceeding further in this discussion, although I shall ultimately be in favour of the committee's rising. Gentlemen were not correct when they told us, that although we had sat seven weeks, we had done nothing with regard to the differences of the United States with foreign nations. I believe we have done something, and I trust that it will prove effectual. There is one strong reason on my mind why we should not decide now on the subject before us. This relates to the ground on which we may decide this question. I mean a subject not yet brought forward, (the conduct of Britain) in relation to which it was my wish to have made a motion before we entered on the business now under consideration. From the issue of that business, we may be able to decide what will be necessary in this. If it shall be thought necessary to go to war, one system of measures will be necessary. If it shall be determined to pursue a different course, a different system will be required. Our minds must remain in a doubtful state until this decision is made. The subject now before us regards principally one nation. What do we complain of? A violation of our neutral rights. And yet that subject is not at present before us. If on that subject we are determined to pursue peaceable measures our course will be very different from that which would follow by our assuming a warlike attitude. In my opinion it is best that the committee should rise, and this business be suspended till we decide on the ground to be taken with that nation. I will go farther and say, that it is not my opinion she will oblige us to go to war with her, and if this shall appear to be the opinion of a majority of the house, it may save us from a great expenditure on the object now under consideration.

Mr. MACON. I agree with the gentleman from Georgia in the propriety of the committee rising. We are called upon for 150000\$ and for other sums. In requiring time for information, the gentleman demands nothing which I think unfair, or that can prove injurious. Were I satisfied myself with the report, on so important a

question, I would not refuse time to others to satisfy themselves. Do gentlemen mean to make others give votes before they are prepared? Is it proper thus to spend the money of the nation? With regard to the expense of a 74 gun ship, we are furnished on that subject with an estimate. So, with regard to the expense of fortifying our ports and harbours, may not the secretary of war give a similar estimate? It would not, it is true, be binding upon us, but it would be the information of a man whose duty it is to be well informed on the subject, and who I believe to be well informed. Let him give us this information, and we shall be well enough informed to judge for ourselves. Let us see the whole length of the route before we begin the journey; before we undertake it let us be satisfied we can perform it. In this way we shall take the most direct course, and the business will be sooner done than by voting on it at present. The committee have given us an estimate of the expense of building a 74. On this subject there is a difference of opinion—so is there also with regard to the defending the port of New-York. On this point the head of the war department may be able to decide. He probably may have an examination made into the possibility of defending it. He may possibly be of opinion that it may be defended by fortifications supported by a naval armament. Before, however, we take any steps, I hope we shall get all the information we can. I have seen such a crisis as this before; and if the statute books be consulted, it will be found that at least seven weeks were then suffered to elapse before any thing material was done. I am not of opinion that it is sound policy to pass laws as fast as we can. On the contrary, I believe the less legislation the better. As to the recommendation of the President, I agree with the gentleman from Maryland. I am not sent here to obey his mandates; or to carry into effect what he recommends; but to obey the judgment which God gave me, and that I shall do, whoever is President. Is the 150,000\$ contemplated only as an entering wedge into this business? The same thing was attempted once before, but, then, to use an appropriate expression, the thing would not fulfil. I hope the select committee who brought in this resolution will agree to this course. They have had a full communication with the secretary of war on it. If they are satisfied, charity and good neighbourhood should induce them to allow the same privilege to others; particularly as it is agreed that this subject is of more importance, and may interest the people in a higher degree, than any other which can come before the House this session.

Mr. DAWSON. An appeal is made to our candor, which I am sorry I am unable to comply with, and which it seems to me, the gentleman who has but just spoken, has but little reason. Every gentleman of the House will recollect that on the first topic of the message, the honorable gentleman declared that he was not for doing any thing, and yet he now calls for information. I do presume that this information can have no influence on his mind. To what, then are we to ascribe his desire for it, but from his wish that nothing may be done?

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Nelson) says that if the sum required for the defence of our ports and harbours will be enormous, he shall be against it, but if otherwise, he may be in favour of it. That gentleman will see in the resolution that

(Concluded in the last Page.)