



"Ours are the plans of fair, delightful Peace,
"Unwar'd by party rage, to live like Brothers."

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STATE OF THE BRITISH NAVY.

British Parliament—July, 1813.

Lord Cochrane rose, in pursuance of his notice, to call the attention of the house to the present state of the navy. He would not long trespass on the attention of the house. In order to place before them in a clear & perspicuous manner his sentiments upon this most important subject, he had embodied them in a resolution, which members would have an opportunity of perusing, and weighing with due deliberation during the period of adjournment, and the truth of which they would thus have an opportunity of ascertaining. He could only say, that to the correctness of the facts which he should state, he could most fully pledge himself. He would then content himself with reading his resolution, and should reserve whatever else he might have to offer to the house, till he heard whether any objection should be made—an event which he did not anticipate, as he saw not upon what ground objection could arise. The noble Lord then read the following resolution:

"That the honour of his majesty's crown, the glory and safety of the country, does in a great degree depend on the maintenance, especially in time of war, of an efficient naval establishment.

That during the late and present war with France, splendid victories have been gained by his majesty's fleets and vessels of war, over a vast superiority in the number of guns and men, and in the weight of metal.

That these victories, gained under such circumstances, were obtained by the skill and intrepidity of the officers, and by the energy, zeal and valor of the crews.

That during the present war with the U. S. of America, his majesty's naval service has in several instances, experienced defeat, in a manner, and to a degree unforeseen and unexpected by this house, by the Admiralty, and by the country at large.

That the cause of these lamentable defeats is not any superiority possessed by the enemy, either in skill or valor, nor the well known difference in the weight of metal, which heretofore has been deemed important; but arises chiefly from the decayed and heartless state of the crews of his majesty's ships of war, compared with their former energy and zeal—and compared on the other hand, with the freshness and vigor of the crews of the enemy.

That it is an indubitable fact, that long & unlimited confinement to a ship, as well as to any other particular spot, and especially when accompanied with the diet necessarily that of ships of war, and a deprivation of the usual recreations of man, seldom fails to produce a rapid decay of the physical powers—the natural parent in such cases of despondency of mind.

That the late and present war against France (including a short interval of peace, in which the navy was not paid off) have lasted upwards of 20 years and that a new naval war has recently commenced.

That the duration of the term of service in his majesty's navy is absolutely without any limitation; and that there is no mode provided for by law for the fair and impartial discharging of men therefrom: and that, according to the present practice, decay, disease, incurable wounds or death, can alone procure the release of any seamen, of whatever age, or whatever length of service.

That seamen who have become wholly unfit for active service, are, in place of being discharged and rewarded according to their merits and their sufferings, transferred to ships on harbor duty, where they are placed under officers wholly unacquainted with their character and former conduct—who have no other means to estimate them, but on the scale of their remaining activity and bodily strength; where there is no distinction made between the former petty officer and the common seaman; between youth and age; and where those wounded and wounded seamen, who have spent the best part of their lives, or have lost their health, in the service of their country, have to perform a duty more laborious than that of the convict felons in the dock-yard—and with this remarkable circumstance, that the labors of the latter are never known to terminate.

That though the seamen, thus transferred, and thus employed, have all been invalidated, they are permitted to re-enter ships of war on actual service: and that such is the nature of the harbor duty, that many, in order to escape from it, do so re-enter, there being no limitation as to the number of times of their being invalidated, or that of their re-entering.

That to obtain a discharge from the navy, by purchase, the sum of eighty pounds sterling is required by the Admiralty, which together with other expenses, amounts to twenty times the original bounty, and is equal to all that a seaman can save, with the most rigid economy, during the average period in which he is capable of service; that this sum is demanded alike from men of all ages and of all lengths of servitude; from those pensioned for wounds, and also from those invalidated for harbor duty; thus converting the funds of Greenwich and the reward of former services into a means of recruiting the navy.

That such is the horror which seamen have of this useless prolongation of their captivity, that those who are able, in order to escape from it, actually return into the hands of government all the fruits of their toil which formerly they looked to as the means of some little comfort in their old age.

That besides these capital grievances tending to perpetuate the impress service, there are others worthy the serious attention of this house.

That the petty officers and seamen on board of his majesty's ships and vessels of war, though absent on foreign stations for many years receive no wages until their return home, and are of course deprived of the comforts which those wages, paid at short intervals, would procure them; that this is now more severely felt, owing to the recent practice of postponing a declaration of war until long after the war, has been actually begun; by which means the navy is deprived, under the name of Drifts, of the first fruits and greatest proportion of the prize money to which they have heretofore been entitled; and thus, and by the examinations of the courts of admiralty, the proportion of captures which at last devolves to the navy, is much too small to produce those effects which formerly were so beneficial to the country; that while their wages are withheld from them abroad, when paid at home, which, to prevent desertion, usually takes place on the day before they sail out again, having no opportunity to go on shore, they are compelled to buy slops of Jews on board, or receive them from government 15 per cent. higher than their acknowledged value; and being paid Bank notes, they are naturally induced to exchange them for money, current in other countries, and which it is notorious that they do at an enormous loss; that the recovery of the pay and prize money by the widows, children or relatives of seamen, is rendered as difficult as possible; and, finally, the regulations with regard to passing of the examination requisite, previous to an admission to the benefits of Greenwich Hospital, subject the disabled seamen to so many difficulties and to such long delays, that in numerous cases he is compelled to beg his way in the pursuit of a boon, the amount of which, even in the event of the loss of both eyes, or of both arms, does not equal that of the common board wages of a footman.

That one of the best and strongest motives to meritorious conduct in military and naval men, is the prospect of promotion, while such promotion is, at the same time, free of additional expense to the nation; but that in the British naval service, this powerful and honorable incentive has ceased to exist, seeing that the means of rewarding merit have been almost wholly withdrawn from naval commanders in chief under whose inspection services are performed; in fact, it is a matter of perfect notoriety, that it has become next to impossible for a meritorious subordinate petty officer or seaman to rise to the rank of Lieutenant; that in scarcely any instance promotion of employment is now to be obtained in the navy, through any other means than what is called Parliamentary interest—that is, the corrupt influence of Bounties.

That owing to these causes, chiefly, the crews of his majesty's ships of war, have in general, become in a very considerable degree worn out and disheartened, and inadequate to the performance with their wonted energy and effect of those arduous duties which belong to the naval service; and that hence has arisen by slow and imperceptible degrees, the enormous augmentation of our ships and men, while the naval force of our enemies is actually much less than in former years.

That as a remedy for this alarming national evil, it is absolutely necessary that the grievances of the navy, some of which only have been recited above, should be redressed; that a limitation of the duration of service should be adopted, accompanied with the certainty of a suitable reward, not subject to any of the effects of partiality, and that measures should be taken to cause the comfortable situations in the ordinary of the dock-yard; the places of porters, messengers, &c. &c. in and about the officers belonging to the sea service, the under wardens of the naval forests, &c. to be bestowed on meritorious decayed petty officers and seamen, instead of being, as they now generally are, the wages of corruption in borough elections.

That this house, convinced that a decrease of energy of character cannot be compensated by an augmentation of the number of ships, guns, and men, which, at the same time, a grievous pecuniary burden to the country, will at an early period next session, institute an inquiry by special committee, or otherwise, into the matters above stated, and particularly with a view to dispensing suitable rewards to seamen; that they will investigate the state of the fund of Greenwich hospital, and ascertain whether it is necessary to apply the droits of the admiralty, and droits of the crown, as the natural first means of compensation to those who have acquired them by their valor, their privations and their sufferings.

Sir Francis Burdett seconded the resolution; But it was negatived by an overwhelming majority.

MR. CROKER'S EULOGIUM ON AMERICAN SEAMEN.

It will, no doubt, strike the reader, that in the debate in the British parliament, on "the state of the British Navy," Mr. Croker has paid our tars a higher compliment than even the most enthusiastic admirers of their heroic deeds have yet done. That the causes which Mr. Croker assigns for our naval victories, may be impressed upon the public mind, we shall republish that part of his reply to the resolutions introduced by Lord Cochrane, which has immediate relation to the subject—Let it be kept in mind, that these are the opinions not of a friend to this country, as might be supposed, but of one of the disciples of Pitt, and a fellow-laborer with the infamous Castlereagh in the work of devastation, treachery and corruption. It cannot be denied, that in this instance, he has, however unwillingly or undesignedly, done that justice to an enemy, which nothing short of an absolute conviction of its being deserved, could have drawn from him.

Mr. Croker said—
"He was surprised that the noble lord should have ventured to submit to the house a resolution bearing upon its face such evident marks of its own falsehood—a resolution so replete as it is with the most unfounded calumny, and with such distortion of facts—who but the noble lord would have ever dreamed of such an insinuation as that the late victories gained by the American navy over the British flag had been attributable, not to the inequality of force but to the misconduct and pusillanimity of our sailors! (Hear! hear!) What! he would ask, was the crew of the Java dispirited when she was taken? (Hear!) When the Macedonian, was taken was her crew sunk in apathy and broken hearted? (Hear! hear!) So far from this being the case, he could state from his own knowledge, that in the latter part of the actions in which these vessels were engaged, and in which they fought with so much honor to themselves and so much glory to the British name, when almost all hopes had failed, their spirit and valor still remained unsubdued—and instead, as the noble lord would have the house believe, of sinking amidst the weight of their misfortunes, they cheered each other, with

reiterated shouts of encouragement—and those cheers invariably commenced among the wounded in the cock pit!—Did this, he would demand of the noble lord, shew any thing like a crew disheartened?—Did this shew a British sailor to be aught but what he had ever proved himself to be? Did this tend to tarnish, or diminish the lustre which had ever attended the career of the British navy? (Hear! hear!) With these facts before the house, and the country, was he not authorised to call upon the noble lord to state, how he could presume to ask the house to vote for his resolution? Another fact he would state, which he supposed the noble lord would construe into a new proof of the apathetic and disheartened state of our sailors. That to which he alluded was the conduct of John Humble, the boatswain of the Java, who, it would be seen in his examination before a court martial amongst other facts, stated, that having had his arm carried away, he went below to the surgeon, and having had the stump "put to right's" as he termed it, by having the tourniquet applied to it, returned to the deck and cheered the boarders with his pipe—(Hear! hear!) Was this a proof of any diminution of British valor, of a falling off in the character and spirit of those brave men who, until libelled and blown upon by the noble lord, had stood above the most distant imputation of misconduct?"

It is needless to enquire whether or not the crew of the *Guerriere*, the *Java* or the *Macedonian*, were "dispirited and broken hearted," when these vessels were captured, since it has been a well ascertained fact that a great proportion of them were killed and wounded—that their ships were completely riddled and rendered unmanageable, whilst our own were comparatively uninjured—and that notwithstanding the "spirit and valor of their crews remained unsubdued," they were glad to cry for quarters from their conquerors; who, according to Mr. Croker's acknowledgement, must have been their superiors in "spirit and valor" as well as in skill, as the issue of these engagements prove, and as the results of every battle fought on equal terms since the commencement of the war places beyond dispute.

Mr. Croker has now fully settled the point in dispute between the two political parties in this country so far as relates to *British invincibility*—he has acknowledged and maintained—

1. That neither the crew of the *Java* or the *Macedonian* were dispirited or sunk in apathy, either at the beginning or at the termination of the engagements in which those vessels were taken.

2. That their capture was "no proof of any diminution of British valor, or of a falling off in their character and spirit"—& Mr. Croker states "from his own knowledge" to—

3. That "in the latter part the actions in which these vessels (the *Java* & *Macedonian*) were engaged, and in which they fought with so much honor to themselves, and so much glory to the British name, when almost all hopes [of beating an equal force, in a Yankee cock boat] had failed, their spirit and valor still remained unsubdued."

We hope that the question of *naval superiority* is now decided for ever—now that even Mr. Croker, in the face of the British parliament, openly declares and admits that the capture of three British frigates and several sloops of war by an equal force of Americans, is "no proof of any diminution of valor, and does not tend to tarnish or diminish the lustre which had ever attended the career of the British navy."

We hope that after this we shall hear no more whining and lamentation about the *invincibility* of his majesty's navy, from the British party in this country, when the British government itself through the mouth of one of its official organs, openly acknowledges that the capture of British ships of war by American ships of war of equal force—does not tend to diminish the lustre which had ever attended the career of the British navy—so anxious indeed is Mr. Croker to swell the magnitude of our victories, that he is quite indignant at the

bare idea that we should have gained them by the "misconduct and pusillanimity" of the British seamen—but on the contrary, asserts that "they cheered each other with reiterated shouts of encouragement, and those cheers invariably commenced among the wounded in the cock pit!" What greater tribute has hitherto been rendered to American skill and valor than this voluntary acknowledgment of Mr. Croker?—How ought Americans to appreciate the deed of their countrymen, when even Britons acknowledge that to be defeated by them, does not tarnish the honor of the British navy—a navy uniformly triumphant for a series of years—and held, of late, to be *invincible*.

We might say much more on this subject—but the tribute which Mr. Croker pays to our naval heroes, is full and explicit, that his own words are sufficient for our purpose—we would merely recommend them to the consideration of those whose business it has been to underrate the deeds of their countrymen, and to emblazon and elevate the merits of the enemy. Aurora.

From the Boston Chronicle.
THE
Principles of Washington inculcated.

The situation of the country demands the highest energies of its friends to counteract the conduct of our internal enemies. While the blood of Lawrence, Ludlow, Allen, and other heroes is shed on the Atlantic, the blood of Pike and other patriots is flowing on the Lakes. While Rodgers, Bainbridge, Hull, Stewart, Porter, Smith, &c. have jeopardized their lives in defence of the country with their brave seamen, it becomes a serious reflection whether internal foes should be suffered to pursue their traitorous designs with impunity. How can we expect to carry on a war successfully when every supply is given to the enemy?—when every information is communicated?—while piratical expeditions are formed on shore, and while the honest seaman who act under the authority of the United States, are arraigned to answer to the charges of those culprits who stand indicted for open violations of the law? The late conduct of certain men in this town in fitting out a vessel in hostile array to retake a vessel captured under the commission of the United States, stands unparalleled in any country engaged in a legitimate war. Admit that in Halifax such an outrage had been committed—would the English have suffered the authority of the government to be proclaimed by a lawless banditti? Would they have suffered their authorized citizens to become responsible to men, who stood charged in their courts for high crimes? Would they have tamely submitted to see an inferior Court exercising a right to hold such men to bail, and finally to confine them in goal for not immediately producing it?—or would they suffer lawyers to calumniate the government under which they acted?—would not such lawyers have been immediately silenced for contempt of court?

The communications to the enemy are become subjects of serious consideration. How often do we find on board of cartels, letters of the most traitorous import? Are not the persons known who write them?—Are they not found in their possession, concealed apparently for clandestine purposes? But are these persons brought to answer for the violation of our laws? Are they not suffered to remain among us? How different is this, from the system adopted by WASHINGTON? When Dr. Church was found corresponding with the enemy, he was immediately arrested by WASHINGTON. He was held responsible for his perfidy, and every energy was exerted to intimidate such traitors from persisting in their correspondence. At that period, we had not lost so many lives in the war as we now have. WARREN had fallen