



Carry on the plow of fair, delightful Peace, Unwary'd by party rage, so like the Brothers

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MR. MACON'S SPEECH ON THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL FOR THE LOAN

For the service of the year 1814. Mr. MACON (of N. Carolina) said his anxiety for the question, and for an early adjournment of Congress would have induced him to remain in his seat, but that it was now near four o'clock, and he did not expect that any vote would be taken to-day, except the one on the passage of the bill, and he would not delay that but for a short time; he would therefore express his opinion in as few words as he could on some of the topics which had been brought into the debate. It has, Mr. Speaker, been more than once hinted or insinuated, that the southern states are unfriendly to New-England. These hints and insinuations are founded in error. No objection had been stated, nor in his opinion could one be stated, which would justify the remarks he had frequently heard made on this subject. Such remarks produce no effect in the southern states, because the people there know there is no foundation for them, and it is possible they were not intended for that part of the nation; indeed it seems impossible, unfounded as they are, that they should produce any in any part of the country. The fact, if true, could easily be ascertained by almost any person living in New-England; because every year people emigrate from these to the southern states, and the emigrants could surely furnish the proof if it existed. The truth is, the emigrants are there received as brethren of one great family. Besides, it must be known to many gentlemen in the House, that each of the three southern states have been represented in Congress by a native of New-England: Look around this hall, and you will see several representatives from the southern states, who have been educated there—and the practice is continued of sending young men from the south to the north to be educated; though at this time they have excellent colleges and academies in their own states; and can it be believed that men under such circumstances would send their sons to be educated to a country to which they were so unfriendly as to be almost hostile! Again, it must be known, that a great number of gentlemen from the south, regularly spend their summers in N. England—and would they go to spend their time and money among a people whom they disliked? If not impossible, it is improbable. It has also been stated, in the same indirect way, that the southern states are unfriendly to commerce. No fact has been stated to support the charge, and it is sincerely believed that one cannot be. Hence this must be met like the other, by an endeavor to demonstrate, that this also is founded in error, as in truth it is. The drawbacks and discriminating duties on American commerce and navigation are highly favored by law; and the annual reports from the treasury shew, that the people of the south are not much engaged in either; and the Journal of the House will shew that no southern member has attempted to get either law repealed. But of what use would their cotton, tobacco, provisions and lumber be, if they could not be exported? The nation cannot consume them.—Of what use would their laborers be, if the products of their labor could neither be consumed in the country nor exported, and while they hold a particular sort of population they will not, I imagine, be either a commercial or navigating people. The reasons for this opinion, it is not necessary to state. They will occur to every one. Virginia is an example of its correctness; her natural advantages for commerce and navigation are not surpassed by any part of

the country, and we all know that she is not one of the great commercial and navigating states; the southern people, like all other people, wish to get their produce to market as cheap as they can, and they believe if you suffer any one power to monopolize the carrying trade, that that power will extort what price she pleases for carrying, and that if you suffer Great Britain to be the monopolizer, that they will not only in time of peace have to pay her extorted price, but that often in her time of war, they will have an extorted war price to pay. In order therefore to get their produce carried to market as cheap as possible, they have been willing to encourage a competition. If the people of the southern states are not friendly to the export and import trade and the coasting too, they must be worse than a man, if such a one is in the world, who could cut off his own thumb to pinch the little finger of his neighbor. It had been said, that the restrictive system, as it was called, operated more hard on New-England than on the southern states. This, I apprehend, was a mistake; it operated on the whole produce of the southern country, while it only operated to the amount of the freight on those concerned in navigation; so that if the southern planters could not sell their crops, the New-England men engaged in navigation could not get the freight; its operation was rather a postponement of sale and freight than a real loss.—But the southern republicans have been directly charged with being the inventors of the restrictive system, as it is called. This is another mistake. If gentlemen will examine the documents on the clerks table, they will find it first mentioned since the adoption of the constitution by the then Major (now Major General) Pickney, when Minister at London. The restrictions, however, of which we have heard so much, certainly grew out of the celebrated Boston memorial. Permit me, sir, here to remark, though it has not much to do with the question, yet quite as much as a great deal you have heard, that I have long thought that the interests of New-England and the southern states are more intimately connected than those of the middle and the southern. The southern are almost entirely concerned in agriculture, and the eastern are greatly concerned in navigation; hence they are not rivals in any market: and if parties in this country had been formed on local and interested considerations, it is probable they would have been united against the middle states; but the present parties were formed by putting different constructions on the constitution of the United States.—One word more as to the restrictions. The majority who voted for them undoubtedly did so under a strong conviction that they were promoting the general welfare, and that the state of our foreign affairs absolutely required them. The embargo, every one knows, was the only act among them for which I voted, and that was solely with a view to avoid war; and I now verily believe that an adherence to the first act for a few months longer, would have produced the desired effect. It is possible that the whole of the restrictions may have been wrong, and that it would have been right to let Great Britain go on as she had done, both impressing and plundering; but, if wrong, they were surely not wickedly so, because they operated as equally as any general laws could on the whole community, and the wicked, however willing they might be for others to suffer for the public good, are scarcely ever willing to do so themselves; they are pretty certain, if they have it in their power, to take good care of themselves, and how easy could the majority, if they had acted on wicked principles, have permitted neutrals to carry away the produce of their fields!

Mr. M. said he sincerely lamented

that his colleague (Mr. Gaston) should have thought it necessary to have stated the unfortunate situation of their native state; he agreed with his colleague in lamenting that there was a slave in the nation; indeed he should be glad that there was one of the African race in it; but what had the condition of these people to do with the cause of the war? If it be a season for not opposing the abominable practice of impressment, will it not be a season for not opposing any wrong that may be inflicted on the country? and he could not conceive a greater wrong than impressment. But, slave or no slave, he was determined to live and die with her. He would stick to her as well in adversity, if it ever overtook her, as he would in prosperity. No misfortune that could happen to her would induce him to leave her, and he religiously believed that no state in the union was better governed. Much has been said about free ships making free goods. The United States have long since given up this point, and cannot now contend for it. But it is surely known to every man the least acquainted with the proceedings of the old Congress that during the revolutionary war that House was anxious to have the laws of nations so settled and understood, that free ships should make free goods: and it is believed that the first administration under the present constitution was not averse to the principle. The very first treaty made by the United States contains a clause declaring that free ships shall make free goods, contraband of war excepted. Permit me, sir, to ask the gentlemen from the navigating states, if it is possible that they can believe that Great Britain will ever suffer, if she can prevent it, any nation except herself to be a great commercial and navigating people? If they do, it seems to me, that a careful examination of her history from the days of the Stuarts to the present time, will convince them that they are greatly mistaken. Some of the many wars which she has been engaged in, have been most assuredly carried on to destroy the commerce and navigation of a rival, and this was done at a time when she was not in Europe acknowledged to be the mistress of the ocean; and have not what she calls her maritime rights grown with her maritime power? and now that she has no rival in that kind of power, can it be expected she will suffer one to grow up if she can prevent it? The war in which we are now engaged, is to protect our maritime rights. Our growing commerce and navigation had made her jealous of our growing power, and she endeavored by impressment and orders in council to destroy both, for she had nearly violated every neutral and maritime right which belongs to us before war was declared; in fact she may be said to have been at war with us while we were at peace with her. But to attempt to conquer Canada in a war carried on for sailors rights and free trade (and no words in our language could better define the cause of the war) is called a new mode of protecting and defending them. It is true, that the injuries which have been done to us have been done on the water, and that we undertake in part to avenge them on the land, and there is nothing new in this. No matter what the original cause of a war may have been, when two nations are engaged in it, it is the constant practice to strike where the enemy will most severely feel; and nations which have been forced to war, as we have been, have generally been willing to acquire something which might remunerate them at least for the expence they had been compelled to incur, & Canada would reimburse the United States all the expence they may be at—the duties on imports alone would do this. It cannot be forgotten that Great Britain acquired New York from the Dutch in a war not forced upon her, but undertaken to destroy the com-

merce and navigation of the Dutch. The history of that war ought to convince us that Great Britain is not willing to have a rival of any kind on the ocean, & the last treaty between her and France ought to convince the world that neither of them pay much respect to the rights of other nations. To the best of my recollection, this is the first session of Congress at which the war has been called wicked and unjust; when it was declared it was only inexpedient; all then seemed to admit that there was just cause for it, and nothing has taken place since which could change its character. The conduct of the enemy at Hampton, and indeed at almost every place, where he has had the power, has been such as no civilized man could have expected, but his abominable conduct cannot render the war either wicked or unjust on our part. The most wicked part of the war seems to be the attack on Canada, and a desire as is supposed to attach it to the United States.—All the gentlemen who oppose the bill, are also opposed to having Canada, though a gentleman from New-York (Mr. Grosvenor) has said, that we shall have it some time or other. Is it possible that, when we were British colonies, all the British statesmen, with the great Lord Chatham at their head, were mistaken as to the value and importance of Canada to the then colonies? They considered it of the first consequence and spared neither men or money to take it; again, is it possible that all the sages of the Revolution with Genl. Washington at their head were mistaken in their wish to obtain it, and attach it to the United States; I ought to have said to admit it into the Union, because the articles of the old confederation has a clause, expressly declaring, that Canada may be admitted into the Union of the States. In the first treaty with France provision was made for it, and in the constitution of the United States there is a clause, which I have always understood was intended to admit it into the Union; the clause does not apply to territories, because they come into the Union under an ordinance of the old Congress; if these gentlemen are now right in not wishing to have Canada, then all the British statesmen and American revolutionary patriots were wrong in wanting it, and if it is now wicked to attack it, it was quite as wicked in the revolutionary war; it was then attacked by men whose purity of heart was never questioned by their countrymen, and by men who lived in the days which tried their souls; and let it be remembered, that the war of the Revolution was defensive, especially by those who talked so much about defensive war, and let it also be remembered by those who have told us that the Canadians were not represented in Parliament, therefore had no hand in injuring us, that they were not then represented in parliament, and had no hand in imposing the tax on tea; they form a part of the British empire, and as a part have been attacked. The object of this war and that of the revolution is the same, though we are not in the same situation with those who concerted that. The object of both is to prevent oppression and to maintain our rights. Will it be believed in this nation that the gallant Montgomery fell in a wicked, unjust attack on Quebec? He lives in the hearts of his countrymen, not for a wicked and unjust attack, but for the brave and faithful discharge of his duty, in a most glorious and honorable war. The mentioning his name brings to my recollection the names of Mercer and Gates; could they have heard the doctrine of perpetual allegiance, which has been advocated on this floor during the debate, it would no doubt have made similar impressions on their minds to those which were made on the mind of the venerable gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Findley). The first be-

ing an Irishman, the second a Scotchman, and the third an Englishman. This doctrine of perpetual allegiance was not, I imagine, in their day advocated on the floor of Congress; if these men and many others equally patriotic, were not traitors according to the doctrine we have heard advanced, it must be because rights exist in a civil war, which do not exist in any other and exactly the reverse is understood to be both the law and the practice of nations. We all wish for a peace that may last long; how is such a peace to be obtained? not by begging, but by manfully maintaining our rights. The acquisition of Canada (pardon me for saying) and Florida, would add much to the probability of a peace being lasting; for while these remain in the possession of any European government, that government will most assuredly manage the Indians so as to force an Indian war on us whenever it pleases—the reason is in the nature of the governments. In Europe there is always secret service money enough to bribe and corrupt whoever will be bribed or corrupted, and with this fund they will manage the Indians. Besides this, in the European governments there is not the same responsibility in the Executive for the expence of public money as in ours; and I hope that ours never will be like theirs in that or in any other respect. It cannot be forgotten that when France owned Canada she so managed the Indians as to have a majority of them on her side, whenever she and Great Britain were at war. The cause of her superior management was, that her king was absolute and could do what he pleased; of course there was no responsibility to the nation for the expence of public money; and perhaps not much to him or any one else; certainly much less than there was in Great Britain at that time. And since our independence Great Britain has so managed them notwithstanding our constant endeavors to civilize them and to better their condition, as now to have a majority of them on her side. The cause is the same in her government. There is less responsibility for public money than in ours; and besides, she has secret service money, as much as the minister wishes, and we have none.—Our frontier settlements never can be safe or even comfortable, while any European nation has the management of the Indians and as long as any of them have Canada or Florida, I have endeavored to shew that they will manage them, and the western frontier would not require a cent for protection, and we should save all the expence of naval armaments on the Lakes, how much this might be no man can tell; what force will be sufficient to give us or any other nation the command of them, & we ought to command them for this plain reason: whoever commands them will command the adjoining country. Some of the gentlemen who oppose the bill, have said they would vote money to defend the soil; that is, they would vote money to defend themselves but not to defend the poor and almost friendless sailor who carries the produce of the soil to foreign markets, and without whose labor the soil would not be more valuable to us than it is to the savages, and at the same time that they will not vote money to defend him; they vote the thanks and money for his services, and good conduct in a war, but not for a wicked subject; but they will vote money to defend the soil. I would like to hear from them, when they would attempt to defend the western and southern frontiers of a plan purely defensive, and to rely on a few forts and garrisons, because the Indians would be the cause of the settlements and settlements the cause of the forts. A defensive and effectual protection against predation and murder, and more money.