



“Ours are the plans of fair, delightful Peace,  
“Unwarped by party rage, to live like Brothers.”

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### DUTY ON IRON.

The following remarks of Mr. SMITH, the Representative in Congress from this District, on the bill to increase the duty on Iron imported, are worthy the attention of our readers:

I rise, said Mr. SMITH, for the purpose of moving to strike out the first section of this bill; and I hope the motion will not be thought unfair, when I state, that I am opposed, not only to the proposition to increase the duty on iron, but to the bill in toto. On the subject of the discriminating duty proposed to be laid on bar iron, made by rolling, I beg leave to differ in opinion with my friend from South-Carolina, (Mr. Lowides.) He doubts the propriety of imposing such a duty; he supposes that the manufacturer is always the purchaser, and that he should be a competent judge. Experience has taught me, that that is not the fact. The importing merchant brings the article into market for the purpose of profit; he cares nothing about the goodness of the article, it yields him his usual per centage.—The farmers, the great consumers of this article, exchange their produce for it with the merchant; they are not sufficiently skilled in this traffic to detect the imposition themselves. And so cunning are the makers of it, that, since a discriminating duty has been imposed on this rolled iron, they have run it under the hammer, to evade the duty and to cover the deception more completely; it is not until it is carried to the blacksmith, or the manufacturer, that the real quality of the iron is discovered. I concur in the statement made by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Scybert) that this iron is little more than pot metal in bars, and that it is, in fact, good for nothing. My own impression is, that if such materials are permitted to come into our market lower than genuine bar iron, that our mechanics will purchase it, and permit it to enter into our domestic manufactures; and if they do, it will undoubtedly bring our manufactures into disrepute. Again, if it is permitted to enter into our ship building, it will be productive of a great evil. I will not oppose the discriminating duty now in existence; but, to return to the main question, I have said that I am opposed to increasing the duty on bar iron. It is true, that the iron masters in New-Jersey and Pennsylvania have made a great noise on this subject; but the difficulty under which they labor is altogether temporary. During the late restrictive system and the war, there was a great accumulation of iron in the Russian and Swedish markets; whilst, at the same time, and from the same cause, the article became scarce and dear in the United States. At the termination of the late war, this, as all other articles, made its way, in great quantities, into our market. The importation was much greater than the demand; hence, it could only be sold at a sacrifice by the importer. The merchant was obliged to sell.

I have been informed, from a quarter on which I think I can rely, that bar iron, of good quality, during the year 1816, sold in Philadelphia and New-York, at from 64 to 68 dollars a ton, which cost the importing merchant from 85 to 90 dollars. This state of things cannot last. The merchant will not import, unless he has some prospect of selling at a profit.—But, sir, I have authentic evidence before me, that iron has risen, since the peace in Europe, 20 per cent. in Russia & Sweden. Good iron cannot be imported, under the existing duty of \$9 per ton, for less than 110 dollars per ton. I have also information before me, that, in New-Jersey, where the greatest complaint is, that a ton of bar iron can be made, from their bloomeries, at 85 dollars per ton—a difference of 30 dollars in the ton. If this is true, the case is not as it is represented by the exparte evidence before us. And where do these complaints come from? They come from the vicinity of the cities of Philadelphia and New-York, two great commercial towns. Iron made here comes in direct competition with that imported, and that which has been sacrificed under the hammer, as I have stated. There wood is scarce, and of much value; there labor is very high also; and provisions are higher than in any part of this country. These works grew up, many of them during the late war, and during the restrictive system that preceded it. In such situations, it could not be expected that works of that kind could flourish at any other time. They had no pledge from this legislature, that duties should be laid and continued for their support; nor are we bound to sacrifice the great interests of this country to prop such fungus establishments. They, like other speculators, expected to profit by the necessities of their neighbors; let them, then, stand on their own bottoms. If this basis is not sufficient, let them go down.

Some of this iron is of inferior quality; it sells in the market at from 10 to 15 dollars less per ton, than Russian or Swedish iron; whilst, at the same time, at Baltimore and other places, the American iron, made in that quarter, sells at from five to ten dollars preference per ton.—Their bloomed iron is too much like the English rolled iron. It is a question whether we should encourage the production of this iron in the United States. It is

important that your iron should be of the best quality. Your cannon, and all your implements of war should be made of the very best materials. Your ship-builders require iron of the best quality likewise. The truth of this can be evidenced, by the statement made by the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Silsbee); who stated to you, that vessels had been lately lost from the brittleness of the iron used in their making. But, again, sir, this iron enters into your domestic manufactures also; and, in my opinion, it is not the interest of this country to encourage the production of inferior iron; for, if it be brought into your market, the mechanics will purchase it, & it will enter into your domestic manufactures. They will be inferior in quality; which will be calculated to injure their character in your own market—this will encourage the exportation of the articles from England, our great rival in iron manufactures. But, sir, the alarm is sounded—you are told, that, if these works go down, the business of making iron is lost by your country forever; and that, if war should again come, you are ruined. This I deny, and against such doctrine, permit me now to enter my protest. At this time, the works in the interior of your country ask of you no protection; there are only about fifty petitions on your table; they bear but a small proportion to the number that are in the United States. All the works are doing well at this time. Where they are well situated for the business, their owners are making large fortunes. In the part of the country from which I come, the domestic iron has a preference to the best Russian and Swedish iron, for most purposes, and it sells lower by one or two cents in the pound, whilst both pay the same carriage. And, sir, at this time, there are seven new States in this Union, and two great territories, that have yet to get their iron from the north and interior, or from foreign nations; all these States & Territories have iron ore of the best quality, & in the greatest abundance. So pure is this ore, that, I am informed, it can be wrought into spikes and horse shoes from the ore bank. Wood is inexhaustible; pit coal abounds in great quantities; provisions are cheaper there than in any part of the world; and the price of labor is lower than in the north. Where slaves can be employed, their labor is always cheaper than that of white men. The seasons in the south differ from the north; in the former you can labor all the season, in the latter you cannot.

Now, I would ask, if these people are going to suffer for iron? No, sir, very soon they will supply themselves. Yes, sir, and the north can be supplied from that quarter, should they need it. And should a market present itself to them, they will be able to supply the whole globe. Those who are not conversant with the history of that country may say, that, it being in the interior, the carriage will prevent its coming into market. Should such an opinion exist, it is a mistaken one. They have the finest rivers in the world, intersecting the country in every direction.—And, since the power to propel boats by steam, has been invented, they have every facility for their commerce. If all this be true, can we not supply ourselves in war, as well as in peace, with this necessary article—nay, I would say, this indispensable article.

We achieved our independence with less facilities than we have at this time, all will admit; and, in a recent war, we succeeded equally well? Why, then, do they appeal to our fears?

But, sir, I have another objection to this proposed increase of duty on bar iron: It is taxing the raw material of our extensive, domestic manufactures. At this time, we make all kinds of tools, for the various mechanics in this country at home—also, all the implements of our agriculture are made in this country. In fact, there is no species of manufactures in the United States that are so extensive, or so useful, as that just mentioned. The duty proposed to be laid on bar iron, by the bill now before the committee, is 25 per cent. ad valorem; and the duties on foreign articles, imported into the United States, of which iron is the chief article of value, is only charged with a duty of 20 per cent. ad valorem. Is this the way that domestic manufactures are to be encouraged? This is certainly new doctrine. Alexander Hamilton, who was the great advocate for manufactures at home, always enforced the idea, that the raw materials should come into this country clear of duty. In his able report to the House of Representatives, in 1790, on the subject of domestic manufactures, he tells you, in very direct terms, that this very article of bar iron should come into your country free of duties. His opinion was that, by encouraging the manufacture of the article, you would increase the demand, and thereby its production, at home; and that the iron works would be benefited. He advanced the same doctrine as respects copper, tin, zinc, old pewter, &c. These are, most of them, free in your present tariff. But, sir, the wiseacres of the day, the new political economists of the north, have found out, that Mr. Hamilton was wrong, and that Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations has been a curse to this country. But, sir, do

not they advance the same doctrine, when they say, encourage and protect our cotton factories to the north; this is the way to encourage the production of the raw material in the south? Why, then, is not Mr. Hamilton's doctrine, as regards iron, true likewise? The highest tax, or duty, that ever was imposed on bar iron, before the war, was 15 per cent. ad valorem, 25 of this was the Mediterranean fund duty, which was never considered a permanent duty. But, sir, your petitioners must have 13 5-6 per cent. more than ever was laid before. And they appeal to your patriotism—they tell you, that you should protect every branch of industry in your country. And, sir, so you should; but you should never sacrifice the interest of the many, to the cupidity and mercenary views of the few. But, sir, here, here is the objection—the great agricultural interest must bend before these mercenary few—these fat capitalists. Agriculture must pay the premium; she must be taxed; and the farmer, the most remote from trade, must be taxed most. Yes, sir, the man who has the fewest natural advantages, must be taxed most—he is the greatest consumer of iron. To get the surplus product of his honest labor to the market, he must have waggons, carts, horses, &c. These require much iron to keep them in repair. But, sir, what has been the course of these iron masters? When they found that war had excluded foreign iron from our market, did they say to the farmer: Come, now that war exists, you cannot get iron from foreign markets—you must have it—but we sympathise with your misfortunes—you are hard pressed—your produce will bring nothing—come, we can make it as cheap as ever—labor is cheaper—provisions are cheaper—and the demand is greater—you shall have it at the old price. Was this their language? No, sir—No. Say they, come now; we have the advantage; the farmer must have it; he is obliged to buy from us; come, let us make our fortunes. Iron rose from 50 to 75 per cent. cash; no credit now; at the same time, the farmer's tobacco was rotting in his barn; it would not bring 3 dollars per hundred; his wheat spoiling in his barn; flour would not bring 4 dollars a barrel; his land, his house, his every thing, taxed to support the cause of his country, at the same time. Did the capitalist sympathise for the farmer? No, sir; the iron master's patriotism, his sympathy was suspended; nor would he have ever thought of it again, but for his own dear self, who thought it a good pretext to get the advantage of the farmer a little once more. Sir, I look upon agriculture as the first and the greatest interest of this country; and, whilst I am honored with a seat on this floor, I will always raise my voice in its support, and against these monopolizing principles.—If this bill is adopted, it will impose a considerable tax on your agriculture. But, poor old Agriculture! She is, I am fearful, doomed soon to be the pack-horse of manufactures and of commerce. They are always seeking to get some advantage, by getting monopolies. Honest old Agriculture has no such feeling; she knows no such principles. All that she asks of you is, to keep your hands off her; she is strong; she is athletic; let her alone and she can, she will protect herself. When then the clarion of war is sounded, who is the most able and the most willing to take the field, to defend your nation's rights? It is the farmer. Is his soil invaded?—If it is, he will offer his life in the defence of it. He is stout and strong; his whole life, from infancy to manhood, is as a campaign. When he is called to the field, it is nothing new to him to be exposed.—Now contrast the case of the manufacturer: any place is his country where his profits are the greatest. Is he to take the field to defend his country, he is weak; he has been raised in a store room, under a covert; he is unable to stand against the cold, chilling blasts of the north, rain and snow. Nor is he even able to stand the scorching rays of a meridian sun.—These facts have been but too fatally demonstrated.

But, sir, it is said your country cannot prosper unless you encourage manufactures. How is this? Has any country ever equalized this in the same time? It has been agricultural solely, or nearly so. In less than 50 years this republic has become a great nation; second in commerce; second as a naval power; most brave in the field; most skillful and most victorious on the water; rich—independent.

But, sir, I hope I shall not be viewed as an enemy to domestic manufactures.—They are growing up in our country, and as we progress towards a more perfect state of internal improvement and agriculture, they will increase. When the population becomes dense, when emigration shall cease in a great degree, when the fine lands of the west and south shall be disposed of, then will manufactures begin to raise their heads. I think it not the true policy, nor the true economy of this country, to force this state of things by bounties and by protecting duties.—When you raise your duties beyond the point necessary for raising the revenue required for the support of your government, you encourage smuggling. Your customs are de-raided; your regular merchants are unable to sell their goods;

fraud and speculation are the result. The effect that this will have on the morals of your country, is too apparent to require comment. And, if you commence this system, all classes will have an equal right to your protection. Yes, sir, the tailors have petitioned you this session for protection; they want you to lay heavy duties on clothes imported ready made. Who is it that will believe that they want protection, after paying them from 7 to 10 dollars for making a coat?

I have gone through the observations I had intended to submit to the committee. I hope they will see with me the evil tendency of this bill, and will consent to strike out the first section.

### BY AUTHORITY.

An act in addition to the “act for the punishment of certain crimes against the United States,” and to repeal the acts therein mentioned.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That if any citizen of the United States shall, within the territory or jurisdiction thereof, accept and exercise a commission to serve a foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people, in war, by land or by sea, against any prince, state, colony, district or people, with whom the United States are at peace, the person so offending shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and shall be fined not more than two thousand dollars, and shall be imprisoned not exceeding three years.*

*Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That if any person shall, within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, enlist or enter himself, or hire or retain another person to enlist or enter himself, or to go beyond the limits or jurisdiction of the United States, with intent to be enlisted, or entered in the service of any foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people, as a soldier, or as a marine or seaman, on board of any vessel of war, letter of marque or privateer, every person so offending shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding one thousand dollars, and be imprisoned not exceeding three years: Provided, That this act shall not be construed to extend to any subject or citizen of any foreign prince, state, colony, district or people, who shall transiently be within the United States, and shall, on board of any vessel of war, letter of marque or privateer, which, at the time of its arrival within the United States was fitted and equipped as such, enlist or enter himself, or hire or retain another subject or citizen of the same foreign prince, state, colony, district or people, who is transiently within the United States, to enlist or enter himself to serve such foreign prince, state, colony, district or people, on board such vessel of war letter of marque, or privateer, if the United States shall then be at peace with such foreign prince, state, colony, district or people.*

*Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That if any person shall, within the limits of the United States, fit out and arm, or attempt to fit out and arm, or procure to be fitted out and armed, or shall knowingly be concerned in the furnishing, fitting out or arming, of any ship or vessel, with intent that such ship or vessel shall be employed in the service of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district or people, to cruise or commit hostilities, against the subjects, citizens or property, of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district or people, with whom the United States are at peace, or shall issue or deliver a commission within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, for any ship or vessel, to the intent that she may be employed as aforesaid, every person so offending shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and shall be fined not more than ten thousand dollars, and imprisoned not more than three years; and every such ship or vessel, with her tackle, apparel and furniture, together with all materials, arms, ammunition & stores, which may have been procured for the building and equipment thereof, shall be forfeited; one half to the use of the informer, and the other half to the use of the United States.*

*Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That if any citizen, or citizens, of the United States shall, without the limits thereof, fit out and arm, or attempt to fit out and arm, or procure to be fitted out and armed, or shall knowingly aid or be concerned in the furnishing, fitting out or arming, any private ship or vessel of war, or privateer, with intent that such ship or vessel shall be employed to cruise, or commit hostilities, upon the citizens of the United States, or their property, or shall take the command of, or enter on board of, any such ship or vessel, for the intent aforesaid, or shall purchase any interest in any such ship or vessel, with a view to share in the profits thereof, such person, so offending, shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and fined not more than ten thousand dollars, and imprisoned not more than ten years; and the trial for such offence, if committed without the limits of the United States, shall be in the district in which the offender shall be apprehended, or first brought.*

*Sec. 5. And be it further enacted, That*

*if any person shall, within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, increase or augment, or procure to be increased or augmented, or shall knowingly be concerned in increasing or augmenting, the force of any ship of war, cruiser, or other armed vessel, which, at the time of her arrival within the United States, was a ship of war, or cruiser, or armed vessel, in the service of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district or people, or belonging to the subjects or citizens of any such prince or state, colony, district, or people, the same being at war with any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district or people, with whom the United States are at peace, by adding to the number of the guns of such vessel, or by changing those on board of her for guns of a larger caliber or by the addition thereto of any equipment solely applicable to war, every person, so offending, shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and shall be fined not more than one thousand dollars, and be imprisoned not more than one year.*

*Sec. 6. And be it further enacted, That if any person shall, within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, begin to set on foot, or provide or prepare the means for, any military expedition or enterprise, to be carried on from thence against the territory or dominions of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people, with whom the United States are [at] peace, every person, so offending, shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding three thousand dollars, and imprisoned not more than three years.*

*Sec. 7. And be it further enacted, That the district courts shall take cognizance of complaints by whomsoever instituted, in cases of captures made within the waters of the United States, or within a marine league of the coasts or shores thereof.*

*Sec. 8. And be it further enacted, That in every case in which a vessel shall be fitted out and armed, or attempted to be fitted out and armed, or in which the force of any vessel of war, cruiser, or other armed vessel, shall be increased or augmented, or in which any military expedition or enterprise shall be begun or set on foot, contrary to the provisions and prohibitions of this act; and in every case of the capture of a ship or vessel within the jurisdiction or protection of the United States as before defined, and in every case in which any process issuing out of any court of the United States shall be disobeyed or resisted by any person or persons having the custody of any vessel of war, cruiser, or other armed vessel of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district or people, or of any subject or citizens of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people, in every such case it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, or such person as he shall have empowered for that purpose, to employ such part of the land or naval forces of the United States, or of the militia thereof, for the purpose of taking possession of and detaining any such ship or vessel, with her prize or prizes, if any, in order to the execution of the prohibitions and penalties of this act, and to the restoring the prize or prizes in the cases in which restoration shall have been adjudged, and also for the purpose of preventing the carrying on of any such expedition or enterprise from the territories or jurisdiction of the United States against the territories or dominions of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people, with whom the United States are at peace.*

*Sec. 9. And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, or such person as he shall empower for that purpose, to employ such part of the land and naval forces of the United States, or of the militia thereof, as shall be necessary to compel any foreign ship or vessel to depart the United States in all cases in which by the laws of nations or the treaties of the United States they ought not to remain within the United States.*

*Sec. 10. And be it further enacted, That the owners or consignees of every armed ship or vessel sailing out of the ports of the United States, belonging wholly or in part to the citizens thereof, shall enter into bond to the United States, with sufficient sureties, prior to clearing out the same, in double the amount of the value of the vessel and cargo on board, including her armament, that the said ship or vessel shall not be employed by such owners to cruise or commit hostilities against the subjects, citizens, or property, of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people, with whom the United States are at peace.*

*Sec. 11. And be it further enacted, That the collectors of the customs be, and they are hereby, respectively, authorized and required to detain any vessel manifestly built for warlike purposes, and about to depart the United States, of which the cargo shall principally consist of arms & munitions of war, when the number of men shipped on board, or other circumstances, shall render it probable that such vessel is intended to be employed by the owner or owners to cruise or commit hostilities upon the subjects, citizens, or property, of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people, with whom the United States are at peace, until the*