

# RALEIGH REGISTER

## AND NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

"Ours are the plans of fair delightful peace, unwarped by party rage, to live like brothers."

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**MR. CALHOUN'S SPEECH**  
On the reception of Abolition Petitions.

We have been favored by the Author with a copy of his clear and Statesman-like Remarks, in the Senate of the United States, on this subject, which we take pleasure in laying before our readers:

If the time of the Senate permitted, I would feel it to be my duty to call for the reading of the mass of petitions on the table, in order that we might know what language they hold towards the slave-holding States and their institutions; but, as it will not, I have selected, indiscriminately from the pile, two: one from those in manuscript, and the other from the printed, and without knowing their contents will call for the reading of them, so that we may judge, by them, of the character of the whole.

[Here the Secretary on the call of Mr. Calhoun, read the Petitions.]

Such, resumed Mr. C. is the language held towards us and ours; the peculiar institutions of the South, that on the maintenance of which the very existence of the slave-holding States depends, is pronounced to be sinful and odious, in the sight of God and man; and this with a systematic design of rendering us hateful in the eyes of the world, with a view to a general crusade against us and our institutions. This too, in the legislative halls of the Union; created by those confederated States, for the better protection of their peace, their safety and their respective institutions; and yet we, the representatives of twelve of these sovereign States against whom this deadly war is waged, are expected to sit here in silence, hearing ourselves and our constituents day after day denounced, without uttering a word—if we but open our lips, the charge of agitation is resounded on all sides, and we are held up as seeking to aggravate the evil which we resist. Every reflecting mind must see in all this a state of things deeply and dangerously diseased.

I do not belong, said Mr. C. to the school which holds that aggression is to be met by concession. Mine is the opposite creed, which teaches that encroachments must be met at the beginning, and those who act on the opposite principle are prepared to become slaves. In this case in particular, I hold concession or compromise to be fatal. If we concede an inch, concession would follow concession—concession would follow concession—until our ranks would be so broken that effectual resistance would be impossible. We must meet the enemy on the frontier, with a fixed determination of maintaining our position at every hazard. Consent to receive these insulting petitions, & the next demand will be, that they be referred to a committee in order that they may be deliberated and acted upon. At the last session, we were modestly asked to receive them and simply lay them on the table, without any view of ulterior action. I then told the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. Buchanan) who strongly urged that course in the Senate, that it was a position that could not be maintained; as the argument in favor of acting on the petitions, if we were bound to receive, could not be resisted. I then said that the next step would be to refer the petition to a committee, and I already see indications that such is now the intention. If we yield, that will be followed by another, & we would thus proceed step by step, to the consummation of the object of these petitions. We are now told that the most effectual mode of arresting the progress of Abolition is to reason it down, and with this view it is urged that the petitions ought to be referred to a committee. That is the very ground which was taken at the last session in the other House, but instead of arresting its progress it has since advanced more rapidly than ever. The most unquestionable right may be rendered doubtful, if once admitted to be a subject of controversy, and that would be the case in the present instance. The subject is beyond the jurisdiction of Congress—they have no right to touch it in any shape or form, or to make it the subject of deliberation or discussion.

In opposition to this view it is urged that Congress is bound by the Constitu-

tion to receive petitions in every case and on every subject, whether within its constitutional competency or not. I hold the doctrine to be absurd, and do solemnly believe, that it would be as easy to prove that it has the right to abolish slavery, as that it is bound to receive petitions for that purpose. The very existence of the rule that requires a question to be put on the reception of petitions, is conclusive to show, that there is no such obligation. It has been a standing rule from the commencement of the Government, and clearly shows the sense of those who formed the Constitution on this point. The question on the reception would be absurd, if as is contended we are bound to receive; but I do not intend to argue the question; I discussed it fully at the last session, and the arguments then advanced neither have nor can be answered.

As widely as this incendiary spirit has spread, it has not yet infected this body, or the great mass of the intelligent and business portion of the North; but unless it be speedily stopped, it will spread and work upwards till it brings the two great sections of the Union into deadly conflict.—This is not a new impression with me.—Several years since, in a discussion with one of the Senators from Massachusetts, (Mr. Webster,) before this fell spirit had showed itself, I then predicted that the doctrine of the proclamation and the force bill—that this Government had a right in the last resort to determine the extent of its own powers, and enforce it at the point of the bayonet, which was so warmly maintained by that Senator—would at no distant day arouse the dormant spirit of abolitionism; I told him that the doctrine was tantamount to the assumption of unlimited power on the part of the Government, and that such would be the impression on the public mind in a large portion of the Union. The consequence would be inevitable—a large portion of the Northern States believed slavery to be a sin, and would believe it to be an obligation of conscience to abolish it, if they should feel themselves in any degree responsible for its continuance, and that his doctrine would necessarily lead to the belief of such responsibility. I then predicted that it would commence as it has with this fanatical portion of society, and that they would begin their operation on the ignorant, the weak, the young, and the thoughtless, and would gradually extend upwards till they would become strong enough to obtain political control, when he and others holding the highest stations in society, would, however reluctant, be compelled to yield to their doctrine, or be driven into obscurity. But four years have since elapsed, and all this is already in a course of regular fulfillment.

Standing at the point of time at which we have now arrived, it will not be more difficult to trace the course of future events now than it was then. Those who imagine that the spirit now abroad in the North, will die away of itself without a shout or convulsion, have formed a very inadequate conception of its real character; it will continue to rise and spread, unless prompt and efficient measures, to stay its progress, be adopted. Already it has taken possession of the pulpit, of the schools, and to a considerable extent of the press; those great instruments by which the minds of the rising generation will be formed.

However sound the great body of the non slave-holding States are at present, in the course of a few years they will be succeeded by those who will have been taught to hate the people and institutions of nearly one half of this Union, with a hatred more deadly than one hostile nation ever entertained towards another. It is easy to see the end. By the necessary course of events, if left to themselves, we must become, finally, two people. It is impossible, under the deadly hatred which must spring up between the two great sections, if the present causes are permitted to operate unchecked, that we should continue under the same political system. The conflicting elements would burst the Union asunder as powerful as are the links which hold it together. Abolition and the Union cannot co exist. As the friend of the Union I openly proclaim it, and the sooner it is known the better. The former may now be controlled, but in a short time it will be beyond the power of man to arrest the course of events. We of the South will not, cannot surrender our institutions. To maintain the existing relations between the two races, inhabiting that section of the Union, is indispensable to the peace and happiness of both. It cannot be subverted without drenching the country in blood, and extinguishing one or the other of the races. Be it good or bad, it has grown up with our society and institutions, and is so interwoven with them, that to destroy it would be to destroy us as a people.—But let me not be understood as admitting even by implication that the existing relations between the two races in the slave-holding States is an evil—far otherwise; I hold it to be a good, as it has thus far proved itself to be to both, and will continue to prove so if not disturbed by the fell spirit of abolition. I appeal to facts. Never before has the black race of Central Africa, from the dawn of history to the present day, attained a condition so civilized and so improved, not only physically, but morally and intellectually. It came

among us in a low, degraded, and savage condition, and in the course of a few generations it has grown up under the fostering care of our institutions, as reviled as they have been, to its present comparative civilized condition. This, with the rapid increase of numbers, is conclusive proof of the general happiness of the race in spite of all the exaggerated tales to the contrary.

But I take higher ground. I hold that in the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are bro't together, the relation now existing in the slave-holding States between the two, is instead of an evil, a good—a positive good. I feel myself called upon to speak freely upon the subject where the honor and interests of those I represent are involved. I hold then, that there never has yet existed a wealthy and civilized society in which one portion of the community did not, in point of fact, live on the labor of the other. Broad and general as is this assertion, it is fully borne out by history. This is not the proper occasion, but if it were, it would not be difficult to trace the various devices by which the wealth of all civilized communities has been so unequally divided, and to show by what means so small a share has been allotted to those by whose labor it was produced, and so large a share given to the non-producing class. Devices are almost innumerable, from the brute force and gross superstition of ancient times, to the subtle and artful fiscal contrivances of modern. I might well challenge a comparison between them, and the more direct, simple, and patriarchal mode by which the labor of the African race is among us commanded by the European. I may say with truth, that in few countries so much is left to the share of the laborer, and so little exacted from him, or where there is more kind attention to him in sickness or infirmities of age. Compare his condition with the tenants of the poor houses in the most civilized portions of Europe—look at the sick, and the old and infirm slave on one hand, in the midst of his family and friends, under the kind superintending care of his master and mistress, and compare it with the forlorn and wretched condition of the pauper in the poor house. But I will not dwell on this aspect of the question: I turn to the political: and here I fearlessly assert that the existing relation between the two races in the South, against which these blind fanatics are waging war, forms the most solid and durable foundation on which to rear free and stable political institutions. It is useless to disguise the fact. There is and always has been in an advanced stage of wealth and civilization, a conflict between labor and capital. The condition of society in the South exempts us from the disorders and dangers resulting from this conflict, and which explains how it is that the political condition of the slave holding States has been so much more stable and quiet than those of the North. The advantages of the former in this respect will become more and more manifest, if left undisturbed by interference without, as the country advances in wealth and numbers. We have in fact but just entered that condition of society where the strength and durability of our political institutions are to be tested; and I venture nothing in predicting, that the experience of the next generation will fully test, how vastly more favorable our condition of society is to that of other sections for free and stable institutions, provided we are not disturbed by the interference of others, or shall have sufficient intelligence and spirit to resist promptly and successfully such interference. It rests with ourselves to meet and repel them. I look not for aid to this Government, or to the other States; not but there are kind feelings towards us on the part of the great body of the non slave-holding States; but as kind as their feelings may be, we may rest assured that no political party in those States will risk their ascendancy for our safety. If we do not defend ourselves none will defend us; if we yield we will be more and more pressed as we recede; and if we submit we will be trampled under foot. Be assured that emancipation itself would not satisfy these fanatics,—that gained, the next step would be to raise the negroes to a social and political equality with the whites; and that being effected, we would soon find the present condition of the two races reversed. They and their northern allies would be the masters, and we the slaves; the condition of the white race in the British West India Islands, as bad as it is, would be happiness to ours;—there the mother country is interested in sustaining the supremacy of the European race. It is true that the authority of the former master is destroyed; but the African will there, still be a slave, not to individuals, but to the community,—forced to labor, not by the authority of the overseer, but by the bayonet of the soldier, and the rod of the civil magistrate.

Surrounded as the slave-holding States are with such imminent perils, I rejoice to think that our means of defence are ample, if we should prove to have the intelligence and spirit to see and apply them before it is too late. All we want is concert, to lay aside all party differences, and unite with

zeal and energy in repelling approaching dangers. Let there be concert of action, and we shall find ample means of security without resorting to secession or disunion. I speak with full knowledge & a thorough examination of the subject, and for one see my way clearly. One thing alarms me—the eager pursuit of gain which overspreads the land, and which absorbs every faculty of the mind and every feeling of the heart. Of all passions, avarice is the most blind and compromising—the last to see and the first to yield to danger. I dare not hope that any thing I can say will arouse the South to a due sense of danger; I fear it is beyond the power of mortal voice to awaken it in time, from the fatal security into which it has fallen.

My first burst of wonder being over, I sat on my horse and gazed in silence on an object truly the most singularly sublime I have ever beheld. We were in a rich and fertile valley, through which a small creek went babbling on—a single residence with some negro huts rested on a gentle eminence in front—cattle were grazing quietly around us—the woods awakened to the sweets of another day, were vocal—and the cock's shrill clarion, heralding in the new born bliss, told of a resting place for the way-worn traveller. The voice of the husbandman came rolling o'er the yet green cornfields, as he spoke to his team, or, in the lightness of his heart, carolled forth his matin hymn. There was a solemnity, yet a joyousness, in this sequestered and beautiful valley, that charmed me into a happy and devotional feeling. Around me lay the dark deep forest over whose western boundary rose the lone Mountain, like some proud child of genius towering above his fellows—and, unlike all others in every particular, the wonder and admiration of thousands: or, like Napoleon, small of stature, but whose solemn brow kept Kings in awe, and compelled Princes to stand in respectful silence afar off. He was still wrapt in his imperial purple, and white fleecy clouds, floating above his head, seemed like the breath of his nostrils, as it came in contact with the chill and upper air.

Unlike the Mountains of Europe it is richly mantled with trees—a feature in American Scenery that strikes a foreigner with peculiar force, and tells him he is in a country very different from his own.—Much of its grandeur is lost by being clothed, and in making the ascent, you do not feel that sense of danger which is experienced in climbing those fearful heights, where terrific rocks and yawning caverns, unshaded by foliage, meet the eye, and on every hand steep precipices compel you to use caution. But here the visitant feels himself secure, where he can at any moment lay hold of the trunk of a tree to help him up, or break his fall, if perchance he make a false step.

On the highest part of this mountain, a mass of naked rock rises, almost perpendicularly, to the height of two hundred and fifty feet, clothed on its summit with stunted trees and shrubs; and, at a distance, may easily be mistaken for some strongly fortified castle, in a dilapidated condition, which the hand of time had decorated with ivy and lichens—each craggy projection resembling the round towers of former days, looking grimly over the dark foliage of its ancient domain, and, if this were a country of feudal origin might well deceive the traveller, and lead him to believe that it had once been the abode of some powerful Baron.

Where each bearded warrior, strong at heart, Hurled the long spear, and drove the ranking dart: Viewed from below, its great magnitude is not perceptible, and it is only when you reach the base, that you can at all comprehend the gigantic proportions of this great natural curiosity. I dwelt for some time in mute wonder, gazing in silent adoration on what lay before me. At length, the spell which bound me was broken by the sound of approaching footsteps, and I followed my friend to the house of Major Lovel, who kindly undertook the task of conducting us to the pinnacle.

I disburdened myself of all my trappings except my drawing materials, determined to be as little incommoded as possible.—We now began the ascent, which is gradual and easy for a considerable way up the acclivity, according to Professor Olmsted, being only about 20° until we reached a Spring, not the one spoken of by this gentleman (but in the neighborhood) where we refreshed ourselves, cleared out a good

basin for the water, attached a piece of bark by way of a spout for the benefit of future tourists, filled our bottles, and proceeded on our journey. The ascent here becomes more abrupt (about 25°) and large fragments of quartz and mica slate, with the trunks of fallen trees impede your progress. A vast variety of plants and wild flowers grow spontaneously in a dark rich soil, and traces of that destructive element fire, are every where visible. On inquiry, I soon learned that it is a custom almost every year to burn the undergrowth. Such a spectacle must indeed be very grand, as the flames are carried to the tops of the pinnacle, shrouding the whole Mountain in one vast winding sheet of flame, presenting, I have no doubt, a very imposing and terrific scene, and continuing to burn for several days and nights without interruption, until the supply of fuel is exhausted.

My health had been somewhat delicate for a few weeks previous, and the fatigue was almost too much for me. I had frequently to stop and rest, and this afforded great amusement to Major Lovell's little son, a child only seven years old, but of a noble disposition and undaunted courage. He had many a laugh at my expense, for my want of strength.

On account of the length of time that has elapsed since I was on a Mountain, I felt, as we approached the top, great debility, but an occasional glimpse of the world below us served to reanimate me, and I would again start forward with renewed strength. The solitude that reigns here, is not to be written: It is reserved only for those, who woo nature in her own dominions. The Geologist and Botanist will find ample scope for the pursuit of their favorite sciences, but particularly the latter, for a great variety of flowers are there

born to blush unseen, And waste their sweetness on the morning air. I was particularly pleased with the modest little sensitive plant, as if conscious of its own delicacy, shrinking from the slightest touch, and closing up its tender leaves to hide its beauties from the curious. Elichens, in almost every variety, cover the trees, rocks, and rotten wood. The crimson cup, or chalice moss, is here really beautiful; and beetles abound in every form and color. I found that land shells were very scarce.

After undergoing much fatigue, we reached the base of the pinnacle on the south side and encountered a flock of Sheep, sufficiently tame to approach and lick our fingers.

On looking up, the pinnacle presents immense upright walls, in many particulars completely resembling the mutilated towers and bastions of an Old Castle, with trees of large growth flourishing in the openings of the rent and mouldering walls. In some places, the rocks hang like one half of an arch over the foss of the citadel, ready prepared to meet the draw bridge and port culis, and in others, deep recesses appear like the closed entrances to the dungeon, dark and damp. The whole pinnacle, on a nearer view from below, is certainly well calculated to deceive the traveller from the old world.

The day was cool and slight rains tempered the atmosphere. Light clouds floated around and a shower compelled us to seek protection under the cliffs.—While securing ourselves from a wetting, the Major directed my attention to a cave above our heads. I climbed up, and from out the entrance came a strong current of cold air, reminding me of the caves of Oenusa. I would have gone in but that I feared, what my own good saint, Patrick, had banished from Ireland, would salute me with a vengeance for disturbing them in their retirement. The Major assured me that one of his sons went into it a short time since, for a considerable distance, and heard the rush of water some depth below him.—On throwing down small stones he could distinctly hear them splash. I suppose that the water on the top of the pinnacle finds its way down, and in its descent carries with it a stream of air, which disengages itself the moment it meets with resistance, & then makes its way through the mouth of the cave. And as a confirmation of this supposition, not far from the cave is a dripping well, falling with little interruption for nearly the whole height of the pinnacle, and the blowing is more particularly noticed after rain.

As soon as the shower blew past, we proceeded to examine the structure of the pinnacle; but as a very distinguished Geologist, (Professor Olmsted) has been there before me, I will take the liberty to quote his description of it, in his own words.

While my companions were employed in these observations, I had begun an examination of the geological structure of the pinnacle. A foot-path running close to its base conducts one, without the least obstruction, quite round the circle, and no opportunity could be more favorable for remarking the different kinds of rock and their relative position. In the geology of the pinnacle, there is something quite remarkable and curious: and the geologist will linger round its base with as much delight and admiration as he gazes upon the landscape from its summit. The pinnacle is made up chiefly of mica slate and quartz; but each exhibits peculiar and interesting charac-

ters. Its rocky wall is full of rents from top to bottom, and it is also regularly stratified, the strata dipping easterly at an angle of only ten degrees. By these parallel seams, the whole is divided into tabular masses. The most abundant rock, is a peculiar kind of mica slate or grit rock, composed of very fine granular quartz with flesh red mica intimately disseminated. The texture is exquisitely fine, and the cohesion so loose that it may be frequently crumbled between the fingers into the finest white sand.

At a mill near the river Ararat, I saw a pair of millstones said to have been quarried from an eminence on the north west side of the Pilot. They consisted of quartz rock, somewhat resembling French Burr, and appeared to be of an excellent quality. Grindstones also are quarried from the grit rock of these mountains.

Having rested for a short time, we walked round to the north side, and soon came to the only ascent to the pinnacle. Never shall I forget the feeling of sickness that came over me the moment I raised my eyes to the awe inspiring narrow cliffs, which threatened to hurl to certain destruction the daring mortal who should have the temerity to climb their fearful heights. I turned from this giddy sight to look upon the blue Ridge in the distance, and the vast green ocean of waving trees, far, far beneath me. The view was grand, in every sense of the word, and by contemplating it, I was somewhat enabled to gain courage for the attempt. My sketch book being rather large, was an incumbrance, but Doctor Henderson, who had been up there before took charge of it and thus lightened me of a load that I could not dispense with. I now braced myself for the task, mounted the first ledge of rocks and looked up, but my sickness returned; fearful of being unable to go with my party, I expressed myself so, but when I looked at Major Lovel, a man of fifty six years, and his young son, James, of the tender age of seven, I determined not to be out done by old or young, male or female. Ladies, I am told, frequently make the ascent much more courageously than the men—O, woman, woman! what is it you can not accomplish, if you only will it? So with my face to the rock, and my back to the awful void below, I coolly began to mount, and ere the first difficult pass was made, I found myself as unconcerned about the task as if I had only been walking up the mountain. We now came to a ladder of about thirty feet in length, suspended at top by withes of hickory, only lying against the face of the steep and precipitous cliff, but without any thing whatever to prop it below. Looking at its perilous position I requested that only one of us should mount at a time. The Doctor led the way, and I followed, as soon as he reached the landing above it. In like manner came the father and son, the child, the whole time, displaying a greatness of nerve that would be creditable even in a hero. Our whole force being up to the second landing, we again resumed our upward journey, and while doing so, the roar of thunder bellowed o'er the neighboring heights, but yet much below us. I turned to the point from which it swelled upon the blast, and saw the blackened mass of angry clouds moving over a portion of the Pilot. This was what I had not seen, since I had crossed some of the highest Mountains of Europe, and it struck me with peculiar solemnity. I could not look upon such a scene without feeling real and fervent devotion to the Author of my existence, and those beautiful lines of Hervey occurred to me—

He's all in all; his wisdom, goodness, power, Springs in each blade and blooms in every flower, Heaven shakes, earth trembles, and the forests nod, When awful thunder speaks the voice of God!

By the time we had reached the top, the electric cloud was far removed from us, and on the pinnacle's most elevated point, we snuffed the pure, untainted breath of Heaven. Here, we found traces of recent visitors, in the broken branches of the whortleberry bushes strewn about in every direction.

Nothing can exceed the magnificence of the view from where we stood. To the south and south-east, one vast extended field of intermingled forest meets the horizon in a hazy blue. Here and there, the various hills raise their heads like islands from the ocean's wave, and the roar of the winds through the tops of the sturdy Oaks and Pines made up the measure of the delusion, waving their tall heads to and fro, much resembling the undulations of a troubled sea.

To the west and north, the Blue Ridge stretches, a long line of interminable mountains, of every shade of blue, graduating itself according to the distance. To the east, the Sawatow mountains by their proximity, delightfully relieve the eye and give additional charms to a natural panorama of indescribable grandeur. I would have made a drawing of this, but that I could only catch occasional views distinctly, owing to the rapid succession of clouds and mist. While wrapt in admiration, a small vapor arose just beneath us that soon swelled into a dense fog, spreading its fantastic arms in