

AN ADDRESS

To the People of North Carolina, on the subject of Constitutional Reform.
 RALEIGH, Jan'y. 1st, 1851.
 [CONTINUED.]

We do not desire to be understood as opposing in the least a proper system of Internal Improvements; nor as making any complaints against what has heretofore been done by our Legislature. Nor are we to be regarded as taking ground against the proper protection of property. We should be pained to see the day come in North Carolina when a system of Agrarianism would be predominant; when our people would be less observant of law; less regardful of right. The true theory of free Government is the proper protection of its citizens in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property. The right of property is a right attached to the person of a citizen, and he is to be protected in its enjoyment. Taxes are uniform; and he who possesses a little is as deeply interested in its enjoyments as one possessing a greater share; and equally, — nay, more opposed to the imposition of high taxes.

Property has no rights independent of persons. You can give it no rights, nor privileges, nor immunities which affect it alone.—It is matter and cannot feel, nor enjoy rights, but in consequence of its possession; you may give its owner political power and privileges.

If, then, you protect citizens in the enjoyment of property, is not the possessor of hundreds equally entitled to protection as the owner of thousands? Is his enjoyment the less? Do you measure enjoyment by the quantity enjoyed? Suppose you take from

the rich man his thousands—it is only his *mill*. If you take from the poor man his hundreds—it is *his* all too. Which will cling to his all with the more pertinacity? Which will surround it with more guards; use it sparingly; and more carefully provide that it

shall not be consumed by profuse and lavish expenditures of Government? It is noticeable that the poor complain most of high taxes, and it is natural; it is harder for them to pay them. It diminishes the aggregate of each more, although the amount taken away

less, and every poor man hopes and expects to improve his condition, and one day to become rich. Hence it is in Western North Carolina we are more interested in the preservation of slave property; because although we may have fewer slaves, we

have more **slave owners**; and, of course, a greater number of persons to watch over my aggressions upon it. The same is true of land. We have more **land owners**; and owners of every other species of property; and fewer of that class of persons who have

Nothing to enjoy, and nothing to protect or defend, but their rights of person. Equally opposed to this principle is the state by which political power is measured. To connect together the people of the state in one common bond of interest, it is natu-

necessary that they should possess the same kind of property, and that taxes should be direct and uniform. Indirect taxes are seldom representatives of the wealth of the community where they are collected. The amount of public revenue collected in the

It is idle, then, to say you must give more

political weight to the rich than the poor—the owner of thousands than the owner of hundreds. A thousand owners of the particular species of property will afford it much more effectual protection than one owner of the same amount and species, under any

If the West has less capital, fewer slaves, and land less valuable; they will guard their title more carefully than the East; and in guarding their own, they will guard and preserve the rights of others.

are one people, and God grant that the time may come when we may feel that we are of common enemies, but that our interests are the same. The struggle that has heretofore existed has not resulted in the public

Many of our citizens are greatly opposed the election of Judges by the Legislature, is required by the constitution. It cannot be disguised that our own Legislature has in many instances been the scene of intrigues strictly at war with our ideas of the purity

neither character, or qualifications, were made the tests of fitness for office, but simply party services. Legislatures are small bodies; usually elected upon political party grounds; and that, too frequently at

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