

our ships are laden for our own account in the French, Spanish and Dutch colonies, in which no foreigner has any concern. This is the trade which we claim as a right in time of war as well as peace, when permitted by the nations to which such colonies belong. If any of our ships are found carrying the property of the enemies of Great Britain, let them be punished, we mean not to defend them.

A firm friendship on the part of the United States, is desirable with all nations. With none more than with Great Britain. We can be mutually useful to each other. Our usefulness to her is self-evident. Her friendship to us would tend greatly to our happiness and peace as a nation, and could in no manner operate to her injury. A mutual good understanding appears to me so necessary to Great Britain, that no trifling consideration ought to induce her to disturb it. Permit me to enquire what are the benefits which result to that nation from our commerce. I have before me the report of the secretary of the treasury calculated on an average of three years, by which I observe, that the United States import annually from all the world, to the amount of 75 millions of dollars, of which 36 millions are imported from Great Britain and her dependencies; 27,400,000 dollars thereof being *actually of the articles manufactured in Great Britain.* Of the 75 millions (our total imports) 28 millions are articles re-exported, so that the true amount of importation, for our own consumption, can only be estimated at 47 millions. Of this forty-seven millions I am convinced from the secretary's report, that at least thirty-two millions are imported from Great Britain and her dependencies, and consumed by our citizens. The total amount of exports of the native products of the United States is near 40 millions of dollars, of which 20 millions of dollars are exported to Great Britain and her dominions. Out of this sum not more than 15 millions of dollars can be considered as a regular export for the use of Great Britain and her colonies. For instance, the report of the secretary states the value of tobacco exported to Great Britain on the average of 3 years, at 3,230,000 dollars, when I believe it will be admitted that not more than 14,000 hogsheds are estimated as her annual consumption. Ships laden with tobacco although they clear out for England, in many instances only call there for orders, and proceed to the ports on the continent for the sale of their cargoes. Provisions which can only be admitted into Great Britain in times of real scarcity, cannot be considered as an export to her, which may at all times be calculated upon. Their amount in the secretary's report is stated at 2,150,000. On this subject I will make one other observation. It is this—that our exports are estimated at their present prices. On a return of peace those prices cannot be expected, whereas the price of the goods imported, will continue at least as high as they now are. From this view of the subject, and I believe it correct, it will appear that the United States import from Great Britain and her possessions, nearly one half the amount of her total import, near two-thirds of all that we import for our own use and consumption, and that Great Britain and her dependencies do not consume of our products more than one half of the amount of what we import from her. By the same report it will be seen that Great Britain exports to the United States of her manufactures twenty-seven millions four hundred thousand dollars, and consumes only 9 millions independent of her colonies, and deducting as before stated for tobacco not used, and provisions only admitted in times of scarcity. To make up the balance which we are thus indebted to Great Britain, our merchants are compelled to exercise their talents and their enterprise in seeking other markets, in doing which in a fair and legal manner, and as sanctioned by Great Britain in 1801, their ships have been met by the British cruisers, carried into port and condemned, under the pretext of new principles heretofore unknown to them. And yet, Mr. President, with all their industry the balance of trade appears by the secretary's report, to be against the United States. The secretary has assigned sound reasons to shew how this deficiency stated by him of 7 millions against the United States may be accounted for. He might have added, that the plunder committed on us by the belligerents had essentially contributed to create that balance. He might with truth have said, that the seizure and unlawful condemnation of the ships and cargoes of citizens of the United States by the powers at war, had added at least 6 million of dollars in the three years towards creating that heavy apparent balance of trade against our country. But for those depredations the balance would certainly have been much less. But, Mr. President, are those the only advantages arising from our trade to Great Britain? No, sir, almost all our money negotiations go through her merchants. The proceeds of a great part of the cargoes shipped from the United States to other countries are ordered to Great Britain, and either go to pay our debts there, or are drawn from thence by bills of exchange, thus giving to Great Britain a great source of wealth and employment. Mr. President, we are in truth more useful to her than if we were again her colonies, for she enjoys

almost all the benefits resulting from our commerce, and incurs no expense in our protection. From Cook's statement it appears that America imports from Great Britain one quarter of the manufactures which she exports. For all these advantages, Mr. President, and surely they are important, what return do we receive? We ought to expect that which would be favorable. We receive the reverse. How Great Britain conducts herself towards us shall be part of my present enquiry.

[To be continued.]

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WEDNESDAY, March 5.

DEBATE.

On Mr. Gregg's resolution.
Mr. J. RANDOLPH'S Speech

[CONTINUED.]

But the gentleman has told you that we ought to go to war, if for nothing else, for the fur trade. Now, sir, the people on whose support he seemed to calculate, fellow (let me tell him) a better business, and let me add that whilst men are happy at home reaping their own fields, the fruits of their labor and industry, there is little danger of their being induced to go 16 or 1700 miles in pursuit of beavers, racoons or opossums—much less of going to war for the privilege. They are better employed where they are. This trade, sir, may be important to Britain, to nations who have exhausted every resource of industry at home—bowed down by taxation and wretchedness. Let them, in God's name, if they please, follow the fur trade. They may, for me, catch every beaver in North America. Yes, sir, our people have a better occupation—a safe, profitable, honorable employment. Whilst they should be engaged in distant regions in hunting the beaver, they dread lest those whose natural prey they are should begin to hunt them—should pillage their property, and assassinate their constitution. Instead of these wild schemes pay off your debt, instead of prating about its confiscation. Do not, I beseech you, expose at once your knavery and your folly. You have more lands than you know what to do with—you have lately paid 15 millions for yet more. Go and work them—and cease to alarm the people, with the cry of wolf, until they become deaf to your voice, or at least laugh at you.

Mr. Chairman, if I felt less regard for what I deem the best interests of this nation than for my own reputation, I should not, on this day, have offered to address you; but would have waited to come out, bedecked with flowers and bouquets of rhetoric, in a set speech. But, sir, I dreaded lest a tone might be given to the mind of the committee—they will pardon me, but I did fear, from all that I could see, or hear, that they might be prejudiced by its advocates, (under pretence of protecting our commerce) in favor of this ridiculous and preposterous project—I rose, sir, for one to plead guilty—to declare in the face of day that I will not go to war for this carrying trade. I will agree to pass for an idiot if this is not the public sentiment, and you will find it to your cost, begin the war when you will.

Gentlemen talk of 1793. They might as well go back to the Trojan war. What was your situation then? Then every heart beat high with sympathy for France; for Republican France. I am not prepared to say, with my friend from Pennsylvania, that we were all ready to draw our swords in her cause, but I affirm that we were prepared to have gone great lengths. I am not ashamed to pay this compliment to the hearts of the American people, even if at the expense of their understandings. It was a noble and generous sentiment which nations like individuals are never the worse for having felt. They were, I repeat it, ready to make great sacrifices for France. And why ready? Because she was fighting the battles of the human race against the combined enemies of their liberty—because she was performing the part which Great Britain now, in fact, sustains—forming the only bulwark against universal dominion. Knock away her navy, and where are you? Under the naval despotism of France, unchecked and unqualified by any antagonizing military power, at best but a change of masters. The tyrant of the ocean, and the tyrant of the land is one and the same, lord of all, and who shall say him nay, or wherefore doest thou this thing? Give to the tyger the properties of the shark, and there is no longer safety for the beasts of the forest or the fishes of the sea. Where was this high anti-Britannic spirit of the gentleman from Pennsylvania? when his vote would have put an end to the British treaty, that pestilential source of evil to this country! and at a time, too, when it was not less the interest than the sentiment of this people to pull down Great Britain and exalt France. Then, when the gentleman might have acted with effect, he could not screw his courage to the sticking place. Then England was combined in what has proved a feeble, inefficient coalition, but which gave just cause of alarm to every friend of freedom—Now the liberties of the human race are threatened by a single power, more formidable than the coalesced world, to whose utmost ambition, vast as it is, the naval force of Great Britain forms the only obstacle.

I am perfectly sensible and ashamed of the trespass I am making on the patience of the committee—but as I know not whether it will be in my power to trouble them again on this subject, I must beg leave to continue my crude and desultory observations. I am not ashamed to confess that they are so.

At the commencement of this session we received a printed message from the President of the U. S. breathing a great deal of national honor and indignation at the outrages we had endured, particularly from Spain. She was specially named and pointed at. She had pirated upon your commerce, imprisoned your citizens, violated your actual territory; invaded the very limits solemnly established between the two nations, by the treaty of San Lorenzo. Some of the state legislatures, (among others the very state on which the gentleman from Pennsylvania relies for support) sent forward resolutions pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, in support of any measures you might take in vindication of your injured rights. Well, sir, what have you done? You have had resolutions laid upon your table—going to some expense of printing and stationery—mere pen, ink and paper, and that's all. Like true political quacks, you deal only in handbills and hostrams. Sir, I blush to see the record of our proceedings, their respectable nothing, but the advertisements of patent medicines. Here you have the Worm Destroying Lozenges; there, Church's Cough Drops;—and to crown the whole, Sloan's vegetable Specific—an infallible remedy for all nervous disorders and vertiges of the sick politicians. Each man earnestly exhorting you to give his medicine only a fair trial. If indeed these wonder-working nostrums could perform business

half of what they promise, there is little danger of our dying a political death at this time at least. But, sir, in politics as in physics, the Doctor is oftentimes the most dangerous disease—and this I take to be our case at present.

But, sir, why do I talk of Spain? There are no longer Pyrenees. There exists no such nation—no such being as a Spanish king, or ministers. It is a mere juggler played off for the benefit of those who put the mechanism into motion. You know, sir, that you have no differences with Spain—that she is the passive tool of a superior power, to whom at this moment you are crouching. Are your differences indeed with Spain? And where are you going to send your political panacea, resolutions and handbills excepted; your sole arsenal of government—your king—your cure-all?—To Madrid? No—You are not such quacks as not to know where the shoe pinches—to Paris. You know at least where the disease lies, and there you apply your remedy. When the nation anxiously demands the result of your deliberations, you hang your head and blush to tell. You are afraid to tell. Your mouth is hermetically sealed. Your honor has received a wound which must not take air. Gentlemen dare not come forward and avow their work, much less defend it in the presence of the nation. Give them all they ask, that Spain exists, and what then? After shrinking from the Spanish jack-all do you presume to bully the British lion. But here the secret comes out. Britain is your rival in trade, and governed as you are by counting-house politicians, you would sacrifice the paramount interests of the country, to wound that rival. For Spain and France you are carriers—and from good customers every indignity is to be endured. And what is the nature of this trade? Is it that carrying trade which sends abroad the flour, tobacco, cotton, beef, pork, fish and lumber of this country, and brings back in return foreign articles necessary for our existence, or comfort? No, sir, 'tis a trade carried on, the Lord knows where, or by whom;—now doubling cape Horn, now the cape of Good Hope. I do not say that there is no profit in it—for it would not then be pursued—but 'tis a trade that tends to assimilate our manners and government to those of the most corrupt countries of Europe. Yes, sir, and when a question of great national magnitude presents itself to you, causes those who now prate about national honor and spirit to pocket any insult,—to consider it as a mere matter of debit and credit, a business of profit and loss—and nothing else.

The first thing that struck my mind when this resolution was laid on the table was *unde dicitur?* a question always put to us at school—whence comes it? Is this only the putative father of the bantling he is taxed to maintain, or indeed the actual parent, the real progenitor of the child? or is it the production of the cabinet?—But I knew you had no cabinet—no system. I had seen dispatches relating to vital measures laid before you the day after your final decision on those measures—four weeks after they were received—not only their contents, but their very existence, all that time unsuspected and unknown to men whom the people fondly believe assist with their wisdom and experience at every important deliberation. Do you believe that this system, or rather this *no system* will do. I am free to answer it will not. It cannot last. I am not so afraid of the fair, open, constitutional, responsible influence of government—but I shrink intuitively from this left-handed, invisible, irresponsible influence, which defies the touch, but pervades and decides every thing. Let the Executive come forward to the legislature—let us see whilst we feel it. If we cannot rely on its wisdom, is it any disparagement to the gentleman from Pennsylvania to say that I cannot rely upon him? No, sir, he has mistaken his talent. He is not the Palmyrus on whose skill the nation at this trying moment can repose their confidence. I will have nothing to do with his paper—much less will I endorse it, and make myself responsible for its goodness. I will not put my name to it. I assert that there is no cabinet, no system, no plan—That which I believe in one place, I shall never hesitate to say in another. This is no time, no place for mincing our steps. The people have a right to know, they shall know the state of their affairs, at least as far as I am at liberty to communicate them. I speak from personal knowledge—Ten days ago there had been no consultation—there existed no opinion in your executive department—at least none that was avowed—on the contrary there was an express disavowal of any opinion whatsoever, on the great subject before you;—and I have good reason for saying that none has been formed since. Some time ago a book was laid on our tables, which like some other bantlings did not bear the name of its father. Here I was taught to expect a solution of all doubts, an end to all our difficulties. If, sir, I were the foe, as I trust I am the friend to this nation, I would exclaim—“Oh! that mine enemy would write a book.” At the very outset, in the very first page, I believe, there is a complete abandonment of the principle in dispute. Has any gentleman got the work? (It was handed by one of the members.) The first position taken is the broad principle of the unlimited freedom of trade between nations at peace; which the writer endeavors to extend to the trade between a neutral and a belligerent power,—accompanied however by this acknowledgment: “But inasmuch as the trade of a neutral with a belligerent nation, might, in certain special cases, affect the safety of its antagonist, usage, founded on the principle of necessity, has admitted a few exceptions to the general rule.” Whence comes the doctrine of contraband, blockade, and enemy's property? Now, sir, for what does that celebrated pamphlet, “War in Disguise,” which is said to have been written under the eye of the British prime minister, contend, but this principle of necessity? And this is abandoned by this pamphleteer at the very threshold of the discussion. But as if this were not enough, he goes on to assign as a reason for not referring to the authority of the ancients, that “the great change which has taken place in the state of manners, in the maxims of war, and in the course of commerce, make it pretty certain—what degree of certainty is this?”—that either nothing will be found relating to the question, or nothing sufficiently applicable to deserve attention in deciding it. Here, sir, is an apology of the writer for not disclosing the whole extent of his learning, (which might have overwhelmed the reader) in the admission that a change of circumstances—“in the course of commerce”—has made (and, therefore, will now justify) a total change of the law of nations. What more could the most inveterate advocate of English usurpation demand? What else can they require to establish all, and even more than they contend for? Sir, there is a class of men—we know them very well—who, if you only permit them to lay the foundation, will build you up, step by step, and brick by brick, very neat and shrewd, if not tenable arguments. To detect them 'tis only necessary to watch their premises, where you will often find the point at issue totally surrendered as in this case it is. A class—is the

more liberal any where asserted in this town? That free ships make free goods?—No, sir, the right of search is acknowledged, that enemy's property is lawful prize, if seized and delivered. And after abandoning these principles, what becomes of the doctrine, that a mere shifting of the goods from one ship to another, thus touching at another port, changes the property?—Sir, give up this principle, and there is an end of the question. You lie at the mercy of the conscience of a court of admiralty. Is Spanish sugar, or French coffee, made American property, by the mere change of the cargo, or even by the landing and payment of the duties?—Does this operation effect a change of property?—And when those duties are drawn back, and the sugars and coffee re-exported, are they not (as enemy's property) liable to seizure, upon the principles of the Examination of the British Doctrine, &c. And is there not the best reason to believe, that this operation is performed in many, if not in most cases, to give a neutral aspect and color to the merchandise?

I am prepared, sir, to be represented as willing to surrender important rights of this nation, to a foreign government. I have been told that this sentiment is already whispered in the dark, by time-servers and sycophants. But if your clerk dared to print them, I would appeal to your journals. I would call for the reading of them, but that I know they are not for profane eyes to look upon. I confess that I am more ready to surrender to a naval power a square league of ocean, than to a territorial one a square inch of land within our limits—and I am ready to meet the friends of the resolution on this ground at any time. Let them take off the injunction of secrecy. They dare not. They are ashamed and afraid to do it. They may give winks and nods and pretend to be wise, but they dare not come out and tell the nation what they have done. Gentlemen may take notes if they please—but I will never, from any motive short of self-defence, enter upon war. I will never be instrumental to the ambitious schemes of Bonaparte—nor put into his hands what will enable him to wick the world:—and on the very principle that I wish success to the French arms in 1793. And wherefore? Because the case is changed. Great Britain can never again see the year 1760. Her continental influence is gone for ever. Let who will be uppermost on the continent of Europe, she must find more than a counterpoise for her strength. Her race is run. She can only be formidable as a maritime power—and even as such, perhaps not long. Are you going to justify the acts of the last administration, for which they have been deprived of the government at our instance? Are you going back to the ground of 1798—9? I ask any man who now advocates a rupture with England, to assign a single reason for his opinion, that would not have justified a French war in 1798. If injury and insult abroad, would have justified it, we had them in abundance then. But what did the republicans say, at that day? That, under the cover of a war with France, the executive would be armed with a patronage and power which might enable it to master our liberties. They deprecated foreign war and navies, and standing armies, and loans, and taxes. The delirium passed away;—the good sense of the people triumphed, and our differences were accommodated without a war. And what is there in the situation of England that invites to war with her. 'Tis true she does not deal so largely in perfectibility, but she supplies you with a much more useful commodity, with coarse wollens. With less profusion indeed, she occupies the place of France in 1793. She is the sole bulwark of the human race against universal dominion—No thanks to her for it. In protecting her own existence, she ensures theirs. I care not who stands in this situation, whether England or Bonaparte—I practise the doctrine now that I professed in 1798. Gentlemen may hunt up the journals if they please—I voted against all such projects under the administration of John Adams, and I will continue to do so under that of Thomas Jefferson. Are you not contented with being free and happy at home? Or will you surrender these blessings that your merchants may tread on Turkish and Persian carpets, and burn the perfumes of the east in their vaulted rooms. Gentlemen say, 'tis but an annual million lost, and even if it were five times that amount, what is it compared with your neutral rights?—Sir, let me tell them a hundred millions will be but a drop in the bucket, if once they launch without rudder or compass into this ocean of foreign warfare. Whom do they want to attack—England. They hope it is a popular thing—and talk about Bunker's Hill, and the gallant feats of our revolution. But is Bunker's Hill to be the theatre of war? No, sir, you have selected the ocean—and the object of attack is that very navy which prevented the combined fleets of France and Spain from levying contribution upon you in your own seas—that very navy which, in the famous war of 1793, stood between you and danger. Whilst the fleets of the enemy were pent up in Toulon, or pinioned in Brest, we performed wonders, to be sure;—but, sir, if England had drawn off, France would have told you quite a different tale—You would have struck no medals. This is not the sort of conflict that you are to count upon, if you go to war with Great Britain. *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.* And are you mad enough to take up the cudgels that have been struck from the nerveless hands of the three great maritime powers of Europe? Shall the planter mortgage his little crop and jeopardize the constitution in support of commercial monopoly?—In the vain hope of satisfying the insatiable greediness of trade?—And minister the constitution upon its own principles, for the general welfare, and not for the benefit of any particular class of men? Do you wish to see war for the possession of Baton Rouge, or Mobile, places which your own laws declare to be within your limits?—Is it even for the fair trade that exchanges your surplus products for such foreign articles, as you require?—No, sir, 'tis for a circuitous traffic—an *ignis fatuus*. And against whom? A nation from whom you have any thing to fear?—I speak as to our liberties. No, sir, with a nation from whom you have nothing, or next to nothing, to fear, to the begrudgingment of one against which you have every thing to dread. I look to their ability, every interest—not to their disposition. When you rely on that, the case is desperate. Is it to be inferred from all this that I would yield to Great Britain? No, I would not towards her now, as I was disposed to do towards France in 1798—9—treat with her—and for the same reason—on the same principle. Do I say I would treat with her? At this moment you have a negotiation pending with her government. With her you have not tried negotiation and failed, totally failed, as you have done with Spain—or rather France. And wherefore under such circumstances, this hostile spirit to the one, and this—(I won't say what)—to the other?—

But a great deal is said about the laws of nations. What is national law, and national power?—What is national interest? You yourselves acknowledge and practice upon this principle where you can, or where you dare, with the Indian tribes for instance—I might give you