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PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 26.
MR. MASTERS'S SPEECH.

In the House of Representatives on the 30th ult. on the subject of our Foreign Relations.

Mr. MASTERS said he lamented the present situation of affairs, which he feared would terminate to our disgrace; he wished that one sober view should be taken of this great question, before they blindly rushed deeper in a scene of confusion and distress.

In the precarious situation in which this country stands (said he) it is the duty of every man to avow his principles and sentiments, with firmness and integrity. It is public delusion to bow to the chimerical projects and phantoms of any man: No man can be deemed independent, unless he is guided by the reason and expedience of things, abstracted from all party and personal prejudices. I trust these resolutions will be determined by their merits, and not by executive or party influence.

Great pains have been taken both in conversation and in print, to work upon the feelings of the people to persuade them, it must be embargo or war; at the same time you intend non-intercourse and then war.

This report is calculated to manage, cultivate and set in action, the warmth of public imagination; in order that a non-intercourse and the embargo may be well received.

The report states, at the time the embargo was laid, the British orders in council were known and understood in this country, though not officially communicated. The fact is the British orders in council were not even mentioned in the debate on that question; and the embargo was laid as a coercive measure without any reference to those orders; and when the administration found they had mistaken its operation, they went to the British government supplicating and begging, that those orders might be rescinded.—Sir, this nation feels humbled with the unhappy issue of their measures; and by deviating from an energetic and practical course, are whirled about, the sport of every gulf, and easily driven into any port.

Mr. Masters said, it had been in the power of this nation, more than once to have adjusted their differences with Great-Britain. When Mr. Fox came into the British administration, he offered our minister to renew the expired treaty; and at the same time remarked it should not prevent him from proceeding in the negotiation, and endeavouring to make such a treaty as would be most satisfactory to both countries. In the mean time the renewal of the old treaty would prevent all collision between the two nations. Mr. Munroe's instructions would not admit of it.

Although Jay's treaty was exceptionable in many points, and not popular in this country; yet this nation prospered under that treaty more than they have since without it.

Mr. M. said the late treaty concluded with the British government, by Messrs. Munroe and Pinckney, was in his opinion more advantageous than the former. This last treaty was rejected principally on account of protestation signed by the British commissioners. It was worthy of consideration that the protestation was no part of the treaty and our government had since offered to continue the embargo as to France, provided the British government would rescind their orders, which was substantially complying with the protestation, yet this treaty is rejected. It never has been in our power (said he) honorably to adjust our existing differences with France, whose emperor has always showed the greatest contempt for the neutrality of every nation, and whose determination is to compel us to take part in the war, either as friends or allies. If the nation does not know this, I know it, and you know it Mr. Chairman. The demands are positive, and because we have not promptly obeyed, France has swept by sequestration and confiscation, all the American property from Italy to Antwerp, amounting to more than one hundred millions of livres; she has burnt and sunk many of our vessels without even the form of a trial.

Why do you continue the embargo, and add to it a non-intercourse? Are you waiting for an answer from Bonaparte, that he has taken off his decrees, that you may go to war according to his demand? Or do you wish to continue this pressure in order to gain time to offer to the great emperor in more explicit terms, that you will take sides with him?—Your measures are leading to that point, and it will be the result.

Russia, Prussia, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Naples, in short all the subjugated world, passed embargo laws under the influence of France, under the same pretence, and worded nearly in the same manner as ours—therefore your embargo laws had a tendency to prevent the British government from rescinding their Orders of Council, and were more injurious than beneficial.

Great Britain has given you her answer.—Sir our affairs have proceeded daily from bad to worse, until we have been brought step by step to this state of things. By not resisting the first belligerent decree, we have invited retaliation and courted calamity.

You ought to desist from a course of measures, which will decide the fate of this country. Sir, before you pass a non-intercourse, I beg the House sincerely and gravely, to

consider the calamities which will follow; inconveniences, mischief and distress, are great and certain. The belligerent powers have trampled upon the law of nations, and we have trampled on and disgraced ourselves. If these measures were intended to coerce them, they would prove visionary and philosophical, and not founded on experience.—Your extreme and theoretical measures may be brought forward, *ad infinitum*, in order to extinguish all principles of action, which arise from experience and probability.

Mr. M. said, the embargo originated from no plan of sound policy whatsoever, and was in contradiction to all the principles of commerce. Your finances (said he) must lean upon commerce, or your whole system will tumble upon your head. You are throwing open the doors to smuggling. Whenever the laws of trade press hard upon the people, your shores and frontiers are full of contraband.—When he calls his eye back on our once flourishing commerce and agriculture, grown to perfection, through series of fortunate events, and train of successful industry and enterprise, unparalleled in the annals of the world, and contrasted them with your non-intercourse and embargo, it gave him melancholy reflections. He could not embrace a system which tended to destroy our country.

In looking round (said he) you will discover symptoms of radical decay, and proof of consuming strength. Never did a people suffer so much from fallacious measure and empty words. This non-intercourse and embargo, must be given up. They stand on no solid principle; it is a reflection on your wisdom to persist in them; you cannot shew either of them to be the means of obtaining some useful end: there can be no dignity in persevering on your ill-chosen ground; you are not punishing the belligerents; the operation against them is childish and fruitless; you are punishing ourselves. The project of abstinence and starving men into a sense of duty might apply to a Convent or Monastery, but the operation as against the belligerents, is extremely absurd and ridiculous.

We have got into this difficulty; the great question is, how are we to get out. One obstacle in the way, is, that you proudly boasted when you laid the embargo, and you now scorn meanly to sneak out of difficulties, and are pressing the nation into non-intercourse and war. I think it well to have the generous courage, when you find and feel an error, honorably and fairly to renounce it.

If your non-intercourse and Embargo are intended to habituate the citizens to the manufacturing and wearing of homespun; that is also visionary. Instead of homespun, the genius of the people is Commerce, Commerce, Money, Money; and we ought to spurn from us the hand of unconstitutional power, that would wrest from us those privileges. Let the House be cautious to guard against the progress of subtle encroachments on commerce, and consider that it may be undermined, as well as openly attacked.—If you attempt to destroy or depress commerce, you excite a jealousy between the states; which, however, much to be lamented, will end in a separation.

Among the united interests of the commercial and agricultural parts of the Union, nothing can be more detrimental than their jealousies of each other, and nothing can be so advantageous to this country, as their united efforts for their mutual benefit. You have already excited jealousies, and shaken the confidence of the people; mutual affection and confidence between the several states is the glory and safety of all. You have turned the course of trade into other channels, which cannot be recovered back for years to come, and posterity will curse the non-intercourse if it is adopted, and posterity will curse the Embargo, which will be remembered as a great infiance to insult the world, to avoid unpardonable error. Sir, you know they cannot be carried into effect without a large military force, subject to military tribunals. I have always understood, that military force was not to be applied to enforce obedience to a law, but when called for by a civil magistrate; and if they are not under the civil authority, it is not government, it is war, civil war, and we have no protection against tyranny.—While we follow the sound of liberty, let us take care we do not lose the substance.

Mr. M. said he had taken great pains, and paid attention with deliberation to the interesting and important situation of the country, and did believe it indispensably necessary to negative the resolution for a non-intercourse, and raise the Embargo. If you do not (said he) it is but the beginning of distress, and I never knew any thing which gave me more heartfelt regret than these measures.—This nation has experienced great advantages resulting from the different branches of trade; and the sources of public wealth and individual happiness are increasing and extending. Reject this resolution of non-intercourse; raise the Embargo in whole or in part; you will then invigorate her exertions, and reanimate her hopes. If you do not, you will sink down the nation into despair, and an absence of hope for constitutional relief, and their resentment may get the ascendancy of their moderation, and your laws will be evaded by force. Sir, a want of remedy is, in effect, the same thing as a want of right.

I will not say where it will end: I will be silent on that head, and go no further;—but look to the consequences.—No rational man will deny that this state of things cannot be attended with either duration or tranquillity.

FROM THE NEW-YORK EVENING POST.
MR. MACON'S RESOLUTIONS.

The Eastern people will read, with astonishment and dismay, the violent resolutions now introduced by one of the southern administration men, cutting off all intercourse with the rest of the world. The first resolution is included in the second, and therefore totally nugatory, inasmuch as "any ship or vessel" must necessarily include "armed ships and vessels;" and the second resolution ought obviously to have been divided into two distinct resolutions; one relating to ships or vessels, the other to the importation of goods. This criticism however is of no further value than as it serves to shew what a set of bungles are operating on the body politic. If our heads are to be severed, we would at least choose it should be done by a keen instrument and at a blow, and not by a blundering executioner, who hacks and hacks with his battered edge, that tortures while it kills.

And who is this Mr. Macon, the honourable mover? A man who lives on the frontiers of North Carolina; who can send out his negroes to provide for him his venison and his wild turkey; who raises his own hominy, and grows his own cotton by the sweat of his hundred slaves, and who I suppose feels just about as much sympathy for the millions of people in the eastern states, at whom he levels his death doing blow, as the Bashaw of Tripoli and not a whit more.

In future then, no keel is to enter our harbours from any part of the world; no goods, wares or merchandise to be imported, and the Embargo laws are to be so amended, as to cut off all communication by land, and if we may judge from the language of the ministerial papers, so as to stop coasters and packets from sailing from state to state. With this view the standing army of 100,000 men is to be immediately called out by the President, and stationed along our northern frontier, and some further millions laid out in gun-boats, to cruise off our ports and harbours. Not a sailing party can enter a pleasure boat, nor a poor man set off in a canoe for a load of clams, without first calling at a Custom House, telling a good story, and being very polite and obsequious to the great man who presides there and obtaining a regular and formal licence, paying therefor such fees as the great man may please to order. Already, we understand, a new circular has been issued to the Custom House officer at Providence, forbidding the citizens under the penalty of seizure and forfeiture, to put their property on board a vessel by way of storing it there, without first obtaining a clearance of the Custom House officer, for another port, who again is strictly enjoined not to grant it, if he has any suspicions that after being landed at such port some person there may reship it for a further destination, and if he has no suspicions himself, he is also enjoined not to grant it, on account of the President's suspicions of the same nefarious design, although Mr. President is five hundred miles off and does not know that there is such a vessel in existence.

And while this state of things is going on through the land, the language at Washington is, "I am Sir Gregory and when I open my mouth let no dog bark." If we complain we are told by a member in the hall of Congress that we are "a few wicked and abandoned men," "that the love of gain has superseded every other motive," and in short, we are served up a second time with Mr. Jefferson's own terms, and denounced as "the most profligate part of the community."

I shall not ask if this will be borne? So far as elections are the test of the people's feelings and opinions, it is willingly borne; and the same set of men are again selected to guide the National bark. Let it then go on. I am but one of the crew, and shall probably sink or swim with the rest. I think, for myself, the ship is in great peril; that she is fast driving upon hideous rocks, and that I already hear the frightful roar of their breakers ahead.—The pilot however, still sings out "By the mark Five, all's well." While the miserable crew.

Whose judgment and whose eyes these jugglers have bound up,

Sit still

In stony features fix'd and motionless.

Soon, however, the fatal moment is coming, when they will start up from their trance aghast with terror and despair.—Alas! 'tis too late to put about the helm—the vessel will neither stay nor wear. What then? She must strike.—Let each individual shift as well as he can for himself. The Lord have mercy upon us all!

BOSTON, JANUARY 6.

Several houses were struck with lightning in East-Haddam, Connecticut, in a violent thunder storm of the 23d ult.—Three men were struck down by the lightning in the field, but received no material injury. Coventry a woman was killed, and another had a leg shockingly fractured.