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TO THE EDITOR OF THE STAR.

Washington, Jan. 24, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

Inclosed you will receive an Address to the People of the United States, in favour of the encouragement of Domestic Manufactures, which I consider not only able, but *conclusive* as to the utility, nay the *indispensible* necessity, of the *increase* and prosperity of that important, and (in my humble judgment) truly *national* interest.

There seems to me to be but one *object* of the address, the propriety of which it has failed to establish; and that is the necessity of further *legislative* protection and encouragement. While, therefore, I assent to the general principles and reasoning of the Address, some of the facts and statements which it contains lead me to the conclusion that *no* further legislative encouragement is necessary, to insure that increase and prosperity, which I believe, with the author of the Address, to be so essential to the best interests of the country.

It appears to me that the state of the times—the present *actual*, as well as the future *anticipated* situation of affairs, as well in this, as in foreign countries; *their* increased agriculture, which together with their commercial regulations, restrictions and prohibitions, have already deprived us of a market for the surplus agricultural products of a very large portion of our country,* and which seem to threaten us at no very distant day with a like deprivation in relation to most other articles, produced in the other sections; the consequent decline in the prices of those important agricultural productions denominated *bread stuffs*, as well as in the wages of labour (facts and circumstances *strongly* adverted to in the address) afford that *certain*, safe and substantial encouragement to domestic manufactures, that I am firmly convinced insures their steady increase and permanent prosperity; and which renders it unnecessary, as well as *impolitic* in the present divided state of the public opinion, to legislate further upon the subject.

It was principally from considerations such as are here stated, that, though agreeing in general principles with the friends of the Tariff proposed at the last session, I voted against that measure; and those considerations having acquired greater weight since the last session, will induce me again to vote against the same Tariff, which is now proposed, unless I can be convinced that the view I have taken of the subject is erroneous, and that further legislative protection is *indispensible* to insure the permanent establishment and prosperity of the manufacturing interest,—in which case, believing that interest to be essentially connected with the other great interests of the country, and more *particularly* and *intimately* with that of *agriculture*, which I unhesitatingly give the first rank, I shall give my vote in favour of that or any other measure essentially necessary to effectuate the object.

I remain very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
THO: CULBRETH.

* The grain growing section.

An Address

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,

DRAWN UP BY ORDER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR THE PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY,

Established in June, 1820,

By Delegates from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Ohio, and Delaware.

EXPERIENCE and political wisdom teach the importance of decision and stability in national councils. What will best promote the interests of a country is a primary question; and, when this question is settled, and its solution sanctioned by public conviction, decided, comprehensive and uniform measures are alone compatible with sound discretion. It cannot be denied, that the physical condition of some countries may expose them to great and sudden changes. When their internal resources are barren and limited, and their prosperity depends on the disposition of foreign nations, there is a necessity of conforming to extrinsic circumstances. But in an empire of great extent and fertility, where there is a full scope for industry, enterprise and capital, without that dependence on foreign states, which is not reciprocated; where the course pursued by neighboring powers, can be set at defiance, and commerce agriculture, and manufactures, can flourish by mutual support from each other, and a valuable course of trade be secured—great changes can be prevented, or their effect easily counteracted.

Labour is the cause of wealth, and that system of policy which renders it the most abundant and most productive to a nation, in the end, is the most worthy of adoption. The interests of agriculture claim the first regards of government. Consumption is the life and support of agriculture, and whatever promotes consumption, either at home or abroad, deserves perpetual attention. Domestic manufactures afford the most extensive, the most various, as well as the surest consumption to the products of the soil; and, therefore, constitute the chief auxiliary to agriculture. They increase the demands of the home market; and give life and support to inland trade and exchange. Inland trade should be preferred to foreign commerce. It more immediately subserves the wants of the community, as the means of distributing articles of domestic production; gives a more rapid circulation to money, and is independent of the restraints and hostilities of foreign powers. Foreign commerce, while it deserves the attention and protection of government, should be the offspring of reciprocity, and cherished no further than it increases the wealth, power and general happiness of a state to a greater extent than any other application of the labour and capital, which it employs, would do.

These positions are every way applicable to the United States; and it is to be lamented, that the recent unsettled state of the civilized world, as well as the adoption of false and specious maxims in political economy, equally current with the people and the government, have given countenance to a system of policy, by which they are contravened and violated.

In the present crisis of our national affairs, two considerations press upon our reflection. First, the natural and moral resources of the United States; and, secondly, our present embarrassed situation.

The resources of the nation have so often been the subject of panegyric, that it may wear the semblance of vanity to recount them here. But if it were ever necessary and proper to bring them into view, it is so at this period. Let it not be forgotten, then, that we live under a government calculated, from the spirit of its institutions, to give full scope to the faculties and energies of the people. Within the boundaries of its authority, an hundred millions of people could live, flourish, and be happy—independent of foreign aid or friendship. Not only are we capable of feeding and clothing ourselves, but we might furnish food and raiment for a great portion of the civilized world. We have the means of building up and sustaining the greatest commercial marine ever known upon the waters of the globe, of transporting our surplus articles to every market of the world, and of holding in our hands a trade of unprecedented extent and advantage. To the inland and coasting trade of the United States, it is difficult to fix any limits. The extent of our territory, the variety of its climate and productions, the mutual dependence and mutual wants which will always exist between different sections of the Un[illegible]ur vast rivers, which are so many natural [illegible]hannels of internal exchange, and the [illegible]and seas with which they may be connected—mark out this Republic as surpassing, in resources, those of any country that has flourished in the compass of history. With these advantages, we must include those which favour the successful cultivation of domestic manufactures. We neither want the raw material, nor the skill and industry, to convert it to individual and national riches. While our soil teems with luxuriance, every day reveals those hidden treasures of the mineral kingdom, which embellish, enrich, and give strength to a state; and sites for factories and machinery are found in every direction, affording the most abundant facilities of manufacturing industry.

But it will be said, what have these facts to do with the great question before us? They cause reflections which rise up in humiliating contrast with our present situation. Without any of those signal calamities which have desolated the face of Europe; without any of those judgments that shake the foundation and wither the prosperity of empires; with the ability to command our resources and our consumption, what at this crisis, is the state of the country? Since 1815, real estate, generally, has fallen at least 30 per cent, or more than $1,000,000,000, from its estimated value in 1815. Rents, in the principal cities, as well as in the country, have fallen proportionably. Agriculture, the source of wealth, is depressed, and an immense surplus of produce on hand, without any market, either foreign or domestic. Manufactures are, for the most part, prostrated by the competition of foreign industry in the American markets; and a great portion of the American people are clothed by foreign skill and labour, upon conditions of exchange the most unjust and ruinous. The active capital of the country, to a disastrous extent, is drawn away for the purchase of foreign commodities, the productions of foreign skill and enterprise, when they could be fabricated at home. Foreign commerce, under its present regulations, tends to impede, and not to facilitate, the advancement of the nation to a state of general and permanent prosperity. There is, confessedly, a great balance of trade against us, without any equivalent that can palliate its evil effects. Nothing worthy of our government has been done to cultivate the energies, and call forth the internal and latent resources of the Union—every thing is left to accident and time. And lastly, amid this universal depression and embarrassment, the REVENUE of the country has failed, former sources are diminished, and internal taxes, the increase of the national debt, or the reduction of the army and navy, must follow.

Under these circumstances, and in the face of a crisis so formidable, it is evident, that THERE MUST AND OUGHT TO BE A CHANGE OF NATIONAL POLICY.

The friends of national industry, without indulging in strictures on the past, propose a change of measures, founded in reason, and conformable to those doctrines of political economy which are sanctioned by practical experience. They propose a system of policy that will redeem the nation from the pressure of existing embarrassments, secure her future prosperity, employ the industry of the whole population to general profit, reveal the resources of the Union, and supply the deficit at the Treasury. They neither shrink from responsibilities, nor from additional burdens, at the hand of government. They are ready to do their part to support it, in the adoption of vigorous and effective measures. But they claim protection. They ask the government to pass such laws, and adopt such regulations, as will shut out that foreign industry that is now permitted to render our own, to a vast extent, dormant or unproductive, and that directly produces the evils which afflict the nation.

Before indulging in details, the friends of national industry would advert to one remarkable circumstance: while the strenuous opposers of their views are crying out "let us alone!" they point out no remedy for the existing state of things. The ruinous state of the country, they cannot deny; they cannot deny, that it is growing worse:—and yet, according to their doctrine, nothing is to be done. We are still to tread the beaten track of improvidence and folly. Nothing is said of supplying the deficit of several millions in the Treasury; nothing is said of internal taxes; nothing is said of increasing the national debt; nothing is said of disbanding the army, dismantling or fortifications, or of tearing down the flag of our navy, and voluntarily palsying the arm of our maritime strength. And yet who can say, that these considerations are not vitally connected with our present national conduct.

In adopting a new system of policy, in the United States, both internal and external, two considerations should be kept in view:

FIRST—What hostile and prohibitory regulations now exist, in foreign countries, against the commerce of this country, and what are their bearings and effects upon our prosperity:

SECONDLY—What will most effectually tend to countervail the effects of these prohibitions and restraints, and encourage and protect the industry of the country—embracing agriculture, manufactures, inland trade, foreign commerce—and the general cultivation of our resources.

As to the first point, we would ask those who oppose such measures as will go to protect ourselves, to take a candid view of the policy of other nations, towards the United States. Where is there a nation to which we can send an article of domestic manufacture, but upon terms that would be ruinous? On what shore can the fruits of American skill and industry be landed, without meeting a hostile tariff? England, France, Russia, Spain, and the German States, are equally jealous and rigorous when an article of foreign manufacture interferes with their own ingenuity and labour. It is a policy that distinguishes their political history. It plants an impassable barrier around their frontiers. But we shall be told, that it is immaterial what the tariffs of foreign nations may be, as to the importation of manufactured articles, since this country alone depends on the export of the raw material. This position brings us directly to the question—what is the state of foreign markets, and what are the advantges which we now derive, or which we have a prospect of deriving hereafter, for the sale of our agricultural products?

While we had the carrying trade of continental Europe, and our vessels were employed in conveying commodities from the colonies to the mother countries, and in occupying those channels of commerce from which other nations were excluded; while the products of our soil were demanded to aid in sustaining the armed millions of Europe as well as millions whose employments were broken up by the general confusion of internal and external relation; we were enabled to sustain the importation of foreign fabrics, and to tolerate the neglect of the home market. But the commercial relations of the world are permanently changed. Consumers have become producers. The soil of Europe is cultivated with new ardour, and the protection of home industry is the ruling system of European policy. The old world is every day becoming more productive in agriculture, while labour-saving machinery is extended far and wide. The vigorous policy of the Russian Emperor, which reaches the borders of Asia, the extension of the British possessions in India, and the fertile sources of commerce opening in South America, denote a still more radical revolution in the maritime world. Do these facts point out the United States as the future granary of nations? Do they not rather indicate, that the foreign markets for our produce must diminish, instead of increasing?

A glance at the state of our foreign markets for the last two or three years will cast much light on this subject. The raw materials exported from the United States may be principally included in the articles of Cotton, Tobacco, Rice, Bread stuffs, salted Provisions, Ashes, and Lumber. What countries afford a consumption and demand for these articles, and how are they received? Let us begin with England. From necessity she takes our cotton, tobacco, and rice to the extent that they are not supplied to her by her colonies and by South America. Flour is prohibited from Great Britain and from her colonies, including the West India markets. Bread stuffs and salted provisions are also prohibited both from the mother country and the colonies. Pot and pearl ashes are received under a restrictive duty that protects the supplies from the Canadas. As to lumber, the duty excludes it as well from the mother country as from her colonies. The articles formerly consumed by France, that were the products of our soil, were cotton, rice, tobacco, & ashes. In consequence of the French regulations, retaliatory upon our Tonnage law passed at the last session of Congress to regulate trade, the direct commerce in these articles are destroyed. The markets afforded to us by Spain and Portugal are very different now from what they were during the wars in Europe, when we exported provisions to the peninsula to an immense amount. Agriculture is now attended to in these regions. Spain, by a recent law, prohibits corn and bread stuffs of every kind. The consequence is, that the former demand for our product has ceased. As to the other ports of the continent of Europe, including Italy, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and the German states, they afford no market for our grain, and none for other products worthy of consideration. Deduct from the foregoing articles the prohibited and restricted items, and see what remains to send to foreign markets, to pay for importations of foreign goods, equal to our demands for consumption.

It is apparant from the foregoing facts, that we must rely chiefly on the sale of our cotton, to defray the monstrous annual contribution levied upon us in the importation of foreign manufactures. The staple articles of the eastern and northern States are no longer demanded abroad. The same may be said of the whole immense country north west of the Ohio river. What then are the prospects for the sale of our cotton in England and on the continent of Europe? From two causes, the growing of cotton in the United States must hereafter depend much on the consumption of the domestic market. In the first place, England, the great consumer of this article, finds it more for her interest to draw her supplies from her own East and West India colonies and from South America, whose commerce she is aiming to command, and which Mr. Pitt designed to control twenty five years ago. In 1817 the whole imports of cotton into Great Britain amounted to 198,917 bags from the United States, and 232,261 from India and South America. In 1818 she imported 205,881 bags from the United States, and 227,681 from the other two quarters. In 1819 she imported 286,000 bags from this, and 341,000 from other countries. During the first eight months of the current year, according to the estimates of respectable merchants, England has imported 280,000 bags from the United States, and 164,000 from other sources—chiefly from South America; much of the old importations from India, and 100,000 bags from this country, still remain on hand in her markets; yet a few years since, American cotton had the monoply of the English markets. But it is not the growing competition of other countries alone of which we would speak—the change of prices is still more important. In 1818, the estimated receipts for the sale of 205,881 bags amounted to $31,334,258. In 1820, the proceeds of 280,000 bags will not amount to $15,000,000—the estimate is $13,000,000. But another view of the subject occurs here. If the exportation of cotton is to prevent the protection of domestic manufactures, then its demand and value in the foreign market should keep pace with the increase of our population, & our extensive consumption of foreign manufactures. If we this year consume $30,090,000 in British goods, ten years hence we may require from $60,000,000 to $70,000,000. If we now export 300,000 bags of cotton in a few years we should require to export 600,000 bags. And who will consume it abroad? No nation on the globe. Thus while our cotton plantations increase with the acquisition of southern territory and the augmentation of population, the foreign demand keeps no proportion in point of quantity, and falls in its annual value. Tobacco and rice have also fallen 30 to 50 per cent. and we export less now than we did twenty years ago. So much for foreign markets, concerning which so much is said by the opposers of the protection of national industry. It is estimated that our exports the present year will amount to from 20 to $25,000,000, and our imports to $40,000,000. Our wheat has no market, and cotton has fallen 50 per cent. and rice and tobacco vastly diminished in their prices.

We are safe then in drawing these deductions:—First, that the nations of Europe preserve a rigid and unvarying system of protection to their industry, and that foreign competition is precluded by the adoption of effectual laws. Secondly, that foreign markets, for the staple articles of American produce, fail to extend a consumption that will enable us to endure the importation of foreign manufactures as we have for a few years past. Hence a change of policy as we before remarked, must ensue.

No rational man will deny the capacity of this country to resort to a new course of measures, for the protection of the industry of the nation, without giving any shock to the social system, without doing any violence to the relations of society, and without destroying our internal peace and harmony.

Nor ought we longer to be told to "buy where we can buy the cheapest." No one destitute of the grossest prejudices will advocate the literal application of the maxim. We may indeed purchase *cheap*; we may drain the workshops of Manchester and Leeds; we may clothe our wives and daughters in the fine fabrics of the east: we may give employment to our shipping, going out in ballast and coming home with importations that will amount to eighty or an hundred millions annually—*but in what shall we make our payment?* Here is the great question, that no one has answered.—There must be an *end* to our national infatuation: for the time has come, when the cultivators of the soil, and thousands of others, cannot afford to lose the fruits of their industry, and contract debts to sharpers and to banks, upon bonds and mortgages, by the purchase of foreign commodities, for daily consumption!

The establishment of Domestic Manufactures will prove the protection of national industry and productive labour. It will directly increase consumption, and aid the profitable cultivation of the soil. It will convert the raw material into articles of necessity and comfort, and effect a positive creation of wealth. It will open new divisions of labour, call a vast and inactive capital into operation, give employment to a great portion of the working community now idle for want of it—correct the evils of a disordered currency—favour the lucrative investment of money in our own country, and advance the prosperity of inland exchange, and of the coasting trade. Real estate will then be saleable and assume its proper value.

It is to be deeply regretted, that hitherto the opposers of national industry have induced many to believe that domestic manufactures constitute an interest distinct from general interests, and hostile to agriculture and commerce. In this, violence has been committed upon the soundest as well as the simplest principles of political economy, and upon the experience of every nation that ever existed. But a revolution in public opinion is taking place; and it will be enforced, by looking back upon the long neglect of government of this great source of wealth, strengh and prosperity. In the time of the Revolution, the patriots and sages of the day saw and expressed the propriety of giving an early and uniform encouragement to domestic manufactures, and the home market. In 1789, under the administration of Washington, the Congress of the United States called on General Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury, for his great and luminious Report, which advocated premiums, bounties, and prohibitions.* But the golden harvest reaped amid the convulsions of the old world—the immense avails accruing to us from the carrying trade, and the demands of foreign consumption for our produce, consigned the reasons and the arguments of this immortal statesman to silence and forgetfulness. From 1807 to 1815, and more particularly during the late war with England, when our troops were covered with British blankets, because we could not furnish them ourselves, and many a gallant soldier perished for want of them;—when American skill and American manufactories were unable to supply the munitions of a defensive war, there was a general voice in favour of Domestic Manufactures The public authorities of the nation, and the public authorities of the different States, were loud in their appeals to patriotism, in favour of national industry. The ardour, the ambition, and the energies of the nation were roused—capital and enterprise were found, and and manufactories sprung up in various quarters of the Union. The double duties were laid, and the internal resources of the country rapidly unfolded. From the reports of committees on manufactures in the House of Representatives, and in the Senate of the United States in 1816, it appears that in the manufacture of cotton and woollen alone, there was an investment of capital amounting to between fifty and sixty millions of dollars; and to this should we add the capital invested in the manufacturing of iron, glass, and other articles of which the raw material is found among us, the whole could not fall short of eighty to a hundred millions of dollars. The home market was vastly increased, the staple articles of produce extensively consumed, and internal prosperity every where visible. What came next? With the return of peace, there was a return of our errors and delusions; we were credulous enough to believe, that the carrying trade would again fall into our hands—the nations of Europe rush to the theatre of war, and again demand our produce for subsistence. The double duties were takin off—our ports thrown open to the introduction of foreign manufactures, and the importations, in a single year, amounting to ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS! The manufactures of foreign workshops—the accumulation of years were poured in upon us, and the tide of inundation rolled on its irresistable course, from the seaboard to the western wilderness, overwhelming the establishments of American industry; our own factories, with few exceptions, were ruined; a system of pernicious credit, overtrading, and wild speculation prevailed, and our internal affairs underwent a destructive revolution. From that time to the present moment our prosperity has been declining, and our embarrassments becoming more multiplied and more severe, until a crisis of no common aspect has arrived:—and yet we hear, from some, of the great protection afforded by the government to domestic manufactures.

As free citizens, involved in the common fortunes of the country, we would respectfully submit our views in favour,

I. Of altering the present tariff to an extent that will effectually protect those branches of American manufacture, which depend upon the raw materials produced in the country:

II. Of abolishing custom house credits, and demanding cash payments of the duties on foreign importations:

III. Of such a duty on sales at auction as will destroy the advantages which are now derived by foreign agents and foreign capitalists over our own citizens.

These three measures would lay a broad and solid foundation of that change now required in our policy.

The first object in adopting a new tariff, should be the complete protection of those branches of domestic manufacture for which we can furnish the raw material, and the importation of which from foreign countries is now draining the nation of its circulating capital. Among these branches, we would enumerate those of cotton, iron, wool, glass, paper, lead, hemp, and flax. To the entire manufacture of these important commodities, our mineral treasures, and the fertility of the soil, are abundantly adequate. One fact is certain, that we do not supply ourselves directly with these articles now; and another fact is equally certain, that we could do it, and secure an immense annual profit to the American people. What is the consequence of taking our cotton, our wool, our flax and hemp, and converting them from the raw to the manufactured state? It is an augmentation of wealth, clear and absolute. Should we manufacture cotton, wool, hemp, and flax, to the amount of forty millions annually by our surplus labour, the saving to the nation would be the value of the manufactured articles over what the raw materials would have sold for, in foreign markets. As the component substances which we can furnish for the manufacture of iron, glass, paper, and lead, for which we can find no market, the creation of wealth, and the ultimate saving to the community, are equal to their entire value. But we shall be asked, could not the labour employed in the manufacture of these articles be employed more profitably in some other pursuit? We answer, no. Every nation will be wealthy and prosperous in proportion to the aggregate of the industry of her people; and whatever, therefore extends the most profitable employment must be kept in view. A portion of the American people are now out of employ, and would even work in our factories, in many parts of the country, for their food. Another portion is engaged in occupations that are not productive. This remark applies in a great degree, to the cultivators of the soil, in the northern and western States. The wages, whatever they might be, which should be so much clear profit to the nation; & more than this, if a portion of the people thus brought into employment were consumers, without producing the means of their own subsistence. Even where the labour of a people is productive, it is always sound policy to transfer it to new channels if a greater productiveness can thus be secured.

It is probable, that such a protection from the general government against foreign competition, as is now required, to promote the successful manufacture of cotton, wool, hemp, flax, iron, glass, paper, lead, and some other articles of prime necessity, to the extent of our domestic consumption, would bring from six to eight hundred thousand people into productive employments, and open a market that would consume millions† of American produce annually, more than is now consumed, reckoning the articles to be manufactured, and the food required for sustenance. But do we mean to create mouths to eat? is the question frequently put. No—but we propose to transfer the labour of a portion of the population from an unprofitable to a profitable employment; that while they convert raw materials into articles of utility, they may consume the products of the industry of others instead of their own, and

* On the 20th Oct. 1774, the members of the first American Congress entered into articles of association in behalf of the different colonies. Among other stipulations we find the following in 1st vol. Journal, from p. 33.

"We will use our utmost endeavors to improve the breed of sheep, and increase their number to the greatest extent. We will, in our several stations, encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts, and the manufactures of this country, especially that of wool."

† Suppose the number to be 700,000, and that we should employ this population in manufacturing for the country at the rate of $3.00 each person per week:—this would be paying to our own people, instead of paying to foreigners, $2,100,000 per week, or $109,200,000 annually, besides opening a home market for our raw produce, and invigorating every other branch of industry. Put it at one half of the sum, and we should pay $50,000,000 to a portion of American population now idle and unproductive, instead of paying the same amount to sustain the paupers of Great Britain.

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