

CONGRESS.

House of Representatives.

Wednesday, January 29.

The SPEECH of Mr. SMITH, of South Carolina, in reply to Mr. M. DIXON, on the subject of the Commercial Regulations.

[CONTINUED]

To depreciate the discrimination in our favor in the British Islands by the exclusion of the produce of other nations, the gentleman had said the exclusion was only a matter of form and a remnant of the old colony system.

Mr. Smith said this was no answer to say 'twas a remnant of the colony system:—That system aimed at peculiar privileges to the national Dominions; as far as we, being foreigners, still partake of those privileges, 'tis to our advantage; suppose under that old system we had continued to enjoy the right of navigating to the islands, would it have been a disparagement of the right that it was only a remnant of the old colony system? Neither was it true that it was only matter of form and of no consequence; though we can in general supply the islands better than other nations, it does not follow that others could not supply at all: The French colonies could not get flour on as good terms as we can furnish them; yet that article was prohibited, and in general the British colonies could not be supplied equally well as from us, yet in the years of scarcity in this country, and of plenty elsewhere, a competition might injure us: Why could not rice in particular be supplied from the Portuguese dominions in competition with our's?

Much reliance had been placed by the gentleman on the disproportion of American and British tonnage employed in the commerce between the two countries; he had stated that in 1790 the British tonnage was 211,000 the American only 43,000: But Mr. Smith observed the comparison was not accurate: the rule pursued by the gentleman was *entry*, not *real tonnage*: and as we have no direct tonnage with the British West-Indies, from which entries, are frequent, the British tonnage is swelled by that frequency of entries, as happened in the case of the American tonnage employed between the British and French dominions. The house having no materials before them, it was impossible to pronounce how far this circumstance varied the true proportion, but it was easy to see that it must do it greatly. Arguments had been likewise drawn from the greater proportion of our tonnage employed in our trade with Spain, Portugal, &c.

Mr. Smith thought the principle of comparison was a proof of nothing, except that Britain was a more navigating power than the nations in general with whom we have commerce: It was no *test* of the system of either. This was evident when we compared the proportion of our tonnage with Britain, and with Spain and Portugal, for as the latter equally with Britain excluded us from their colonies, their systems were essentially the same: But Britain has extensive means of navigation, Spain and Portugal slender means, so that while our bottoms were the principal carriers between those countries and us, Britain maintained a competition with us in the trade between her dominions and us. But could it be proved that this was either avoidable in the present circumstances of the country, or that we ought to attempt to avoid it by violent or forced expedients. The navigating states, in the European trade between the British dominions and the United States, preponderate greatly in the article of tonnage; Great Britain may have the advantage in the non-navigating states; this arises, in a great degree, from a cause which navigation laws cannot cure—the superiority of capital. The merchants of Britain can supply on long credits, what those of our navigating states cannot; they have more means to purchase and export the commodities of the south; from both causes they carry on a considerable part of the southern trade, and they make their own shipping the instrument of it. No means calculated to multiply our vessels, can under existing circumstances, obviate this course of things. But the remedy of violent and forced expedients would be pernicious, if it could be successful: It would divert our capital, in too great a degree, from better to worse business, from agriculture, commerce and manufactures, to mere na-

igation. The true course, he thought, was to foster our navigation by gradual and moderate encouragements, and to expect from time and the increase of resources, the advantages of which we were solicitous. In the mean time, and till our resources could be better matured, it would be difficult to demonstrate that it was not a convenience to us to have the aid of foreign means. Mr. Smith, to strengthen his argument on this point, quoted a passage from Mr. Jefferson's letter to Mr. Morris, the minister in France, in the printed correspondence, page 63, in these words, "Were the merchant vessels coming for our produce forbidden to have any arms for their defence, every adventurer who has a boat, or money enough to buy one, would make her a privateer, our coast would swarm with them, foreign vessels must cease to come, our commerce must be suppressed, our produce remain on our hands, or at least that great portion of it, which we have not vessels to carry away, our ploughs must be laid aside, and agriculture suspended: This is a sacrifice, no treaty could ever contemplate, and which we are not disposed to make out of mere complaisance to a false definition of the term privateer."

He begged the committee to remark that this related to a British ship, and that they were the principal foreign carriers of our produce; yet the tendency of the gentleman's propositions went to exclude them from our ports.

(Speech to be continued.)

IN SENATE,

Friday, March 14.

The Vice-President communicated the report from the Secretary for the department of war on the petition of Robert Connelly, which was read.

Ordered, That it lie on the table.

Mr. King from the committee appointed to consider the bill, sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled, "An act to provide for the defence of certain ports and harbors in the United States," reported amendments, which being adopted—

Ordered, That this bill pass to the third reading.

The bill sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled, "an act authorizing a loan of one million of dollars," was read the third time.

Whereupon,

Resolved, That this bill pass.

Ordered, That the Secretary acquaint the House of Representatives with the concurrence of the Senate in this bill.

The bill, sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled "an act making further provision for the expenses attending the intercourse of the United States with foreign nations; and further to continue in force the act, entitled, "an act providing the means of intercourse between the United States and foreign nations," was read the second time.

Ordered, That this bill be referred to Mr. King, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Strong, to consider and report thereon to the Senate.

Mr. King from the committee appointed on this bill reported an amendment, which being adopted.

Ordered, That this bill pass to a third reading.

The bill, sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled, "an act making appropriations for the support of the military establishment of the United States, for the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four," was read the second time.

Ordered, That this bill be referred to Mr. King, Mr. Vining and Mr. Gunn, to consider and report thereon to the Senate.

Mr. Vining reported from the committee on enrolled bills, that they had examined the bill, entitled, "an act authorizing a loan of one million of dollars"—and that it was duly enrolled.

The Senate adjourned until 11 o'clock on Monday morning.

Monday, March 17.

The Vice-President laid before the Senate the report of the Secretary for the department of war on the petitions of Theodore Chartier and others; which was read.

Ordered, That it lie on the table.

Mr. Bradley reported from the committee appointed to consider the petition of Jabez Rogers, jun. that the prayer of the petition be granted.

The bill sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled, "an act to provide for the defence of certain ports and harbors in the United States," was read the third time.

Resolved, That this bill pass with amendments.

Ordered, That the Secretary desire the concurrence of the House of Representatives in the amendments of this bill.

A message from the House of Representatives by Mr. Beckley their clerk:

"Mr. President—The House of Representatives agree to the amendments of the Senate to the bill, entitled, "an act to provide for the defence of certain ports and harbors in the United States."

"The President of the United States hath notified the House of Representatives, that he did on the 14th instant, approve and sign "an act making appropriations for the support of government, for the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four."

"The Speaker of the House of Representatives having signed an enrolled bill, I am directed to bring it to the Senate for the signature of the Vice-President"—

And he withdrew.

The Vice-President signed the enrolled bill, entitled, "an act authorizing a loan of one million of dollars," and it was delivered to the committee on enrolled bills, to be laid before the President of the United States for his approbation.

The bill, sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled "an act to provide a naval armament"—was read the second time.

On motion,

Ordered, That this bill be referred to Messrs. Langdon, Morris, Butler, Taylor, and Cabot, to consider and report thereon to the Senate.

The bill, sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled, "an act making further provision for the expenses attending the intercourse of the United States with foreign nations; and further to continue in force the act, entitled, "an act providing the means of intercourse between the United States and foreign nations," was read the third time.

Ordered, That this bill pass with an amendment.

Ordered, That the Secretary desire the concurrence of the House of Representatives in the amendment to this bill.

The Senate resumed the second reading of the bill, sent from the House of Representatives for concurrence, entitled, "an act to prohibit the carrying on the slave trade from the United States to any foreign place or country."

On motion to postpone the bill to the next session of Congress—It passed in the negative.

Ordered, That the further consideration of this bill be postponed.

The Senate adjourned until 11 o'clock to-morrow morning.

UNITED STATES.

NEW-YORK, March 22.

Messrs. Childs and Swaine, Please to insert the following extract of a letter from a gentleman in Halifax, (N.S.) to his friend in this city, dated February 28, 1794.

"Business here is very dull, and I see no prospect of an increase. I should suppose there must be a stagnation of business your way, owing to the embarrassments your government is thrown into by the European powers—What effect this will finally have we are at a loss here to conjecture; your political situation is undoubtedly a critical one; I hope you will be enabled to steer clear of the miseries of war, and at the same time preserve an honorable appearance.

"There appears to me to be a very powerful combination against the liberties of mankind; and it is not at all surprising that the system of American government should be an object of general dislike to the enemies of France. The sound of republicanism is sufficient to rouse the resentment of the European powers; it threatens the very foundation of aristocracy; it is their greatest dread; their power is built upon aristocracy, and derives its greatest force therefrom; and whatever has a tendency in any measure to lessen that sort of power, must materially be an object of their hatred. At the same time mankind are of such a restless disposition, they cannot use moderation, the unbounded violence of the people is such that while we view the oppression of the great with indignation, at the same time we dread the fury of an enraged multitude—it will be a great blessing if Divine Providence has so ordered it, that you may still enjoy a continuation of peace and good order—this is what earthly happiness chiefly depends on."

BALTIMORE, March 22.

Last night between the hours of 8 and 9 o'clock a fire broke out in the store occupied by Mr. Benjamin Lewis, in Market street, between Tripolet's alley and Gay-street which in a very short time communicated to the adjoining houses of Mr. Myers, Mr. Bull, Mr. Sweeny, and Mr. Diefenderffer, which with the greatest part of their valuable contents were totally consumed—the rapidity and violence with which the flames spread, had at first a very threatening appearance, but by the spirited exertions of the inhabitants it was extinguished in about three hours.

The damage sustained is very considerable at the lowest computation, is upwards of 10,000 pounds.

PHILADELPHIA,

MARCH 26.

From the Knoxville Gazette, Feb. 27.

On Wednesday the 4th inst. James Russell, Robert Shannon, and William Cox, on their way from Nashville to this place, were ambuscaded on the Cumberland mountain, 18 miles from South West Point, by a party of Indians, consisting of about twenty five, who fired on them, and wounded Russell through the arm.—Russell and Shannon were coming from Gen. Robertson to Governor Blount with public dispatches. That these men were not killed, may be counted among miracles. The facts respecting this transaction are as follow:

As these men passed Obid's river, the preceding day, they discovered a fire, which induced them to push forward about fourteen miles, when they turned off the road, and laid all night without fire, judging they would be followed by Indians.

The next morning they kept the woods four miles before they struck the road, and finding no sign of Indians, they pursued their rout in confidence that they had not been discovered; but they had not proceeded above half a mile, when they found themselves in a well chosen spot for an ambuscade, surrounded by Indians, the most distant of whom was within thirty feet—they all fired, and many of them threw their tomahawks, without doing any injury, except to Russell, the ball which struck him was turned in its direction by a large metal button, or it would have passed through the most vital part of his body. Mr. Russell is now at the block house at South West Point, under the care of a surgeon, and it is hoped the wound will not prove mortal.

On the night of the 19th inst. William Robertson was shot as he was sitting in his house in Holliston, about 30 miles above this place. Robertson had some months past given information against a set of counterfeiters and thieves in North Carolina; and it is believed that some one of this gang has added the murder of Robertson to their other atrocious crimes.

From the Kentucky Gazette of Feb. 22.

Extract of a letter from his Excellency Major-General Anthony Wayne, to his Excellency Major-General Charles Scott; dated Head-Quarters, Greenville, Feb. 10th, 1794.

"The hostile Indians sent in a flag some time since, proposing a cessation of arms, and requesting me to appoint the time and place for holding a general treaty.—

"I agreed to a cessation for 30 days, and then to appoint the time and place for holding a general treaty, on condition, that they would surrender up all and every of the American prisoners in their possession, to the officer commanding at Fort Recovery, on or before the 11th instant.

"Whether the enemy were influenced by a serious wish for peace—or whether this overture was an insidious manoeuvre, to gain time to procure their provision, and to remove their women and children to a place of more security, time will soon determine.

"For my own part, I think it rather problematical, from certain circumstances attending this extraordinary embassy.

"I have the honor to be with sincere esteem and regard,

"Your most obedient

"Humble servant,

"ANTHONY WAYNE.

"The Honorable

"Maj. Gen. Charles Scott."