National Intelligencer.

& WASHINGTON ADVERTISER.

VOL. IX. WASHINGTON CITY, PRINTED BY SAMUEL HARRISON SMITH, PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE. NO. [illegible]

FIVE DOLLARS PER ANNUM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1808. *PAID IN ADVANCE.*

IN SENATE.

EMBARGO DEBATE—CONTINUED.

NOVEMBER 24.

Mr. Giles's speech continued.

But says the gentleman, what has become of the farmer? The gentleman knows, that I am a farmer, and that I have long borne the appellation with sincere pleasure; I may therefore be presumed to know something of the situation of the farmer; and not only in my own name, but in the name of the whole happy, useful, and honorable fraternity of American farmers, I will tell the gentleman what that situation is at this moment. The American farmer is now enjoying the fruits of his honest industry, in peace and security, blessed at the same time with every political, social, and domestic enjoyment, perfectly exempt from all vexations, and I had almost said taxations, and with pleasure beholds a surplus of fourteen millions of dollars in the public treasury, after paying every debt, which could be demanded, of the honor of the government. All these blessings too, are sweetened by the noble consciousness that they are enjoyed by him as a freeman, and by a constant recollection, and perfect confidence, that he is protected in this enjoyment, by a government, which will never basely surrender his rights, nor the national sovereignty, to any foreign aggressor upon earth. Blessed with all these uninterrupted enjoyments, I agree perfectly in sentiment with the gentleman from New-York, (Mr. Mitchill) that with a heart overflowing with the most grateful affections, he should render thanks to the author of all good, that in the bountiful dispensations of his providence, he has been pleased to pour so many blessings into the lap of the American farmer!! Grumbling and repining when thus favored, would in my judgment, be impiety to Heaven, and ingratitude to his own government.

The gentleman does not tell you, sir, that the farmer wants any thing, but that he has plenty over much. The puzzle is, to know what to do with the surplus plenty. And how does the gentleman advise the farmer to dispose of it? Why he tells him, raise the embargo and it will increase the price of your surplus produce; and for this supposed difference in price, he advises the farmer to sell his own freedom and his country's independence; and in this contemptible and miserable barter, to purchase his own and his country's vassalage—to cease to be a freeman, and to become a slave! To give up the noble feelings inspired by liberty and freedom, and to descend to the abject and ignominious existence of a slave without any mental feeling whatever. Sir, let me tell that gentleman in my own name, and in the name of every farmer in the U. States, that we would repel with indignity and indignation, the disgraceful golden allurement, even if it could be realized. But, sir, dishonorable as the allurement is, it is fictitious, it is visionary—it could not be realized. I believe, and every sensible farmer will believe, that he has for the last ten months obtained more for his surplus plenty under the embargo, than he could have done in any other state of things, which was in the choice of the government. Let us suppose that the immense mercantile capital which is admitted to have been saved by the embargo, had been seized and carried into foreign ports, and there condemned; what would have been its effects upon the mercantile capital of this country? It would have so crippled our merchants, that they would not have been able for a long time to purchase the surplus produce of the nation.

But that is not all, these merchants would have claimed indemnification from the government for losses which, in that case they would have urged, were sustained by its culpable neglect—and they would have plunged us into war, to repair so great an injury inflicted upon the nation—the foreign plunderers too, would have told us, that they cared but little about a war, as they had taken from us sufficient means for defraying its expence. Thus, in that state of things, a war would have been inevitable—and would you tell the farmer that he would get more for his surplus produce in time of war, than he has received since the embargo? Sir, the farmer knows too well the calamities of war, to be thus deluded by these visionary golden dreams. In the event of war, he would not have received as much for his surplus produce, as under the embargo laws: hence, it obviously appears from a fair estimate of pounds, shillings and pence; (since we are compelled to resort to that standard, as the only orthodox test of our national honor, national sensibility, and even national independence); yes, sir, even according to that sordid standard, the farmer would have been the loser. Besides, sir, to say nothing of the increased taxes, and other burthens indispensable to the support of war, who can count its chances, or limit its duration? Who can calculate its demoralising consequences? But calamitous as war is, the American farmers would with eagerness encounter all its terrors, rather than surrender their own liberties, and the nation's honor, independence and sovereignty—let us then for a time, sir, bear our present privations—let war be the last experiment.

But, sir, I will mention another circumstance, which may be some alleviation to the farmer, for the difference in the price of his surplus plenty now, and in ordinary times. When the price of produce is low, the temptation to raise large crops will be lessened, and the farmer will turn a certain portion of his labor to the improvement of his farm. The high prices of produce heretofore have induced the farmer to impose too much upon his land; too great demands have been made on it, and it has been in some degree exhausted. The embargo has apprised the farmer of this important circumstance, and taught him his true interest in this respect. I have observed a great change in the application of labor in this respect, and I have no doubt a general sentiment exists in favor of a still greater change; a greater portion of labor is also converted into household manufactures, which will lessen our demand and dependence upon foreign nations. In both these respects, I believe the operation of the embargo is favorable to the farmer, at the present moment, and will certainly be favorable to posterity by transmitting to it a more fertilized soil for cultivation. It will be favorable, at the present moment, in this respect; that before the adoption of the embargo, the farmer was tempted to apply too great a proportion of his labor to the annual increase of crops, and too small a portion of it to the permanent improvement and fertilization of his farm. I mention this as an alleviation, not as a complete exemption from the effects of the embargo, and its so far producing a beneficial influence upon cultivation and internal improvement.

I hope by this time, Mr. President, that the gentleman will concur with me in opinion, that the situation of the American farmer is rather enviable than miserable—That he has good sense enough to make a just estimate of his own interests, and possesses too much honorable sensibility not to repel with indignation every attempt to seduce him into a disgraceful surrender of his own liberties or his country's independence.

Let us now take a view of its effects upon some other classes of our fellow-citizens, which seem almost to have escaped the gentleman's notice; or at least not to have excited so much of his plaintive sympathies; I allude to the manufacturer, the mechanic, and the laborer. The manufacturer seems to be in such a state of prosperity, as rather to have excited the gentleman's jealousy, than his tender commiseration; he fears that the real object of the embargo was to erect the manufacturing system upon the ruins of commerce. I do not mean, here, sir, to reply to the suggestion of this unfounded jealousy. I mean, in the course of these observations, to make that a subject of distinct and separate examination. I shall here, however, take the liberty of remarking, without the fear of still further exciting the gentleman's jealousy, that I am extremely happy to see not only that we have abundant fabrics for manufactures, but that we have artizans sufficient to mould them into all the articles necessary for home consumption, and thus lessen our dependence upon foreign nations for our supply. I rejoice, indeed, to see our infant manufactures growing into importance; and that the most successful experiment has attended every attempt at improvement. What is the situation of the mechanic and the laborer? They have full employment, good wages, and cheap living. I am told, sir, that within the last year, one thousand houses have been erected in Philadelphia; I see at this time, more houses building at Georgetown, even for mercantile purposes, and more improvements in this city, than ever I have seen before; and I believe this generally to be the case throughout the country. That this is a correct statement of facts, I have no doubt; how then is this agreeable and unexpected scene accounted for amidst this mercantile clamor about the stagnation of business? It is because a greater proportion of the overgrown mercantile capital is now diverted from external commerce, to internal improvements; and I am strongly inclined to think that this transposition of a certain portion of the mercantile capital, will produce a beneficial operation in a national point of view, and probably even more productive to the capitalist, than risking it in the employment of foreign trade. This I believe to be a fair, just, and candid statement of the operation of the embargo laws, upon the several great classes of citizens; and when correctly viewed, how different is its aspect, from the miserable picture of horrors presented to us by the gentleman from Connecticut. When you tell a mechanic or a laborer of his distresses and sufferings, when he has full employment, good wages, and cheap living, he would laugh at you; he would either think you silly, or that you meant to treat him with indignity and insult. These are all the blessings he could wish, and they are enough for any man to possess, when he reflects upon the narrow span of human enjoyments, this world affords. Sir, the miserable laborer on the other side the Atlantic, would consider the enjoyments of the laborers here, Elysium itself; and, I can but lament for the sake of suffering humanity, that he cannot find the way to these enjoyments. I presume that during the late electioneering scene, every laborer and mechanic in Pennsylvania was told a thousand times that he was ruined by the embargo; but thirty thousand votes (majority) have told these frantic, officious disturbers of the public quiet, in loud and awful tones, how silly and ridiculous they consider the suggestion. The recent elections in most of the other states, speak the same emphatic language.

I have been thus minute, Mr. President, in the examination of this part of the subject, as well to relieve ourselves from the miseries and apprehensions of our own deluded imaginations, as to relieve foreign nations, as far as was within my power, from their delusions, which I shall show in the course of my observations, are the principal if not the only cause of the very hardships and sufferings so loudly and causelessly complained of by some gentlemen. Now, sir, take an impartial review of the effects of the embargo laws, as operating upon ourselves, and what is the actual result? Why, sir, as far as they were precautionary, their success has been complete; and whilst in their general operations, they have been attended with some privations and sufferings, they have not been without their beneficial effects on society.

The gentleman next triumphantly tells us, that the embargo laws have not had their expected effects upon the aggressing belligerents. That they have not had their complete effects; that they have not caused a revocation of the British orders and French decrees, will readily be admitted; but they certainly have not been without some beneficial effects upon those nations. Let me, however, ask, sir, is this failure a cause of triumph to the gentleman? Does he feel more pleasure in the delusive expectation of a triumph over a political adversary, than in the triumph of the nation over our common adversaries? Are his political feelings so strong, that they are to be indulged, even at the expense of his own, and his country's interests? Does he vainly suppose, that, disregarding or postponing all consideration of the people's interests, when their all is at stake, to the indulgence of these petty animosities, will give him a just claim to the people's applause? If he does, sir, he is mistaken. It is by the reverse of this conduct that he can lay any just claim to their applause. It is by banishing his prejudices—it is by conquering his own passions, and by devoting the whole energy of his mind to their service, at this critical moment, that he can be justly entitled to their applause. This would be for him a glorious triumph—a triumph over his own passions; and it would secure him the public approbation, because the conduct would be right. Let us then, sir, hope for this conciliation, which would be so honorable to ourselves, and would promise so much advantage to the nation.

In this spirit of conciliation and patriotism, then, Mr. President, let us enquire, first, what have been the actual effects of the embargo laws upon the aggressing belligerents? And, secondly, what are the actual causes of their failure of complete success? The first enquiry involves much mercantile information. I have only some views of general mercantile principles—I know little or nothing of their operative details—I had, therefore, hoped, for much information upon this part of the subject from gentlemen who possessed it; but have received very little satisfaction from them in that respect.

The first effect of the embargo upon the aggressing belligerents, was to lessen their inducements to war, by keeping out of their way, the rich spoils of our commerce, which had invited their cupidity, and which was saved by those laws. If they had once possessed themselves of this enormous booty, it would have been a sure pledge for open and direct war. It would have defrayed the expences of the war for several years. If they had not gone to war, they would have been compelled either to resore the captured property, or to make indemnification for it. Its amount alone, would have been a sufficient security against either of these acts of justice. And is it not better, that this enormous amount of property should be on this side of the Atlantic, than on the other? In the hands of its lawful owners, than in the hands of unprincipled freebooters? Is it not better that it should be drawn to our aid in the event of war, than applied to aid our unjust adversary? Upon this point, I presume, there can be but one opinion.

The second effect, which the embargo laws have had on the aggressing belligerents, is to enhance the prices of all American produce, especially articles of the first necessity to them, to a considerable degree, and, if it be a little longer persisted in, will either banish our produce, (which I believe indispensable to them) from their markets altogether, or increase the prices to an enormous amount; and, of course, we may hope will furnish irresistible inducements for a relaxation of their hostile orders and edicts. However, I may generally respect the mercantile information of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Lloyd) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Hillhouse) they appear to me on this occasion, not to have been very correct. I have before me, two prices current from Liverpool, the one of the 8th, the other of the 20th September last. They, I presume, were written under no political bias, favorable to the U. S. Let us draw our facts from them. I will begin with the article of the first necessity in G. Britain, and one which, at all times, excites her highest sensibility. She manifests, at all times, more anxiety about her corn laws, than any other subject of her political economy. This is a necessary result from the peculiar state of her population.

Let us then enquire what is the present state of bread stuffs in G. Britain. In the Liverpool price current of the 8th September, I find this information upon this subject. "Our grain market for the most part of the last month was very dull; however, within this day or two there have been some extensive sales made of N. York wheat at 13s. 3d. per 70lbs. and the holders now demand 13s. 6d. a 14s. 0d. for prime parcels, which may possibly be obtained, as the appearances for the harvest in most parts of the kingdom are not quite so favorable as was at first thought, the late heavy rains having proved injurious in many places, and the grain is much lighter in the ear than former seasons; but as the dealers and country millers buy only to supply their immediate wants, we do not calculate upon a material improvement on the annexed prices, unless some export vent to Spain or our West India colonies take place. Good sweet American flour is not to be had in this market."

In the price current of the 20th, I find these observations:—"Large speculations have lately been made in tobacco, in consequence of our stock becoming limited; but should the embargo be raised, this and every other description of your produce must very materially decline in price, wheat and flour excepted.

"Our stocks of grain are but moderate, although we have been much favored in our harvest."

What reflection does this information naturally present to the mind? That the crop is limited—that bread stuffs are high, and likely to be higher—that there is such a deficiency of bread stuffs, that our whole supply will not depress the market, even in the event of raising the embargo; and certainly continuing it, (which does not seem at all calculated upon in England) would lessen the quantity and raise proportionably the demand and price.

The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Hillhouse) tells us, we cannot starve G. Britain, she being mistress of the trade of the world, will supply herself with bread stuffs from other quarters, and particularly from Spanish America. I never heard it suggested, except by the gentlemen in the opposition, that we could starve G. Britain; but, that through our produce, particularly our bread stuffs, we could make a strong appeal to her interests. This fact is demonstrated to my mind. The Liverpool merchants differ with the gentleman in his mercantile information. They tell us that our whole supply of bread stuffs will not depress their market. If a ready supply could be obtained elsewhere, upon better terms, there would be no need of a supply from us. But when has it happened, that Spanish America could afford this supply? So far from affording a supply to G. Britain, it gets a portion of its own supply from us. The gentleman tells us, that Spanish Americans export great quantities of hydes and tallow. That is true. These however, are not bread stuffs. It is not pretended that G. Britain is in want of meat, but bread; bread is an essential of life—meat is no substitute for bread—it could not prevent even a famine. These documents also go to show the reason of the low price of New-York flour, quoted by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Lloyd.) It is because the flour was not sweet. It had been so long kept, as to become sour. I have no doubt that the British cabinet is now looking at this subject with great anxiety; and particularly at our movements in relation to it. Again, sir, suppose G. Britain should be able to provision her islands, it would be at such an expensive rate, as to render them very unprofitable.

The next important article is cotton. Let us see the prices current respecting that article:—

"The operations in our cotton market during the whole of last month have been immense, while our total imports are inadequate to one half the usual monthly consumption; as the stocks of this article have become more depressed, the speculators continue purchasing with increased spirit, and many of them have already realised considerable profits; we therefore quote an advance on all descriptions of cotton of from 4d to 6d per lb. above our last month's rates, which has principally occurred within the last ten days; but we must beg leave to remark, that such unexampled advances are scarcely ever so well maintained as when they are gradually established, and some occurrence may perhaps shortly take place to put a stop to further speculations; we are however, of opinion, that prices may yet be driven considerably higher, although they have to encounter an extremely bad trade in Manchester."

"West-India cottons have advanced nearly in the same proportion as American, and the recent arrivals have fully brought the annexed prices, with every appearance of much higher being realised."

"In cottons we have a great stir; and should we not soon have arrivals from the Brazils, prices must be enormous."

Here the Liverpool merchants tell us, not only that the prices are extremely high, and may be driven much higher, unless some occurrence (to wit, raising the embargo) may perhaps shortly take place, to put a stop to further speculation; but *that the total imports are inadequate to one half the usual monthly consumption.*—Now, sir, whence is one half of the usual consumption of cotton to be supplied to the British market. The Liverpool merchants seem totally at a loss for a supply from any place; but the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Hillhouse) has pointed out several places of supply—the East and West Indies; and even Africa has been resorted to. They have supplies from all these places now, and yet the Liverpool merchants tell you, that the whole imports are not equal to one half the monthly consumption. I therefore have no confidence in the statement made by the gentleman. With respect to the illustration of his position, by stating the supposed analagous case of his butter merchants, I shall make no reply. Its fallacy was ably demonstrated by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. Crawford.) I will only incidentally remark however, that it is the first time I ever recollect to have seen that gentleman in debate, when it appeared to me, that he did not know on which