msa_sc2901_scm2355-0109 ©Maryland State Archives

The Kent News.

DEVOTED TO AGRICULTURE, POLITICS, GENERAL NEWS, &c.

Vol. 18. CHESTER TOWN, MD., JUNE 27, 1857. No. 7.

POETRY.

THE PATCHWORK QUILT.

BY MRS. M. J. E. CRAWFORD.

I was sitting in my chamber,
With my baby on my knee,
And the music of an olden tune
Was humming dreamingly—
I idly glanced toward my bed,
A patchwork quilt was there,
The work of girlhood's early days,
Arranged with "mickle care;"
And tears came gushing to my eyes,
Their course I could not stay,
While many a mile my heart went back,
Along life's devious way.

That quilt is made of memories,
Which with my growth has grown;
Each patch is part of garment worn
By some one I have known.
What tales of love and joy and grief
Are with the whole inwrought!
What portraits and what histories
Come crowding to my thought!
That figure robed by mother's form
When I was but a child;
Oh! how it brings my mother's face
Before me calm and mild!

Her soft dark eyes, her raven hair,
Her forehead meek and fair,
Where even in her brightest hours
There lay a shade of care.
Years changed the raven locks to gray,
Her fair brow grew more pale,
And so she faded from our sight,
And went "within the veil."
And here are scraps of infant robes
A darling brother wore—
The brave, bright boy who died so young;
But I can sing no more—
All brighter memories are dimmed
With tears my eyes have shed,
And that old quilt has filled my heart
With yearnings for the dead.

THE YOUNG AMERICAN.

Scion of a mighty stock!
Hands of iron,—heart of oak,—
Follow with unflinching tread
Where the noble fathers led.

Let thy noble motto be
God,—the Country,—Liberty!
Planted on Religion's rock,
Thou shalt stand in every shock.

HISTORICAL.

From the National Intelligencer.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE Civil History of the War OF 1812.

BY A CONTEMPORARY.

NO. II.—THE MEETING OF CONGRESS AT THE CALLED SESSION OF 1807.

In pursuance of the Proclamation of the President, the two Houses of Congress convened at Washington on the 26th of October, 1807; the Senate, representing then only one-half of the present number of States, assembled in its beautiful chamber in the north wing of the Capitol, and the House of Representatives in its splendid hall in the southern edifice, then for the first time occupied. The venerable GEORGE CLINTON, Vice President, took the chair of the Senate; and JOSEPH B. VARNUM, of the Administration party, was chosen to be Speaker of the House of Representatives on the first balloting by a majority of one vote, the remaining votes of the Republican party, as it was termed, numbering in all thirty-nine, being distributed among various candidates from other States. The Federalists voted for received in all nineteen votes; showing a large preponderance of the friends of the Administration in that body.

The Message of the President was, according to usage, transmitted to the two Houses on the second day of the session. Its principal topic was, of course, the sad event which had led to the convocation of Congress at a somewhat earlier day than its stated time of meeting, and a narrative of which was presented something more particular than that which is given in the first number of this series, but not materially differing from it. The President refrained, with obvious intention, from dilating upon the occurrence as narrated in the message. He accompanied it, however, with the following additional information:

"To former violations of maratine rights another is now added of very extensive effect. The Government of that nation has issued an order interdicting all trade by neutrals between ports not in amity with them. And being now at war with nearly every nation on the Atlantic and Mediterranean seas, our vessels are required to sacrifice their cargoes at the first port they touch or to return home without the benefit of going to any other market. Under this new law of the ocean our trade on the Mediterranean has been swept away by seizures and condemnations and that in other seas is threatened with the same fate."

The only passage in the Message which made any allusion to legislative action in view of the actual state of things is the following:

"Whether a regular army is to be raised, and to what extent, must depend on the information so shortly expected. In the mean time, I have called on the States for quotas of militia, to be in readiness for present defence; and have, moreover, encouraged the acceptance of volunteers, and I am happy to inform you that these have offered themselves with great alacrity in every part of the Union. They are ordered to be organized and ready at a moment's warning to proceed on any service to which they may be called, and every preparation within the Executive powers has been made to ensure us the benefit of early exertions."

This passage, it will be observed, is so oracular and indecisive in its terms that none but the writer himself, could with certainty know in what was to apply it. our relations with the Government of Spain being spoken of in the Message as little less critical than those with Great Britain.

No recommendation of any particular measure was made, nor was *any particular course of policy* to be pursued in regard to Great Britain or any other Power so much as hinted at in the Message.—The reading of it left the members of both Houses at least as much in the dark as to the purposes of the President as they were when they left their homes to repair to Washington. Nor was any other "communication" made to Congress till nearly *two months* afterwards.

Such an arbitrary silence as this would not be quietly submitted to by a Congress of the present day by a Chief Magistrate who had, almost three months before, summoned the two Houses to Washington "to receive such communications as might be made to them, and to consult and determine on such measures as in their wisdom might be deemed meet for the welfare of the United States." For, not without some pride, be it said, if within the last half century some things have changed for the worse within the walls of the Capitol, more independence of Executive influence is now manifested in Congress than in former times. Nor did the President then adventure to unbosom himself to Congress so freely and unreservedly as is done in these latter days.

The influence exerted by Mr. Jefferson in Congress was as much personal as political. Besides the overpowering force of his party in the House of Representatives, there were among the Members, at the time spoken of, several near relatives of the President and of Secretary MADISON (his privy counsellor,) and not a few who had been their associates in former Congresses, through whom the views of the Executive were ascertained in familiar intercourse, and more or less generally diffused.* There were certain individuals among the members, of the House of Representatives especially, so well known to be in the confidence of the President and possessed of his views, that if one of them rose to address the Speaker, were it but incidentally, upon any public question, the hum of the house was at once hushed into silence, lest a word of his brief but grave discourse might be lost; for, in all probability, he had that morning seen, and even talked with, the President!

We have already had occasion to remark that whilst almost the whole country was up in arms for revenging the outrage of the British squadron in our waters, the President had, from the beginning, harbored in his breast no thought of War as necessarily the consequence of the Chesapeake. He resented it, no doubt, as deeply as the body of the People; but he and the Secretary of State were bent upon turning the incident to the advantage of a favorite policy which they had become converts to as far back as the year 1794, had been ruminating upon ever since, and had within the past three years put in practice as against the Government of Great Britain in the form of sundry non-intercourse laws, with but indifferent success. No one who had the reading of the National Intelligencer, then still in the hands of its respected founder, and faithfully reflecting the inmost thoughts of Mr. Jefferson, would fail to have discovered, within the first week after the distressing intelligence from Hampton Roads, that the mind of the President was made up, even at that early day, to avail himself of the occasion to test upon a grand scale the efficacy of his favorite theory of counteracting the edicts of the beligerents against neutral trade by cutting off from them entirely the supplies drawn from the United States. We find, for example, in the journal referred to, as early as the 3d of July, an article, couched in a strain of indignant patriotism invoking the whole People to resent the injury inflicted upon their country, and concluding with the following exhortation:

"Let the whole nation, in one unbroken column, present themselves to the Government, ready, as the good of our country requires, to meet our enemy in the field of combat, to *break up all intercourse with them* or refuse admission to their products, or in any other mode that shall be deemed advisable, make them aware that their injustice shall not be suffered to go by with impunity."

The same journal of the 10th of the same month in an article, the objects of which appeared to be to persuade the merchants, without waiting for the tardy action of the Government, to impose a *voluntary* embargo on their own exports, argued the matter thus:

"But little injury," said the article, "can accrue to the merchant from *a suspension of his export business* for a few months. Were Congress in session, it is extremely probable that their first step would be the *imposition of an embargo.* What *they* would do were they sitting, it is the interest and duty of the merchant to do himself."

A most reasonable proposition, surely!

It is now quite apparent that the delay of the President in "communicating" to Congress the purpose for which he had called them together—this long non-intercourse between the Legislature and the Executive—arose from no intentional disrespect on the part of the President, but from the discovery that the tone of the Representatives fresh from the People was pitched to a higher key than that of the Administration. Delay had therefore become necessary to allow the friends of the President in Congress to take counsel with one another for bringing about the accord required to enable them to carry out the plans of the Executive. Several Members of Congress, moreover, had not yet taken their seats. Mr. Macon, of North Carolina, Mr. Wilson C. Nicholas, of Virginia, Mr. Jacob Crowningsfield, of Massachussetts, and Mr. Joseph Clay, of Pennsylvansa, did not reach the city until the third or fourth week of the session. With them consultation was advisable, if not indispensable, before the Administration could with any degree of confidence present its project to Congress. In this deliberateness and precaution the attentive reader will perceive additional and conclusive evidence of the resolution of the President that the country should not be embarked in *War* during his administration if he could prevent it.

The time at length came for the raising of the curtain. On the 18th of December seven weeks after the day for the meeting of Congress, the following Message was transmitted to that body by the President:

"The communications now made showing the great and increasing dangers with which our vessels, our seamen, and merchandise are threatened on the high seas and elsewhere, from the belligerent Powers of Europe, and it being of the greatest importance to keep in safety these essential resources, I deem it my duty to recommend the subject to the consideration of Congress, who will doubtless perceive all the advantages which may be expected from an inhibition of the departure of our vessels from the ports of the United States.

"Their wisdom will also see the necessity of making every preparation for whatever events may grow out of the present crisis."

[The "communications now made" consisted only of a letter from M Champigny and a copy of an order of the French Emperor subjecting to confiscation all British property or products found on board neutral vessels.]

The above Message was immediately taken into consideration in both Houses, with closed doors, and, after sharp discussion, a bill was finally passed in conformity to its intentions, as interpreted by Members in the confidence of the Executive. The following is the act referred to:

AN ACT laying an embargo on all ships and vessels in the ports and harbors of the United States.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That an embargo be and hereby is laid on all ships and vessels in the ports and places within the limits or jurisdiction of the United States, cleared or not cleared, bound to any foreign port or place, and that no clearance be furnished to any ship or vessel bound to such foreign port or place, except vessels under the immediate direction of the President of the United States; and that the President be authorized to give such instructions to the officers of the revenue and of the navy and revenue cutters of the United States as shall appear best adapted for carrying the same into full effect: *Provided,* That nothing herein contained shall be construed to prevent the departure of any foreign ship or vessel, either in ballast or with the goods, wares, and merchandise on board of such foreign ship or vessel when notified of this act.

SEC. 2. *And be it further resolved,* That during the continuance of this act no registered or sea-letter vessel having on board goods, wares and merchandise shall be allowed to depart from one port of the United States to any other within the same, unless the master, owner, consignee or factor of such vessel shall first give bond, with one or more sureties to the collector of the district from which she is bound to depart in a sum of double the value of the vessel and cargo that the said goods, wares, and merchandise shall be relanded in some port of the United States dangers of the seas excepted, which bond and also a certificate from the collector where the same may be relanded, shall by the collector respectively be transmitted to the Secretary of the Treasury. All armed vessels possessing public commissions from any foreign Power are not to be considered as liable to the embargo laid by this act.

[Approved, Dec. 22, 1807.]

The foregoing act having been in both Houses discussed with closed doors, no trace remains of the debate which took place upon it. Simultaneously, however with the publication of the Embargo act, on the morning after its passage, appeared in the National Intelligencer, in conspicuous type, the subjoined article, the best, and indeed the only reliable, exposition that was ever made of that measure. The act not having become a law until the afternoon of the 22d of December, of course must have been prepared in anticipation of its passage. To ensure to it from the reader all the attention which it deserves, and to secure it a place among the most valuable State Papers of the country, it is sufficient to state that this article was the production of the pen of JAMES MADISON.

EXPOSITION OF THE EMBARGO.

From the National Intelligencer of Dec. 23, 1807.

EMBARGO.—This is a strong measure; proceeding from the energy of the public councils, appealing to the patriotism of their constituents, and is of all measures the one peculiarly adapted to the crisis. The honest judgment of all parties has anticipated and called for it.

The measure could no longer, in fact, be delayed without sacrificing the vital interests of the nation.

Great Britain, by interpolations into the maritime code operating on her enemies through the violated rights of neutrals, furnished an occasion which was seized by the French Government for the decree of November, 1806, interdicting commerce with Great Britain which was adopted by the allies of France, particularly by Spain, in her decree of February, 1307.

The decree of November was followed by the retaliating Brisish order of January, 1807, making war on all neutral trade usually carried on from the ports of one enemy in those of another.

France, again seconded by Spain and other allies, is retaliating on this order, by new constructions, extending their decree to all trade from British territories or in British articles.

And it is clear that, if not already done Great Britain meditates further retaliations, most probably an interdict of all trade by this country (now the only neutral one) with the enemies of Great Britain, that is to say, with the whole commercial world.

To these destructive operations against our commerce is to be added the late proclamation of Great Britain on the subject of seamen. This extraordinary instrument, instead of relinquishing the pretension with respect to alleged deserters on board national ships, extends it to all British seamen on board; varying only the mode of process, from that used by Berkely to a redress to be obtained by the Government itself. And with respect to seamen on board merchant vessels, the proclamation has made it the duty of all her sea-officers to search for and seize all such as they may call British natives, whether wanted or not for the service of their respective ships. From the proportion of American citizens heretofore taken under the name of British seamen, may be calculated the number of victims to be added by this formal sanction to the claim of British officers, and the conversion of that claim into a duty.

Thus the ocean presents a field only where no harvest is to be reaped but that of danger, of spoliation, and of disgrace.

Under such circumstances the best to be done is what has been done—a dignified retirement within ourselves; a watchful preservation of resources; and a demonstration to the world that we possess a virtue and a patriotism which can take any shape that will best suit the occasion.

It is singularly fortunate that an embargo, whilst it guards our essential resources, will have the collateral effect of making it the interest of all nations to change the system which has driven our commerce from the ocean.

Great Britain will feel it in her manufactures in the loss of naval stores, and, above all, in the supplies essential to her colonies, to the number of which she is adding by new conquests.

France will feel it in the loss of all those colonial luxuries which she has hitherto received through our neutral commerce; and her colonies will at once be cut off from the sale of their productions and the source of their supplies.

Spain will feel it more, perhaps, than any, in the failure of imported food, not making enough within herself, and in her populous and important colonies, which depend wholly on us for the supply of their daily wants.

It is a happy consideration also attending this measure, that, although it will have these effects, salutary it may be hoped, on the policy of the great contending nations, it affords neither of them the slightest ground for complaint. The embargo violates the rights of none. Its object is to secure ourselves. It is a measure of precaution, not of aggression. It is resorted to by all nations when their great interests require it. All of them have been made us, on different occasions, feel the effects of such a resort on our commercial interests. And it could be the less murmured at by those who may be incidentally affected dy the present embargo; inasmuch as they have forced us into the measure, by the direct effect on us of measures founded in an alleged regard for their own eventual safety and essential interests.

But may not the embargo bring on War from some of the nations affected by it? Certainly not; if War be not predetermined on against us. Being a measure of peace and precaution; being universal, and therefore impartial; extending in reality as well as ostensibly to all nations, there is not a shadow of pretext to make it a cause of war. War, therefore, let it be repeated, cannot be the result; unless it be in pursuance of a predetermined plan of hostility against this country.

Will it not be an impediment to amicable negotiations with nations with which we have unsettled differences? Not more than any other precaution, not more, certainly, than military preparations, with which depending negotiations are frequently accompanied, and sometimes professed armed. The policy of President Washington sent Mr. Jay nto negotiation with an embargo in his hand. Would the treaty he made have been the worse if the embargo had not been rescinded?

Might not the embargo have been better modified? Might not, particularly, the vessels of the several foreign nations have been allowed to carry on trade from our ports?

The plausibility of such an exception vanishes at once, when tested by its inevitable and admissible consequences;

1. It would have given so decided and exclusive an advantage to one of the belligerent parties that it would have been difficuly to justify it to the others. Great Britain, having the command of the sea and the means of conveyance, would have supplied her wants, whilst her enemies, having neither, would be left destitute.

2. Having the monopoly of our market, her agents would obtain supplies at half their value.

3. The competition to sell to them would have made every purchase a favor, and consequently a source of dreadful influence.

4. Our mariners, thrown out of employment, would have been easily enticed into foreign service, never probably to be regained. Our ships might perhaps be bought up at the same time for half their value, and be lost to the nation.

5. In fine, the exception, thus operating in favor of Great Britain, would have done what, above all things, she would have wished. It would give her a monopoly of the trade of the world; would have secured all her supplies on the best terms, whilst her enemies and rival would go without altogether; and, to crown the whole, it would, without the benefit of more than a very scanty market for our produce, have given her the greatest possible interest in persevering in those regulations, and prolonging that state of things which forms the present afflicting crisis to this country.

The embargo, then, is the best expedient in its best form. It has been recommended by the President, who has the best means of knowing the policy of foreign Governments, and it has been adopted by Congress, who are alone able to provide in such cases for the security of the public rights and interests; adopted almost unanimously by the Senate, and by as large a majority in the House of Representatives as is to be expected in any case where an honest difference of opinion may be added to the habitual opposition of party spirit.

All that remains, then, for a people confiding in their Government, is to rally round the measure which that Government has adopted for their good, and to secure its just effect by patiently and proudly submitting to ever inconvenience which such a measure necessarily carries with it.

*Among the "Writings of Mr. JEFFERSON," purchased and published by authority of Congress a few years ago, is extant a latter addressed by that gentleman to Mr. WILSON CARY NICHOLAS, a distinguished citizen of Virginia and one of the oldest friends of Mr. Jefferson, which illustrates so clearly the tact of the latter in the management of popular bodies, that it is absolutely necessary for our readers to be put in possession of it to enable them to comprehend the nature of the irresistible influence which Mr. Jefferson exercised in the House of Representatives:

WASHINGTON, February 28, 1807.

DEAR SIR: Your letter of January the 2d was received in due time. But such has been the constant pressure of business that it has been out of my power to answer it. Indeed, the subjects of it would be almost beyond the extent of a letter, and as I hope to see you ere long at Monticello, it can then be more effectually done verbally. Let me observe, however, generally, that it is impossible for my friends ever to render me so acceptable a favor as by communicating to me without reserve facts and opinions. I have none of that sort of self-love which winces at it; indeed, both self-love and the desire to do what is best strongly invite unreserved communication. There is one subject, which will not admit a delay till I see you. Mr T. M. Randolph is, I believe, determined to retire from Congress, and it is strongly his wish and that of all here that you should take his place. Never did the calls of patriotism more loudly assail you than at this moment. After excepting the Federalists, who will be twenty-seven, and the little band of tchismatics, who will be three or four, (all tongue,) the residue of the House of Representatives is as well disposed a body of men as I ever saw collected. But there is no one whose talents and standing, taken together have weight enough to give him the lead. The consequence is that there is no one who will undertake to do the public business, and it remains undone. Were you here the whole would rally round you in an instant, and willingly co-operate in whatever is for the public good. Nor would it require you to undertake drudgery in the House. There are enough able and willing to do that. A rallying point is all that is wanting. Let me beseech you, then, to offer yourself. You never will have it so much in your power to render such eminent service.

Accept my affectionate salutation and high esteem.

Mr. Nicholas yielded to the arguments and entreaties of Mr. Jefferson, became a candidate, and succeeded Mr. T. M. Randolph, at this very session, as a member of the House of Representatives.

[*From California Papers.*]

The Coming Poet.

When from my room I chance to stray, to spend an hour at close of day, I ever find the place most dear, where some friend treats to lager beer.—*Sacramento Age.*

Ah! yes, my friend of city life, are such a treat cures such a strife, but better than such dose by tar, are pleasures of a fine cigar.—*Placen Herald.*

Such pleasure may suit baser minds, but with the good no favor finds; we think the purest joy in life, is making love to one's own wife.—*Volcano Ledger.*

Most wise your choice, my worthy friend, in Hymen's joys your cares to end; but we, tho' tired of single life, can boast of our own wife, and so when 'neath our cares we faint, we fly to kiss a gal that *ain't*—yet—*Napa Reporter.*

That "lager bier" will bile provoke, while "fine Havana's" end in smoke,—To court one's wife is better far than lager beer or vile cigar. Kisses, the dew of Love's young morn, break on the lips as soon as born. These all are naught to that greatest joy—the first proud glance at your first-born-boy!—*Evening Ledger.*

'Tis true a boy's a wished for blessing, but then suppose the first's a girl! A dear sweet child with ways carossing, with pouting lips and flaxen curl, with dimpled cheeks and laughing eye to come and bid "papa" good bye! So, whether boy or whether t'other embrace the babe and then the mother!—*San Francisco Globe.*

☞ A long, lean, guant Yankee entered a drug store and asked:

"Be you the drugger?"

"Well I 'spose so, I sell druge!"

"Wall, have you got any of this ere scentin?"

"Oh yes."

"Wall, our Sal's gwine to get married, and she gin me ninepence and told me to invest the bull 'mount in centin stuff, so's to make her stink sweet, if I could find some to suit, so if you've a mind I'll jest smell round."

The Yankee smelt round without being suited until the "drugger" got tired of him, and taking down a bottle of hartshorn said:

"Here's the very stuff. To get the full strength you must take a good smell."

"Wall jest hold on, let's have a real snuff."

The Yankee was knocked down, but on getting up and rolling up his sleeves, said:

"You made me smell that tarnal, everlastin', riproarin' stuff, and neow I'll be darn'd to darnation if I don't jest give you a leetle smell of Varmount fire and brimstone."

BEFORE MARRIAGE.—Fairest of earth! if thou wilt hear my vow, at thy feet I swear to love thee ever. The flame which burns for thee in my bosom shall never be extinguished, if thou wilt resign thy heart to me my sweet Kate! Thou shalt have all this world can bring—thou shalt be my idol, and I will worship thee ever! *When* shall we be one, my dearest?

AFTER MARRIAGE.—Now, Mrs. Wagstaff, once for all, I tell you I will not allow such extravagance. Bills upon bills thrust upon me every day, for bonnets, gloves, frippery and trash! *Tears.* Mrs. Wagstaff, will not gull me now—I will not allow this extravagance—I can't afford it, madam! I thought when I married you, I had a treasure, but I find myself most miserably mistaken.

☞ Swift, reasoning upon the folly of the dread of death, sums up thus:

"It is impossible that anything so natural, so necessary, and so universal as death, should ever have been designed by Providence as an evil to mankind."

A shrewd little fellow who had just begun to read Latin, astounded his maiden instructress, who was fast approaching a certain age, by the following translation. "*Vir*, a man; *gin* a trap; Virgin a man trap!"

"Harry," said a young lady at the theatre, "how I should like to be an actress." "An actress, Henrietta, why?" "Oh! it must be so nice to be made love to in such pretty words *every* evening."

☞ The question asked by a hospital physician was, "How many dentist?"—"Nine." Why, I ordered medicine for ten." "Yes, but one would not take it."