

Conf
Pam
#640

Conf Pam #640

D99105065Z



REMARKS

ON THE

POLICY OF PROHIBITING

THE

EXPORTATION OF COTTON.

BY

ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

CHARLESTON :

STEAM-POWER PRESSES OF EVANS & COGSWELL,

No. 3 Broad and 103 East Bay Street.

1861.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
Duke University Libraries

T. R.

~~338.1~~

~~R384~~

THE COTTON QUESTION.

EXPORT OR NO EXPORT.

No. I.

“Let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee—for we be brethren.”

It oftens happens that disputants are nearer to each other than they seem to be. It is so on the cotton question. One writer insists that not a bale of cotton shall be exported; another says the export ought to be permitted and promoted. They appear to be in absolute opposition to each other, but they are not. They refer to different classes of cases. They look on the object from different points of view, and perhaps have only to change places to agree in opinion. If they will not change places, but continue to occupy their several stand-points, they may dispute forever.

One reasoner, A, would prohibit the export of cotton totally. He has in view a class of cases where vessels shall come from Europe to our ports, in ballast, by collusion with the Lincoln Government, and carry away the cotton crop, for the benefit of the exporters directly, and indirectly for the advantage of the Northern States. The scheme would suit them, but not us. Such an arrangement would give England a greater control over the cotton market than she has now. She now imports for the greater part of Europe; she would then import for the

North also. Instead of New York exporting cotton to Liverpool, Liverpool would export to New York. This mode of supply would not be so advantageous to the North as that heretofore enjoyed, but it would be better than no supply at all. They would willingly adopt it. But such a trade would be an intolerable indignity to the South. It would be an attempt to regulate our commerce, partly by enemies, partly by neutrals, with no reference to our interests or opinions. A says, very justly, let us refuse to submit for a moment to any such one-sided traffic, in the arrangement of which we are treated with scorn or indifference by the contracting parties. Let us withhold every bale of cotton. All sides will agree with him; there will be no dissenting voice.

B, on the other hand, says, permit and encourage the export of cotton. He alludes to another class of cases, where a foreign merchant brings to our ports a cargo of goods at his own risk, in defiance of blockades. He desires to take cotton in return. He wants that and nothing else. Without it, he will go home in ballast. A half voyage—a voyage without a return cargo—will not pay his risks. If cotton be denied to him, his enterprise will be discouraged and crushed. Shall it be denied? B thinks that the merchant, under these circumstances, should have the cotton he desires. If there be not enough in port, a sufficient quantity should be brought from the interior to meet his wants. We should do everything to encourage him. Such a trade will come by no arrangement with Lincoln; it will go on in spite of him. It is not a scheme of foreign Governments; it is the result of private enterprise. It would go farther and faster than anything else, to induce and compel the interposition of foreign States. They would interfere to protect their traders. It would bring about this result without fail and immediately. There is every reason, then, for promoting such an interchange of merchandise, and none against it. It is probable that all parties, A among the rest, would agree readily to this opinion. But if not, why not?

The only reason assigned for refusing absolutely to export cotton is, that by refusing we shall enforce a recognition of the Southern Confederacy by foreign States. But recognition and the export of cotton for foreign goods are two distinct things. They have no necessary connection. It would be a mistake, a political blunder, to confound them. One is a question of courtesy, the other of trade. International law permits the recognition of new States, but does not enjoin it. It is a right but not a duty. If a people, from no unfriendly motive, but consulting their own interests merely, neglect or refuse to recognize a rising State, they afford no adequate cause for complaint. The interchange of ambassadors is a common courtesy among States; but the neglect of one nation to send a minister to another is not a hostile or even an unfriendly act. There may be adequate reasons for delay.

If recognition be a matter of international courtesy, it is not to be coerced. We should neither seek it eagerly, nor attempt to force it. When voluntarily offered, we may freely accept it. We may even address reasons in a proper manner to foreign States, to expedite the proceeding by showing how it would promote their welfare. But to go beyond this, directly or indirectly, by retaliatory measures of another kind, would be consistent with neither right nor self-respect. Certainly, it cannot be the wish of a high-minded people to constrain by forcible means an act of respect from a foreign Power, which it has a right to bestow or refuse, without giving just cause of offence. We should neither compel nor supplicate. Courtesy enforced is worthless. Courtesy petitioned for is equally without value. We seem nevertheless to desire both. We send our incipient ambassadors to Europe, offering civilities before we receive them; and we threaten foreign nations with certain contingencies in the cotton trade if our volunteered courtesy is not properly received.

If we have a product of such potency in commerce as to oblige other nations to come to us and seek it, we may thank Heaven for the advantage and use it for the legiti-

mate purposes of trade. But to convert it into a weapon for compelling foreign States to pursue a certain line of policy not agreeable to them; to threaten certain consequences if they refuse; to say to England: No recognition, no cotton; no cotton and your mills will stop, your operatives will starve, your people will rebel, your Government be in danger of overthrow and your society of anarchy; this would be to use our great commercial advantage in an improper, wrongful, unfriendly and hostile manner. We should not conciliate good will, but provoke enmity.

But while our commissioners abroad administer alteratives or stimulants to European courts, and we at home brandish over the heads of foreign States the scalpel of commercial necessities: while we pursue these different modes of curative treatment with other countries, we are in absolute want of the most important articles of consumption among ourselves. We require supplies of arms, ammunition, clothing, blankets, shoes, medicine and other things for our troops and laborers. We want, in a word, to exchange cotton for foreign goods. It is essential to the people's comfort and convenience, and to the prosperous management of the war. We need the supplies, and must make the barter. It is a question concerning our own absolute wants, and the necessities of our armies and laborers. Goods are brought to our doors on condition that we supply to the importers an adequate return of cotton. Shall we withhold it? Shall we oppose a traffic essential to our well-being, because the Government of the merchant who offers the trade is not yet pleased to say to the world that we are an independent people? We would accept the trade, not with any reference to the advantage of others, but altogether for our own. We need the trade at once; we may take recognition whenever it happens to come.

What is this recognition to which we attach so much importance as to be ready to beg it on the one hand and coerce it on the other? We are already an independent people; no recognition on the right or on the left will

make us more or less so. Recognition would not add a man to our armies or a dollar to our treasury. It will not involve the necessary opening of our ports? If the Confederacy were recognized to-morrow, the question of blockade would remain unchanged. Foreign nations demand now that the blockade shall be efficient; they would do no more if recognition were announced by France and England. The question of recognition has no immediate connection with the opening of the ports, and none with the barter of cotton for goods imported in foreign ships. If it were otherwise—if, as soon as the Confederacy was recognized, our ports would be thrown open as a necessary consequence, there might be some show of reason for holding our cotton in expectation of the event. But since recognition may leave us just where it finds us, why delay? What is there in any recognition of so much consequence as to forbid us at once to buy the goods we want for the cotton which we produce to sell. Recognition, at best, could only give us the trade which the foreign merchant offers without it. Why wait for six months or a year for what we may have at once? The trade may involve a risk, but the risk is not ours.

Trade is ruled by certain general laws. We cannot abrogate or materially change them. If we attempt to place commercial intercourse between States on any unnatural basis at variance with the great principles by which it is governed, we shall fail in the attempt. Cotton is no exception to the rule that applies to all products alike. It is a great interest, but it must obey the laws that regulate commercial exchanges. Any forcible interference with the broad, natural stream of trade is a delicate and dangerous operation, at all times, with any people, for any purpose. The prospects of cotton loans and total non-exportation under all circumstances are empirical schemes of doubtful issue, and yet more doubtful principle. They savor of stock-jobbing expedients and the devices of small attorneys accustomed to the tricks and subterfuges of special pleading, rather than the broad, comprehensive views

of a vigorous and practical statesmanship. It would be better, I believe, if our Government at Richmond would sweep away their projects and expedients, and adopt in their stead a wide, liberal, intelligible, commercial policy. Let us throw open our ports to the commerce of the world, without duties, limitation or restriction of any kind for one full year, with promises of future commercial treaties to all friendly States who shall engage heartily in the trade. Let us try the virtues of free trade, of which we have been so long talking—for which we severed the Union, but on which we have resolutely turned our backs heretofore in our new Confederacy. We clamored for it until we could command it, and then forgot all about it. Away with the speculations of experiment mongers, and give us the measures of men and statesmen. Give us free trade, and we care not a sixpence for the formal bow of recognition from foreign nations. They may make it at their leisure. It may be an important thing for gentlemen expecting foreign appointments; it is worth little else. But if never so valuable, and I desired it never so much, I would seek it in the mode suggested, as the readiest and most certain way to obtain it.

There is no reason, then, against the exchange in our ports of cotton for foreign goods. Our great object is to open our ports to general trade. The barter proposed would serve the purpose to a certain extent. It would tend to bring about the recognition which is considered so important. Above all, we want supplies of merchandise, and must have them. To obtain them, we must furnish an adequate quantity of cotton. To this mode, therefore, of exporting cotton, there can be no sufficient objection.

No. II.

I have endeavored, in a former number, to show that the foreign merchant, importing a cargo of merchandise into a Southern port, should be allowed to export a cargo of cot-

ton in return—that such a traffic should be encouraged as beneficial and necessary. But if the foreign trader is permitted to bring us goods and take away cotton, shall we debar the enterprising merchant at home from the same privilege? Shall we refuse to our citizens what we concede to strangers? If the home merchant is adventurous enough to bring us goods from France or England, shall we hamper and embarrass his enterprise? Shall we not rather applaud and assist it? There can be but one answer to the question. We must rejoice at his success and endeavor to promote it. To do otherwise would be unjust to him and impolitic for the country. In the American Revolution the enterprise of the merchant sustained the Republic. We hailed the arrival of the *Bermuda*, lately, with exultation. It was a triumph, a victory over the enemy. Shall we cripple her enterprise by refusing a cargo of cotton?

There is yet another class of cases in the export of cotton, a class in which no goods are brought to our ports; but the foreign merchant comes with coin instead of merchandise. For many years a trade of growing importance has been carried on by Spanish vessels in Southern ports. These vessels take cargoes of goods from Barcelona to Cuba, sell their cargoes and proceed to New Orleans, Savannah or Charleston, with the amount of their sales in doubloons, to purchase cotton for their manufacturers at home. They would prefer to bring us the sugar, coffee and molasses of Cuba, but they have been prevented by *our* laws. They bring their gold, therefore. Shall we refuse it? Shall we withhold the cotton for which alone they come, and for which their doubloons are brought? It may be said, they will soon export for other parties. They will export the whole cotton crop. Suppose they do. They will only convince us that, place the cotton export in any position we please, the power of cotton will be very much the same. We need not wrangle about this or that arrangement, the result, in every case, will be nearly equal. Suppose that the Spanish trade of coin for cotton should

grow to the magnitude suggested, and that it carried away our cotton for all Europe. The Spaniard must then bring us the coin of all Europe. He must gather it from all nations and send it to our ports. We should monopolize the specie of the world. The movement of coin would be like the tracks of cattle at the cave's mouth of Virgil's robber—all coming in and none going out. It would disturb the commercial balances of all nations. We should be masters of their fortunes. The only remedy for the evil on their part would be to bring their goods to our ports to regain a portion of their coin. The operation would be a little more circuitous, but the end would be the same. It would ensure open ports quite as certainly as any other mode of proceeding, and that, too, with no shadow of attempt by the Confederate States to establish what might be deemed a coercive policy by other nations.

It should be our care to avoid such a policy for many reasons. Among others, because it is problematical, after all, whether we can coerce foreign nations into particular measures by keeping our cotton in our barns. It may be so, but who can say that it must or will be so? There is no man, Secretary or President, whose departure from his place would leave a moment's gap in the world's existence. I doubt if there be an interest that may not be stricken from the catalogue of human pursuits with equal, or nearly equal indifference to the future. American cotton is a great object in the world's eye, and the phrase "Cotton is King," has been repeated so often that we attach to it the power imputed of old to an incantation, and indulge in vague, and, perhaps, extravagant notions of its efficacy. Yet, a hundred years ago, the world was prosperous and happy without American cotton, and it is possible that it may be prosperous and happy without it a hundred years hence. Whatever the cotton power may be, it needs, like every other human advantage, to be temperately and discreetly managed. Let us indulge in no rash or unnecessary experiments on its strength. Let us provoke no needless hostility by using it to settle *questions that must be*

decided by the usages solely of international law. We should rather husband its energies carefully, and not expose it to forced competitions without necessity. Let us not forget that if cotton is king over the world, it is equally king over ourselves, and governs our fortunes as well as the fortunes of the rest of mankind. It rules abroad by one necessity, and at home by another. If in other countries they are compelled to buy it, in our own we are equally obliged to sell it. Who would cultivate cotton to lock it up only in his warehouse?

It has been objected to the export of cotton in any way; that, if exported at all, it would find its way to the enemy's ports. But it is impossible to provide against every contingency and possibility of trade. You cannot stop all the currents and eddies of commerce, any more than you can arrest the flow and dam up the outlets of the great Western river. An army of coast police and all the dexterity of custom house detectives, could not prevent smuggling between France and England. It is not to be supposed for a moment that the whole commercial policy of the South is to be settled or modified by so small an event as the possible arrival of a lot of cotton, by a circuitous route, in Boston or New York. That would be to repeat the extravagance of the Witch in Æsop, who stopped by her spells the sun and moon in their courses to protect her little dog from a threatened danger. The possible damage is too small for consideration. Are we to arrest the great flood of commercial enterprise for so trivial a possibility?

To guard against the danger of cotton finding its way to the enemy, and to provide exchanges of trade for foreign goods, it has been suggested to export rice, sugar, tobacco, naval stores, without restriction, while we keep our cotton at home. Any such discriminating policy in the export of our agricultural productions would be ruinous and absolutely inadmissible, as I will hereafter show. If the possible arrival of a parcel of cotton in the enemy's ports is a sufficient reason for shutting it up in our barns, the reason will apply with equal force to all other productions. Can

any man believe that rice, sugar, tobacco, naval stores, will fail to find their way to the Northern States, if suffered to be freely exported? Are we not already informed that naval stores sent to Nova Scotia from North Carolina, are regularly transshipped from Halifax to New York. They are quite as indispensable to the shipping interest, as cotton is to the manufacturer. Every Southern product will find its way to Northern ports as certainly as cotton. If to avoid this contingency we refuse to export cotton, we must equally refuse to export everything else. We must take up the Japanese system of no trade whatever, just when the people of Japan have become wise enough to lay it aside.

It has been urged that the question of non-exportation of cotton is already settled by general consent, and should not, therefore, be re-opened. The circulars of factors are appealed to as evidence of the fact. I deny the whole statement. The circulars can have no such meaning if confined to their legitimate purpose. If they had, they would prove nothing. The true object of the circulars was to advise planters to refrain from sending their cotton to the sea-ports as they have been accustomed to do. If it were sent as usual, large stocks would accumulate in comparatively exposed places, and invite assault and plunder from the enemy. On this point the factor could properly speak. It concerns him personally. The accumulated stocks would be under his care and keeping. In this matter he was a fitting adviser of the planter. But he is not the planter's guide in political affairs. On the broad question of non-exportation for reasons of State, the factors would as little think of issuing circulars of advice as they would on the comparative merits of two candidates for the Presidency. I acquit them of any such purpose or desire. But if it were otherwise, and all the factors in the country intended to offer their advice where it would have been out of place, their circulars would go a very little way to prove that the great cotton-growing community were ready to be advised. They may, to a man, be of an opposite

opinion, and willing to exchange their cotton for specie or goods, the circulars to the contrary notwithstanding. What do the planters and the Government mean by the Cotton Loan? Does not the Loan contemplate a sale? A sale implies a purchaser. Who are to be the purchasers? Is the Government to buy—and thus become a huge cotton broker in defiance of all the maxims of political economy hitherto received among nations—or did the planters, in lending their cotton, count upon a sale of it to foreign nations? Without this as a component part of the scheme, the whole plan would be impracticable.

No. III.

I have treated the question of non-exportation of cotton as a voluntary arrangement on the part of the people. In this view of the subject, there is no reason to believe that the cotton planters would be opposed to an exchange of cotton for goods brought to our ports in foreign ships. There is as little cause for concluding that they would refuse to sell their crops for specie, introduced in the same way. If the reverse be true, and total non-exportation is to be the established policy of the South, the policy must not be partial; it must include all our productions. To suppose that the cotton planter will consent to keep his produce in his barn, while everything else is freely exported, is to suppose him a simpleton. Why should he keep it? Cotton is the most eligible article of export. It will be sought for most generally. It is not a jot more certain to find its way into the enemy's ports than naval stores, rice, sugar or tobacco. If the cotton crop is to be retained, to enforce recognition by foreign States, why not retain every other production for the same purpose? Other products are as necessary as cotton to the world's well-being, or nearly so. The fleets of the enemy are at this moment fitted out with the naval stores procured from North Carolina. Everything or nothing should be the principle of

the voluntary system of non-exportation. If attempted in any other form it must fail. It would be an injustice and wrong. If the cotton planter submits to a discrimination of any kind against his own great staple, it would be fatuity, not patriotism. He would deserve a cap and bells, not the civic crown of public virtue.

But the question of export and discrimination presents another view of the subject—a view involving a thousand evils and dangers to the whole country. It has been suggested that the arrangement shall be no longer voluntary; that an embargo shall be imposed on cotton exclusively, by the Confederate Government. The proposition has been discussed at Richmond already. It may be resumed in a few days. Against any such measure, against any such one-sided exertion of unauthorized power, I protest with all the strength and earnestness of a thorough conviction of its disastrous consequences. I protest against it as a policy unjust and dangerous, offensive to neutrals abroad, partial and ruinous at home. Suppose it to be once established, will it not scatter the seeds of discontent and dissension inevitably among the various agricultural interests of the Southern States? To think otherwise would betray a disregard or forgetfulness of the strongest traits of our common nature. Reflect, for a moment, how the scheme would operate; how it must operate among men jealous of their rights and interests. The producers of rice, sugar, tobacco, naval stores, will sell their productions at good prices, at prices advanced for the very reasons that these products, in the absence of cotton, will be the only articles of exchange for foreign goods. They will have a command of money. The cotton grower will have none. In the depressed state of the market for lands, negroes, houses, the producers alone of exported articles will be able to buy. They will buy at reduced prices. The cotton planter can purchase nothing. He must dispose of something to pay his taxes and defray his current expenses. He may be obliged to sell to his more fortunate neighbor houses, farm, negroes. The makers of rice,

sugar, tobacco, naval stores, may buy the cotton of the cotton planter for a small amount comparatively, and keep it in their warehouses for a rise in prices. They may purchase the cotton-negro for half his value, the cotton-farm for a great deal less. This would be the necessary result of the policy proposed. It would be idle to say that to reason in this manner is to sow dissension among different interests. It is the proposed embargo that will sow dissension. We cannot escape the evil consequences of a bad measure by shutting our eyes to them, if we shut our eyes never so closely. It is certain that an embargo on cotton exclusively cannot be tolerated by the cotton planter. It is quite as certain that no planter whatever, of any kind, would advocate a one-sided measure to the prejudice of his neighbors, such as this would be.

But suppose an impossibility—suppose that all parties were agreed to adopt an embargo on cotton, where would the Confederate Government get the right to impose it? The mere assent of the people, even if unanimously given, can't impart it. The Constitution must confer it, or it is not within the powers of the Government. It is proposed to lay an embargo on the great product of the South, *in order to enforce a recognition of the Confederacy by foreign States*. Point out the article in our Southern Constitution that gives any such power, for any such purpose. There is none. It would be usurpation as gross as any perpetrated by Lincoln's Government. It would assume over the property of the citizen what the suspension of *habeas corpus* asserts over his person—a power not authorized by the Constitution, limited by the discretion only of the Government, directed to the same pretended object, the necessities of the State and the public benefit. Are we preparing to imitate the proceedings and endorse the despotic maxims of the Government at Washington—to sail with them under the roving colors of State expediency, for the robbery of civil and political rights? Under what color of right is this to be done?

The Government at Washington has been accustomed to

claim the power to do what it pleased under the plea of advancing "the general welfare." They picked out a phrase from the preamble of the Constitution and made it cover more ground than the whole Constitution besides. Its articles and sections give certain specified powers, but the words which empower the Government "to promote the general welfare," bestows all power whatever. To promote the general welfare is to do everything that the discretion of the Government may judge to be fit and proper. Under this phrase, it gave away the public lands, dug canals, made roads, distributed bounties to fishermen directly, and indirectly to cotton spinners, diggers of coal, makers of salt, publishers of books, forgers of iron, to everybody, in short, of the Northern States who had influence enough to command a dozen votes at a party election. Under the power to make war, it made roads. It passed laws of embargo and non-intercourse, and destroyed all commerce, under the pretence of regulating commercial intercourse with foreign nations. But, with a deep conviction of the abuses perpetrated under this doctrine and practice, the Southern Confederacy has excluded the phrase altogether. It has been solemnly condemned as the parent of lies, and thrust out from the new Constitution disgraced and branded. On what new peg are our politicians designing to hang their vague, loose glosses and interpretations, in reference to their delegated powers? We ask in vain. We are not permitted to know. Our sessions of Congress are all secret. The concealment which may have been expedient in the early part only of their proceedings, seems to have grown into a settled system. The people are shut out from all knowledge of the sayings and doings of their representatives. The continuation of this secret session system is becoming an abuse, and deserves the denunciation of the people. It destroys all responsibility. The members of Congress may be as trustworthy as any one, but no one is to be trusted in perpetual secret session. I would as readily confide in a Venetian Council of ten, or an English Star Chamber, or a Spanish Inquisition, as in a

Congress setting under the safe concealment of lock and key. Until this system of secrecy is abandoned, we shall not be able to understand on what new pretext our representatives may claim the power to do what the Constitution confers no right of doing. Their old plea has been taken away. The people have refused to impose on their agents the burthen of promoting the "general welfare" at their discretion. What device will our politicians next contrive as a substitute for a false pretence so convenient to the Lincoln Government; so prolific of all sorts of villainous abuses, and so thoroughly condemned and repudiated by the Southern Convention?

No. IV.

I have said, in my last number, that the pretence set up by the old Government of doing what it pleased to promote "the general welfare" has been condemned, in the new, as a fountain of shams and falsehoods; a stalking horse for every selfish schemer who may be hunting his own petty interests at the public expense. I have asked what fresh contrivance for assuming powers not delegated by the people is to be put together in the secret sessions of the Confederate Congress. If our representatives lay an embargo on cotton, they will inform us at their leisure on what article of the Constitution they rely for thus interfering with the industrial pursuits of their constituents. In the meantime, I venture the conjecture that we shall be told they are consulting and deciding with the purest intentions for the public good, the benefit of the country, the necessities of the State. There is no mistaking the road of those who are seeking to enlarge the powers of Government. We may trace them as the hound tracks the deer. Every usurpation ever attempted in ancient or modern times has been for the public good, for the State's advancement or security. Only give the politician this footing to stand upon, and he will move the political world

at his pleasure. But what is this public good or State necessity but the old evil, the exorcised fiend, returning in another form? What is it but the "general welfare" in a new dress? I deny that the good of the country requires, or is consistent with, a departure from the fundamental maxims of civil and political liberty. These maxims with us are a rigidly strict construction of delegated power and the constant responsibility of the public servant. There can be no responsibility in secret sessions. The proceedings of Congress must be open to the public eye. There is no other guarantee for the honesty of the representative. If he seeks to evade it, he should be marked for distrust. Without open sessions, the representative will become a subservient tool to the dispenser of official loaves and fishes. Without strict construction, the Constitution, like that of the United States, will be a worthless piece of waste paper, the sport of politicians and lawyers, who will infer any power they wish from any article in the instrument.

It seems to be the fate of the great cotton interest of the country to be forever the sport of Government, used and perverted by adverse interests and political parties. The prominent evil of the South has been heretofore, for years past, this unauthorized intermeddling of Government with her great commercial staple. What was the whole tariff system of the United States, but an indirect and unjustifiable interposition of Congressional legislation between the cotton-grower and his customers? The legitimate current of trade was forced aside by law to enable New England to establish her cotton manufactures. It was all for the public good before as it is at present. It is now, to coerce a recognition of the country's independence by foreign nations; it was then, to coerce our independence of foreign nations, financially, by a system of domestic manufactures. The regular trade of the cotton-grower was embarrassed and injured for this purpose. A drain on the prosperity of the South succeeded. Southern progress was retarded. We were fast becoming mere appendages

of the Northern States. Yet they impeded only the course of the cotton trade abroad; our Government embargo would stop it altogether. The Northern manufacturers may have desired to do the same thing, but they were not bold or strong enough to attempt the experiment. It may remain for the Southern Confederacy to say to the cotton planter, you shall not sell your produce at all. Every other farmer may export his crop, but yours must remain in your barns. We have no power delegated to us by the Constitution to order this, it is true, but there are important reasons of State for it, and abundant passages in the Constitution from which we can infer it. The Government of the United States construed the power to make roads out of the war-making power, and the right to arrest all commercial intercourse with the world and establish monopolies at home, from the right to regulate trade. Can we follow a more illustrious example?

But if the politician is allowed to meddle with the cotton crop for one political reason, how long will it be before another and another arises? If the Confederate Government uses cotton for enforcing recognition, why not for enforcing the removal of the blockade? Why not for obtaining aid of men, money, arms and ammunition? We seem to think it can do anything. If this war is to be fought with cotton, why not other wars? What is to be the future position of the cotton planter? Is his crop to be a sort of public property, and he an operative for the general benefit? Is he to be the perpetual sport of politicians and parties? The whole scheme is at variance with the rights of the citizen and the plainest principles of political economy. It belongs to times and States when laws were passed to prohibit the export of wool and of money; when commerce was encouraged by tying its hands and feet. This policy has been long since abandoned by enlightened nations. Let us not resume it. Let us have no discriminations, either of exports or taxes. The Government has no power to make them, and if it had it could never exercise the power without injustice and general disaster.

I have endeavored to establish these propositions :

Firstly. The export of cotton by collusion between the enemy and neutrals, by vessels arriving in ballast, or in any way, should be universally denounced and opposed.

Secondly. The importation of foreign goods brought to our ports by foreign vessels, deserves all the encouragement we can give it by return cargoes of the produce they require.

Thirdly. The similar import of goods by our own merchants should be sustained by a similar supply of cotton, and at least equal approbation.

Fourthly. Foreign vessels, bringing specie for cotton, like the Spanish vessels from Cuba, should be also furnished with cargoes.

Fifthly. Discriminations in the non-exportation policy are of dangerous tendency. It should embrace all products alike.

Sixthly. If any such policy be established, it must be voluntary. The Confederate Government has no constitutional power to intermeddle by laying embargoes for political purposes. It would be a usurpation of power, and produce discord and dissension.

I need not say, and say it for greater caution only, that the question of supplying return cargoes of cotton to vessels bringing goods or specie, is not to be confounded with the question of sending the crop, as usual, to our seaports. It may be kept in Columbia, Augusta, or on the plantations, and be quite accessible enough for all commercial purposes. Let it be brought to the coast only when required by the immediate calls of trade.

I have tried to treat the subject temperately. It is an occasion that requires mutual forbearance. We all seek truth, and truth only. I will engage in no controversy, but content myself with thus stating, without urging, my opinions.

Dermalife®
pH 8.5