

## TO THE PEOPLE OF GEORGIA.

**FELLOW CITIZENS**—The undersigned have been appointed a Committee, by the Convention which has just temporarily closed its sittings, "to prepare an address to the People of Georgia, illustrating the objects and proceedings of that body."

In the discharge of this duty, we desire respectfully, but earnestly to commune with you, on questions of deep and solemn import, intimately connected with the peace and prosperity of our common country, and necessarily therefore, interesting to every citizen of Georgia. The crisis at which we have arrived is one of awakening interest. No man can be insensible to the dangers which beset us.—No patriot can be indifferent to the consequences which may flow from them. A portion of the people of this great confederated republic, respectable for their numbers, and principles of civil liberty, complain of the systematic and persevering oppression to which they are subjected by their brethren. A system of taxation has been adopted by the Federal Government with the distinctly avowed object of protecting domestic manufactures. Its character may be thus briefly described: It lavishes bounties upon one class of our people, which are extorted from another, and a different portion of the same people. It denies to the American citizen the right of regulating his own industry according to the dictates of his own judgment, a right which is equally essential to individual and national prosperity. It forbids to the planter of the South the right of selecting his own market, and makes him tributary to the manufacturer of the North for the necessaries of life. It does this by an usurpation of the power to create and uphold domestic manufactures within the States, a power which is not conferred upon the Federal Government by the Constitution, but which was expressly refused by the Convention of States, which framed it, and by the gross and palpable perversion of the constitutional power to lay and collect duties for the legitimate purposes of the Government. Against this systematic and continued oppression, the people of Georgia have for a series of years remonstrated, as well in primary assemblies of our citizens, as through the medium of the constituted authorities of the State. **THESE REMONSTRANCES HAVE BEEN DISREGARDED.** The solemn protest of the Legislature of Georgia, deposited in the archives of the Senate of the United States, in perpetual testimony of the determination of this people not to submit to these oppressions, was almost unheeded in the moment of its presentation, and utterly forgotten or disregarded in that which followed it.

In this alarming condition of our affairs, a great majority of our citizens assembled in their respective counties, had resolved to meet in general convention for the purpose of considering the evils under which we labor, and of devising the most proper and efficient mode of redress. Delegates from sixty counties accordingly assembled at this place on Monday the 12th November instant, and having exhibited their credentials, proceeded to enter upon the duty assigned to them: At an advanced period of the session, after having participated in its organization, and shared in all its preceding deliberations, a portion of the delegates, some of whom had been appointed to, and had served on the general committee which was raised to consider what objects ought to engage the attention of the Convention, and what would be the most proper means to effect the same, who had shared in the labors of that committee, and had expressed their assent in substance and with some ver-

bal alterations, to the principles contained in the report which was subsequently adopted by the Convention, thought proper to return from their seats, and to present their reasons in the form of a protest, which they have given to the public. Thirty-seven counties, containing as it is believed a majority of the Representative population of Georgia, continued to be represented in Convention after this secession. The Delegates who remained, not deterred by that secession from the discharge of the duty which they owed to their constituents, proceeded to consider the report of their committee, and have concurred with great unanimity in recommending to the consideration of the people of Georgia, the resolutions which appear in the Journal.

We propose to speak briefly of the character of those resolutions, and to suggest to you some of the consequences which may result from their adoption. They announce certain principles which are believed to be at the foundation of our Government, flowing naturally and necessarily from the relation of the States, and the confederacy—from the limited grant of power to the General Government, and the broad reservation of rights of the states. Proceeding to apply these principles to the several acts of congress laying duties on imports, they declare those acts to be unconstitutional, unequal and unjust—and conclude by suggesting the means by which the evils under which we labor may most probably be relieved.—The duty prescribed by the Convention to this committee, will therefore have been performed, when we shall consider very briefly—

First. The PRINCIPLES announced by the resolutions.

Secondly. The EVILS OF WHICH WE COMPLAIN.

Thirdly. The remedy suggested, and the probable consequences which will result from its adoption. Of these PRINCIPLES it may with great truth be said, that up to the present moment, it has not been doubted that they express on the subject to which they relate, the political creed of an overwhelming majority of the people of Georgia. They have been repeatedly declared by every department of our Government, Legislative, Executive and Judiciary, and now when for purposes which remain to be discovered, it has been deemed proper to resist the proposal to submit them to you, for your deliberate consideration, the chief, nay, the only objection to them in substance is, that they have been too repeatedly announced already, to render the repetition of them either necessary or proper. The answer to the objection is simple, and it is believed to be entirely satisfactory. That which is true in itself, is not the less so, because it has been told before. If the occasion for uttering it be a proper one, it is not weakened by having received the assent of those who have gone before us. But there is a peculiar propriety in declaring those principles now, and in the manner which is proposed. We have arrived at a crisis in our public affairs, in which it becomes necessary to look carefully to the fundamental principles of our Government. We allege that these have been violated by Federal legislation. The principles put forth in the resolutions, relate to this state of things. They profess to speak the will of the people on the subjects to which they refer. Who can so properly decide that question as the people themselves? If the different departments of our state government have mistaken the popular will in this regard, it is peculiarly proper that the error should be corrected, and that it should be corrected now. On the other hand, if they have rightly understood it, the solemn ratification of these principles by the people, will nerve the arm of their functionaries in their efforts to obtain relief from the grievances under which we labor. Thereafter we can no longer be represented to our Northern Brethren as a divided people.

But what are those principles, which although they are admitted to be true, it is considered unsafe, or improper to announce?—They may be briefly stated thus:—The people of the State of Georgia, as one of the States of this confederacy, have conferred upon the General Government certain defined powers, AND NO OTHERS. If that Government abuses the trust reposed in it; by exercising powers which have not been granted, or by perverting those which have been granted to purposes which are not authorised by the Constitution, their acts ought not to be binding upon the several States. The Federal Government cannot have the right to decide upon their own use or abuse of the powers conferred, because that would be to destroy the constitutional limitation altogether, and would leave us entirely at the discretion of Congress. There is no arbiter provided by the Constitution of the U. States to judge of this matter, and because there is not, each state in virtue of its sovereignty, must necessarily exercise this right. In what manner it shall be exercised these resolutions do not declare, leaving that question to be examined first by the Convention of the Southern States, whose opinion will be communicated to the Convention of this State, and by whom it will be ultimately referred to the final decision of the people of Georgia themselves. May we not confidently enquire, if any possible danger can be apprehended from this source?

THE EVILS OF WHICH WE COMPLAIN, are those which result from the several acts of Congress imposing duties on imports.—

You yourselves are aware, that these are not the only grounds of complaint which the people of Georgia may properly urge against the General Government. Our present enquiries are however limited to them.

By the provisions of the tariff act of 1832, a principle of taxation is affirmed, which imposes burdens on articles of necessary consumption, while those of luxury, and those materials used in manufacturing, such as dye-stuffs, &c. are with a few unimportant exceptions, declared to be free of duty. The effect of this unwarrantable discrimination is to exempt UNPROTECTED articles entirely from taxation, and to throw all the burden upon the PROTECTED articles, such as iron, salt, sugar, woollen and cotton fabrics. &c. These are articles of necessary consumption at the South, the duties imposed upon which, in many instances amount to an entire prohibition.

The spirit which characterized the majority in Congress in the adoption of this odious act, cannot perhaps be better illustrated than the rejection by the majority in the Senate of all propositions tending to the reduction of the duties, to the wants of the government—or limiting those imposed to a certain definite amount. A distinguished Senator from the South, during the discussion of the act of 1832, in the Senate, submitted to that body four distinct propositions. The first was an amendment to Mr. Clay's resolution, by which amendment it was proposed "to bring down the duties gradually to the revenue standard, adjusting them on the protected and unprotected articles, on principles of perfect equality."— This proposition, fair and equitable in its terms, in every respect reasonable in its operation, was treated by the majority, "as a scheme to destroy manufactures, and as pledging Congress to an ultimate abandonment of the protecting system, which it was declared had become the settled policy of the country." Immediate reduction was termed, "sudden destruction to the manufactures;" gradual reduction was called "slow poison." The proposition was rejected.

To the clause in the bill imposing a duty of 16 cents a yard upon flannels, the same distinguished Senator, proposed to add a proviso, "that the duty shall in no case exceed FIFTY PER CENT." The duty of 16 cents a yard on coarse flannels used by the poor, would be equal to 160 per cent. while on the finest of that article it would amount only to 32 per cent! yet this proviso was rejected. The reason alleged for this rejection was that "50 per cent. would not be an adequate protection to the Domestic manufacturer of flannels.— Another proposition was made "to strike out the minimums on cottons." This was also rejected; and this "fraudulent device" was retained in the act, by which an article costing 5 cents, is to be deemed to have cost 30 cents, and to pay a duty as having actually cost 30 cts. This was done too, in the face of a distinct admission of the friends of the manufacturers of coarse cottons, that they did not at present require protection. But the majority in the plenitude of their power, thought it would be wise "to keep the fences up by which foreign competition would be excluded." The fourth and last proposition made by the southern senator, was that a clause should be added at the end of the act, declaring "THAT THE DUTIES IMPOSED BY IT, SHOULD IN NO CASE EXCEED 100 PER CENT," yet this proposition shared the same fate of all the previous ones—IT WAS REJECTED. Yes, a majority in the Senate secure of their power, calculating on the deceptive features of the act, and relying upon a want of unanimity among the Southern people, for the final triumph of the protective system, rejected a proviso, which would have limited the maximum of duties to 100 per cent. People of Georgia! the rejection of these propositions speak a language not to be mistaken, the direct tendency of which is to enslave you—to render you tributary to the North. This conduct of the majority evinces but too clearly a determination to maintain the protective principle inviolate, regardless of the cost, and reckless of the consequences.

The character of the act of 1832, is distinctly marked. Its diminished credits, its requisition of cash payments, its increase of the value of the pound sterling, its discriminating duties will show, that the burdens imposed upon you are decidedly increased, yet you are told that this act is a concession—"an effort to moderate the burdens of the South," that like the troubled dove it comes with the olive branch, to give you future security. The treacherous kiss of Judas is not more deceptive—A CONCESSION, with the odious principle of protection retained as the permanent policy of the government!—No—it is no concession; its object is rather to lull you into a false security. The arm is still raised to crush your liberties, the blow is only suspended for a season, until the present excitement is hushed into careless indifference, then it will fall with such concentrated, such accumulated power, that you will feel all its force; but the oppressor will then be secure from resistance.

Whoever has marked the course of congress upon this subject, cannot have failed to perceive, that all hope from that source for relief from the operation of this odious, oppressive, and unconstitutional act, is at an end; and the question now to be propounded to the freemen of Georgia is, will you submit to be plundered by unconstitutional exactions; or will you resist the unlawful exercise of undelega-

ted power? In the solution of this question, let it be remembered, that a people, united in any given purpose, seldom experience defeat, while diversity in sentiment or division in action, as seldom meet with success.

But it is not only of the unequal and oppressive operation of the protective system upon our pecuniary interests, by force of which we are compelled to pay taxes which are not required for the purposes of revenue, and to contribute from our own hard and scanty earnings a bounty to the manufactures of the north—it is not merely the amount of dollars and cents which it extorts from us, of which we complain. It is that the power which is here exercised, rests upon a principle which may be used to the utter annihilation of all our rights. That principle may be, and in some instances has been pushed to the extent of prohibition. It assumes the right then utterly to annihilate the foreign commerce of the United States, and thus to leave us unreservedly at the mercy of the northern manufacturer. It assumes the right to raise a revenue not limited by the legitimate wants of the government, but one which may minister to its patronage, by being employed in schemes of internal improvement, in which we can never beneficially participate. Finally, it claims the startling prerogative of doing whatever in the discretion of Congress may conduce to the common defence and general welfare. This is the principle on which the protective system is rested by the report of the committee of manufactures of the Senate at the last session of Congress. If it can be maintained, all the limitations of the federal constitution are scattered to the winds, all its safeguards destroyed, all its defences broken down. Our rights, of whatever description, will thereafter be held not under the protection of our own laws, but at the discretion of the national legislature. One species of our property which is rendered indispensable to us by our climate, our habits, and even by the nature of our compact with the other states, will be rendered insecure, if the fanaticism of the abolitionist shall receive the countenance of Congress.

Such are some of the evils of the system of which we complain. It remains to state, very briefly, **THE REMEDY SUGGESTED AND SOME OF THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH WILL PROBABLY RESULT FROM ITS ADOPTION.** It is proposed if these resolutions shall meet your sanction, to take counsel with such of our sister States, as have a common interest in this matter, leaving to the delegates who may be elected to settle, by correspondence among themselves, the time and place of their assemblage. It was believed to be desirable to have a full meeting of all the Southern States in the proposed Convention, and that with this view it was important not to fix the time of convening. You will see that this course is free from the objection which was urged against it: namely, that of precipitancy. The Convention supposed that this meeting of delegates from the Southern States might take place in June next, and to be in readiness to receive the report of the delegates from this State, if that should be the case, have adjourned to meet in July next—but should the Southern Convention not have convened at that time, our own can be re-assembled either by the same or any other delegates to be elected by the people at such time as may be necessary. Great pains have been taken to disseminate the idea, that the other States will not meet us in Convention, with the exception of South Carolina, and that the effect of this measure will be to wed our fortunes to those of our Sister States, and to put these two States alone in opposition to all the others. The answer to this suggestion is obvious, and we commend it to your attention—**SUCH A RESULT CANNOT HAPPEN WITHOUT YOUR OWN CONSENT.** Whatever is done in the Convention of States, is first to be submitted to the Convention of this State, **AND THEN TO YOURSELVES** for your approval or rejection. While it is not possible therefore that any evil can result from this measure, you yourselves retain a check upon the whole procedure, much benefit may and probably will flow from it. It is not to be believed that our sister States, who have a like interest in this matter with ourselves, will refuse to meet us in Convention, and the moral force of their united counsels cannot but be salutary. It is impossible to suppose that rashness can characterize the deliberations of a Convention of the whole Southern States—and he must, we think, very much underrate the moral force of their united counsels, who can believe that a deliberate and solemn appeal from them to our brethren of the manufacturing States, can be made in vain—meantime an opportunity will be offered calm and deliberate reflection. The questions which now agitate us, will have passed from the hands of politicians to those of the people. The crisis will have gone by—our northern brethren may awaken to a sense of the dangers which will result from a perseverance in the system of which we complain. We shall not have laboured in vain for the preservation of the peace and harmony of the Union, and with the full fruition of those rights of which we have been deprived, we shall enjoy the added gratification of having successfully vindicated our constitutional charter.

Such, fellow citizens, have been the views of the Convention, by whom we have been deputed to address you on this occasion. We believe that the times in which we live are pregnant with dangers, which menace the Un-

ion. We earnestly desire to preserve it in its original purity. We still look to it as the ark of our safety, and will not yet "despair of the Republic." These expectations may be frustrated by divisions among ourselves, or by the refusal of our sister States to make common cause with us in this struggle. Even in this event we shall have the consolation of having used our best efforts for the preservation of the precious inheritance which we have received from our fathers. But we are not without hope that all will yet be well, for our confidence is in Him, in whose hands are the destinies of communities as well as individuals, who watched over us in the infancy of our political existence, and has mercifully conducted us to our present elevated rank among the nations of the earth.

**JOHN MACPHERSON BERRIEN,  
A. S. CLAYTON,  
ROBERT AUGU'S. BEALL, Jr.,  
WILLIAM H. TORRANCE,  
CHARLES P. GORDON,**

**Committee.**

*Milledgeville, Nov. 21, 1832.*