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FOR THE ENQUIRER.

JOHN C. CALHOUN—No. 3.

Rashness is the error of youth, timid caution o age. Manhood is the isthmus between the two extremes; the ripe and fertile season of action when alone, we can hope to find the head to contrive united with the hand to execute. LACON.

I am sensible of the injustice I do to Mr. Calhoun in omitting to notice any of his public acts; for though it be true, that he has been but twelve years in the councils of the Union, we nevertheless find his history crowded with incidents more than sufficient, in number and importance, to illustrate a long life devoted to the public service. In tracing his claims to public favor, it is the mass, variety, and richness of the materials which constitute at once the necessity and difficulty of selection. His celebrity does not rest on a single great act—standing out in bold relief from the general negativeness of the character;—it depends on a rapid succession of such acts, each of which challenges our admiration, and which, when taken together, form the portrait of an accomplished and brilliant statesman. There is not, in fact, a single branch of our foreign policy, or internal administration, that has not passed under the review of his powerful mind, and on which his conclusions do not stand recorded for the inspection of his fellow-citizens. Some of his opinions, are indeed objected to among us; but in his career all is light. He has never *temporized.* He has kept no "prudent reserves with the public:" no dark corner in his breast for secret biasses with which to astound, at some unguarded moment, his deluded supporters. In short, whether we look into his countenance or his history, we behold alike the undoubted and undoubting traits of distinguished frankness and intelligence.

His speech on the New Army Bill in 1815, like many others of the war period, has been unavoidably omitted, and I can only *briefly* notice many of the great measures originated or supported by him, in the important interval between the treaty of peace, and his entrance into the cabinet December, 1817.

In the introduction to the second volume of the American Register, printed in 1817, the editor who holds a classical and powerful pen, has drawn the following character of Mr. Calhoun's legislative services:

"Several of the speeches delivered on the repeal of the *direct tax,* besides those of Mr. Clay and Mr. Hopkinson which I have given entire in my first volume, could be cited as ingenious and instructive performances. I would indicate particularly those of Mr. Calhoun, who shines on every occasion which calls for an appeal to general principles, and enlarged views of policy. His language in the debates on the additional military academies, on the general appropriation bill, on the encouragement of domestic manufactures, was that of a statesman "*looking before and after.*"

On the subject of the *direct tax* Mr. Calhoun spoke *against* the repeal and mainly contributed to defeat the measure at that time.—It was however carried after he had left Congress, and hence a large increase of national debt incurred by loans in a time of profound peace, and under the financial administration of Mr. Crawford. It does not appear that the latter gentleman did any thing to oppose the repeal of this tax, though he was the secretary of the treasury at both periods when the question was agitated. His rival with a "species of self devotion" which has ever characterized his public life, preferred the *tax* to *loans*—his *duty,* to *popularity.*

The following is the history of his speech on the general appropriation bill alluded to above:—Under the act of 1809, the President was authorized to transfer money from one head of appropriation to a different head. By a reference to the Journals of the H. R. 2d sess. 14th Congress it will be seen, that the *first* attempt to establish the existing system of *specific* appropriations, was made by Mr. Calhoun, on a motion to instruct the committee of ways and means to enquire into the expediency of repealing the act of 1809. Did Mr. Crawford, as Secretary of the Treasury, aid this great reform? He did not; and if enquiry be made among the members of that Committee it will be found that the Secretary exerted himself against the proposition and succeeded in crippling it in some of its material parts.—I regret that I cannot, at this moment, lay my hands on this truly republican Speech of Mr. Calhoun which established the principle, of the last importance in a free country—*that not a dollar of the people's money shall be expended, without the specific authority of the people's immediate representatives.*

Another great parliamentary effort was made by him about this time on the "treaty making power." The late Mr. Pinkney who followed in debate, said—"The strong power of genius from a higher region than that of argument, had thrown on (the question) all the light with which it is the prerogative of genius to invest and illustrate every thing." And still more directly—'The gentleman from S. Carolina (Mr. Calhoun) has exhausted the correct constitutional grounds of the question, and left him nothing but to recapitulate his arguments."

I have quoted these complimentary notices as well to justify the high anticipations of the Enquirer, expressed on Mr. Calhoun's first appearance in Congress, as because I have not, at this moment, the speeches by me to exhibit for themselves.

His support of the present bank of the United States, and of Internal Improvement, I had designed to have reserved for the head of *popular objections;* but cannot resist the pleasure of noticing the speech on the latter occasion, in this place. As a whole, it is believed that our congressional debates do not furnish a finer specimen of statesman-like oratory.—The noble sentiments breathed in the extracts which follow will amply compensate the trouble of perusal. Mr. Calhoun first adverts to the effect of the improvements in question, on productive industry and wealth, and then proceeds—

"But there are higher and more powerful considerations why Congress ought to take charge of this subject. If we were only to consider the pecuniary advantages of a good system of roads and canals, it might indeed admit of some doubt whether they ought not to be left wholly to individual exertions; but when we come to consider how intimately the strength and prosperity of the Republic are connected with this subject we find the most urgent reasons why we should apply our resources to them. In many respects, no country of equal population and wealth possesses equal materials of power with ours. The people, in muscular vigor, in hardy and enterprising habits, and in a lofty and gallant courage are surpassed by none. In one respect, and in my opinion in one only, we are materially weak. We occupy a surface prodigiously great in proportion to our numbers. The common strength is brought with difficulty to bear on the point that may be menaced by an enemy. It is our duty, then, as far as in the nature of things it can be effected, to counteract this weakness. Good roads and canals, judiciously laid out, are the proper remedy.—In the recent war how much did we suffer for the want of them! Besides the tardiness & the consequent inefficiency of our military movements, to what an increased expense was the country put for the article of transportation alone! In the event of another war, the saving in this particular would go far towards indemnifying us for the expenses of constructing the means of transportation.

"It is not however, in this respect only, that roads and canals add to the strength of a country. Our power of raising revenue, in war particularly, depends mainly on them. In peace our revenue depends principally on the imports; in war this source, in a great measure, fails, and internal taxes to a great amount, become necessary. Unless the means of commercial intercourse are rendered much more perfect than they now are, we shall never be able in war to raise the necessary supplies.—If taxes were collected in kind; if, for instance, the farmer and mechanic paid in their surplus produce, then the difficulty would not exist, as, in no country on earth, is there so great a surplus, in proportion to population, as ours.—But such a system of taxes is impossible.—They must be paid in money, and by the constitution, must be laid uniformly. What then is the effect? The taxes are laid in every part of this extensive country, uniformly; but the expenditure must, in its nature, be principally confined to the scene of military operations.—This drains the circulating medium from one part, and accumulates it in another—perhaps a very distant one. The result is obvious.—Unless it can return through the operations of trade, the parts from which the constant drain takes place, must ultimately be impoverished. Commercial intercourse is the true remedy to this weakness; and the means by which this is to be effected, are roads, canals, and the coasting trade. On these, combined with domestic manufactures, does the monied capacity of this country, in war, depend. Without them, not only will we be unable to raise the necessary supplies, but the currency of the country must necessarily fall into the greatest disorders—such as we lately experienced.

"But on this subject of national power, what, said Mr. Calhoun, can be more important than a perfect unity in every part, in feelings and interest? And what can tend more powerfully to produce it, than overcoming the effects of distance? No people enjoying freedom, ever occupied any thing like as great an extent of country as this Republic. One hundred years ago, the most profound philosophers did not believe it to be even possible.—They did not suppose it possible that a pure Republic could exist on as great a scale even as the island of Great Britain. What was then considered chimerical, we now have the felicity to enjoy; and what is most remarkable, such is the happy mould of our government; so well are the state and general powers blended, that much of our political happiness draws its origin from the extent of our Republic. It has exempted us from most of the causes which distracted the small Republics of antiquity. Let it not, however, be forgotten; let it forever be kept in mind, that it exposes us to the greatest of all calamities, next to the loss of liberty, and even to *that* in its consequences—*disunion.* We are great, and rapidly, I was about to say—fearfully, growing. This is our pride and danger—our weakness and strength. Little, said Mr. C. does he deserve to be entrusted with the liberties of this people, who does not raise his mind to these truths. We are under the most imperious obligation to counteract every tendency to disunion. The strongest of all cements is, undoubtedly, the wisdom, justice, and above all the moderation of this house. Yet the great subject on which we are now deliberating, in this respect, deserves the most serious consideration. Whatever impedes the intercourse of the extremes with this, the centre, of the republic, weakens the union. The more enlarged the sphere of commercial circulation, the more extended that of social intercourse; the more strongly are we bound together; the more inseparable our destinies. Those who understand the human heart know how powerfully distance tends to break the sympathies of our nature. Nothing, not even the dissimilarity of language, tends more to estrange man from man. Let us then, said Mr. C. bind the Republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals. Let us conquer space: It is thus the most distant parts of the Republic will be brought within a few days travel of the centre; it is thus that a citizen of the West will read the news of Boston still moist from the press. The mail and the press, said he, are, the nerves of the body politic. By them, the slightest impression made on the most remote parts, is communicated to the whole system; and the more perfect the means of transportation, the more rapid and true the vibration. To aid us in this great work, to maintain the integrity of this Republic, we inhabit a country presenting the most admirable advantages. Belted round, as it is, by lakes and oceans, intersected in every direction by bays and rivers, the hand of industry and art is tempted to improvement. So situated, blessed with a form of government at once combining liberty and strength, we may reasonably raise our eyes to a most splendid future, if we only act in a manner worthy of our advantages. If, however, neglecting them, we permit a low, sordid, selfish, sectional spirit to take possession of this House, this happy scene will vanish. We shall divide, and as consequences will follow—misery and despotism.

"To legislate for our country, continued Mr. C., requires not only the most enlarged views, but a species of self devotion not exacted in any other. In a country so extensive, and so various in its interests, what is necessary for the common good, may apparently, be opposed to the interests of particular sections. This must be submitted to as the condition of our greatness. But were we a small Republic; were we confined to the ten miles' square, the selfish instincts of our nature might, in most cases, be relied on for the management of public affairs."

Mr. Calhoun (after an interregnum) succeeded Mr. Crawford, as Secretary at War.—Here a new field was opened to his genious, industry and love of order and economy. The department in all its branches stood in its original "confusion—worse confounded" by the prodigious masses of unsettled war accounts which had been seven years accumulating.—These were now destined to be broken up and despatched. The mere manuel part of the labor and also such decisions as rested on express provisions of law devolved of course, on the subordinate officers of the department. But in all doubtful cases of expenditure, and particularly in the settlement of state claims for militia services rendered, a personal reference to the Secretary under the same provisions of law, became indispensable. In December 1817, when Mr. C. came into office the amount of these unsettled debts and credits was more than forty millions of dollars. This enormous mass has already been reduced to a mere modicum, and the amount found due to the United States received, or put into suit for collection. A similar instance of despatch in the settlement of war-accounts it is believed never occurred in the experience of any other government. In England it is said they usually remain unaudited for half a century. Great credit is certainly due to the accounting officers attached to the war department, for their share in these appalling labors; and I doubt not that they were from the first, equally ready and willing to perform their duties; but, it is as certainly true, that for the want of an efficient head little or nothing had been done before Mr. Calhoun's appointment.—For the truth of these facts I refer to the reports annually made to Congress, of what is termed, *public defaulters*—that is, of the progress made in the unrolling of these manuscripts—which, like those buried in Pompeii and Herculaneum, might have slept for centuries but for the new genius that presided over the work of disinterment.

Mr. Calhoun had scarcely entered on his new duties when Congress passed an act granting pensions to the survivors of the revolutionary army and navy, and referring the whole subject to the war department. It is believed that the number of applicants for the benefits of this act has been more than *sixty thousand.* Now it was manifest on reflection, that, under the very strict limitations imposed by Congress the survivors entitled to be placed on the Pension List could not equal a *third* of that number. This mustering host of claims, was therefore, to be examined in detail, as well to save the Treasury from imposition, as to be certain that not *one* individual whose early patriotism and existing penury entitled him to national assistance should be disappointed. Both these objects have been attained with as much certainty as ever attended the decisions of the highest judicial tribunals, and the number of revolutionary pensioners, under that act reduced to about sixteen thousand. And here I do not hazard contradiction from any candid mind, acquainted with the facts, when I assert, that Mr. Calhoun, in the performance of this herculean labor has, by his extraordinary habits of business and powers of discrimination, saved to the United States at least a million of dollars annually, since 1818—a saving that will be continued, through on a declining scale, for the next fifteen or twenty years!

When Mr. Calhoun came to the direction of the war department, the average cost of the officers and men in the army, was about $ 451 per annum each. A reduction in the cost of supplies of every sort would, of itself, have reduced that average to about $ 377; but the present average (and it has been equally low for several years) is but $ 293. The difference therefore, amounting to about $ 440,000 per annum, on an army of 5500 men and officers, can be attributed only to the admirable system of supply and exact accountability that he has introduced in all the parts of the establishment. In proof of these assertions, I refer to the President's messages during the two last winters and their accompanying documents. From these it will appear, that not one dollar in a thousand is now lost either by ignorance, fraud or failure on the whole expenditure of the department. Let the real friends of enlightened economy, look to these great results.

These triumphs of genius and system, over ignorance and waste could never have been effected without a thorough interior reform of the war department, within itself, and the new modelling of the staff of the army.—The truth is, the war department had never been put on the footing of that of the treasury (for example) which owed its admirable organization to the analytical mind of Hamilton—the first incumbent. This was now the first duty to be performed. Mr C. saw at once that his department was not a labor-saving machine;—that the genius of invention and of construction had never been employed upon it. Left by the President reponsible only for *results* in the execution of his particular duties, Mr. C. found a motive in giving to his department the highest beneficial action. His fame became immediately interested in it. Accordingly, he commenced the reform by breaking up the general mass of business, and distributing it among several distinct bureaux. At the head of each of these, an officer of rank was placed, having a particular experience in that branch of duties. This head looked only to the chief of the department, who in turn, looked hourly to each of those heads—in order to assure himself, absolutely, that all acted on the general principles prescribed.

As incident to this great reform was the remodelling of the staff, and the introduction of a new branch (the *commissariat*) for the subsistence of the troops. These measures were effected by recommendations to Congress through the military committees of the two Houses; and thus the chief of each branch of the new staff, became the head of one of the bureaux before mentioned. All the effects which result from a judicious division of labor and responsibility were soon found to succeed these simple but grand conceptions. Each chief of a bureau immediately felt that he had a direct interest in the able discharge of his duties, under the powerful stimulants of inspection and competition. The whole army, in all its branches of service and expenditure, was from the first, made to feel the hand of regeneration. Orders were now transmitted with direct certainty to the point of execution, and reports of the *service performed* received back in like manner. Every dollar of public money drawn from the Treasury could now be distinctly traced through a few hands to its destined object, and the vouchers for the expenditure returned in time to be checked and settled within the fiscal year.

This simple exposition will readily explain how Mr. Calhoun has found time and means for the despatch of the old accounts of the war before-mentioned;—the examination of claims for revolutionary pensions;—the thorough revivification of the military academy—the source of professional science; the establishment of a uniform and vigorous discipline throughout the army—supported by the most vigorous economy in expenditures; a survey of our maritime frontier by officers of the engineers; the institution of a system of permanent fortification—by which our coasts will soon be rendered invulnerable to an enemy; the establishment of a cordon of military posts, stretching from the upper lakes, around our western frontier—as physical and moral shackles on Indian hostilities;*—and, finally, for his duties as a cabinet counsellor, in which capacity he is well known to have given to the measures of the President, an honest and efficient support.

I here close the long, but rapid enumeration of Mr. Calhoun's great public services.—In my next (and concluding) number, I shall notice such objections as I hear among us urged to his elevation to the chief magistracy of this Union.

THOMSON.

* It will be remembered, that the Mandan village was deemed an essential link in this cordon. Congress stopped the expedition at the Council Bluffs. The recent hostilities in that quarter are the result!

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

Frankfort, Ky Nov. 8, 1823.

"The trial of Rees closed last evening, after an investigation of several days. The Attorney for the United States submitted six distinct charges to the jury, who have found Rees guilty of five of them—that is, two for cutting the mail bags, two for stealing letters not containing articles of value, & one for stealing letters containing articles of value. The Judge (TOD) this day will settle the punishment in the five cases. There was nothing but circumstantial testimony, which was connected from Louisville to Maysville by eighteen witnesses.—This, I believe, is the first case of conviction for an offence against the Post Office laws, in the state of Kentucky." [*Nat. Int.*

Breach of promise of Marriage.—At the Circuit Court of this county, now sitting, the Hon. Chief Justice CLAY presiding, was tried an action brought by a Miss Conelly, against a Mr. Green, for a breach of promise of marriage. The case, we understand, was fully made out, with the aggravating circumstance of seduction, and the jury found a verdict for the plaintiff of $1000—The defendant's property was estimated at $2500. [*Huntsville Rep. Nov. 5.*