

One of the most remarkable contributions to the pending discussion on the ship subsidy bill is the speech of Senator J. L. McLaurin, of South Carolina, in the United States senate February 7th. It is remarkable as being the earnest and impassioned appeal of a southern democrat to rise above sectional feeling and party affiliation and support a measure in which he claimed the South has more interest than any part of the country. "The time has now come," the senator said, "when the South, following in the lead of its great business interests, can afford to put aside the animosities of the past and take up the work of the old South, and when its political leaders should stand shoulder to shoulder with its business men and strive to advance measures calculated to upbuild its prosperity, without regard to whether they are advocated by republicans or democrats."

While northern democrats are opposing with united front all efforts of the administration to restore to this nation her lost supremacy on the high seas, it will be interesting to learn in what light this subject is viewed by the great and rapidly expanding business interests of the South.

In May last there met at Charlotte, N. C., what Senator McLaurin characterizes as "the most representative body of business men which has assembled in that section during the last twenty-five years." It was the annual meeting of the Cotton Spinners' Association of the South. It represented the entire cotton business from Virginia to Texas, and some five hundred men, the foremost business men of the South, were there. After two days of brilliant speeches there was not a dissenting voice in public or in private against the following resolution, a resolution having in view especially the ship subsidy bill now before congress, because it was mentioned, the senator says, in nearly every speech that was made. With a ringing cheer these five hundred great captains of southern industry, representing a business investment of more than \$150,000,000, unanimously resolved: "That the Southern Cotton Spinners' Association recommend to congress the enacting of such legislation, carrying such compensation, as will stimulate the development of American shipping interests under the American flag to an extent necessary to handle American commerce on the high seas in time of peace, and which will provide at the same time such transports and auxiliary service as may be needed in time of war."

Senator McLaurin enforces his appeal by a score of letters from southern boards of trade and leading business men, all urging with one voice that the men in congress who stand as the representatives of the South shall heed the voice of the business men of that section who believe that the shipping bill should be passed because it is essential to the South's best welfare. Nor are they careful to conceal the fact that they are prepared to break away from party ties if they cannot get their party leaders to heed their warning; while under date of February 2nd, instant, the president of the Charlotte convention of last May urges congressional action along the lines of the ship subsidy bill and affirms that the sentiment in its favor is stronger among the southern manufacturers than it was then.

While some of our northern political economists are ready to spurn the ladder by which the country has risen to commercial supremacy, the south, in spite of itself, has tasted the benefits of protection and wants more of it.

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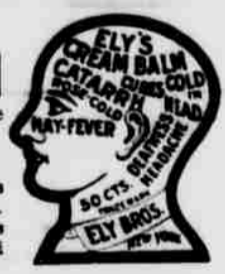
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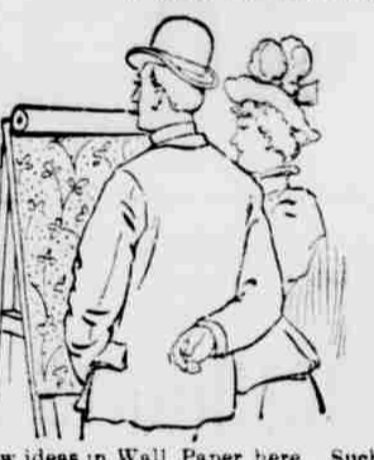
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