

[From the New-York Standard.]

THE WITNESSES.

The Bank Committee are immensely unpopular with the Courier and Equirer, which can hardly find language to express its wrongs and indignation. Referring to the discount of Noah's individual notes, for four years, the Courier says of the committee:

To fix upon Mr. Biddle and the Bank the charge of bribery and corruption, they *meanly* insinuate—nay almost directly charge, that Mr. Webb, and afterwards Mr. Noah, *perjured* themselves on this point, by gravely telling the public that “it was without the knowledge of Webb and Noah *as they state*,” and “*it is stated* by Webb and Noah in their testimony!” Is this *honorable* in such men as have signed the report? Is it *just*? On the contrary is it not a *base* attempt to impugn our testimony, simply because that testimony acquitted the bank of any impropriety, and placed the loan from Mr. Biddle to Mr. Burrows upon a business footing, and not in the remotest manner connected with the course of the paper or the recharter of the Bank?

We saw once a man very angry at a Grand Jury, who had found a bill of indictment against him, notwithstanding, as he said, that he had gone before them *uncalled*, and sworn that he was entirely innocent of the crime. He declared that the finding of the bill was a base and mean attempt to impugn his testimony, simply because that testimony acquitted him of any impropriety, and inquired whether an action of damages would lie against the Grand Jury for charging him with perjury.

How came Webb and Noah to be witnesses at all? Did the committee send for them? No—Webb volunteered, he says, and so the committee say—he *requested* to be heard as a witness. WHY? If their transactions with the bank were “ordinary, fair business transactions,” might they not be trusted to speak for themselves? Why should Webb go an hundred miles to swear up the honesty of a fair bank account? Were they so perfectly conscious that the account could not stand a scrutiny—that all the suppressing and whitewashing would not avail—that the leper spots would still show through? It would seem so; else why did Webb think his oath needed to make them appear fair. They were tremblingly anxious about these transactions; the first \$15,000 was covered by Burrows—the last \$15,000 they managed to suppress, as soon as they learned that an investigation was ordered, the note not being due for three months and more—and now there was but \$18,000, *in their names*, on the books of the bank. Could they not trust Mr. Biddle to explain that sum, and to justify it, by the aid of that letter from “a former director,” and the “statement” and deposition of the Courier’s prosperity?—No—they had done their best at whitewashing, and a small sum only remained—but, still, Mr. Webb thought it might be as well for him to add his testimony. We can conceive that he is much provoked that the committee should outrageously and “base-ly” feel unable to believe it.

The defence of the Courier on Saturday last was very long, and might have been equally satisfactory had it been comprised in ten lines. The question, as that defence left it, stands thus:—the committee reported the facts without expressing an opinion upon them—and these facts all tend to a certain conclusion. That is one side. On the side of the Courier are arrayed the testimony of Mr. Biddle, (himself implicated), and testimony said to have been volunteered by Webb and Noah—all of which assert the honesty of the transactions, and they must be believed; so that the “certain conclusion” is false, and the facts lie, as is proved by “famous witnesses,” the best possible witnesses, the parties themselves, who certainly know best how the matter is.

Accuse you of “*perjury!*” Certainly not—the committee do not even suspect you of it. They know as well as Noah does, that even a false affidavit does not constitute *perjury*, unless some *other* person’s interest is affected by it, and of course, that his testimony before them, even if false, was to be answered only to his conscience. And being aware of this, perhaps the committee thought that the same temptations which caused a journey of 100 miles, and Webb’s volunteering to swear for his bank accounts, might warp another witness’ memory. The Courier is outrageous at this—and the committee is clearly wrong; they should have laid out of view the facts, *and the temptations*, and believed whatever the witnesses said. For, is not Mr. Biddle an honorable man? and Webb, also, and

look ill, and they ventured only on all these measures were required to establish a credit, is not the nature of the first loan palpable, black? Did it not need real *good* swearing to whiten it?—The committee it seems wanted even better than they got.

Well, the credit of our office being established, in December they venture on the next instalment of \$15,000, also on a six months' note. But now came trouble—a scrutiny was ordered, and the dealers shivered with apprehension. They examined their screens closely and anxiously, and to their dismay found they were insufficient—they could be seen through, and but one course was left for them. They must hide the first and the last instalments from the eyes of the committee—and they contrived to take up the notes for both, though neither were due. The committee may have thought that this paying of undue notes, increased still further the necessity for *very good* swearing, and were perhaps still more unsatisfied with what they got.

Mr. Webb is certainly a very ill used gentleman, and this unbelieving committee are men without remorse. Mr. Webb is quite justified in retracting all his admiration for Mr. Cambreleng, expressed during so many years, and maintained so stoutly against the gainsayers of the American, Commercial, and Daily Advertiser, and will find no difficulty in writing him down.

In a great mass of good things it is not always easy to say which is best, and on studying the Courier of Saturday, we hesitated before we could choose; the following however, is really the most ludicrous.

“There can be no doubt but our loan is not only

“ There can be no doubt but our loan is not only a safe one, but that if we should require any additional facilities, the bank will readily grant them.— Should we require aid, we shall most assuredly apply to the mother bank, and we would have just cause of complaint if our application should be rejected—but of that we entertain no fears.”

Try it, Mr. Webb, try it! Committees of scrutiny are come in fashion now, and the president will give no more money “out of his own pocket,” until at least the notes are made.
