

MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,

COMPRISING PORTIONS OF

HIS DIARY FROM 1795 TO 1848.

EDITED BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

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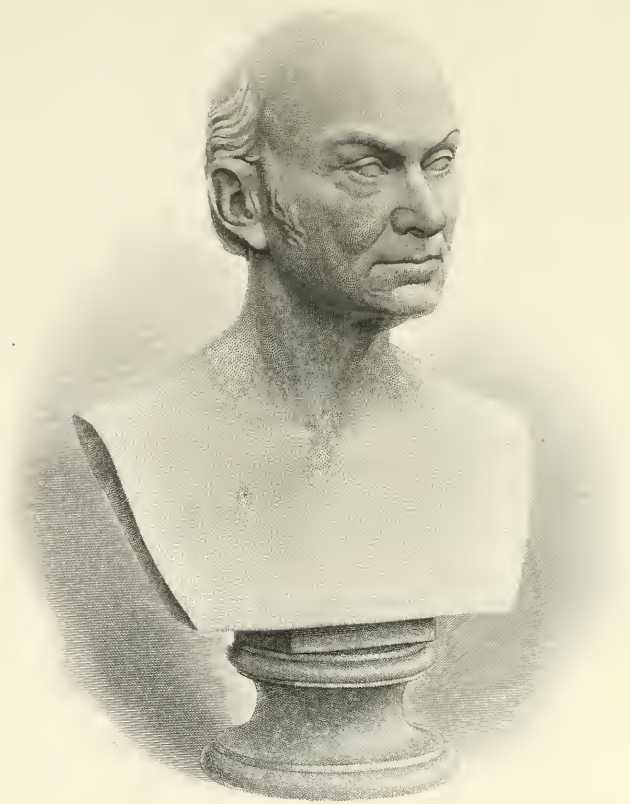
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FROM A BUST BY H. POWERS.

George Washington to be transferred to be entombed under the Capitol—a refusal to which I believe he was not competent, and into the real operative motives to which I wish not to enquire. I did wish that this resolution might have been carried into execution, but this wish was connected with an imagination that this federative Union was to last for ages. I now disbelieve its duration for twenty years, and doubt its continuance for five. It is falling into the sere and yellow leaf. For this, among other reasons, I determined that my celebration of this day should only be by sharing in its devotions. I attended the performance of divine service at the Capitol, where a very ordinary prayer was made by Mr. Post, the Chaplain to the House of Representatives, and a singular, though not ineloquent, sermon was delivered by Mr. Durbin, Chaplain to the Senate. His text was from Revelation, iv. 11: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.” The discourse was not written, nor was it composed to be preserved. It was extemporaneous, and yet well suited to the occasion. It exalted the character of Washington perhaps too much. There were close approaches to the expression of a belief that there was something supernatural in his existence. There seemed little wanting to bring out a theory that he was a second Saviour of mankind. That he had a charmed life, and was protected by a special Providence, was explicitly avowed as a belief. The religious character of Washington was dwelt on with great emphasis. The House was well filled, but not crowded. The 148th and 100th Psalms were sung without instrumental music, and a hymn at the close. The Vice-President and Speaker of the House of Representatives were there, and the Judges of the Supreme Court, but neither the President of the United States nor any member of his Cabinet.

23d. At the House, Drayton had offered a resolution for altering the rule of the House which devotes Fridays and Saturdays to the consideration of private business, so that Saturday alone should be thus specially appropriated. Various amendments were proposed, and, after a discussion of two hours or more, they were all rejected, as well as the motion itself.

There ought to be no private business before Congress. There is a great defect in our institutions by the want of a Court of Exchequer or Chamber of Accounts. It is judicial business, and legislative assemblies ought to have nothing to do with it. One-half of the time of Congress is consumed by it, and there is no common rule of justice for any two of the cases decided. A deliberative assembly is the worst of all tribunals for the administration of justice.

**Mr. Clayton, of Georgia, smuggled in, by consent of the House, a motion for the appointment of a select committee to examine into the affairs of the Bank of the United States, with power to send for persons and papers. It must lie over a day for consideration.**

The orders of the day were postponed, and the General Appropriation was taken up in committee of the whole—J. W. Taylor in the chair. I fully intended not to have opened my lips on this bill, and my purpose is as seldom as possible to enter into any debate. But the impulse to take part is continually recurring, and I cannot always resist it. I rose this day twice—once to support a contested item of appropriation for surveying of the public lands, and once to object to an amendment proposed by Archer, Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations. The appropriation which I supported was adopted. The amendment proposed by Archer was to add thirty-five thousand, for contingencies, to an item of twenty-five hundred dollars for a dragoman at Constantinople. I asked what it was for. Archer declined giving the information, but said that the committee, composed of members entertaining different political opinions, were unanimous in recommending the amendment. I still objected, though declaring my confidence in the committee. My opposition would probably have been of no avail, but McDuffie joined in it, and in his peremptory tone said the information must and should be given; if the committee chose, it might be given to the House, but given it must be. The amendment was then rejected without counting.

25th. In the House, Mr. Branch's resolution was taken up. Mr. White, of Florida, moved an amendment, which brought on an extremely violent debate between them, full of the most

offensive personalities ; charges of direct falsehood cast to and fro—Branch accusing White of speculating, to pocket some hundreds of dollars, upon the Government and upon his constituents, and White retorting that Branch had wasted forty-five thousand dollars of public money upon useless agencies in this business, and had appointed last winter one of his near relatives on this service, and increased his salary six hundred dollars after his own dismissal from office. This was continued, by speech and counter-speech, for nearly two hours. Carson was beginning to speak on the side of Branch, when the Speaker stopped him, and said he had indulged Mr. Branch on account of the peculiar situation he was in with reference to the Executive office he had recently held, and in which his conduct had been made a topic of animadversion, but that this indulgence could be extended no further. Branch finally acceded to White's amendment, with a modification suggested by Wickliffe, and the resolution was adopted.

27th. Attended the House at noon. Petitions called for by States. My resolution, with an additional call for copies of the negotiations with Turkey from the year 1819, was adopted without opposition. Archer, Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations, declared he had no objection to it; and Root came to me and apologized for having objected to the reception of my motion last Friday. He said if he had known it was political he would not have objected.

Mr. Clayton's motion for a select committee to investigate the affairs of the Bank of the United States was called up, and there was some question whether it should be considered. Upon this the yeas and nays were not taken, though called. Clayton was suffered to proceed, and read from a paper fifteen charges—as he said, articles of indictment, which he said could be proved against the direction of the bank, and upon which he commented rather feebly.

McDuffie answered him instanter, taking his paper, reading his charges successively, and refuting them one by one, perhaps too much at length, but completely showing that they were either ordinary, lawful, and useful operations of the bank, or frauds of a gross and sordid kind, of which there was no evi-

dence even sufficient to lay the foundation for a justifiable suspicion. Mr. Patton, of Virginia, rose, but, being reminded by the Speaker that it was within a few minutes of four o'clock, moved an adjournment, which immediately took place.

Judge Baldwin sent and called me out from my seat to say that he wished to have some conversation with me upon the Tariff, as we had once had upon the Missouri question. I told him the only leisure time I had was in the evening; and he promised to call upon me to-morrow evening at six o'clock.

Mr. Carson, of North Carolina, told me that the Speaker, Stevenson, had informed him that they were determined to run for Van Buren as Vice-President, even in North Carolina; and that he had answered him, "If you carry him, it shall be over my dead body."

28th. Judge Baldwin was here this evening, and unfolded to me his plan for the settlement of the Tariff question. It is simple enough—twenty per cent. upon all importations of articles, whether with or without foreign competition; then gradually shortened credits, finally to be turned into cash payments, and a considerable duty upon sales at auction. This is his panacea. He has revealed it to General Hayne and to Mr. McDuffie, who did not tell him that they or the South would be satisfied with it, but Hayne told him that he wished one of the Senators from Pennsylvania would bring it forward. He has also conferred upon the subject with the President and with the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. McLane. The President is entirely in favor of his plan, and will support it. The Secretary of the Treasury had objections to it, but, upon explanations given, they were so far removed that he will also probably support the plan. But, if he should not, the President will. Judge Baldwin said he had told the President that he considered his plan of so much importance that he would go to any quarter for support to it, even to Mr. Clay. The Judge assured me that he would always be ready to give me any information that I might desire. I have considerable doubts of the efficacy of his plan, or whether it will prove acceptable; but it will deserve grave consideration.

*March* 1st. In the House, the resolution of Mr. Clayton pro-

posing the appointment of a select committee to investigate his fifteen charges against the Bank of the United States came up. Thomas R. Mitchell made a speech of two hours against the bank. H. Denny, Colonel Watmough, and Mr. Ellsworth supported it. Foster, of Georgia, and Cambreleng, replied. Watmough moved an amendment to Clayton's resolution, to be referred to the Committee of Ways and Means, and then McDuffie gave up the whole ground, and advised Watmough to withdraw his amendment and let Clayton have his committee in his own way. The House adjourned at four o'clock without taking the question. But I conclude that McDuffie has betrayed and sacrificed the bank. His surrender was unexpected to me, but it is not uncongenial to the obliquity of his politics and the unsteadiness of his mind. I had, fortunately, taken no part in this debate, and it is a new warning to me to forbear all volunteering upon such treacherous ground as that covered by the floor of the House. I am constantly tempted to speak, and yet have continual demonstration that I should only expose myself to mortification and be surely deserted, even by those whom I would wish to serve and sustain.

The Apportionment bill was taken up in the Senate, where Mr. Webster made an eloquent speech—I fear to no purpose. If reason or argument could effect anything at this time, I should hope that a great and inveterate defect in the apportionment laws might be remedied. But the conviction is pressed upon me more and more, from day to day, of my utter inability to render any valuable service to the country. I would not prematurely despair of the republic, but my forebodings are dark, and the worst of them is in contemplating the precipice before us—yawning at our feet from the very pinnacle of prosperity to which we have been raised, and on which we stand.

2d. At the House, a joint resolution passed authorizing the Secretary of State to employ clerks to record the patents in the Patent Office. This resolution has passed "sub silentio," without opposition and without notice—a contrast sufficiently striking with the retrenchment proceedings of 1828. Mr. Clayton of Georgia's resolution for a committee to investigate the direction of the bank was taken up, and he made a tiresome

speech of an hour, in which he barely reached the threshold of his subject. The orders of the day were called for, and the Speaker ruled that the recent alteration of the seventeenth rule did not extend to the days of private business—Fridays and Saturdays; that on those days, therefore, the orders of the day could not be set aside by a bare majority of the House. A motion was made to suspend the rule, to allow Mr. Clayton to finish his speech. It very nearly prevailed—the vote being ninety-six to fifty-four—but, the majority not amounting to two-thirds, Mr. Clayton was silenced for the day.

Colonel Richard M. Johnson asked me to walk with him, and said he wished to speak with me of the state of the personal relations between the President, Jackson, and me; that he (Johnson) wished the relations of friendly personal intercourse between us to be restored, and that he thought the first advances to it should be made by him. He had also spoken of it to Mr. Cass, the Secretary of War, who agreed with him on this point.

I said that the personal intercourse between General Jackson and me had been suspended by himself, without informing me of the reason why. I had never known his reason. I had seen at the time in the Telegraph an anonymous statement that it was because *he knew* that I had caused or countenanced abusive charges against Mrs. Jackson in the newspapers. The fact was not so. I never had caused or countenanced, directly or indirectly, any such publication. But General Jackson had never asked of me the question, and I did not deem it necessary to notice anonymous charges in the Telegraph.

Colonel Johnson said he had always been sure it was so; that General Jackson had come here with dispositions entirely friendly to me, and intending to call upon me; that his mind had been poisoned here by scoundrel office-seekers; that he was a warm-tempered, passionate man, and had been led to believe that I was the cause of those publications against his wife; but that he (Johnson) knew that the President's feelings were now as friendly to me as they had ever been. He had told him that at the time of the debate in the House of Representatives on the Seminole War questions he had received



more assistance from me, in drawing up the minority report of the military committee, than from all the world beside. He did not now speak by the authority of General Jackson, but he knew that his disposition towards me was friendly, and had no doubt, if a friendly advance from him would be accepted by me, that he would make it.

I said I had no desire that the interruption of social intercourse between us should continue, and was disposed to receive any friendly advance from General Jackson with kindness.

He asked if I would accept an invitation to dine with him.

I said, no; that was an act of mere ordinary courtesy, usually paid to every member of Congress, which I could not consider as an advance towards reconciliation.

He asked if I would accept an invitation to a small and select party of friends.

I said that would be liable to the same objection. It would pass for mere civility to a member of Congress, and be set to the account of my present situation.

He then asked what I should myself think proper.

I said it was not for me to prescribe. I could only say that I was willing to receive in a spirit of conciliation any advance which in that spirit General Jackson might make. With this the Colonel was satisfied, and we parted. But it has placed me again in a situation of the delicacy of which it is my duty to be profoundly sensible.

3d. I received from Colonel Richard M. Johnson a note without date or signature, which I copy for curiosity: "General Jackson expressed great satisfaction that I had the conversation with you which I detailed to him, and expressed a wish that I should assure you of his personal regard and friendship, and was anxious to have a social and friendly intercourse restored between you. There I left it, and have satisfied my own mind. I shall communicate to Governor Cass the same; and there it rests with me, having done what my heart suggested. The President expresses himself as perfectly satisfied now that you never did countenance the publications to which I alluded, and entertains for you the highest opinion as a man of honor, etc. Please destroy this when you read it."

So far so good. The President is now perfectly satisfied that I never countenanced the newspaper publications against his wife, and wishes the relations of social intercourse to be restored between us. Colonel Johnson is to tell this to Governor Cass, and there leaves it. And what is now my duty to myself and to the country? To seek Governor Cass? No; but to return to Colonel Johnson his paper instead of destroying it, letting him know that I have a copy of it, to thank him for the conciliatory part he has taken in this affair, and to assure him of my gratification that the President is satisfied I countenanced no newspaper publications against his wife. A restoration of friendly, social, and personal intercourse between President Jackson and me at this time would attract much public notice, and could not fail to expose me to obloquy. The old federal party, now devoted to Mr. Clay, have already more than once tried their hands at slandering me. They have drawn the sword and brandished it over my head. If I set my foot in the President's house, they will throw away the scabbard. I must, therefore, walk with extreme circumspection; even that will not protect me from their malignity. Something is due to myself; and the path is narrow to avoid on the one hand the charge of an implacable temper, and on the other of eagerness to propitiate the dispenser of power.

The judgment of the Supreme Court was delivered this morning upon the case of the missionaries to the Cherokees imprisoned in Georgia. It pronounces the statute of Georgia under which they are imprisoned unconstitutional.

4th. I received by the mail several letters, and with one of them a memorial, signed by several thousand persons, upon the existing relations between the United States and the Cherokee tribe of Indians and the imprisonment of the missionaries. The memorial was the result of a very numerous meeting at New York, and a letter from a committee of the signers requested me to present and support it. Blunt wrote to me some days since, and mentioned that this memorial would be sent to me, and I had intended to answer him declining to present it. But his letter had escaped from my memory, and remained unanswered. I now concluded, though after much hesitation, to

present it to-morrow morning, well assured that it will be of no avail, but willing to perform to the utmost of my power my duty.

5th. At the House it was the day for calling petitions, and at the call of Massachusetts I presented the memorial from New York concerning the Cherokees and the missionaries imprisoned in Georgia. It was read at my request, and I moved that it should be printed and referred to a select committee.

This immediately gave rise to a debate, which consumed the day. Speight moved its reference to the Committee on Indian Affairs. Bell, Chairman of that committee, made one of those speeches common in the House when a subject comes upon them unexpectedly—arguing against the reception of the memorial, but closing with a repetition of Speight's motion. The Georgia members were variously affected—Clayton raved, and said that before the decree of the Supreme Court should be carried into execution Georgia should be made a wilderness. Thompson, of Georgia, finally moved that the memorial be laid on the table. The question was taken by yeas and nays—ninety-one for, ninety-two against laying on the table.

The vote was first thought to be carried, for Stewart, of Pennsylvania, had voted in the affirmative by mistake. He corrected it before the decision was announced. Wayne then attempted to move a postponement of consideration for a fortnight. Drayton actually moved a postponement. John Davis moved a reference to the committee of the whole on the state of the Union. Everett had proposed this to me, and said it was an understanding between the parties that the subject should be discussed in committee of the whole on the Union. This was personally satisfactory to me, but did not discharge my duty to the memorialists. Stewart moved the previous question, but withdrew it at my request to give me the opportunity to give my reasons for not assenting to Davis's proposition. Beardsley, of New York, followed with an argument that the memorial should be laid on the table. He said he thought I should have moved that myself.

Cambreleg noticed that the memorial, though from New York, was not presented by any of the Representatives from that city.

I said I had reason to believe that it was from no disrespect to the members from New York that the memorial had been sent to me, but from a belief that it would be an unpleasing task to them. It was no pleasing one to me. I had wished to decline it, but, after examining the contents of the memorial, had deemed it my duty to present it. The House was now in possession of it, and would dispose of it as they thought best.

Stewart renewed his call for the previous question, which was seconded and taken. Wickliffe moved that the vote should be taken upon the simple question of commitment. I asked for the yeas and nays, and they were taken. The commitment was carried—ninety-six to ninety-three; and then it was referred to the committee of the whole on the state of the Union, without a division. This decision is precisely what I wished; though, having moved for a select committee, I did not feel at liberty to assent to it. In committee of the whole on the state of the Union I may leave it to the management of other hands, and may take any part or no part in the debate, as I may think proper. The three members from the city of New York voted to lay the memorial on the table. Cambreleng and White voted against the commitment; Verplanck for it. I returned to Colonel Richard M. Johnson his note, and told him I had taken a copy of it; which he approved. I thanked him for the part he had taken in this affair, which I believe proceeded on his part from a good intention.

6th. I overtook Mr. Cambreleng walking to the Capitol, and apologized to him for having presented the memorial—it being considered as a courtesy that every member should present petitions from his own particular constituents.

After the States had been called over, reports from standing committees and reports from select committees were called for by the Speaker. The first order of the day then was the resolution of Mr. Clayton, of Georgia, upon which he made a speech of three hours and more, repeating and reinforcing all the charges of his indictment against the Bank of the United States. He was very tiresome, but the House listened to him with much attention, excepting that a large portion of the seats were deserted. When he finished, he announced that all he

had till then said was mere inducement, and he had a great deal more to say, but would detain the House no longer. As he sat down, ten or twelve members sprung up to speak, among whom were Wayne, of Georgia, and Root, of New York. The Speaker said Root had the floor. Wayne asked him to yield it for a moment to allow him to offer an amendment to his colleague's resolution, which would give him something to talk about. There was a laugh in the House at the implied sarcasm of Wayne upon Clayton, as if his three hours' speech was not worth answering; but Root said he had enough to talk about, and refused to yield the floor. He moved that the House should adjourn; which was carried.

I saw in the House Mr. Webster and Mr. Seymour, of the Senate. They had the Apportionment bill before them, with an amendment proposed by Mr. Webster, of the success of which he is doubtful.

7th. In the House, after the usual introductory business of the morning, Mr. Clayton's resolution for a committee to investigate the affairs of the bank was immediately taken up. General Root made a speech of about an hour in favor of a Bank of the United States; and moved that the investigating committee should consist of seven, and be chosen by ballot. Crawford, of Pennsylvania, and Evans, of Maine, also in favor of a choice of the committee by ballot. Then Beardsley, of New York, in a speech of near two hours, made a joint attack upon the bank and upon General Root. His personalities were of the most offensive character. He continued till past four, when the House adjourned, leaving his speech yet unfinished. Mr. Root had spoken irreverently of the proceedings of what are called the Albany Regency—the predominant party in the State of New York, and partisans of Mr. Van Buren. Pendleton says there are in the House but three partisans of Root, eight Anti-Masons, two National Republicans, and twenty-one Regency men.

8th. At the House, almost immediately after their meeting, Mr. Clayton's resolution was resumed. Mr. Beardsley finished his speech, and renewed his attacks upon the bank, and upon General Root, who replied with equal acrimony, and fully di-

vulged the cabalistic political combination of the New York banks and their safety fund.

Bell, of Tennessee, then made a speech of an hour and a half against the chartering of the bank at this session; and his principal argument was with reference to the President's opinions and to his proceedings respecting the bank.

The question was taken upon Root's proposed amendment, to choose the committee by ballot, and by yeas and nays it was rejected—eighty-eight to ninety-two. Only one hundred and eighty members voted. There were, of course, about sixteen accidentally or otherwise absent—for the most part skulkers. Mr. Wayne then moved a long amendment to Clayton's resolution; he proposes a committee to sit during the recess, and to report to the next session of Congress. Mr. Burges, of Rhode Island, proposed an amendment to this amendment. There were several very sharply-debated points of order, in one of which Mr. Wayne spoke of Root with great indignation and contempt. McDuffie justified Root, but Root himself made no reply. There were motions for printing the amendments both of Wayne and Burges; but before any decision Dr. Condict moved an adjournment, which was carried.

9th. We found the House in session. Mr. Clayton's bank resolution was immediately taken up. The amendment proposed by Mr. Wayne was another resolution, and Mr. Burges's still another. Burges proposed a postponement till Monday, and that the resolution and both amendments should, in the mean time, be printed. Speight raised a question of order, whether Burges's proposal for a committee of seven to be appointed by ballot could be received after the rejection of Root's motion yesterday.

The Speaker inclined to think it not in order, but had not read Burges's amendment.

Everett pointed out differences between the motions, but the Speaker decided the committee of seven to be chosen by ballot was out of order. Then Burges, at the suggestion of Wickliffe, moved a committee of eight, which the Speaker thought was in order.

McDuffie rose, and, with some impatience, said the great evil

above all others in this case was delay; that it was of infinite importance that the House should do what it meant to do at once. Wayne started up and asked if the *evil* of which the gentleman spoke was evil to the country or to the bank.

McDuffie turned pale, and replied that he must say the course of the gentleman from Georgia in the House was intolerably supercilious and impertinent.

Wayne rose again. His eyes flashed with fire, and he in substance told him that if he wished to give proof of manhood it must be elsewhere.

They were called to order, and the Speaker said the observations made on both sides had been very improper.

Barstow, of New York, moved a reconsideration of the vote yesterday, which rejected Root's motion for the choice of the committee by ballot. He said he had not changed his opinion, and should vote the same way again, but some of his friends absent yesterday had requested him to give them an opportunity to vote, and he was willing to gratify them. The vote was accordingly taken, after a call of the House, and the reconsideration prevailed—ninety-eight to ninety-three; still a small vote.

Before the House adjourned, C. F. Mercer, referring to the wrangle that had taken place between Wayne and McDuffie, said he hoped they would be reconciled. He called upon them according to Parliamentary usage sanctioned by practice in England. He stated what had been first said in the warmth of debate by Wayne, without intention, he had no doubt, but which he thought was justly offensive to McDuffie. He called upon Wayne to disavow the offensive intention. Wayne said he was convinced by the opinion of his friends around him that what he had said in the heat of debate was susceptible of an offensive imputation upon McDuffie. He disclaimed all such intention, and declared his full conviction of the patriotic spirit of the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means.

McDuffie declared himself entirely satisfied, and said that he retracted the words he had used with infinitely more pleasure than it had given him pain to speak them. Mr. Wayne then complimented him upon his spirit, and the House adjourned.

11th. I read attentively after church the opinion of the Su-

preme Court of the United States, delivered by Chief-Justice Marshall, in the case of Worcester, the missionary, against the State of Georgia. It pronounces the law of Georgia under which Mr. Worcester is imprisoned in the penitentiary unconstitutional, null and void. There is no doubt that the execution of this sentence will be resisted and defeated by the Government of Georgia. A case of collision between the judicial authority of the Union and the authority of the State is now brought to an issue. The immediate power is in the hand of the State. The Executive of the Union is leagued with the State authority, and the two Houses of Congress are about as equally as possible divided in the case. It is clear that the Constitution and law of the Union and its judicial authority will be prostrated before the despotic power of the State; and I would it were possible for me to anticipate the course to be taken, and the measure proper to be proposed, when the information shall come back! Convinced that I can effect nothing, my own course will be to withhold myself from all action concerning it.

13th. I went up to the Capitol soon after nine this morning, and finished the draft of a bill for the meeting of the Committee on Manufactures, for the purpose of repressing frauds on the revenue. I found John S. Barbour already at the Capitol, walking about in the passage-ways. He came to the committee-room for about five minutes, before the hour of meeting of the committee, but did not attend the meeting. There were present at that, Condict, Dayan, Horn, and Worthington, to whom I read my draft of a bill made according to the recommendation of the Secretary of the Treasury, and taken chiefly from a bill reported by the Committee of Manufactures at the session before last. Diversities of opinion soon arose. Horn, very good-humoredly, opposed everything. Worthington manifested a similar disposition, with more reserve. Dayan objected to the provisions of the drafted bill, but proposed measures less energetic. Dr. Condict was earnest upon the object. We sat till noon, and adjourned till to-morrow morning, as I propose now to have daily meetings till we have determined whether to report a bill or not.



In the House, Mr. Clayton's bank investigation resolution was taken up. Collier, of New York, made a speech of an hour and a half, in which he fully exposed the system of combined banks and safety fund of that State. The political caballing; the reservation of three per cent. from the capitals of all the banks; the party combinations intertwining with them; the patronage of, by, and through three bank commissioners, with salaries each of fifteen hundred dollars a year; the holy league and covenant of banks loaning money at seven per cent. against a bank which discounts at six per cent.; with the bearing of all this upon the resolutions of the Legislature of New York instructing their Senators and requesting their Representatives to oppose the rechartering of the Bank of the United States; the jugglery of party discipline; the political frauds and hypocrisy of the party calling itself *the* Republican party; their subserviency to the regency of the Albany Argus, and their motive of recommending themselves to favor by their joint and violent attack upon Root; were all displayed in a manner at once cautious, playful, and bitter.

After he had closed, McDuffie rose merely to urge that the question might be taken to-day. I gave notice that I should, before the final question upon Mr. Clayton's resolution should be taken, offer an amendment to it, which I sent to the Chair. There was then a call of the House, and, after one call of absent members, a suspension of it. Two hundred and two members answered as present. The vote upon Root's motion, to choose the committee by ballot, was one hundred to one hundred, and the Speaker decided against the ballot—that is, to appoint the committee himself. Plumer voted for the ballot, but, before the decision was announced, changed his vote. Jenifer was unaccountably lounging about the House, and did not get within the bar till after his name was called. He asked, but was not allowed, to vote. Burges was absent, sick. Kerr, Randolph of New Jersey, Mitchell of Maryland, Ingersoll, absent. In this case, as in the choice of the Speaker, and the Apportionment bill, by carelessness and accident, always operating against right, the decision was against the declared sense of the majority of the House. Wayne's amendment was then taken up.

and he spoke for two hours, till he was so hoarse that he could not articulate, and the House adjourned, leaving his speech unfinished. Walking home with Drayton and Cambreleng, I noticed this, and Drayton said Wayne had never learned when or how to finish a speech. The Apportionment bill yesterday passed the Senate without amendment—twenty-four to twenty-three.

14th. At the Committee on Manufactures at ten. Conduct, Dayan, Worthington, Horn, present; Findlay and John S. Barbour absent. My draft of a bill was discussed without drawing near to any conclusion. Mr. Horn read a letter to him from a manufacturer expressing a strong aversion to repealing the minimum system of imposts. The majority of the committee are equally averse to it; and I told them I would report just such a bill as they should direct. But I assured them that I became from day to day more firmly convinced that this system of minimums must ultimately be abandoned, or that there would be an insurrection in the South. The main argument for sustaining the minimums in the letter to Horn was, that Congress would not directly levy so high duties as are levied by this winding process. We are to meet again tomorrow, and I told the members of the committee that I should wish to meet every morning until we shall have come to some determination upon my draft of a bill.

In the House, Wayne's proposed amendment to Clayton's resolution was taken up. He spoke for about two hours; and the instant he sat down, Hubbard, of New Hampshire, rose, moved the previous question, and a call of the House. The direct object of this was to cut off all discussion upon my proposed amendment. The call of the House was first made; and when the first call of names was gone through, Hubbard moved to suspend the call, and renewed the motion for the previous question. To this I objected that the House could not entertain *two* motions from a member at once.

The Speaker, who evidently favored Hubbard, told me the previous question did not admit of debate, unless I spoke to a point of order—which I said I did; and it was to enquire whether

the gentleman from New Hampshire could have two questions under the consideration of the House at once.

The Speaker said the question was whether the call of the House should be suspended.

Everett suggested to me while I was speaking that I might speak against that. I said I did object to the suspension of the call, because I wished every member in the city, whose attendance could be procured, should be present. I deemed my amendment extremely important, and was very anxious to have a full vote upon it. I believed the original resolution proposed a committee with powers which the House itself did not possess and was not competent to give.

The Speaker said again I could not debate the previous question; but I did not permit myself to be disconcerted by these interruptions. I said I had yesterday given notice that I should move this amendment, expressly declaring that it was to anticipate that the previous question would otherwise be moved before I could offer it. I had abstained from assigning my reason for offering it, but my object had been to show, as I thought I could, that the original resolution would transcend the legitimate powers of the House. I had no desire that any humiliating process should be pursued towards the absent members, but merely that they might be sent for and their attendance requested.

The doors were for some time closed, and then the call was by consent suspended. Mr. Hubbard's motion for the previous question was not sustained by a majority of the House. The question was taken by yeas and nays on Mr. Wayne's amendment, and lost—twenty-six to one hundred and sixty-four. My amendment was taken up. Beardsley, Hogan, and Howard successively offered amendments for delay, and supported them by speeches. Cambreleng, McDuffie, Polk, and Arnold took part in the debate. I had proposed to limit the time for receiving the report to the 14th of April. McDuffie asked me to extend it one week further, to the 21st; to which I assented. The other amendments were all rejected by successive yeas and nays. Twice the yeas and nays were taken upon motions to adjourn, which were rejected, and at last the yeas

and nays were taken upon my amendment, which was carried—one hundred and six to ninety-three. On the resolution as amended the question was taken, and carried without a division. Everett renewed the motion for the appointment of the committee by ballot—nine instead of seven—but afterwards withdrew the motion. I moved five, because the Speaker had told me that seven, having been once rejected, would be out of order. But five were thought too few. I moved seven again; and the Speaker said that would be the number if not objected to.

15th. In the House, on the reading over of the journal of yesterday, the bank investigation committee were announced—Clayton, Adams, McDuffie, R. M. Johnson, Cambreleng, Thomas of Maryland, and Watmough. The Chairman and a majority of the committee are taken from the minority of the House upon the resolution as it passed. But Watmough seemed to be satisfied with the committee. He told me it was not so bad as he had expected. The committee were notified by the Chairman to meet at ten to-morrow morning in the room of the Committee of Claims.

There came up in the House a resolution, offered some time since by General Root, for an amendment of the Constitution by changing the mode of electing the President of the United States. This was a favorable electioneering topic five years ago, but no one cares a straw about it now. Root made a short speech, but no one answered him, and he got rid of his resolution by moving its reference to the committee of the whole on the state of the Union.

The Appropriation bill came next, and a very warm debate arose upon a motion of Warren R. Davis, of South Carolina, to strike out the item for salary of a Minister to the republic of Colombia. The committee had obtained evidence that the republic of New Grenada had six seaports on the Atlantic and three on the Pacific Ocean, by a letter from General Santander, now at New York. Bullard, of Louisiana, congratulated the Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations upon the discoveries in physical geography that he had made since this subject was last before the House. This sarcasm quite upset Archer's philosophy and put him in a passion. This item was

passed over for further consideration. The additional item of thirty-five thousand dollars for contingencies to the Turkish Legation was also passed over, and the bill was reported by the committee to the House.

Before the adjournment, I asked to be excused from further service upon the Committee on Manufactures; but it was late, and, at the request of Colonel Richard M. Johnson and of other members, I waived the motion for the present, giving notice of my intention to renew it to-morrow morning.

16th. Met at ten o'clock, the Bank Investigation Committee—Clayton, McDuffie, R. M. Johnson, Cambreleng, Thomas, of Maryland, Watmough, and myself—first in the room of the Committee of Claims of the House, from which we passed into the committee-room of the Committee of Commerce. Some arrangements were made for going to Philadelphia together. There was some question with regard to expenses and allowances by the House to the committee. It was agreed to consult the precedents of the committee which in the year 1819 was sent to Philadelphia on a similar commission, particularly the accounts of their expenses. I observed from recollection that the committee on that occasion agreed among themselves to accept no invitations to dinner or to evening parties. I proposed the same agreement now; and it was so unanimously determined. We agreed to meet again at ten to-morrow morning.

At the meeting of the Committee on Manufactures, Dr. Condict, Dayan, and Worthington were present; Findlay, Horn, and J. S. Barbour were absent. My draft of a bill for preventing frauds on the revenue was further discussed, without coming to any conclusion. Agreed to meet again Monday morning.

In the House, I renewed my request to be excused from further service on the Committee on Manufactures, for reasons which I briefly stated. Much to my surprise, it excited considerable debate; to abridge which, and particularly at the request of Mr. Wayne, of Georgia, I withdrew the motion for the present, reserving to myself the right of renewing it before the departure of the Bank Committee for Philadelphia.

The General Appropriation bill was taken up, and many of the items discussed in committee of the whole were again debated. I took part only in that upon the item of thirty-five thousand dollars for contingencies of the Legation to the Porte. Archer, Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations, now explained the purpose of the appropriation, which was for presents upon the negotiation and exchange of ratifications of the treaty. Archer gave a succinct account of the negotiations, and did full justice to the preceding Administration with regard to these transactions. The appropriation was partially opposed from various quarters, and especially by E. Whittlesey, of Ohio, who objected to it as a payment of tribute. I supported the whole appropriation, and it was carried almost unanimously, though Archer at one time had consented, at the instance of McDuffie, to reduce it to twenty-six thousand dollars. The calls from all parts of the House for the whole appropriation were such that McDuffie finally gave up his objection to any part of it.

This was the second instance of effect produced by my share in a debate favorable to the opinion I sustained. The first was in the passage of my amendment to the bank investigation resolution. It increases beyond expression my anxieties; as do the reasons assigned by several members for objecting to excuse me from the Committee on Manufactures. It was near six in the evening when the House adjourned.

Mr. Stansbury, the reporter, brought me just at the adjournment the notes taken by the Englishman, Codd, of my reasons assigned for asking to be excused from the Committee on Manufactures. Gales and Seaton wished to have the revised notes by nine this evening, to publish with the debate in the *Intelligencer* to-morrow morning; but the notes were so incorrect that I found it would be necessary to write them all over again. I could not correct them, and when they sent for them in the evening I returned them by the boy, sending word that they were too incorrect for publication.

17th. I attended this morning at the Bank Investigation Committee. All the members present. Mr. Cambreleng said he would not be ready to go before next Wednesday. It was then determined to go that day. Judge Clayton takes his wife and

child with him, and goes separately. Mr. Thomas goes to Frederick to-morrow, and will meet us at Baltimore, Wednesday evening. McDuffie, Johnson, Cambreleng, Watmough, and myself are to go together in an extra stage, which I engaged to procure, and which is to come and take us up at the door of the House at one o'clock next Wednesday.

I called and saw Mr. Webster at his lodgings, and enquired of him the state of the Apportionment bill. He said his amendment had failed by a vote of twenty-four to twenty-three, Mr. Clay being absent, and probably to avoid voting against the amendment, as, if present, he would have done. He said Frelinghuysen and Tomlinson had also voted against us, and now Chambers and Naudain were called away by sickness in their families.

19th. Attended at ten the Committee on Manufactures. Condict, Horn, Dayan, Worthington, present. Barbour there a few minutes, but went away to attend a meeting of the Virginia delegation. I read my draft of a bill for the prevention of frauds on the revenue. Mr. Horn is the most intractable member of the committee. It is impossible to bring him to agree to anything. Mr. Dayan has been very inflexible too, but he was this day a little more yielding. We are to meet again to-morrow.

I went to the Senate-chamber, at the door of which I met Mr. Webster, with whom I went into the committee-room, and we talked over the Apportionment bill and the tariff. The former, he said, would have no chance of amendment if called up before the return of Mr. Chambers, of Maryland, and Dr. Naudain, of Delaware. I desired him, if he could, to keep it till my return—which he said he would. Of the tariff he spoke with much uncertainty. I pressed him upon the abandonment of the minimums and the return to ad valorem duties.

He could not come to it, for he is too closely tied to Clay. He asked me if I would repeal the duty on wool. I said, yes, upon coarse wool, as part of the disposition to ad valorem duties. He said, no, he could not do that; it had prodigiously increased the breed of sheep, and the repeal of it would be very unpopular in New England. I said a bounty upon raising sheep

might benefit agriculture, but to tax the indispensable raw material one hundred per cent.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Webster seemed apprehensive that the final compromise of interests would be made at the expense of New England.

Judge Baldwin called upon me, and finally Thomas R. Mitchell, of South Carolina. Baldwin said Judge Wilkins was about to propose in the Senate, as an amendment to Mr. Clay's resolution, his (Baldwin's) plan for the modification of the tariff—ad valorem duties, cash payments, and a duty on sales at auction. The Judge was very anxious that I should see and converse with Mr. Wilkins upon his plan. He said he should see Wilkins again in the morning, and would ask him to call upon me in the House. Mitchell came to urge me not to persist in my request to be excused from serving further in the Committee on Manufactures. He thought I could render much service by conciliating the parties. I told him I could accomplish nothing—having not the slightest weight with either of the parties. He said that he and his friends were exceedingly unwilling to vote upon the question, but that, if I did insist, he should call for the yeas and nays. It is clear that if I renew the request it will have the appearance of seeking more compliments, and with this notice that the yeas and nays would be called, I should be suspected of forcing them as a trophy to my own importance. They do not wish to vote at all upon it, and if I compel them to vote they will attribute it to my own self-sufficiency. My situation is distressing deeply, without prospect of coming out of it creditably; but I cannot withdraw from it, and must abide by the issue, such as a higher power may dispense.

20th. Met the Committee on Manufactures at ten. Condict, J. S. Barbour, Dayan, Horn, Worthington, present; Findlay absent. I thought it necessary to bring something to a point, and had drafted a bill for the prevention of frauds on the revenue. After much discussion, the members of the committee agreed it should be reported, except Mr. Horn, who said he should oppose it with all his power. It is a bill predicated upon the principle that the present tariff system is to be

<sup>1</sup> This sentence left imperfect.



maintained, which I believe not only impolitic but impracticable. I proposed to report this bill because it was urged strongly by the manufacturers, and because I wish to see how it will meet the public opinion. There is such a total diversity of opinions upon every question concerning the tariff, that, had it not been for this emergency, I doubt whether I should have brought them to report my bill at all upon the frauds.

I met for a moment the Bank Investigation Committee, and we five agreed to go from the House itself at one to-morrow.

21st. I attended the Committee on Manufactures at ten. Condict, Horn, Dayan, J. S. Barbour, and Worthington were present; Findlay absent. I read my two fragments of a draft for a report upon the modification of the tariff—parts of which were satisfactory to one member and displeasing to another, other parts were the reverse. It was to no one entirely satisfactory.

On the meeting of the House, when the reports from standing committees were called for by the Speaker, I reported from the Committee on Manufactures a bill for the prevention of frauds on the revenue; which, at my motion, was read a first and second time by its title. I then moved that it should be printed and referred to the committee of the whole House on the state of the Union. Root moved that the bill should be read; and three or four sections were read, upon which Root moved to suspend the reading of the remainder. I took the occasion of reporting this bill to say that I should not renew the request to be excused from further service on the Committee on Manufactures, for which I assigned my reasons, and apologized to the House for having given them any trouble on the subject.

PHILADELPHIA, 22d.—We came to the United States Hotel, directly opposite to the bank, and in half an hour were in committee. Judge Clayton's wife and child were with him. Mr. Cambreleng and Colonel Watmough were appointed a sub-committee to engage a clerk. It was resolved that Judge Clayton, the Chairman, should write to the President of the bank, Mr. Biddle, and notify to him our commission and our arrival, and proposing to call on him at the bank to-morrow morning at ten. We discussed the question about the charge

against the bank of subsidizing the press. I persisted in my objection against the pretension to try or censure individuals whom we had no right to summon for examination into their transactions nor to condemn unheard. The question was postponed. We found invitations to a ball this evening, at Mrs. John Sergeant's; but we confirmed our previous determination to accept no invitations to dinner or evening parties. An exception was made for Colonel Watmough this evening, he being here at home, and Mrs. Sergeant's brother. He undertook to offer excuses for the rest of us.

23d. The committee met immediately after breakfast. The answer from the President of the bank was read, announcing his readiness to receive the committee at ten this morning. The committee proceeded to the bank, and met there the President, Mr. Biddle, and three Directors—Horace Binney, Thomas Cadwalader, and Manuel Eyre. Mr. Biddle presented a verbal, short, and comprehensive exposition of the affairs and condition of the bank, with reference to a number of documents, which he exhibited. The committee then retired to their room, and adjourned to meet at two o'clock at the bank again. William B. Reed was appointed clerk to the committee. At the meeting at two o'clock, Mr. Clayton presented a portion of his charges against the bank, with some new ones, and Mr. McDuffie presented those originally advanced by Mr. Clayton, but which he had now omitted. Mr. Biddle was requested to furnish a copy of the verbal statement which he had made in the morning.

Here occurs a blank in the record, spreading over nearly eight months. The minutes remaining, from which it was the purpose of the writer to fill it up, are not deemed sufficiently perfect for publication. The diary is resumed at the beginning of the twelfth volume.

WASHINGTON, *December* 1st.—Walking round the Capitol Hill this morning, I met and spoke to Andrew Stevenson, Speaker of the House of Representatives; also C. A. Wickliffe, a member of the House from Kentucky, and several other members of Congress. Mr. Featherstonhaugh paid me a morning visit.