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BY GEORGE HOWARD.
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DOMESTIC.

From the Raleigh Standard.
Gen. SPEIGHT'S DEFENCE.
Washington, Feb. 15, 1835.
Mr. White: I see in the "Star" of the 12th inst. that the "malign influence" is out; and, like many other poor and unfortunate victims, I am doomed to feel its baneful effects. The "narrative," as it has been very properly styled, must doubtless prove a delicious treat, particularly when it is borne in mind that it was delivered in the Senate, and, stripped as it is of much of its original composition. Surely, I should not attempt to arrest its mighty progress, but for the notice taken of my humble self. I should most cheerfully have permitted the author to wear all the laurels which he can possibly gather by a development of his court gossip and petty court quarrels, had he not thought it fit and proper to introduce into his "narrative" a private letter of mine, written, as he well knows, under the impressions made by his misrepresentations.
My object is not to meddle with any of the author's statements, but to show how I came to write the letter, which will be done in a very few words. The author states: "Before I read the letter, I will state to the Senate, that the gentleman professed to be my ardent friend whilst I was Secretary of the Navy, and thus became intimately acquainted with the causes which embarrassed and finally dissolved the Cabinet." Indeed, and was this the first evidence of my friendship? I remember to have been in the Legislature in 1822, when he was first elected to the U. States Senate. I was then his open and sincere friend; and while many of his new allies were pouring out their denunciations upon him, I used every effort in my power, and not without success, to procure his election. Again in 1823, I stood by him.
And now for our connexion at Washington. When I came to this place in 1829, the author made the same representations to me in relation to the state of affairs, which he has exhibited in his "narrative;" and frequently represented to me that there was an attempt to force his family to visit Mrs. Eaton; and towards the close of his ministerial career, he attributed the whole to the artifices of Mr. Van Buren.

At and during the time above alluded to, I was his sincere friend, and did advise him, on more occasions than one, to pursue the course which his own notions of propriety dictated. As to Mrs. Eaton, or her character, I know nothing but from report. I never called on her in life; and were I to meet her this day, I should not know her. It was natural for me, as the intimate friend of the author, to believe what he said of her; though I fear that he and her persecutors have done her great injustice.
I will not pretend to describe the feelings which arose in my mind, when I heard of the dissolution of the Cabinet. I felt that, if it were true, as the author of the late "narrative" and his friends at Washington had represented it, General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren were both greatly to blame. With these feelings, I wrote to the author to give me the causes of the "blow out." In a few days thereafter, I received from him the two following letters, to which my letter published in his awful "narrative" is an answer:
Washington City, May 1st, 1831.
My Dear Sir: I have just received your friendly favour of the 23d ultimo; and I pray you, Dear Sir, accept my thanks for the kind interest you take in the transactions alluded to in yours, as connected with my personal feelings and reputation. I have not time to enter into a detailed statement of the circumstances which have led to this state of things, nor to point out to you the causes which have produced its consummation. On most of these points I am persuaded you will be at no loss; you have seen and heard enough during your residence at Washington, from which to derive a clue to the general understanding of the matter; and probably before the lapse of much time, a full and satisfactory explanation will be given by some of the parties concerned.
I take the liberty of enclosing to you a copy of a letter which I had prepared to address to a few of my friends in North Carolina, and amongst others yourself. You are at liberty to give it publicity in any form you please. From a sense of duty to the nation; I remain in the Department until my successor arrives. This is no little sacrifice; but the duty is imperative, and I obey.
Accept, dear sir, the assurance of continued esteem and great respect,
JOHN BRANCH.
Hon. Jesse Speight, Stantonsburg.
Washington City, May 3d, 1831.
My Dear Sir: You have no doubt before this seen in the papers, accounts of the resignations of the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of War, and the dismissal of the other members of the Cabinet.
The letters of the two former, addressed to the President of the U. States, present their reasons for resigning; and the motives for the dismissal of the others, are assigned in the answer of the President to the Secretary of the Treasury and myself. In these the President admits, that the dismissed officers have faithfully discharged their respective duties. But intimates that the want of harmony in the Cabinet, and the protection of the two resigning Secretaries "from unjust misconceptions and malignant misrepresentations," made it necessary the others should go out also.

So far as regards the members of the Cabinet, this measure is comparatively of little moment.—It is, however, a matter of deep concern, as affecting the character of the Government. In this point of view, the American people have a right to know the whole truth;—from whence the alleged discord originated; by whom and for what purposes it has been fostered; and in what respect and wherefore it has been connected with the public administration of the affairs of the nation. The President is bound to make these explanations to the people.
If it were intended to be intimated that I am responsible for the want of harmony in the Cabinet, the charge is unjust. I deny that I pursued a course which ought to have invited hostility; on the contrary, I went as far as a man of honor could go in endeavoring to promote a good understanding, and a cordial official co-operation with all the members of the Cabinet. But it seems I was expected to go still further; and not doing so, it has been held good cause for my dismissal.
If it is asked why I did not abandon the Cabinet and expose to the world the *malign influences* by which it was abandoned, I shall reply that I constantly looked forward to a favorable change. That especially I relied for this upon the wisdom, fairness and justice of the Chief Magistrate. I have been disappointed. I have had the deep mortification to see him gradually discarding from his counsels and friendship, his old and long tried supporters, and throwing himself into the arms of persons whose cold-hearted selfishness and artifices were played off upon him for true and faithful service.
In the mean time, rest assured that whatever may be the public judgment as to the merits of this question, no consideration arising from personal feeling will induce me to take a course which I should not believe calculated to maintain the character and promote the interest of the State which gave me birth.
Business of importance, especially as enabling me to settle down permanently in North Carolina, will probably require my presence in Tennessee, where I may be detained until August next.
On my return to my family, I hope to meet you, when I shall be highly gratified to renew that social and friendly intercourse which heretofore, so much to my satisfaction, has subsisted between us.
In the mean time, I beg you to receive assurances of great respect and esteem.
JOHN BRANCH.
Hon. Jesse Speight, Speight's Bridge, Greene County, North Carolina.
Upon the receipt of these letters, I wrote to the author of the late "narrative" the letter which he has paraded and published. I wrote as I then felt, that a friend had been treated unjustly. And so I continued to think until a few weeks thereafter, when he returned home.
Let us now see if his subsequent conduct was calculated to bear me out in this belief. It is known, that at that time the Hon. Mr. Bynum, the present representative, was a candidate for the Halifax district; and that soon after the return of the unfortunate author from this place, he was brought out as a candidate in opposition to him. And here, I am sorry to say, is another striking proof of the ingratitude which he is capable of exercising towards his friends.

It is known that Mr. Bynum had been his long and devoted friend, and was brought out by the administration party for Congress before the dissolution of the Cabinet. But after the unfortunate author returned home, he suffered himself to be held up as a candidate in opposition to Mr. Bynum,—not however, as the enemy of Gen. Jackson, but as his "personal friend, whom he expected to meet as cordially as ever, and shake by the hand and spend many a social moment with." These and many other similar expressions, were made use of by him repeatedly, as I can prove by the Hon. Messrs. Bynum and M. T. Hawkins, and others. And finally, after repeated declarations of friendship towards Gen. Jackson, and his desire to come to Congress only to expose the "malign influence;"—terms of capitulation took place between him and Mr. Bynum, (whereby the latter withdrew) in which the following words were used, viz:
"We, with the Governor (John Branch) believe, from the facts disclosed to us that our venerable President, although like other men not exempt from the frailties of human nature, has done nothing in this matter that cannot be forgiven,"—done nothing for which we should abandon him,—done nothing improper, which did not result from his peculiar situation: (signed) Jno. H. Patterson, Jno. Haywood, Thos. Jones, Jesse Dawson.
The above is an extract, to which the unfortunate author assented. The characters of the gentlemen signing it, are too well known for their statement to be questioned.
Let it be remembered, that all this took place in less than three months after the dissolution of the Cabinet, and after he had written the above letter to me. Now, it occurred to me, if the unfortunate author who had been thus "sans ceremonie" kicked out of office, could forgive the doer of it, that I could. Comment is unnecessary. I ask any candid man to look at and compare the parts in italics, and let any one produce such an instance of inconsistency and contradiction. What could I think, who had been induced to believe that he had been so unjustly treated by the President? I confess I was utterly astonished, when a friend (who heard him make a speech in Scotland Neck) told me that Gov. Branch had said that he was as much the friend of Gen. Jackson as ever, and expected so to meet him, and I so repeatedly expressed myself; and added, that I feared he had been imposed upon by a faction at Washington, whose track I had gotten upon the winter before.
Towards the close of the session, previous to the dissolution of the Cabinet, I had

been induced to believe that Mr. Van Buren was intriguing to get himself into the Presidency; but I found out that those who accused him, were then or had been trying to play the same game themselves.
I come now to events which happened during the next winter. In a short time after I had been here, he applied to know if I would bear a note to Gen. Jackson, asking for some letter he had written him, or a copy; as well as I remember, to which I assented; but on reflection, I declined, and advised him to call in person, for I thought I discovered in him a disposition to bring me in into a difficulty. Instead of that friendship which he had manifested for the President in his electioneering speeches, I saw that he entertained the most deadly hostility in his heart against him, and shake him by the hand? Did he not join in the most violent persecution of him? Can he point to a single vote he gave that was not with the opposition? It was well known that the bank question was a measure intended to break down Gen. Jackson, and elect Mr. Clay. What was his course on that question? In every instance he voted for the enemy, except upon the main question. His whole conversation was about the "malign influence," and in abuse of Mr. Lewis, Mr. Kendall, and others, about whom I knew nothing: And, for no cause under Heaven, but that I would not make myself his ready and subservient tool in a crusade against these men and against the administration, have I experienced his displeasure. I challenge him to point to a single case in which I have attempted to injure him; I have joined in no persecution against him: But merely because I have had the independence to think and act for myself, have I incurred his hostility.
I am charged by him, as being subservient to the "powers that be," in support of all their measures. Does that unfortunate gentleman know the manner in which he is viewed, as having stood to the administration? What measure, however obnoxious, did Gen'l. Jackson ever adopt, but met his hearty approbation? During his continuance in the Cabinet, he was the most despised of all the members; and mainly on account of his proscriptive policy. Did he not approve of the plan for a treasury bank? Did he oppose the course which the President pursued in relation to the present to the Ottoman Porte?
I have supported this administration from principle; and because I was sent here to do it,—I have too much self-respect to betray my trust; If I had feared vituperation and abuse, I would have pursued another course; I look for no other reward

than that of a clear conscience, and the approbation of my constituents. I seek no office; there is none I want. I am willing that my conduct and that of the unfortunate gentleman, should be put side by side; and then it will be seen which savors most of subserviency.
I have supported Mr. Van Buren for Vice President, because I saw that the wicked had combined to destroy him. I believe him to be both honest, and capable for any station. I have contributed as far as I was able, to the re-election of Mr. Brown. I have been associated with him long enough to discover that he is an honest man; and one who goes for the good of his country. And notwithstanding the "malign influence" has tried to kill us both, we have made out to get along thus far.
I have only to say, in conclusion, that if it was deemed necessary to read my letter, it seems to me that it would have been quite as fair to have done it when the author and myself were in Congress together. He came here to expose the "malign influence." He heard me make a speech on the removal of the Wiscasset collector, in which I alluded to the dissolution of the Cabinet, in connexion with other events; and then, it seems to me, would have been the proper time to have made the assault.
J. SPEIGHT.
Resolutions to Expunge.—In the U. S. Senate on the 18th ult. Mr. Benton submitted a resolution for expunging from the journals of that body the resolutions passed the last session censuring the President. Mr. Poindexter having objected to the resolution, on the ground that it was out of order:—
Mr. Brown, (of North Carolina) rose and said, that it appeared to him, with great deference to the Senator from Mississippi, that the remarks which had fallen from him, and the course which he had indicated, was at once novel and indefensible. Whenever a proposition stated any thing which was derogatory to the character of the Senate, or was indecorous in its language, it might be arrested in its incipient state. But it was not pretended that this resolution contained any thing which was derogatory to the Senate, or indecorous in itself. What then was the objection urged against the reception of the resolution? The Senator from Mississippi said that it was unconstitutional to alter the journal. This was anticipating a conclusion which could only be reached through an investigation. It must be decided, after an examination of the subject, whether the act would be unconstitutional or not. Yet the Senator from Mississippi would arrest the inquiry in its incipient stage. The Legislatures of as many as four or five States had instructed the Senators on this point: would the Senate refuse to entertain a proposition recommended by so many sovereign States?
After some further remarks from Mr. Brown, Mr. Poindexter withdrew the objection on request of Mr. Leigh; when, on motion of Mr. Benton, the resolution was ordered to be printed.