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SPEECH OF MR. WISE.

OF THE CAUSES OF THE LOSS OF THE FORTIFICATION BILL OF THE LAST SESSION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Friday, Jan. 22.
After Mr. A. has concluded his speech, Mr. WISE addressed the House to the following effect:

Mr. Speaker, I did not expect this discussion to arise to-day. I was in preparation for it on another occasion, and if my facts, and inferences from them, be not presented so well arranged as they might be, and as is desirable they should be, I hope I shall be excused on the score of being thus called upon unexpectedly. The whole matter shall be laid in print, and I trust this has become a very important subject, and should be so considered. The question, "Who is responsible for the failure of the fortification bill of the last session?" is now made to supersede almost every other question, no matter how deeply, presently, and immediately it may involve the most important public interests for the future. I readily confess that I should be providing for the future rather than squabbling about the past. But so it is, "the party" has seen fit to make this a test question of political merit; it has been discussed in all the public prints, particularly in that which is the organ of the Administration, it is made the most prominent subject of discussion in Congress; the most woful misrepresentations concerning it have obtained currency and credence; the innocent are made to bear the sins of the guilty; truth and justice both have been violated; a presidential canvass is made, in part to depend upon this question; the public mind is anxiously inquiring about it, and I am determined that the whole truth shall be told, and that all the light which I can shed upon it shall be given to the world. The discussion thus far has been perfectly blindfold. By one party the Senate, by another the House of Representatives, has been charged with the loss of that bill. Now, sir, the main fact which I rise to establish is, that neither the Senate nor the House of Representatives is justly chargeable with its failure.

I say, sir, let all crimination and recrimination between the Senate and House of Representatives, both innocent, forever cease, for I can prove by this journal (holding up the journal of the last House) alone and by other indubitable testimony besides, that neither the Senate nor the House was responsible or censurable for the failure of that bill. The Senate did its duty, the House did its duty, and both were not only willing but anxious for its passage. No blame for its failure is fairly attributable to either. Called upon to say upon whom the blame should fall, I say, as Nathan said unto David, "thou art the man!" (pointing directly at Mr. Cambreleng.)

Sir, let not the gentleman from New York (Mr. C.) take this as personally unfriendly or unkind. That gentleman has always been courteous and kind to me, and I desire ever to be courteous and kind to him. But truth and duty impose a task upon me on this occasion, which I must perform, regardless of all personal considerations. This subject is introduced by himself, the question is up, it is fair to discuss it, he is here, present to defend himself, eye to eye, and face to face; this House is the place for the trial before the eyes of the whole nation, and the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—so help us God! should go forth to the People from this Capitol!

I here make the charge as I believe it, from the journal, my own evidence, and that of others, to be true, and I appeal to the facts to sustain it. To the facts, then,—to the facts!
On the night of Tuesday, the 3d of March, 1835, on the three millions amendment to bill No. 409, "An act making appropriations for certain fortification for the year 1835," was reported by the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union. That amendment reads as follows:

"And to be further enacted, That the sum of three millions of dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to be expended in whole or in part, under the direction of the President of the U. States, for the military and naval service, including fortifications and ordnance, and increase of the navy; provided such expenditures shall be rendered necessary for the defence of the country prior to the next meeting of Congress."
On the question that the House do concur with the committee in this amendment, the vote stood: Yeas 100; Nays 77. Number of votes, 186.
I beg of the House to mark the number of votes given, as I proceed.
On the bill to establish branches of the Mint, the next vote, upon a call of yeas and nays, was, Yeas 115; Nays 60. Number of votes, 175.
A message was afterwards received from the Senate, informing the House that they disagreed to the three millions amendment. A motion was then made by Mr. Gilmer that the House do recede from its amendment. The previous question was then called, and on the main question, "Will the House recede from the said amendment?" the vote stood: Yeas 57; Nays 110. Number of votes, 167.

The House then insisted on its amendment, and sent a message to inform the Senate. The Senate then returned a message that the Senate disagreed to the House's amendment.

A motion was then made by Mr. Cambreleng that the House do adhere to their said amendment.

(Here the Speaker interrupted Mr. Wise, saying it was not in order to call members by name on the floor. Mr. Wise replied that he was reading from the Journal of the last Congress.)
Upon a motion then to recede, the previous question was demanded, and upon the question, "Will the House recede?" the vote stood: Yeas 58; Nays 107. Number of votes, 165.
A motion was then made by Mr. Hubbard that the House do ask a conference, which resolution was carried, and Mr. Cambreleng, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Hubbard were appointed managers to conduct the said conference on the part of the House.

Here, sir, permit me to remark that the Hon. Dixon H. Lewis, of Alabama, has not yet arrived, from indisposition, and he is not here to testify. I wish, for the sake of a full development, he was in his place. But, Sir, Mr. Cambreleng is now in this House, and Mr. Hubbard is now in the Senate.

(Here the Speaker again interposed, and said the gentleman was out of order in calling gentlemen by their names.)
Mr. Wise again replied that he was reading from the Journal of the last Congress.
The Speaker said the gentleman named was not in the House.
Mr. Wise proceeded: Well, sir, Mr. Hubbard, of the last Congress, is now in this House, and Mr. Hubbard, of the last Congress, is now in the Senate, and Mr. Cambreleng, of the last Congress, is now in this House, and Mr. Hubbard, of the last Congress, is now in the Senate. The whole truth in his place, if the gentlemen will come out fully, as they should. Each House of this Congress is supplied from the committee of conference of the last session with a witness of all the facts, who can, if he will, disclose the real truth of this whole transaction. Will they tell this whole truth? Will they satisfy the public mind? Will they disclose all, and conceal nothing? I pray them to speak out, and hold nothing back, for the sake of truth and justice! Sir, I could not sit in my seat calmly and coolly, and suffer the torture of this controversy, which less rise and speak, bringing the whole truth, without disclosing it fully. I could not permit innocence in my sight to go unpunished, and I am determined that I should fall on my own head by disclosing the truth. I could not see violence done to truth and justice whilst I was present ready with the means of vindicating both. Let the witnesses, the best witnesses the case admits of, come forward and testify fully as to all the facts, known or unknown! Will they do it!

(Here Mr. Cambreleng said he would tell all.) I am glad to hear it, and I shall congratulate the country and the friends of truth and justice, if all be told. But to proceed.
The Senate was notified of the request for a conference.
The House then proceeded to the consideration of the bill to render permanent the present mode of supplying the Army, &c. which took up considerable time. Mr. Briggs, from the Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills, reported the examination of two enrolled bills, and Mr. Dickerson reported that forty-four bills had been presented to the President, the titles of which were named. Mr. Ashley, of Missouri, during this time also made several motions, which occupied considerable time, to take up a harbor bill, which does not appear on the journal.
And at this and every point of time the House was delayed by continual efforts to take up particular subjects not in order.

The House then proceeded to the consideration of the Cumberland road bill. Previous to the vote on this bill, the conferees on the three millions amendment had returned into the House.
(Mr. Cambreleng here said, No, no; he had remained in the House after being appointed on the committee of conference until the vote on the Cumberland road bill, and voted on that bill; that the committee did not return to the House until about the time of the vote on the Moore and Letcher resolutions, which was sometime after twelve o'clock.)
Mr. Wise proceeded. Sir, the gentleman must be mistaken, or he is guilty of a neglect of duty in delaying so long to attend the committee of conference. From the time of the appointment of the conferees until the vote on the Cumberland road bill, more than an hour elapsed, and if the gentleman was so conscientious about the time of night he legislated, he should have hastened to do his duty on the committee of conference, lest the House should exercise before this precious bill could be considered. As he did not, he should on that ground, if on no other, be held responsible. But, sir, my recollection is, that the committee of conference returned into the House before the vote on the Cumberland road bill; and just before or at the time of that vote the first notice that I heard was given of the hour. The vote on the Cumberland road bill was taken up after twelve o'clock at night, I know, from two circumstances. Mr. Gilmer, of Georgia, then whom no man is more honest and no man more unaffectedly scrupulous on points of conscience, when his name was called, rose, pulled out his watch, and audibly announced it to the House that he could no longer sit in his place and vote, for the reason that the hour of twelve had arrived. He immediately left the House. He practised *bona fide* what he professed. He gave me the first notice of the time, and of the question whether in fact we were defunct. He did not depend upon that false clock face (pointing to the clock above the Speaker's chair), the hands of which were made that night to point backwards. It was the first time in my life I ever saw old Time flying backwards; the old man's eye had returned to their youth again. I wish that clock was all that is false which is in this Capitol! He relied on his own watch, which was regulated by his conscience. Thus reminded of the hour, and struck by the conduct of Mr. Gilmer, upon whose watch, and whose conscience I could rely, I was on the point of making opposition to the bill before the House, for reason of the hour, as well as of constitutional objections, when I was prevented by my friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. McKenney), who held me down, in a playful way in my seat, which circumstance he may recollect. Thus I am certain, that when the vote on the Cumberland road bill was taken, the hour had come and was past! I voted on that bill on account of my constitutional objections to it, and declined several votes afterwards, until my colleague (Mr. Mercer) and others convinced me there was no foundation for the objection to voting after twelve o'clock. On the question "Shall the bill pass?" the vote stood: Yeas 94; Nays 80. Number of votes, 174.

This, sir,—this was the last *bona fide* vote of the last House of Representatives. Here it died, strangled by fraud and foul play!
I beg of the House to step back a moment with me, whilst I collect together and group the facts which I wish borne along in our remembrance, when approaching other facts, which follow.

The House will please to remember that the committee of conference was appointed long before the vote on the Cumberland road bill, and time enough for them to have reported before the hour expired.
Remember that the committee of conference returned just before or at the time of the vote on the Cumberland road bill, or just before or at the time of the vote on the Moore and Letcher resolutions. I care not which.
That from the offering of the three millions amendment until the Cumberland road bill, inclusive, the yeas and nays were called five times, showing at the different times 186, 175, 197, 195, and, immediately preceding the Moore and Letcher resolutions, 174 members present and voting!
Mark now the names of those who voted on the Cumberland road bill knowingly and willingly, with proclamation of notice, after 12 o'clock at night. Among the yeas in favor of that bill we find the name of Samuel Beardsley, a gentleman who, in a breath afterwards, excused himself from voting, for the reason "that the term for which the members of the 23d Congress had been elected had expired!"—Such is the vote, and such the reason for not voting, as the journal shows beyond dispute.
(Here Mr. Beardsley said that by his watch he was not to sit after 12 o'clock when the vote on the Cumberland road bill was taken. He recollected there was a diversity of opinion about the hour.)
Well, sir, the gentleman has served in more than one Congress; did he ever know any diversity of opinion, any question about the hour, before the last night of the last session!
(Mr. Beardsley said, he could not submit to this.)
I know, sir, from childhood up that conscientiousness is pleasant, but when truth is suffering violence we must all submit patiently to be questioned, and the nation must know all the facts and the whole intent in this case. But perhaps by that gentleman's watch it was not 12 o'clock, though it was soon afterwards. I know it was 12 o'clock and past, for I remember well that fact, that Mr. Gilmer, whose conscience did keep a strict watch over his time, announced it to the House, and departed from his seat, which he never did unless compelled by sickness or a sense of duty, and I know that it was held in my seat by the strong arm of a strong friend of the Cumberland road bill. The name of that gentleman is not the only name which I wish the House to recollect among the votes on this bill after 12 o'clock at night. Among the yeas, sir, we find the name of Churchill C. Cambreleng.

(Here the Speaker again interrupted Mr. Wise, for calling members by name.)
Mr. Wise again said, I claim the right to read the Journal of the last session of Congress. Names, dates, persons, facts, are what are wanted. I cannot get along unless I am permitted to call things by their right names! It is impossible for me to get along with anything like a connected relation of facts, if I am thus to be interrupted.

The Speaker said the gentleman has the right to read from the journal. I thought he was naming a gentleman in this House.)

Mr. Wise replied, I have told you, Mr. Speaker, repeatedly, that I was reading from the journal, and I claim the right to read plainly out the name of Churchill C. Cambreleng! (Cries of "go on! go on!")
As soon as Churchill C. Cambreleng gave this vote and all the votes were told, after 12 o'clock at night, Churchill C. Cambreleng, the Chairman of the committee of conference, might as well have done his duty and made his report to the House. But this is not all. Two enrolled bills were next reported, one of which the Speaker signed after 12 o'clock at night confidentially.

Mr. Jarvis (of Maine) then moved the following resolution:
"Resolved, That the hour having arrived when the term for which this House was elected has expired, we do now adjourn."
Sir, note that here is a resolution offered to the House, giving additional notice to that of Mr. Gilmer, that the hour had come. Note by whom this resolution was offered: by a gentleman who afterwards voted.

(The Chair again interposed for calling proper names.)
Mr. Wise, I read from the journal. I call the attention of the House to the fact that here is a resolution to adjourn for the reason of the time of night, that the hour had come—that we were dead. Mr. Jones (of Georgia) also immediately moved to adjourn, for the purpose of trying whether the House thought it could sit after 12 o'clock. Here is double notice to all who had conscientious scruples. It was necessary. When was the want of a quorum to do this!

A motion was then made to suspend the rules to take up the Moore and Letcher resolutions. It passed in the affirmative. Where was the want of a quorum to prevent doing this! After debate, the previous question was moved and demanded. On the question "Will the House recede to the resolution as herein recited?" the vote stood: Yeas 111; Nays 21. Number of votes, 132.
No quorum! but among the yeas I find the names of John Quincy Adams and Churchill C. Cambreleng! Yes, sir, both voting long after all had been thrice notified that the hour had come! Where were their consciences!

(The Chair here said it was not in order to include in personalities or to refer to motives.)
Mr. Wise, why, sir, the gentleman before me (Mr. C.) is continually assuring me that he does not object to be named, and why should the Speaker? No member calls to order, and I hope I shall be permitted to proceed. The gentleman from Massachusetts has said that gentlemen refused to vote after 12 o'clock, for reason of "conscientious scruples." I put the question, then, in more charitable phrase: *where were their scruples?* Not only had Mr. Gilmer retired, announcing beforehand his reason, but two resolutions had been expressly offered to adjourn, assigning the reason that the hour had expired—notice given verbally and in writing before this vote was taken. Where were the scruples of the gentleman then who refused to give as one reason for not reporting from the committee of conference that the hour had come!

But, sir, the most important fact at this point of time to be noted is, that at one moment you see 197, at another 195, immediately preceding this moment 174 members present and voting; and of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, as if by magic, there is no quorum! Sir, at the sound of the whistle the Rhododendron Dismas disappeared! Where did they go—why?

Two enrolled bills were next reported as having been presented to the President for his signature and a message was next received from the President notifying the House—the House of course then in being, after long after 12 o'clock—that he had approved and signed more

than 70 enrolled bills. The President, this proves, was in the Speaker's room after 12 o'clock at night, signing bills. It is notorious he was in that room signing bills after that time of night, after Mr. Gilmer retired, and after the resolution of Mr. Jarvis to adjourn.

(The Chair again interrupted Mr. Wise for mentioning names.)
Mr. Wise asked what names!
The Chair. The name of Mr. Jarvis.
Mr. Wise. I am reading from the journal.
The Chair. I did not so understand the gentleman.
Mr. Wise. Why, sir, those names which I am reading from the journal did according to conscience, on the 3d of March last.
Mr. Mercer said his colleague (Mr. Wise) must necessarily refer to the names of members of the last Congress.
Mr. Wise. I claim the right to do so, and protest against this interruption of the Speaker!
The Chair declined any intention to interrupt the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. Wise. I hope I may proceed then without in eruption. A motion was received from the Senate as to enrolled bills, signed by the President. How could we receive this message if we were dead! A motion was again made by Mr. Jarvis to adjourn. Here it was that Samuel Beardsley, of New York, being called, declined to answer, on the ground that the session had expired! He was called and came not, not the hour come on the Cumberland road bill! Was not notice given to all, by Mr. Gilmer, that the hour had then come! Mr. Beardsley's name was passed over, and he did not answer again that night. There were many others who did not come again, that night, who were here, but had a call from behind the curtain—who shrunk from their posts, and shrank behind that chair, behind those pillars, appeared and disappeared at the sound of the whistle; and who should have shrunk into non-entity!

The question was taken on adjournment, moved then, notoriouly after twelve o'clock, by Mr. Jarvis, who had already said by his resolution, we were dead. The vote stood: Yeas 15; Nays 163. Number of votes, 178.
Here, sir, only three members were wanting to make a quorum; and I know—I will make oath to the fact—that there were more than three members in the House who did not vote. Mr. Beardsley was present, Mr. Mann, of New York was present, and I was present myself, and neither of us voted. I will account, sir, for not voting myself. I wish every gentleman would do so, and had done as I did afterwards—answered when called. But who did vote! Mr. Jarvis voted in the affirmative, and Churchill C. Cambreleng voted in the negative—voted against adjournment after he knew the hour had come! After every kind of notice which he could have had of the expiration of the hour, he voted against adjournment—virtually declaring, necessarily voting that the House might sit, was competent to legislate, and ought to continue in session. Now, sir, gentlemen may excuse themselves, those who pretend to have had "conscientious scruples," for voting in the affirmative, for that they have expressed their scruples about continuing to sit; but I am utterly at a loss to see what can justify those who had "conscientious scruples," in voting against adjournment. Why vote to sit if you could not sit! If the House no longer existed in law, and possessed no legislative functions or power, after the hour of twelve, what object was there in voting to continue its session? Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. C.) say that he changed his opinions; that his "scruples" were begotten between this point of time and the moment he refused to report the proceedings of the committee, for the reason that the hour of twelve o'clock had expired!

But, sir, I must proceed; I am determined to travel over the whole journal, and point out every fact, even to the crossing of the *ts* and the dotting of the *is*. After Mr. Jarvis' last resolution failed, for want of a quorum, Mr. Wm. Cost Johnson, of Maryland, from the select committee on establishing a national foundry, made a report, which was read, and the resolution therein recommended, was agreed to by the House! How could this report be made, and this resolution be agreed to by the House, if there was no quorum and no House? If a quorum and if a House to receive and agree to a report and resolution of a select committee, why was there not a quorum and a House to receive and agree to the report of the committee of conference! Why did its chairman, Churchill C. Cambreleng, not then make its report! He was voting against adjournment, though he knew, all knowing, the hour had come, and so far from being a dead body, the House was a living, legislating, acting, moving body!

The Speaker then laid before the House no less than nine communications from the Executive Departments, among which was the letter of the Postmaster General, which was read, and Mr. White, of Florida, laid upon the table an act of the Legislature of that Territory. In a word, sir, every species of legislative action was performed. We were invested with all the functions, attributes, powers, and paraphernalia of a House of Representatives. We were not dead but living legislators, with the substance as well as the semblance of an organized body—the Speaker sitting in that chair, the members here in their seats, long after it was notorious that the hour of twelve o'clock was past and gone forever. Thus formed, thus acting, living, moving, and having our being, we received a message from the Senate to notify the House that the Senate was waiting for us to act upon the fortification bill.

A message from the Senate, by Mr. Lowell, their Secretary.
Mr. Speaker, I am directed to bring to this House a resolution passed by the Senate, and which is as follows:
"Resolved, That a message be sent to the honorable House of Representatives, respectfully to remind the House of the report of the committee of conference, appointed on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill respecting the fortifications of the United States."
Sir, what did this message mean or say, which could have been offensive! It is expressly respectful in its language and in its object. The Senate was waiting for the action of the House on this bill, which alone delayed the termination of the session, and which remained unacted upon by the House, whilst it was acting upon a great variety of other business of much less importance. To my mind, the Senate by this message, so much abused in the interpretation of it, said to the House, "respectfully," "We do not wish this bill to fail, and we respectfully ask that you will act upon it, and save the interests of the country involved in its passage." This message was received; it was not sent back with an insult to the Senate, as the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Adams) would have dashed it on their floor; and what then transpired! The journal states,

"Mr. Cambreleng, the chairman of the conferees on the part of the House, then rose, and stated that he declined to make report of the proceedings of the committee of conference as aforesaid; and sir, mark the reasons, and compare them with the facts already detailed. On the ground that from the vote on the resolution granting compensation to Robert P. Letcher, which vote was decided at the time the committee returned into the House from the conference, it was ascertained that a quorum was not present; and further, that he declined to make the said report, on the ground that the constitutional term for which the House had been chosen had expired."
Up to this moment the House had been hourly waiting for the report of the committee of conference, and not until this moment had the least intimation been given that the chairman of the committee would decline to make the report! He gave two reasons: First, "it was ascertained that no quorum was present." How was this ascertained! Why was not a quorum present! That is what I wish the gentleman to answer me! Up to a given point of time—up to the vote on the Moore and Letcher resolutions; and if that was the time when the committee of conference returned, up to the very moment when that committee did return, there were 174 members present and voting—53 more than a quorum! What became of this number of votes! Why, sir, at the sound of the whistle, at the wink of the leaders, the "faithful" vanished the "faithful" were "shaken down" in ambuscade at the stamp of the foot! It was not because they were not here, but because, being here, they would not vote—were ordered not to vote, that there was no quorum. I put it to the gentleman if he did not know, and does not know now, that there was more than a quorum present! How many were present refusing to vote, when but three were wanting to be added to the vote of 118! Were there not more than twenty present who voted, or refused to vote, as circumstances directed them, or as the leader pleased! Who were they who would not vote! Read the journal for yourself—he who runs may read, look at the names of "the party"! It was not the House, or a majority, which was to blame. A majority of the House was ready, and willing, and anxious to pass the bill; but a very small minority could reduce us below the number of a quorum. A majority of the House maintained their posts and did their duty that night. Some, it is true, were left from anxiety to get home, some were asleep, some were drunk, but, despite of sober, they were ready to vote and pass the bill; but the chairman of the committee of conference (Mr. C.) would not make his report, because there was no quorum! Now, how did he know there was no quorum without a call of the House!

Mr. Cambreleng, I know it.
Mr. Wise. Yes! I know you know there would be no quorum without a call; no man knew it so well as you did! But how did you know it! Did you not know where those were who were ordered to be "defiant" on the occasion of a call! So much for the want of a quorum!

The second reason of the gentleman was, "that the constitutional term for which the House had been chosen had expired!" Now, sir, please compare this reason with the gentleman's own votes. Thrice, previous to this excuse, the gentleman himself had voted on a call of the yeas and nays—he voted on every call—from the Cumberland road bill up to this paltry excuse, repeatedly after 12 o'clock at night! He voted against the Cumberland road bill, then in favor of a resolution to pay money out of the House fund to Robert P. Letcher, and actually against an adjournment, after the hour of 12 o'clock, before he gave in this excuse for not reporting from the committee of conference; and, sir, will it be believed that the gentleman did actually vote upon a call of the yeas and nays, even after he gave this reason, that the term of the House had expired! Sir, I cannot understand the consistency of this conduct with these excuses for failing to do an act of duty. Can the gentleman explain this!

Mr. C. Yes, I will.
Mr. Wise. You will attempt it, but you cannot explain it. Yes, sir, after this excuse was offered, a motion was made to adjourn, and on the call of yeas and nays Mr. Cambreleng was found still voting. And, sir, among the list of yeas on this last vote, at the far end of the night's labors, is found the name of John Quincy Adams.
Mr. Adams here explained.
Mr. Wise was proceeding to reply, when Mr. Mercer said his colleague had totally misrepresented the gentleman from Massachusetts, and repeated in substance Mr. Adams' explanation.

Mr. Wise. Then I have misunderstood the gentleman. I thought he had been declaring all the time that the House was a dead body at 12 o'clock that night. The death of the gentleman's seat prevents my hearing him distinctly. I am happy to be corrected, for the gentleman's opinion is one I regard highly on such questions.
But, sir, there is that other name which must not be forgotten by the side of the unerring name of the gentleman from Massachusetts; that name, really, Churchill C. Cambreleng, who continued to vote after he excused himself from reporting, because in his conscience he was dead!

To go back a little. Mr. Cambreleng, with such excuses, and such of his own conduct to rebut them, declined to make the report of the conferees, and Mr. Lewis had to make the report long, long after the conferees had returned to the House.
(Here Mr. Cambreleng said the report was not made by Mr. Lewis.)
Mr. Wise. He did make it! Here it is upon the record, (holding up the journal) this journal says so:
[Mr. Lewis, from the conferees, then made a report, as follows:]
"That the conferees had agreed to recommend to the respective Houses that the House of Representatives recede from its amendment, containing an appropriation of three million of dollars to be expended in whole or in part under the direction of the President, for the military and navy service including fortifications and ordnance, and increase of the Navy, and that in lieu thereof, the bill be amended by inserting therein the following, viz:
"As an additional appropriation, the sum of three hundred thousand dollars shall be appropriated for arming the fortifications of the United States, over and above the sum provided in this act; and the sum of five hundred thousand dollars shall be, and hereby is, appropriated for the repairs and equipment of the vessels of war of the United States, in addition to the previous appropriations; the said sums to be paid out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated."
On the question to adopt this report, it was objected there was no quorum, and tells having been moved, they reported that no quorum was present.

Mr. Cambreleng, I can tell you.
Mr. Wise. Ay, you can tell us, can you! There is another more important fact, which must come out. Out with it all, say I, you, Mr. Speaker, ay, you, sir, are deeply concerned in that matter, deny it if you can. Before I disclose that fact, I must premise that I voted for the three millions amendment. There were 197 votes for it, the name of John Quincy Adams first, and my name last on the list of yeas. I was held to a strict accountability for that vote by my constituents, with whom I have settled it, as a gentleman whom I now see (Mr. Tyler) can attest, and believe he heard my reasons and my apologies before the People. Sir, I have now to say, that under the impressions of that amendment at the time I gave that vote, I would give the same vote again, with the same information I then possessed. And

Mr. Lewis did make the report, whether it was received or not, and it was entered on the journals. I was sitting by him when he made the report. He took it from Mr. Cambreleng, was called on to make it, and handed it to the messenger of the Clerk who put it upon record. He made the report though the hour had come! And, sir, I could not but observe his astonishment when Mr. Cambreleng refused to make the report. No quorum! Do we ever count the House when we receive the report of a committee! How know there was not a quorum before a count! Sir, it was notorious there was a quorum; it was known to every man. I would say, if there was one, there were 150 members at least in the House when that report was made. They were in the Lobby; they were skulking in every direction and refused to vote. They knew their own motives. I will not dive into their hearts, but such is the fact!

After the yeas and nays on the motion to adjourn, we received another message from the Senate, by Mr. Lowell:
"Mr. Speaker, I am directed to inform the House of Representatives that the Senate has finished the legislative business before it, and is ready to adjourn."
Now, sir, no man will accuse me of being the advocate or the apologist of the Senate. But give the truth—Tut! Tut! The truth be told, admit, whom it may, injure whom it may. The message was considered in the House to act on the Fortification bill. The Senate could not, with propriety, have renewed the first message, without seeming to arrogate the prerogative of dissolving the House, or without seeming to be guilty of the insolence which was charged upon the first message by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Adams). They therefore said "the Senate has finished the legislative business before it!" And was not the fact! Was the Fortification bill there! No, sir, it was here in this House, and here enacted on! Yes, sir, notwithstanding this bill was still unacted on in the House, Mr. P. O. J. Smith, (of Maine) one of "the faithful," offered a resolution, "that a committee be appointed to write on the President, and to notify him that, unless he may have further communications to make, the two Houses of Congress, having completed the business before them, are ready to close the present session." Although this was admitting that the session had not closed, yet was it true that both Houses had completed the business before them! That the House of Representatives acted on and completed the fortification bill which was before it! It had not. The Senate had completed its business; the House had not.

The House again proceeded to take up the Letcher resolution. There was no quorum answering, though one present. Mr. Smith then moved a message to notify the Senate that the House "had completed the business before it," whilst the fortification bill was still unacted on, and after the two messages from the Senate directing our attention, requesting our attention to it! Pending this motion and a call of the House, Mr. Mason moved to adjourn, because the Senate had adjourned, and his motion passed in the affirmative, without even the usual interchange of courtesy between the two Houses and the other branch of the Government! Such was the termination of the last Congress, and I do say, sir, it was one of the most disgraceful scenes I ever witnessed, it was unbecomingly barbarous and savage, much more the representatives of a civilized nation! Sleepy, tired, drunk—
Mr. Byrum. Is the gentleman in order when speaking thus of the last Congress!
Mr. Wise. I do not pretend to say Mr. Speaker, that all Congress was drunk, or that one-half, one-third, or one-tenth of the members were drunk; but I know that some were drunk—that I was not of the number—and so it was, that what with maneuvering, being tired, opposed to some measures, sleepy, drowsy, and drunk, no quorum could be had unless it suited certain individuals!
Mr. Lane said he should like to hear the names of those who were drunk.
Mr. Wise. The gentleman might feel unhappy, sir, if I were to mention names.
I have now, sir, given you the facts upon the journal; but there are other important facts—facts unwritten, as well as facts written. Out with them! Come! rise in your high places all, here and elsewhere, and tell the truth—the whole truth! Sir, it is said that bill failed in the House. That is not true. It failed before it got to the House from the conference room! It dropped like a spent ball before it quite got here—it dropped near the door! Sir, there are two statements about the matter; they may be conjectural, I cannot vouch for them. I mean to put interrogatories. I put it to the gentleman (Mr. C.) did no body boldly whisper in his ear as he was on his way to report to the House? Did an one tempt him as he passed, to strangle the bantling under his arm, and his imp? And, if this may be denied, I put it to the honorable chairman of the committee of conference, (Mr. C.) if no member of a committee, received a bill, dox after he received his seat! Did the honorable chairman, after he left the conference room not intend to make the report! Did he not, after he returned to the House with it, inform a gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Forester) though it was then after 12 o'clock, at night, that he intended to make the report! Did he not sit down by a gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Whitely), and give him to understand, with the report on the desk before him, that the report was to be made? Why did that intention fail! What prevented! Sir, there were spirits haunting the Capitol that "awful night"—there were strange whisperings—chattering elf-ghosts, as I am told, I did not see them—bliss, devious and imp! Is it true, was there any dealing with the "infernal" that night! Tell us, I pray tell us, and let the cause fall on the perpetrators, not on the victims of the horrid spell!

Mr. Cambreleng. I can tell you.
Mr. Wise. Ay, you can tell us, can you! There is another more important fact, which must come out. Out with it all, say I, you, Mr. Speaker, ay, you, sir, are deeply concerned in that matter, deny it if you can. Before I disclose that fact, I must premise that I voted for the three millions amendment. There were 197 votes for it, the name of John Quincy Adams first, and my name last on the list of yeas. I was held to a strict accountability for that vote by my constituents, with whom I have settled it, as a gentleman whom I now see (Mr. Tyler) can attest, and believe he heard my reasons and my apologies before the People. Sir, I have now to say, that under the impressions of that amendment at the time I gave that vote, I would give the same vote again, with the same information I then possessed. And