

Congress of the U S

JOHN RANDOLPH.

Our readers, perhaps, recollect the famous Circular of Mr. John Randolph, to his constituents, written at the moment of his departure for Europe, in May last, in which he stated, referring to the investigation of Ninian Edwards's charges against the Secretary of the Treasury, that it was "at his instance, and not without considerable resistance on the part of a majority of the Committee, that the Secretary had the opportunity given him, to file his answer to the accusation of Mr. Edwards." This statement was denied by Mr. Webster in the H. of R. in terms which rather impeached the credit of Mr. R. The following discussion which took place in the House of Representatives on the 23d ultimo, refers to this subject:

Mr. RANDOLPH rose, and said, that a letter, addressed by him to his constituents having become, on the last session of Congress, a subject of animadversion on this floor, he felt it to be due to himself, as well as to his constituents, to state to the House, as succinctly as he might, the facts having reference to that occasion, leaving every thing like inference or argument to be deduced by others. I say then, continued Mr. R. that when I entered the room of the committee, to whom was referred the memorial of Mr. Edwards, on the 29th of April—I go by the dates on the Journal—there was a naked proposition of an honorable member before that committee, which it is not necessary for me here to recite—To that proposition I moved an amendment, which it is equally unnecessary to recite, when I was informed that a similar proposition had been already rejected by the committee; and I then learnt for the first time, that the original proposition consisted of two substantial propositions, the latter of which had been so discarded, and pointed out the difference between mine and that, which was obvious to every one who would compare the two. That proposition of mine, however, not meeting the favor of the committee, I proceeded to suggest such considerations as occurred to my mind, why it should be adopted; and, during that discussion, the honorable member from Louisiana, (Mr. LIVINGSTON,) joined the committee. I stated to him the proposition pending before the committee. He readily coincided in opinion with me on the subject, stating his concurrence of opinion in these words: that "he could not see what other course could be resorted to." Then, and not till then, was there a general acquiescence in this proposition: then, and not till then, was my proposition adopted. It is unnecessary for me to say, that in nothing that I have written or said, could I have had reference to the ulterior decision of the committee; and if any proof were wanting to satisfy the most incredulous, it would be found in the fact, that on the 11th of the ensuing month as appears on the minutes of the committee, a proposition was made by me to lay the minutes of the committee, including this transaction, up to that day, before the House. I have no wish to go further into this subject. It was incumbent on me—it was my bounden duty, to take the earliest opportunity to make this statement to you and to the House; and I have availed myself of the earliest moment to do so.

Mr. LIVINGSTON, of Louisiana, said, that the statement of facts which had been made by the gentleman from Virginia, was precisely correct, according to his (Mr. L's) recollection of what passed in the committee. The misunderstanding on this subject, Mr. L. said, had arisen from a misconception of the letter which had been written by the gentleman from Virginia on that occasion. That letter, he must be allowed to say, was so worded as to justify the construction that a majority of the committee had, with much difficulty, been prevailed upon to give the Secretary of the Treasury an opportunity of being heard.—This he understood to be now disavowed by the gentleman from Virginia, and the circumstance, which he had stated, of his motion to lay the minutes of proceedings of the committee before the House, convinced Mr. L. that such was not his intention, and he took pleasure in stating this impression.

Mr. OWEN then observed, that as he was a member of the committee on the memorial of Ninian Edwards, it might be proper in him to take some notice of the remarks and statements which had been made by the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Randolph). He had some conversation since he came to this city with other members of the committee, and endeavored to bring the facts, which occurred, to his more distinct recollection; and he believed that the statement now given by the gentleman from Virginia was substantially correct. When he entered the committee room, a proposition, in relation to submitting the memorial of Mr. Edwards to the Secretary of the Treasury might have been the subject of conversation, but he now felt satisfied that that proposition had been disposed of by the committee before the gentleman entered, and that his was a distinct proposition. The conversation, he believed, had relation rather to the manner of submitting the charges in the memorial to the notice of the Secretary, against whom they were directed, than to the measure itself. He thought, (as far as he could recollect,) the proposition of the gentleman from N. York, (Mr. Taylor,) was to submit the entire memorial, and let the Secretary answer such parts of it as it might be proper. — But Mr. Owen's own impression, was, that in the then present situation of that officer, it would be improper that all the language of that memorial should be submitted to his eye. It would submit various charges which were unimportant, but which he might think himself bound to answer; while he might esteem others of two little consequence to be answered, of which the committee might think differently; and he, therefore, had thought it would be best to specify the particular points which he was expected to answer. To this it was replied, that if all were submitted, the Secretary would have a fair opportunity to Judge for himself in a way better than any others could judge for him. Then it was, and not till then, that the gentleman from Virginia offered the proposition to which his published letter seemed to allude.

Mr. WEBSTER then rose, and said, that he had not had occasion to refresh his recollection of the occurrences alluded to, since the last session, either by reference to the minutes of the Committee, or conversation

with other members of it. But that he did not think a material circumstance. All he had now to say was that the address of the honorable member to his constituents appeared to him, (Mr. W.) and he presumed to others, to convey plainly the idea, that it had been with difficulty that a majority of the committee had been prevailed on by the honorable member to consent that the Secretary of the Treasury should have an opportunity to answer the charges made against him in the memorial of Ninian Edwards. If he, (Mr. W.) was now to understand that the honorable member did not mean to convey such an idea, then he was willing to take the gentleman's statement to that effect, and ready, therefore, to say, that what he had observed on a former occasion, was said, under a misapprehension of the honorable member's meaning. But if it had been intended to be represented, in the honorable member's letter to his constituents, that a majority of the Committee were reluctant, or unwilling, or needed to be prevailed upon, by any efforts of the honorable member, to allow the Secretary an opportunity to answer the charges, then the statement which he (Mr. W.) had formerly made, was not only just, but necessary. He (Mr. W.) thought then, and still thought, that if the honorable member intended a reflection on a majority of the Committee, it was incumbent on him to be explicit—to state of whom that majority consisted—that every individual gentleman might have an opportunity to answer for himself. The only matter, therefore, as he (Mr. W.) thought, which called for explanation, was this, viz. Did the honorable member intend to represent, that a majority of the committee were unwilling to give to the Secretary the fullest opportunity to answer the charges against him?

Mr. RANDOLPH—I have stated, as clearly as I could, and I could recapitulate, were it necessary to trouble the House with it, the facts as they occurred.

Mr. McARTHUR then rose, and said, that he should like to understand from the gentleman from Virginia, whether he wished to be understood as having stated that the committee consented, with reluctance, that the charges in the memorial should be submitted to the Secretary, that he might answer them. If such, said Mr. McA. was his impression, it certainly was not mine. If the gentleman says that he did not mean to convey this idea, I am satisfied—but, if he says that he did mean to express such a meaning and to apply it to a majority of the committee, I deny the proposition of the gentleman.

Mr. FLOYD, of Virginia, said it would perhaps, be recollected, that, at the time the inquiry on this subject was introduced at the close of the last session, he was not in the House—he was not present when the gentleman from Massachusetts made his statement to the House as to what had passed in the committee, nor did he know that he had made such a statement until after he had himself spoken. At that time he thought he observed some reluctance in that gentleman to answer; but he was persuaded then, as now, that there was some misapprehension. The statement now made by the gentleman from Virginia was a true one. He believed that many supposed the language of the letter he

had written to refer to a vote of the committee—but his own understanding of it had always applied it to the general conversation which took place among the members of the committee while in the committee room. Supposing that, if any thing unpleasant should grow out of what had passed he might himself be referred to—he had endeavored to bring up the whole of what occurred to his recollection; he had also had some conversation with other members of the committee, but had no reference to the minutes. He felt assured that there had existed a misapprehension in the exposition of the language of the gentleman from Virginia.

[The remarks of Mr. Floyd were made in so low a tone of voice, that our reporter lost much of what was said, but the above is believed to be the substance of them.]

Here the conversation ceased.



HABEAS:

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 1825.

Lafayette.—It appears by a communication from Mr. Tatnall, a member of Congress from Georgia, to the Mayor of Savannah, that Gen. Lafayette will not set out on his Southern Tour till after the 4th of March. The legislatures of Georgia, South Carolina and Vermont, have passed resolutions inviting the General to their respective states, and appropriated ample funds to meet any expence that may be incurred in his reception.

Congress.—A correspondent of the N. Y. Evening Post, in a letter dated Washington, Dec. 23, states as follows: "The bill granting \$200,000 in money and a township of land to Gen. Lafayette was read a third time in the Senate by unanimous consent, and is probably by this time a law. It is an act not unworthy the character, and one that must be responsive to the sentiment of the American people."

"It would have been better to have passed the bill without debate, and such was the expectation and determination of its friends—but it is well as it is—Those who voted in the minority were generally not hostile to the principle of the measure, but, some to the form and some to the amount. A remark made by the General on this subject is worth recording. Some gentleman was expressing his regret that there was any minority at all—"You are quite mistaken, said he, the minority are right—had I been a member of the House I should certainly have voted with them—the sum is much more than I merit—it is much too large."

"We have passed a bill, ayes 113, noes 57, authorising the establishment of a military post on the North West Coast—in the third section we authorize the President, when he thinks proper, to establish a Port of Entry there also. We do not exactly violate our treaty of 1818 with Great Britain, by this section—but we authorize the President to do so, which is about the same thing. The Senate will however correct this as well as some other errors in the bill."

South-Carolina and Georgia.—We republish this even-

ing matter of much pith and moment respecting the two states of South Carolina and Georgia, and not without both apprehension and regret. The opinion given by Mr. Wirt, which puts those states in the wrong, seems to us unanswerable, but they are neither of them disposed to accede to it, indeed so far otherwise that they exhort each other to persevere in the course they have adopted, alleging they are imperiously called upon to do so, by the law of self preservation, the great law of nature. What will be the result baffles conjecture. A collision between the states and the general government in relation to the subject of slavery has been long foreseen and dreaded.—New-York E. Post.

The verdict has been set aside, and a new trial granted, in the case of Clarke vs. the Corporation of Washington, relative to the \$100,000 prize in the Grand National Lottery.

A slave contest.—A slave from the south having absconded, was recognized in New York by his master, and the police required to interfere and have him restored to his owner. The usual interference was made, by the abolition society and colored population, and the slave was brought up on a writ of habeas corpus, before Judge Edwards, who went through the enquiry patiently, in order to test the point, whether he was a freeman or actually a slave, as contemplated by the act of Congress.—The colored folks, feeling great anxiety on the subject, and fearful, from the testimony before the judge, that the man would not be liberated, got out a friendly writ, and Seaman, deputy sheriff, was required to take the man while the examination was progressing. The blacks, not knowing the object of the writ, but fearing the consequences, came to his rescue in great numbers, and while the officer had him by the collar a scuffle ensued, on the steps in the rear of the city hall, and the officer was dragged from the top to the bottom, was much bruised, and the slave was finally rescued. So much for the force of law in New York!

Narrow escape.—Mr. John Ellis, of Mercer, Me. a celebrated hunter, recently had a dangerous encounter with a large moose, in the neighborhood of Moose River. When discovered, the animal took to the river, and the hunter to his canoe and started in pursuit of him. Having approached within six or eight rods, he fired, and the ball taking effect, the moose made for the shore. Mr. E. having reloaded his gun, proceeded in search of him. The moose was soon come up with, and rather unexpectedly.—Mr. Ellis had approached within twenty or thirty feet of the animal before he discovered him.—He instantly fired; but being somewhat agitated by finding himself so near the moose, missed his object, the ball entering a small tree which intervened between them; whereupon the moose immediately made at him with desperate fury, taking him between his horns, one of which entered his clothes near the waistband of the pantaloons in front and passed out near his chin, and the other at the small of his back, taking the skin in its course. While in this dangerous and critical situation, the moose made four or five bounds with him, clearing a rod or more