

er, they should exercise a right themselves hitherto attached to his office.

Such a mode of procedure as had been pursued on this occasion was not conformable to that heretofore practiced. An application somewhat similar had been, some time since, made to the Speaker. The Speaker decided, and the house, without debate, acquiesced in his decision. A Stenographer had grossly misrepresented a member, and when required to correct his false statement, had insolently refused to do it, and added to the previous injury of misstatement insult of the contemptuous kind. The Speaker disclaimed him from his place for this barefaced misconduct. Some of his friends made an appeal to the house. The house acted wisely, and with becoming dignity refused to interpose.

Now, said Mr. Rutledge, if any other stenographer, like the one I have alluded to, shall make it his systematic practice to misrepresent, and he continue, as heretofore, to hold his place at the tenure of the Speaker's permission, he may be dismissed by the Speaker without troubling the house. But should the motion made by the gentleman from N. Carolina prevail, we shall be perpetually appealed to, and occupied in debate. For these reasons he trusted the report would be agreed to.

Mr. HILL next spoke for several minutes, what he said was not heard, further than that he declared he considered the subject as simply involving an address to the sentiments of the members on the ground of personal convenience, and that on that ground he was ready to sacrifice any little inconvenience to the accommodation of the stenographers; stating, at the same time, his entire reliance upon the integrity and talents of the Speaker.

MR. GRISWOLD's introductory remarks were not heard. Having raised his voice, his first words, as heard, were,—This is nothing less than an appeal from the chair. To the Speaker has heretofore been committed the regulation of the admission of all persons whatever within the bar. This is the only correct mode in which such an object can be accomplished. The Speaker must exercise the discretion hitherto vested in him, otherwise the order of the house cannot be preserved. The object now is to take this power from the Speaker, and to open the area of the house to the Stenographers, without the Speaker's approbation. It is said that only two persons at present apply. But if the door be once opened to admission in this way there may be no end to intrusion. The Speaker being divested of power to act, and the necessity of acting being evident, the house will be perpetually troubled with appeals.

In his opinion the power, confided to the Speaker, had been exercised in this case with great propriety. It must be apparent to every body that the area was too small to justify the admission of the Stenographers. He believed it to be an idle pretence, that the Stenographers could not hear. He believed it to be a mere matter of pride, which would be gratified by an appeal from the chair and a reversal of the decision of the Speaker by the house.

Mr. THATCHER, persuaded that all the information derived from the debates of this house, was of little comparative importance, when viewed in relation to the general mass of information possessed by the people, carried but little for the event of the resolution before the house. Upon this ground he felt no anxiety whatever. As a matter of order it might perhaps be of some importance. As to the convenience of position, he doubted whether a more correct account of the debates could not be given from a situation from without the bar than within it. His reasons were these. It was well known that for four or five sessions after the organization of the federal government, stenographers never came within the bar; and their positions, during that period, were as remote from the members as they are at present. Yet if any one man would appeal to the debates then taken, he would find them as correctly taken as they have been at any time since. It is true, there were complaints of inaccuracy, but the debate takers never assigned, as a justification of their errors, the inconvenience of their situations; on the contrary they declared that they did as well as they could, and contended that their reports were as correct as the nature of the case permitted.

When the seat of government was transferred to Philadelphia, and the stenographers occupied places within the bar, complaints increased, the debates were taken more incorrectly, and two or three of the stenographers were actually turned out of the area within the bar; one of whom, he believed was sent into the upper gallery.

The incorrectness of the published debates did not arise so much from an inability

to hear, as from an inability to take down a rapid speech.

Mr. THATCHER said he believed the debates as taken down by Mr. Lloyd, were as accurately taken, as any taken before or since. The conclusion he drew from these facts was that if the stenographers were admitted by the house within the bar, the public would gain nothing by it. He had however no objection to their admission, if the speaker approved it. They might as far as he cared, take any place in the house; even seats along side of the speaker.

Mr. DAVIS had expected to hear substantial reasons in support of the report of the committee. None such had been offered. It was said that the stenographers could hear very well from their present positions. He denied it. The reporter could not possibly hear. Though himself nearer the gentleman he had not heard a word that fell from the gentleman from North-Carolina.

He trusted the house would admit the stenographers within the bar. If not admitted, the conversation and passage of the members around them, will at once prevent the debates from being well taken, and be a perpetual excuse for their errors. But if admitted they will have no such apology, and they will be within the power of the house.

The great mass of our citizens are too remote to attend your debates. They rely on those who report them. Not more than forty or fifty persons transiently appear in the galleries, who are not equal to diffusing a knowledge of your proceedings. Exclude the stenographers and you may as well shut your doors. It may be said that you print your journals. But who reads them? They are scarcely read by the members themselves. On great national questions the people ought to know, not only what you do, but also the principles that guide you.

The gentleman from S. Carolina was willing to place the stenographers under the coercion of the Speaker, but was averse to placing them under the coercion of the house. For his part he thought differently. He did not wish to see them at the mercy of the Speaker.

Several allusions had been made to the treatment of a reporter at Philadelphia, who had been driven from the house by the Speaker. He recollected the affair, and in his opinion the Speaker had in this case been actuated more by personal enmity, than by any other motive.

Mr. H. LEE next rose. He spoke for some time, without our being able to hear him; and through the whole course of his speech we occasionally lost a sentence. He said, he put it upon the candour of his colleague from Virginia to declare, whether, in his opinion, any gentleman in that house wished to suppress his sentiments, or was disposed to shrink from an avowal of them. If an individual were to judge from the debate of to day, he would infer that it was the desire of some members on that floor to conceal their sentiments from the people. No such thing was the case. We are as anxious, as those who differ from us, that the people should know what we think, say, and do.

The only question was, whether the Speaker shall exercise a certain power, which he can conveniently, and which he has hitherto honorably, exercised, or whether we shall assume it with all its inconveniences. He hoped we should not. He feared no inaccuracy so long as the debates published received no sanction from the house.

Have you, said Mr. Lee, no greater objects to engage your attention, than whether this man, or that man shall go out of your bar, or remain within it. He thought the house might be better employed.

Mr. MASON understood the subject before the house very much as his colleague did. The question was simply whether we will take upon ourselves inconveniences alleged to exist, or keep the stenographers without the bar. He was convinced that the situations occupied by the stenographers were badly calculated for hearing, as even within the bar the members could scarcely hear each other.

One reason had great weight with him. It was, that if the house made a rule in relation to the admission of the stenographers, it would be placing law in the room of discretion. He ever preferred a certain rule, to a vague discretion.

The danger apprehended from a crowd of Stenographers was farcical. Since he had been in Congress he had never seen more than three or four. And if the number admitted should prove inconvenient, it would be time enough, when the inconvenience was experienced, to remedy it.

Mr. S. SMITH said, the question was entirely one of convenience. He would not ascribe to any member a desire to sup-

press his sentiments. The speeches never went forth as delivered. Yet it was desirable to assign to the Stenographers the most convenient places. He had heard Gentlemen on both sides of the chair declare they would experience no inconvenience from the admission of the Stenographers. For himself, from his situation, he could experience none. He believed, indeed, that the members could be heard from any part of the house; and nearly as well in one place as in another.—But as other Gentlemen hold a different opinion, and the Stenographers had hitherto been admitted within the bar, he had not the least objection, and would vote for their admission.

In this stage of the Debate the SPEAKER rose, not, he said [the connexion of his words was here lost]—not to enquire into the consequences of the house acting in the business; but again to repeat the line of conduct he had pursued, and the motives that had influenced his conduct; he did this for the information of members not in the house at the time he had before addressed the house. The Speaker then repeated what he had before stated, for which we refer our readers to the National Intelligencer No. 16, with some additions: viz. that on being applied to by Mr. Stewart, he had declared to him his decision before any other application had been made; that he had spoke to many members, all of whom without a single exception had approved his ideas; and concluded with again declaring, as he had before declared, that the Stenographers could not be admitted within the bar without violating the order of the house, and the convenience of the members. It was, he said, for the house to decide—to them only was he responsible.

Mr. NICHOLAS understood it to be the object of those who supported the admission of the Stenographers within the bar to place them upon the same footing, they had heretofore held. This was his object. All the remarks, therefore, made, respecting their independence of the chair, were inapplicable. They would still be subject to his control, except as to the single point of situation. In short the business would be restored to its old form.

His colleague had made an appeal to his candor. He wished to know whether he (Mr. Nicholas) thought that he, or any Gentleman in that house, wished to suppress his sentiments, or was disposed to shrink from an avowal of them. He would answer the appeal made by his colleague, and would tell him that he did not feel himself at liberty to form conjectures respecting the opinions of others, but decided from facts. If he heard a Gentleman make use of arguments so weak as those which he had heard that day in defence of their sentiments, he would say that their feelings differed essentially from his. He would say that, judging them by their arguments, they do not wish publicity to be given to the Debates of this house.

What does the Gentleman tell us? Does it not amount to this, that their complaisance for the Speaker suffer him to judge for themselves, in a case where they are the best judges; and would not this complaisance go to this length, that if the Speaker should judge wrong, they will not interfere to correct his error?

We are told by a Gentleman just up, that the application made proceeds from pride, and that it can proceed from nothing else. But the Gentleman has not assigned his reasons for this extraordinary charge.

It is contended that any place without the bar will be convenient for the Stenographers. Let the place be pointed out. Let the gentlemen who urge this shew us a place without the bar inaccessible to the whispers of the members and the pressure of a crowd. Do they imagine that any particular place can be assigned, to which they can ensure a profound silence, and from which every person can be withheld? Do they not know, have they not experienced, that when business presses, when subjects of importance are discussed, a crowd is produced, noise ensues, and interposing obstacles render it impossible either to hear or see the members. In such cases, by far the most interesting that can occur, a recess within the bar can be their only protection.

The Gentleman from Massachusetts had put the business upon a very extraordinary footing, a footing that he did not expect from him. He represented that it would be safe to trust the reporters to the speaker's indulgence. For his part he did not think it would be safe in such hands. Shall the speaker have the discretion of saying what debate shall be taken, and what shall not? Shall he, and he only have the public ear? Could the speaker desire this? Surely

he could not. He ought rather to desire the house to decide generally than thus impose upon him such an invidious task.

Mr. NICHOLAS said he considered those who report the debates as appearing in this house on the behalf of the people of the United States, to whom they communicated what passed here. The people were entitled to this information; and if, as observed by the gentleman from Massachusetts, either foreign ministers, or secretaries, or any other gentlemen in long robes, interfered with such an object, they ought to give way. He knew not wherein consisted the propriety of assigning them particular seats—what right had they to exclusive seats? He knew no connection that subsisted between them and this house. Be the right as it may, he was not for sacrificing a solid benefit to mere complaisance.

But a Gentleman has told us that one Stenographer, for his misrepresentation and insolence, had been discharged by the Speaker. In the course of the debate Mr. Nicholas said, he had studiously avoided any allusion to this circumstance. Nor would he now say any thing about it, as he thought it altogether foreign from the present question.

The respect which gentlemen expressed for the Speaker appeared to him to lead them from the object they professed to have in view. For at present the Stenographers are not under the control of the Speaker. But admit them within the bar, and if they are guilty of misconduct, if they infringe any of the rules of the house, the Speaker has them within his power.

Some gentlemen apprehend the admission of a crowd of Stenographers. The thing is morally impossible. When Congress met in a large populous city, where several daily papers were printed, we saw but two reporters. Here, removed from the busy world, where the demand for that description of labour which arose from publishing the debates was not nearly so great, and of consequence the profit less, it could not be expected that there could be more.

Mr. NICHOLAS concluded by declaring that, in his opinion, it was the duty of the house to decide in this case. The Speaker had changed the established practice of the house. It became, therefore, the house to enquire whether he had done what he ought to have done, which, if he had omitted to do, it devolved on them to see effected.

Mr. WALN spoke in favour of the adoption of the report. The beginning of the speech we were totally unable to hear; nor did we distinctly hear it in its progress. We forbear, therefore, the attempt to report it.

The question was then taken by Yeas and Nays, on agreeing to the report of the select committee, and carried by the CASTING VOTE OF THE SPEAKER.—There being YEAS, 45, NOES 45.

THE YEAS AND NAYS IN OUR NEXT.

James Lloyd, Senator of the United States for Maryland, has resigned.

Accounts from SOUTH CAROLINA derived from the sight of several recent letters, one of which is dated as late as Nov. 27, at Columbia, authorize us in saying that a regard to principle and not a spirit of local attachment prevails in the legislature of that state; from which it may be inferred, that, if the majority of the Legislature be republican, Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr will be elected.

The Electors of President and Vice President of the United States for the state of New-Jersey, have given their suffrages as follows:

For John Adams	7
Charles C. Pinckney	7

We hear, without being able to vouch for its authenticity, that a FRENCH MINISTER has arrived at Norfolk.

A Letter received by a Gentleman high in Office in this City, from General C. C. Pinckney, dated Columbia (S. C.) Nov. 29th, states that owing to the absence of ten Federal members, arising from sickness and other causes, it is highly probable that MR. JEFFERSON and MR. BURR will have every vote in South Carolina.

#### INFORMATION WANTED.

ALEXANDER INNES, a Hatter by trade, was sometime ago on board the Constellation frigate and was in 1793 in Norfolk, Virginia. He has not since been heard of. His friends would be thankful if any persons who know any thing of his situation or residence, would communicate it by letter, per post, addressed to Robert Innes, jun. merchant Easton Pennsylvania. P. S. Printers to the Southward of Pennsylvania are requested to give the above a place for a few times.

November 23, 1800.