

THE MADISON WHIG ADVOCATE.

BY G. E. W. NELSON & Co.

"OUR COUNTRY—ALWAYS OUR COUNTRY—RIGHT OR WRONG."

At Five Dollars in advance.

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BY
G. E. W. NELSON & Co.

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SPEECH OF MR. WISE, OF VA.,
ON THE SUBJECT OF THE LATE DEFEALCATIONS.
Concluded.

Sir, I said the other day that I did not rejoice in these public losses and calamities, though I confessed I did feel a thrill of triumph at having gained a victory for the truth. The pet bank system and the sub-treasurers have exploded, as I said they would, and exposed their hidden enormities, concealed until they could be concealed no longer; but I do not rejoice at it. I made me no boast to stand watch for the destruction of corrupt men. But, sir, there is one man in the world—wrecked in reputation—blasted—slighted by men not half so worthy as he is—whose soul at such times does rejoice, must exult. Who and where is he? Sir, if you will go down the Pennsylvania avenue to the corner of Four-and-a-half street, beneath Mrs. Peyton's boarding house, you will find a gray-headed man, stricken in years; his name is—Tobias Watkins! That man, for borrowing money of public officers, funds in their hands, not covering funds in his own hands to his own use, was imprisoned on the 14th of August, 1829, and tried on three several indictments, on all which he was convicted and fined, on one the sum of \$750, on another \$300, and the third \$3,000. He was sentenced to be imprisoned three months on each indictment, in all nine months; but though imprisoned in August, 1829, he was not released until March, 1833, kept in jail three years and six months for a real or fictitious defalcation of \$3,050!!

Where are now the defaulters of this Administration? Where is Swartwout, after embezzling public money for eight years in succession, till he had tampered and carried away a million and a quarter? Where is Price? Where is Gilpin? How long since their carriage wheels proudly hurled the Olympic dust of the fashionable streets and avenues of your metropolis of court and of fashion! No marshals at their heels—no district attorneys prosecuting against them triple indictments; they ran away, untroubled, untraced, and none hinder. Where is Boyd in that land of his delinquency, who attempted to the "misfortune of speculation" to elect him to the Senate of his State of Mississippi? These are all innocent and unfortunate escaping defaulters! These are full-handed public plunderers, pet plunderers, and go "unwhipped of justice." Sir, so was Tobias Watkins unfortunate. He was born and bred a gentleman; dazzled by the tinsel glare of this metropolis of splendid misery and shabby splendor, (as it was once, with equal force, truth, and beauty, described by that unequalled orator of Virginia, John Randolph)—of liberal mind and habits, too, he lavished some three thousand imprudently, thinking in his heart that he should be able to replace that sum, and more, and "make all straight," and he was imprisoned for his imprudence for nearly four years, and made to bear a felon's brand! Al! Sir, but he was a gentleman—he being charged to "fill the decency," to the "silk stocking gentry" he was not one of your Loco Foco defaulters—he was not unfortunate to the amount of millions—he was no robber on a large scale—he was not one too full-handed to be touched by the rude hands of the tipstaff—he was not a defaulter of the great democracy, and, poor fellow, he suffered for being a gentleman! By the by, sir, that word reminds me of the fact that it was striking, and not until the past summer, your party first discovered that your President was a gentleman! The discovery was made first, I think, by granny Ritchie! That venerable gentleman took me to find some gentlemen in Peterburg, and, as a set off, it seemed, he actually a gentleman! Very strange! That a man whom they made President, the successor of the "illustrious" in 1837, they did not find out to be a gentleman until the summer of 1838! They must surely have been trying to make him out a Whig. For myself, I always knew he was, in the ordinary sense, a gentleman; and it was mortifying to me to see that the Enquirer, by implication at least, had supposed until lately that the President of the United States could be other than a gentleman—judging, I mean, from its boast of the sudden discovery, though by my colleague there, (Mr. Dromgoole,) will not, however, recognize Mr. Ritchie as a genuine Loco Foco, but a Conservative. There is a cheering consideration connected with this discovery, though by the Administration pressed; it is the brightest omen which has occurred for years of Mr. Van Buren's

downfall. Yes, sir; cry of "gentlemen" upon him by hiends will finish him—with the party he supports him, they might as well have cried "mad dog!" It is a certain prognostic that he is going down. For the hour that father Ritchie made that fatal discovery, the man's doom was sealed. But, sir, the gentleman default, Watkins, as I was saying, met his end; and now that he has been purified the fires of the law, we may be permitted to do him justice, and to make him instrument of retribution. I call him; I invoke his wrongs, his sufferings, his injuries, his expiation, to rise in judgment against his persecutors to condemn them. Where is he now? In a station where he is, no doubt, far happier than in his day of precarious and terror-hunted show, when he toiled as a poor slave in one of the stalls of your document-factories called Departments. He is not an humble apothecary; and here I will say, for the benefit of all who would be honest, and who wish to be clean, that he keeps for sale the very best of "papa soap" and chloride of lime, and other chemical compositions, to take off the spots of loco locism, and to cleanse from all corruption! I recommend to certain sub-Treasury gentlemen to go buy; but what if they be once washed white as snow, they will, like the beg, return to their wallowing in the mire.

The Administration may pretend that they wish investigation. It is full time. But now is the matter pressed? Every now and then the chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Cambreleng) comes forward, and, in solemn tone, asks you to drop the subject for what he's pleased to term "business," as it was not the business of this House, and its chief duty now-a-days, to look into abuses. Sir, "the party" are in reality, at heart, as much opposed to inquiry now as of old. It serves their turn at this time to pretend to be diligent and zealous for inquiry. They are no more its friends now than they ever were.

Mr. Cambreleng here interposed. I hope the gentleman will not do me injustice. I never voted against any of his investigations. Never.

Mr. W. I said your party.

Mr. C. My party; ha! ha! That is another affair.

Mr. W. Yes, sir, I believe the gentleman is "another affair" since the New York election. And now that the inquiries of your party are daily coming to light, now that concealment is no longer possible, every man of "the party" is prompt to exclaim, "you can't say I did it!"—the party itself must be brisk to make the disclaimers, lest the People set all down as conspirators together, those who are found out and those who are not. The People are beginning to compare Watkins with Swartwout—hundreds of cases of defalcation with one—thirteen millions of expenditure with thirty or forty millions—and to see that the Administration of Adams, however bad, was, in comparison with the iniquities of this dynasty, about as Watkins to Swartwout—3,050 to \$1,225,000—thirteen millions to forty millions—one defalcation severely punished, to one hundred not only unrebuked, but countenanced and connived at!

And this, sir, brings me to the Message of this session. So enormous, appalling have your iniquities grown, that at one time we were called to an extra session to cure one system of experiments, and again another system's blotches and blains are the special subjects of Executive communications. The President himself, in self-defence, and Mr. Secretary, are compelled to acknowledge them in order to account for them. This Message of Mr. Van Buren directly contradicts the letter and certificate of his "illustrious predecessor." He confesses that all the Departments are not, and were not sound, and is all in a hurrah for investigation. Let us see:

"A change in the office of Collector, at one of our principal ports, has brought to light a defalcation of the gravest character, the particulars of which will be laid before you in a special report from the Secretary of the Treasury." By his report, and the accompanying documents, it will be seen that the weekly returns of the defaulting officer apparently exhibited, throughout, a faithful administration of the affairs entrusted to his management."

Sir, quere de hoc? I will endeavor to show you directly that this is an error; that "the weekly returns," if they had been properly examined and compared in the Secretary's office, would have detected and exhibited the very reverse of "a faithful administration" long ago. But the President proceeds:

"It, however, now appears that he commenced abstracting the public money shortly after his appointment, and continued to do so, progressively increasing the amount, for the term of more than seven years, embracing a portion of the period during which the public moneys were deposited in the Bank of the United States, the whole of that of the State Bank deposit system, and concluding only on his retirement from office." &c.

Sir, this is a confession, and a confession of the "ability and integrity" of the Departments in December, 1838.

"The way in which this defalcation was so long concealed, and the steps taken to indemnify the United States, as far as practicable, against loss, will also be presented to you. The case is one which imperatively claims the attention of Congress, and furnishes the strongest motive for the establishment of a more severe and secure system for the safe-keeping and disbursement of the public moneys than any that has heretofore existed."

Ay, sir, and from this we learn the most extraordinary deduction, that the defalcation of a sub-treasurer, of the "gravest character," is an argument to

recommend to our favor the sub-Treasury system!

"It seems proper, at all events, that, by an early enactment, similar to that of other countries, the application of public money by an officer of Government to private uses should be made a felony, and visited by severe and ignominious punishment."

I will soon show you, sir, that millions of the public money have been applied by officers of the Government to private uses, with the knowledge of the Administration.

"The Government, it must be admitted, has been, from its commencement, comparatively fortunate in this respect. But the appointing power cannot always be well advised in its selections, and the experience of every country has shown that public officers are not at all times proof against temptation."

Is the Government fortunate in this respect now? Can any one tell us how much we owe of late that Government oftentimes are not always proof against temptation; and we may all verily pray that part of the Lord's prayer which prays—"Lead us not into temptation!"

"If a more direct co-operation on the part of Congress, in the supervision of the conduct of the officers intrusted with the custody and application of the public money is deemed desirable, it will give me pleasure to assist in the establishment of any judicious and constitutional plan by which that object may be accomplished."

Now, sir, what would the President consider a judicious and constitutional plan? We recollect that his illustrious predecessor considered a committee to report to Congress as worse than a Spanish inquisition. What is Mr. Van Buren's plan? We will soon see.

"I submit to your consideration whether a committee of Congress might not be profitably employed in inspecting, at such intervals as might be deemed proper, the affairs and the accounts of officers intrusted with the custody of the public moneys. The frequent performance of this duty might be made obligatory on the committee in respect to those officers who have large sums in their possession, and left discretionary with respect to others."

Sir, all this would seem to be reversing the rule and line of conduct pursued by General Jackson. He would seem to be coming at last to my doctrine of inquiry and investigation. But, no, sir, hear him!

"They might report to the Executive such defalcations as were found to exist, with a view to a prompt removal from office unless the default was satisfactorily accounted for," &c.

Al! sir, here the mystery is solved. Here is the clue to all Executive concessions—it is but another step to Executive grandeur. The committee of Congress is to report to the Executive, is it? A committee of Congress is to travel all over the United States, as Executive servants, to supervise the officers of a President, who is sworn to see that the laws are faithfully executed! A id pray that have we an Executive for? Why have we a president, and Secretary, and Auditors, and Comptrollers, with plenary powers to do this very service? Could they not have done this, whenever they pleased to do their duties, for the last nine years? We are to convert our committees into missionaries—this House is to be a new sort of "American Board," with this difference, that, instead of being missionaries of Christ, we are to be missionaries of Mr. President Van Buren! General Jackson claimed it as the duty and prerogative of the Executive alone, to see that his subordinates executed the laws faithfully; but his successor asks Congress to perform the Executive duties for him. Does Mr. Van Buren mean to say that it has been for want of such Congressional aid, heretofore, that there has been no such supervision by the Executive? That there has been no such supervision, is true; but that such aid was wanting, or necessary, is not true. The President has always had the full power of this supervision—he might have found some honest men of his own party fit for offices, and have appointed honest commissioners to supervise those who were not fit. This, sir, is an insuperable objection, that the President not only asks us to go out of our usual course, but to become merged in the Executive. What, sir, is this House in fact, in actual service, to become an Executive slave? Is it the aim of the President still more to prostrate the dignity of the legislative branch of Government? Would any other President have dared to propose such a thing? I would ask the venerable gentleman from Massachusetts whether he would have dared to ask Congress to direct its committees, by law, to report to him? That gentleman's worst foes, those who vilified him most, never charged him with thus insulting the dignity of Congress. Is this the sort of committee you are now asking from us? I would prefer that defalcations should go on—that the public moneys should all be squandered—that the public character and morals should go with it overboard, to having the great lines of demarcation between the co-ordinate branches of the Government destroyed—to amassing all power in the Executive. This would bring us at once, and at a leap, to the lowest degree of degradation—whither defalcations and corruption were only gradually and slowly leading us—to the very footstool of a despot.

But, sir, I come to the important question now: With what view would the President have these committees report to him? He tells us, "with a view to prompt removal from office." This brings me to another branch of this subject. I will proceed now to show that case after case has been reported to the Executive, of defalcation, and of delin-

quency in office, and violation of duty, in subordinate officers—reported by commissioners appointed by the President himself—cases not only of default, but fraud of repeated applications of public money to private uses—no less than 40 since 1835, in three years—and yet the officers were retained in office, and reappointed to office after their delinquencies and moral turpitude were known to the Department. I will go further: they have been countenanced and encouraged to become defaulters, and to perjure themselves and defraud the Treasury. I am not declaiming—I will prove what I say. When I say forty cases, I mean that number, at least, which I can enumerate since 1834—I can give the names; I have them before me. I will first take up the case of Joseph Reckless, a collector at Perth Amboy, New Jersey. I refer to this case particularly to do General Jackson justice. I believe that he was imposed on in this case by a false abstract of testimony made out at the Treasury Department. Wm. Van Hook, of New York, preferred the charges against Reckless in a letter to Secretary Woodbury.

[Here Mr. Wise read several letters which passed between Mr. Reckless and Secretary Woodbury; and also between Mr. Woodbury and several of the Receivers of Public Money, which we are obliged to omit for want of room. These letters show that Mr. Woodbury had been acquainted with the defalcations of Swartwout and the Receivers for two or three years.]

Is this not wilful, base official corruption? Shaving with the public money was mere "irregularity," and "improper practices," thrice proved, admitted, reported, became "unfounded imputations" as soon as a political partisan whispered—"Better let it be!" Sir, these words ought to be incribed over the doors of the Treasury Department, and to be branded, like Cain's infamy, upon the forehead of Levi Woodbury—"Better let it be!" Sir, this embrace all your principles and practices in respect to investigation of fraud, embezzlement, corruption, and official malversation for years. These words converted of a sudden the Secretary's frowns and threats into the clearest perception of "difficulties," and the clearest proof of "unfounded imputations!" After this, what should be thought of this Secretary's denunciation of any charges as "unfounded imputations?"

Sir, I will read no more of these cases; these few I have given as specimens are not the gravest or the last of forty or fifty I can enumerate. In addition to these, I could show you facts in the instances of Lewis, Alsbury, Dickson, Sterling, Sheldon, Rogers, Taylor, Ryland, Allen, Hawkins, Blackburn, Carlin, Owens, Cannon, M. J. Allen, Hutchens, Benson, Holleman, Mitchell, McCarty, Simpson, Hays, Skinner, Blakeley, McRoberts, and numerous others, "too tedious to mention," all going to the same point—official neglect, violation of law and duty, and corrupt administration. All going to show more—that the losses have all occurred by failure to deposit in banks, and by leaving moneys in the hands of Sub-Treasurers. And more still—that, notwithstanding the pretensions set up in the President's Message to this session, this Administration is guilty beyond all former examples of "the impropriety of diverting public money to private purposes."

No, sir, I will waste through no more of these cases. I come at last to that of Samuel Swartwout, the largest, though not the last of the list.

Samuel Swartwout went out of the office the 29th of March, absconded on the 16th of August, and was not reported against until the month of November, 1838. How does the Secretary account for this delay?

According to the report to this House, Swartwout's return of March 28, 1838, showed a balance against him amounting to the sum of \$201,096.40.

Letter of Swartwout to Secretary, dated April 13, states that he holds this sum subject to sundry suits at law then pending to recover back duties.

Letter from Woodbury to Swartwout, April 16th, hopes that Swartwout will deposit one half of that amount to the credit of the United States.

Letter from Woodbury to Comptroller Barker, April 16th, would thank him to have Swartwout's accounts settled.

And here, sir, you must permit me to digress a moment to show you a piece of Mr. Secretary's chicanery in the numbering of this last letter. You will perceive that it is dated the 16th of April, prior in date to Swartwout's excuses contained in his letter and those of Price of the 20th, 21st, and 25th of April; yet in the Secretary's report of April 31, it is referred to as if subsequent to those three letters of later date. This is some of Mr. Woodbury's obfuscation, some of his muddy water to escape by. It is important, and you would not observe the effect of this upon a hasty reading. You will see the effect directly.

The next letter in the series is that of Barker, the Comptroller, to Miller, the First Auditor, dated April 17th, requesting him to settle the accounts of Swartwout.

Letter of Barker to Swartwout, dated April 17th, requests him to return his accounts to First Auditor.

Letter from Woodbury to Barker, dated April 18th, would thank him to call on the Solicitor to get from the District Attorney—asks Tom to call on Dick to get from Harry—in New York (Price) a list of the suits pending against Swartwout for return duties, and their amount. &c. endorsed with the same request to the Solicitor.

Now, this letter, you will observe, was written in obvious reference to Swartwout's of 13th of April, giving these suits pending as excuse for retaining the balance in his hands of \$201,000.

The next letter is from Swartwout to Woodbury, dated the 21st, in reply to Woodbury's letter of the 16th, enclosing one from Price, dated the 20th, showing his individual liability for judgments on protests, and stating that the notices of protests were estimated at between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

Woodbury then, in a letter to Barker, dated April 23d, refers Swartwout's letter to him, and suggests that Swartwout should furnish Hoyt, his successor, with funds to meet refunded duties paid under protest.

Barker, by letter to Swartwout, dated 24th of April, states his of the 21st had been referred to him, and that it was necessary he should so furnish Hoyt with funds.

Barker to Swartwout, April the 26th, requests him to render his accounts to the First Auditor. Gilpin, the Solicitor, in a letter to Barker, April the 27th, enclosing Price's letter, as district attorney, in reply to the Secretary's, of the 18th April, showing the list of suits. This letter of Price, dated the 25th of April, to Gilpin, shows that there were but two suits pending undecided—damages in one \$2,000, in the other \$150 80, and the amount of unsatisfied judgments to be \$5,561 63; the whole amount for which Swartwout was individually liable but \$7,720 43. And, further, that there were 115 protests, uncertain in amount; "but, by examination of invoices and appraisements at custom-house, the amount of each claim could be readily ascertained." He adds:

"I will apply to the present collector (Hoyt) for such statement, and transmit it to you, upon my receipt thereof. It will, however, require several days to prepare such a document."

Now, sir, in this letter we see that Swartwout's excuse for retaining this large balance of \$201,000 to meet \$7,700 was false, or could readily be made to appear true or false in a period not exceeding, at most, "several days." Were any steps taken to ascertain the amount of these protests? None. And, sir, here I bring your attention to the letter of Woodbury dated April the 16th, numbered 9, and to his report. Mark you, sir, page 3d, he says:

"A further inquiry into the case was, however, immediately instituted by me, through the First Comptroller and Solicitor of the Treasury. It terminated in an impression that the facts and the law, as to suits and protests, might justify a short delay in the adjustment. See copies of letters Nos. 6 to 8," &c.

The letters 6 to 8, in his report, are his of the 18th of April, Gilpin's of the 27th of April, and Price's of the 25th of April. In the very next paragraph of his report he adds:

"But the Comptroller was, notwithstanding, directed to bring Mr. Swartwout's accounts to an early settlement, and to have a prompt payment made of whatever amount should appear to be not in doubt or controversy."

Now, would not any one suppose, from this report, in this connexion, that this direction to the Comptroller was given subsequently to the date of this letter from Price of the 25th, falsifying Swartwout's of the 16th? The Secretary intended to create such an impression, but, upon referring to the No. 9 he cites, you find it his old letter of April 16, prior in date to all this correspondence with Barker, Gilpin, and Price!

So far, then, from his taking any steps after this falsification of Swartwout's excuses for retaining so large a balance, you find no step whatever until a letter from Wolf, the Comptroller, to Swartwout, dated June 13th, nearly two months after Price's of the 25th, stating that upon an adjustment of his accounts he was charged with the enormous sum of \$1,365,377 18!

This, even, startled not the Rip Van Winkle of the Treasury; but next comes lazily along another letter from the Auditor's office, signed by clerk Mahon, to Swartwout, dated August 13—two months, again, after Wolf's adjustment—nearly four months after Price's of the 25th, which was to admit of but "a short delay," and which required only "several days," at most—calling upon him to forward his accounts!

Swartwout took steam for England in two days afterwards, August 16th! If this was speed, "go it, ye terrapint!" Put Woodbury after Swartwout and Price! He gave them the word "go," and said, "I am coming!" A Muscovy drake after night hawks! Sir, every step he took was like those of his own unyielding body—heavy and slow; every indication here is that he was rather for giving them timely and friendly warning to take steam, not leg-bail!

It is amusing, now, to look at the next letter of the Department and its date. Miller, the Auditor, reports to Barker, the Comptroller, August 31st, half a lunar after the bird had flown, that Swartwout's accounts had not been received! On the 3d of September his (Swartwout's) securities were notified that he had not rendered his account! The poor fellows took advantage of this notice, no doubt. They were fools, if they did not; and then came the circulars, the letters of inquiry, the despatches to New York, the bustling activity, the hurly-burly of confusion, and wonder, and surprise—"Why, why, why! Swartwout is gone! He is a defaulter! Who would have thought it? How did it happen? Can any body tell how? Can you, Mr. Auditor—you, Comptroller—any body?"

Such is a picture of the administration of your Treasury. It is literally administered and returned insolvent. Why was this delay from April to October, 1838, to ascertain what Price told them they might readily ascertain? Why this postponement to examine invoices and appraisements? I will tell you, sir. Notwithstanding Mr. Secretary tells you there was no suspicion,

even—no, not the least—this thing was as well known, not perhaps the amount exactly, but the defalcation was as well known before October, as afterwards in November. But, the elections were in October, and concealment of this nefarious transaction was every thing until after the Empire State and her sisters of the Union had voted. This was the secret of this delay, and this was Swartwout's passport to Europe! "Better let it be!" until after the elections! It would not do. If it had been known, when elections were turning on the Sub-Treasurer scheme, that the chief Sub-Treasurer had marched off with a million and more of the public money, it would have had an electric effect; it would have won for the country a victory in Ohio, notwithstanding abolition and its kindred political vices! Thank God it is in time for you, sir, in Tennessee!

But, again, from the joint report of the Comptroller and Solicitor, Barker to the President, dated at New York, November 8, 1838, page 19, of this Doc. No. 13, we learn the following fact:

"It appeared that the last settlement of his accounts at the Treasury was up to the 31st December last, (December, 1837,) and that though he was called on by the First Auditor, and notice subsequently given to his sureties by the Comptroller, his accounts and vouchers from that time to the 28th of March, 1838, when his term of office expired, had never been furnished."

Indeed, sir, it fully appears that he was never made to return his accounts and vouchers at all; they were not returned, as you see by the letters read long after his escape. Now, why was this? What was the balance against him in December, 1837? The same report informs us:

"The stated balance against him on the 31st December, 1837, was \$9,678,984 56; this however was known to include all the uncollected bonds not due, bonds in suit, &c. This made it necessary, as the accounts and vouchers were not furnished, that immediate steps should be taken to ascertain the sum ready due as accurately as possible."

Were such steps taken? None, none! Time after time was Mr. Swartwout requested and thanked to return his accounts. Time after time he failed. It was left, as it were, optional to furnish his vouchers or not; he chose to furnish none; he eloped on the 16th of August, 1838; and no such step was taken at all until the orders to Underwood in November, 1838—two months after it was to be taken—proceed to New York!

But again, sir, from this report, pages 33, 34, it does appear that the accounts of Swartwout for the term commencing October 1, and ending December 31, 1837, were made out at the First Auditor's office as early as May, 1838, showing the balance due the United States to be \$9,678,984 56. Here is the statement in full, reported by the First Auditor, and certified by the Comptroller; and certified by the Register and Woodbury himself. Why was this defalcation is, that the Secretary extended the time to the collector at New York for making up and rendering his accounts for adjustment.

21. The accounting clerks in the First Auditor's office have not been made, since 1832, to ascertain that the balance of the bond account of the collector was correctly brought forward, that the additions were correct, and the balance, as retained, properly stated.

22. Bonds from New York have not been recorded. Never in time to accompany accounts of the Comptroller. This duty has been wholly neglected during Mr. Woodbury's term of office, since the second quarter of 1834.

23. The account of Swartwout was not received at the office of the First Auditor until the 10th November, 1838, long after his neglect to forward the account in due time had been reported to the Comptroller.

24. That the Collector had not been required to render an account of all outstanding bonds.

25. That the Collector at New York had not been required to return, with his quarterly account of the customs, a copy of his "suspense accounts," showing what items consisted of that part of the balance not consisting of bonds or cash on hand.

26. That deposits for duties have not been regarded as cash at New York, whilst at Philadelphia they have been so regarded—and the Secretary himself had control of this—unaccountable to Auditor, but the "remedy obvious."

27. The naval officer has not been made to do his duty, and, if he had done his whole duty, this defalcation could not have occurred.

28. That the "weekly and monthly returns of moneys received and paid at the custom-house," the "return of duties," "abstracts of bonds put in suit," "summary statement of duties collected," "schedule of bonds taken and liquidated," required for the Secretary's office, have not been properly arranged and compared with each other and with the quarterly account current of the

customs by the Secretary of the Treasury himself.

Such, sir, is the exposure by this able and masterly and independent report of the ability and integrity with which your Treasury Department has been conducted, and by which this millions of public money has been abstracted! Sir, this report must have been paid and wormwood to Woodbury. I understand that the manly clerk by whom it was made is already under the ban of his displeasure. It is a biting sarcasm, it is a sneer throughout, upon Mr. Secretary's unblushing effrontery in his capacity into the causes of this defalcation. He knew, above all men, how it happened. Sir, if ever a Whig President be elected, and I have a title of influence with his councils, this man, Mahon, shall be remembered by me as a firm and faithful public servant. I know him not, but this report is a voucher to me of his character. But, sir, I forget! I am doing good and true any where, and you will find him dull, stupid, incompetent, negligent, faithless, and corrupt. I mind no terms—fear no responsibilities. If he had the sensibilities of a man, he would demand a trial. Give me an honest jury, and I will, upon these papers, convict him!

Sir, the report of the First Comptroller confirms the report of the First Auditor.

[Here Mr. Wise read from the report of J. N. Barker some extracts, also necessarily omitted.]

Now, sir, he remembered that this Administration and the preceding one both alike distinguished for the doctrine that the Executive was a unit—that it was the President's duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed. Why has not this duty, so strenuously insisted on with the view of maintaining Executive prerogative, been performed in discharge of Executive obligation and responsibility?

I am now done with the review of these cases. And, after what I have said before you, let me ask—What use would there be in humbling ourselves to become spies and censors to report delinquencies and crimes to this Executive, with a view to a prompt removal from office? Why pass laws to enact that "the application of public money by an officer of Government to private uses shall be a felony?" Will reports or statutes avail any thing? Vain and idle! they would the more cloak and conceal and protect these plunderers! The President, if he will, may say, as the Duke of Vienna, disguised as a friar in his own capital that he might overlook the actions of his people:

"My business in this State made me a lawyer, not a judge; in Vienna, where I often saw corruption, bold and habitually till it overran the shore. Laws for all faults, but faults are uncounted, that the strong statutes stand, like fortresses in a barbarian's camp. As a such is most to mark."

Pass any pains and penalties, adopt any system of laws you please—United States Bank, pet bank system, sub-Treasury—and let me ask if either could be expected to work well in the hands of such men who "unconsciously" such "faults" Sir, we are told by that philosopher in government, Wm. Penn, that the best system will be as the worst if badly administered by bad men; and that the worst system will be as the best, if righteously administered by good men. Yes, sir, a change of men is what is wanted—a general turn-out of all faithless traitors and servants.

I must bring my remarks to a close—am asking from my head to my heel! But, sir, did I tell the truth or a falsehood in 1836? Have the Executive Departments been conducted with ability and integrity? Let every honest man answer. Add the defalcations of Swartwout, Price, Grant, Reckless, Boyd, Harris, Linn—the whole lot, and tell me how much money was stolen in 1836? But, sir, it is all to be thrown upon the poor banks! How much in default have the banks been?—The Secretary's annual report says:

"First. A list of the banks will be indebted to the United States for defaults previous to the close of 1834, none of which are believed to have given originally any collateral security, (warranted, [M.] The whole amount now due, upon out-competing interest, equals 1,000,670 dollars; and a great part of this must be regarded as a total loss."

"Secondly. Another list of indebted banks is annexed, most of which gave collateral security. [N.] The remaining dues from them to the Treasury, on defaults accruing between 1834 and October, 1837, though at first very large, have been reduced to about 2,000,000; and most, if not all, of these debts, with some others, owing to public disbursements for money on deposits, it is confidently expected will in the end be paid."

"The first instalment due from those which have since executed other bonds and given new security, under the act of October, 1837, has been promptly met, and portions of the second have already been advanced by some of them. Save

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