

WASHINGTON CITY, East Room }
Dec. 12, 1834. }

To my Cousin, Major Jack Downing, editor of the Downing Gazette, Portland, away down east in the State of Maine.

Dear Jack—It's against my rule to say any thing when I haven't got any thing to say, and that's the reason why I haven't wrote to you this week before. And to tell the truth I haven't got a great deal to say now, for there hasn't been much going on here this week, that's worth talking about. One Congress, that they call the Senate adjourned over from Thursday to Monday, just as they did last week. Toth'er Congress met a little while to day, and then they adjourned over to Monday to. Take em both together they have done rather more work than they did last week, but nothing to brag of after all. What little they have done I s'pose you'll find out by the newspapers quicker than I can tell you. But about the General and private matters the papers can tell you so much as I can. I can see the General is growing old a little since I was here before in nullification times. The wrinkles are getting a little deeper in his face and his head grows a little whiter, and although he stands up pretty straight, I can see he don't step quite so strong and a kind of tremble a little when he walks. Seems to me though for a few days past, since they have been talking so much about kicking up a bobby along with France, the old gentleman kind of renews his strength a little. After talking awhile about it with Mr. Van Buren or Mr. Kettle, he'll spring out of his chair and walk across the floor a good deal quicker than he did when I first got here a fortnight ago, and I can see his eyes look brighter and more fiery, and when he walks he brings his foot down with a sort of military squareness that makes me think of a life and drum every time I see him step. He declares right up and down, if the French Congress don't pay over that money, he'll be into em before next June fall chisel. And between you and me I really think he's afraid they will pay it over, so that he shall lose the fun of having a brush with them.

Last night I and the General had a long talk about this French business, went all over it from beginning to end. A number of both cabinets had been in talking the matter over, and Mr. Blair had been in talking the matter over, and Mr. Blair had been in to see what was best to say in the Globe about it, and the General had been hammering upon it so much that he had got his ideas wide awake about it. And after they had all gone out, now, says he, Sargent Joel, I'd give fifty dollars in a minute if your cousin Major Downing was here to talk this business over with me half an hour. There's nobody that I take so much comfort with in talking over my military campaigns as I used to with him. He was the most capital listener that ever I come across. His very listening was a great deal more expressive than most other folks' talking; and sometimes I've thought when I've not by the hour together and told him over about the battle of New Orleans, he listened so capitally, and I could see the thought run over his face and dance about in his eyes so brisk, it seemed almost as good as though I was a fighting it all over again.

By this time I s'pose the General begun to think I was a pretty good listener too, for he looked so much as though he was going to have a tantrum, that I couldn't keep my eyes off of him; and all to once he jumped up and caught hold of my hand, and give it a monstrous grip, and slap me on the shoulder with tother hand, and say he, Sargent Joel, I never see you look so well before in my life. You really look very much like your cousin, the Major, and talk very much like him too. I wonder I never noticed it so much before. Come, says he, Sargent Joel, set right down here and let us have a talk about this French matter; I've got the opinion of most all the rest of em, that is, of my two cabinets, and now I want your opinion about it. Why, says I, General, I don't think my opinion would be worth much, for I've never went to France in all my life; and don't know much about them French fellers, but such as 'tis I'm always ready to give it.

Well, says he, now what do you think about the whole of this French business; speak your mind out freely.

Well, says I, General, I think it is by no means—
You know, says he, Sargent Joel, that I have pledged myself in one of my Messages not to ask any thing but what is right and not to sum up to any thing that is wrong. Don't you call that sound doctrine says he?

Yes, says I, General, according to my notion that is sound doctrine. It is the rule I go by when I am at home. But I think this French business, as far as I know about it.

In the first place, says he, Sargent Joel, the French plundered our commerce year after year, till they took from us from ten to twenty millions of dollars without our giving them the least cause in the world for it. Now don't you think that was clearly wrong?

Yes, says I, General, there's no doubt of that; but in looking from one end to 'tother of this business,

I want look from one end to 'tother, says he. It's enough wrong, & I won't submit to it from France nor no other nation. Well in the next place, says he, after sending over Ministers to France and bawling and parleying with em year after year, they acknowledged that they owed us, & agreed to pay us about five millions of dollars. But they keep putting it off from time to time till they have told as much as a dozen lies about it, and don't act as if they ever meant to pay it. Now isn't it clearly right that the French should pay that five millions?

Yes, says I, General, I believe it's right enough, but sometimes you know.

There's no sometimes about it, says he, I've asked for nothing but what is clearly right, and I'll have it out of em somehow or other, if I have to take it out of their gizzards.

As he said this he jumped out of his chair and marched across the floor and smashed his fist together and looked as fierce as a lion. At that I begun to bristle up too, for always when I see any body getting into a tantrum, I face up to em, that's the best way in the world to cool em down. Well now, says I, General, you asked me tell you what I thought about this French business. But every time I've begun to say a word in edgewise, you'd cut right in and have all the talk to yourself. Now if you want to hear my notion about it, if you'll just set down and promise to be as whist as a mouse ten minutes, I'll give it to you. At that the General stooped short and burst out a laughing; and says he, Joel, you are a clear Jack, all over, and I like you the better for it. And he come along and give me a slap on the shoulder, and set down and told me to go ahead, and he wouldn't put me out again.

Well, says I, General, my rule is this; if a feller strikes me, or pulls my nose, or spits in my face, I up and knock him right down, and make no bones of it. If any body gives an insult to Sargent Joel Downing, he must look out for the rubbers. But if any body steals a load of wood off my wood lot, or a calf or a sheep off of my farm, I don't fly in a passion about it, but think it's best to be calm and look both sides of the question. I'll try all prudent means I can to get the property back again, if I can get it without it's costing me more than it is worth; and I'll try to have the feller punished too, if I can do it without being in danger of getting a digging myself. But I always take time to reason upon it, and look out for my own pocket and my own back.

Now, says I, General, I'll tell you a story that'll show you my notion about this business, and just how it strikes me. When I was a boy we had two neighbors up in Downingville, pretty good sort of neighbors for the most part—
When I got so far the door opened and in come Mr. Kettle again to talk over some more pints about it, and so my pipe was put out for that time; but I mean to tell the General the story the first chance I can get.

I remain your living Cousin,

SARGENT JOEL DOWNING.

Indiana Legislature.

Indianapolis Dec. 19.

On Wednesday last, in the House of Representatives, most of the day was occupied in a general and desultory debate, in committee of the whole, on the resolution offered by Mr. Vawter, providing for a loan of \$1,400,000 for internal improvements. The resolution offered by Mr. Vawter had been stricken out at a previous sitting of the committee, and a motion was pending to insert in lieu thereof an amendment offered by Mr. Thompson, providing for a loan of \$1,500,000 to be appropriated to any rail-road, canal, or turnpike road, now begun or chartered, or hereafter to be begun or chartered—the Governor to be authorized to subscribe double the amount subscribed by individuals; provided no sum shall be subscribed, on the part of the State for the construction of any rail-road, canal or turnpike, until the sum of \$30,000 shall be subscribed on the part of individuals, nor until the payment of the same is secured to the satisfaction of the Treasurer and Auditor of State, who are to decide on the sufficiency of the security offered; and afterwards, to subscribe a proportionate amount, on the part of the State, until the objects so commenced shall be completed. To this amendment Mr. Nave proposed an amendment, to strike out "double" and insert "equal"—the amount of stock to be taken by the State and individuals. The debate took a wide range, and a variety of plans were urged by different gentlemen. Some were in favor of the State embarking in a system without individual subscription. The other gentlemen favored individual subscription; but were divided as to the details of a system of improvement. The object of the discussion appeared to be mainly for the purpose of a general interchange of opinions. It was admitted, on all hands, that the time had now arrived, when the wants, the interests and growing importance of the State, demanded that some general system of internal improvement should be adopted. The final issue of this question still remains doubtful; but a general disposition seems to manifest itself to act with energy and liberality in this matter. The committee rose with leave to sit again.

Mr. Crume from the committee of ways and means reported a bill to abolish the Agent of the 3 per cent. fund, and transferring his duties to the Treasurer of State—allowing said Treasurer an additional compensation of \$100; which bill was three times read and passed. An interesting discussion was taking place on yesterday afternoon, at the time our paper was put to press, on a resolution offered by Mr. Newman, instructing the judiciary committee to report a bill transferring the Probate business to the Circuit Court, and allowing three terms in each year. Mr. Vawter moved to strike out three terms, and after some discussion thereon, Mr. Smith of Ripley moved to postpone the resolution indefinitely; which motion was pending when we left the House. Considerable interest is felt in the issue of the above resolution, as it will be considered a test vote whether any alteration will take place in the Probate system at the present session.

On Tuesday last Mr. Crume from the committee of ways and means, to which had been referred a resolution directing an inquiry into the propriety of repealing the law of last session imposing a tax on Michigan road lands, reported that after the most careful deliberation a majority had come to the conclusion that the law should not be repealed. On the question of concurring in the report considerable debate took place. The question on concurring in the report of the committee was decided in the affirmative by a large majority; so that question, we suppose, is settled for this session.

December 23.

On yesterday, in the House of Representatives, on motion of Mr. Evans, the committee of the whole was discharged from the further consideration of the resolution offered by Mr. Vawter, on the subject of a loan for internal improvements. The question, under this proceeding, recurred on the adoption of the resolution as originally introduced by Mr. Vawter. Mr. Evans moved to strike out said resolution from the resolving clause, and insert in lieu thereof the following:—"That the committee on canals and internal improvements be directed to bring in a bill, providing a loan of \$1,500,000, to be borrowed at a rate of interest not exceeding 5 per cent. redeemable in not less than 30 nor more than 40 years; said sum to be applied to the construction of important works of internal improvements, within this state." A discussion now took place in which several gentlemen participated. At the suggestion of Mr. Wallace, Mr. Evans so modified his amendment that the resolution be referred to a select committee of thirteen—and at the suggestion of Mr. Smith of Ripley, he also modified the same so as to direct the committee to inquire into the expediency of reporting a bill. A division of the question being called for, was first put on striking out the resolution offered by Mr. Vawter; which was decided in the affirmative, yeas 57, noes 18—and on the question of adopting the amendment proposed by Mr. Evans as modified, it was also decided in the affirmative, yeas 56, noes 19. The resolution, as amended, was then adopted. The Speaker then appointed Messrs. Evans, Wallace, Vawter, Bell, Crume, Newman, Wilson of H. Green, Shaw, Thompson, Lowe, Kiston, and Angle, a select committee in pursuance of the resolution. The House agreed to adjourn over from Wednesday until Monday next (the Senate concurring) by a vote of 41 to 34. The balance of the day was consumed in discussing a resolution, offered by Mr. Crume on Saturday, providing for a change in the Probate system, so as to provide for Circuit Probate Judges. Several amendments were proposed which will hereafter be given in our report of proceedings. A motion was made to indefinitely postpone the resolution and proposed amendments; which was considered as testing the propriety of a change in the Probate system, and decided in the negative, yeas 34, noes 37. The resolution as introduced by Mr. Crume was stricken out, and an amendment was offered by Mr. Newman, transferring the Probate business to the Circuit Court, and providing for three terms, and on the question of adopting the same was decided in the negative, yeas 28, noes 44. A motion was now made by Mr. Ray to reconsider the vote striking out Mr. Crume's proposition, providing for Probate Circuits; which was decided in the affirmative. Before any further proceeding, the House adjourned. If any change takes place in the Probate system, it may be fairly inferred it will be to provide for Circuit Probate Courts and Judges, equal to the present number of Circuit Courts.

IN SENATE.

Saturday, Dec. 20.

After some time spent in committee of the whole on various bills, Mr. Dumont from the committee on education, on leave, reported a bill in furtherance of an act to provide a fund to encourage common schools, approved Feb. 2, 1834; the bill was read and ordered to pass to a second reading.

Monday, 22, 1834.

Petition presented—by Mr. Dumont, of James N. Taylor and others, citizens of Switzerland county, praying a reform in the fees, duties, &c. of Clerks of the circuit court, which was referred to the committee on the judiciary.

TEMPORARY ADJOURNMENT.

On motion of Mr. Willet, the vote taken on the resolution moved by Mr. Kelso, on Friday last, providing for an adjournment from the 24th inst. to the first Monday in January, was reconsidered.

Mr. Smith of F. moved to amend the same by striking out the 1st Monday in January 1835, and inserting in lieu thereof "28th instant."

Mr. Kelso proposed to extend the adjournment to the 2d of January, which motion did not prevail.

The question was taken on inserting the 29th instant and was agreed to.

The question was then put, shall the resolution as amended be adopted? and was determined in the affirmative—yeas 41, noes 34.

IN SENATE.

Tuesday, Dec. 23, 1834.

Mr. Dumont, from the committee on education, to which was committed a bill to repeal an act for the encouragement of education reported the same, amended according to instructions. (This bill repeals the Dollar law, so called, and places the military fines in the hands of justices of the peace for collection, one half of which is to be

appropriated to purposes of education, and the other to military purposes.)

The King of Prussia and Dr. Gall. At a grand fete once given at Potsdam, all the Court of Prussia assembled and paraded before Frederick the King. Among all the embroidered colored courtiers, one man alone attracted the attention of his Majesty, and this was a large, tall, bonylooking old man, in white, with a head of remarkable shape. Frederick could not think who he was, and called the Lord in waiting for the purpose of inquiring, "Who is that man in a black coat?" said the King, "at the window with our learned Chancellor?" "Sire," was the answer, "it is Dr. Gall, a celebrated physician." "Gall! oh, I should like to prove for myself whether what I have heard of that man is exaggerated or not. Go and invite him to our table. On the following day, at six o'clock, a splendid banquet brought together the King the Doctor, and a dozen other personages covered with crosses and orders, but remarkable for manners which indicated any thing but noble birth. "Doctor," said the King, when the repast was finished, "will you have the kindness to explain to these gentlemen the various dispositions which their bony systems indicate." Gall arose, for the request of a King was, of course, a command, and began to examine the head of his neighbor, a man of color, who during dinner had been called General. The Doctor appeared embarrassed, "Speak out candidly," said the King. "His Excellency is fond of hunting," said the doctor, "and other violent exercises, and must certainly be in his true element when on the field of battle. He has every indication of a warlike disposition and sanguine temperament."

The King smiled. The Doctor passed on to the next. This was a young man with sparkling eye and daring expression of countenance. "This gentleman," said Gall, a little disconcerted, must excel in gymnastic exercises, must be a great runner, and partial to all the manly sports." "That will do my dear Doctor," interrupted the King; "I perceive that I have not been deceived with regard to your abilities, and I shall not fail to make known that I have myself been the witness of them. The General nearest to you is an assassin, condemned and sentenced to be kept imprisoned for life in chains, and your other friend is the greatest pickpocket in Prussia." Having said this, the King struck three blows on the table, at which signal, guards entered from several doors of the apartment. "Take these gentlemen back to their cells," said the King; and then turning to the stupified Doctor, added, "you have dined with some of the greatest lions of my kingdom; look to your pockets!" Gall obeyed, and discovered that the guests had taken his handkerchief, his purse and his snuff box. On the following day, these articles, however, were returned to him, with a handsome snuff box richly set with diamonds, and of great value, as a present from the King—Le Camelson.

Mr. Rives to impress his countrymen with a high idea of his Diplomacy, says:

"An arrangement which, amid many difficulties, has secured, for claims of our citizens (prosecuted in vain for the last twenty years, and a large portion, if not the whole, of which has been considered as desperate,) a sum sufficient, in all probability, to pay every cent, justly due, and nearly treble the amount pronounced to be due by the commission charged with their examination here, &c."

The Commander of the Faithful, in order to produce irritation against France, says in his message:

"Although the gross amount of the claims of our citizens is probably greater than will be ultimately allowed by the Commission, sufficient is, nevertheless, shown to render it absolutely certain that the indemnity falls far short of the actual amount of our just claims, independently of the question of damages and interest for the detention."

Who is mistaken? Perhaps it can be shown by the Globe that both are right.

[Richmond Whig.]

NEW DEFINITIONS TO OLD WORDS.

Intended as a supplement to Noah Webster. Foretold—A thousand pulls at the devil's tail. [Inquire of the printer.]

Foul mouthed—Having an appetite for a chicken.

Frankincense—Puffing free gratis for nothing [Vide newspapers in general.]

Frivolous—You have loaned out your rascalship.

Freecost—Expenses which cost nobody nothing no how.

Gaily—A dashing falsehood.

Landcaper—A runaway farm—a mortgaged estate.

Landwater—An impatient heir to an estate.

Lovely—A story told to one's sweetheart.

Lovely—A pretty woman without any brains.

Metaphrase—Having had an encounter with certain words.

Misprison—A maiden jail—one that never had tenants.

Mohair—To perform a barbarous operation.

Nobody—A carbuncled proboscis.

Package—To send your grandmother adrift.

Paper stainer—A scandalous writer.

Pastorage—Older than you.

Port hole—The mouth of an Englishman.

Seaboy—The son of a mermaid.

Lodatory—Having brought an action against a tory.

Syntax—A revenue raised on iniquity; license to grog shops and gaming houses.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17, 1834.

The bill introduced a few days ago by Mr. Webster to provide for the payment of five

millions of dollars to claimants for French spoliation previous to 1800, was discussed at length in the Senate. The subject, the times and ardor with which the speakers entered into the discussion, conspired to render the debate one of unusual interest. Mr. Webster opened the debate by stating three propositions assumed as the basis of the bill. One was spoliation, &c. &c. had been committed by France, another was that the spoils, &c. were entitled to remuneration, and the third grew out of these two, and as well as I could understand the speaker, it was that this government was in an equity bound to compensate the citizens for their losses. Mr. Webster after taking for granted that the first two propositions would not be questioned, proceeded to urge reasons to justify the third. I would be doing both him and the subject injustice to give those reasons in detail, or even to state the more prominent of them; but there is no doubt you will have the matter accurately reported in the morning papers.

Mr. Tyler of Virginia, followed Mr. Webster and came directly to opposite conclusions. He said it had been his duty to examine minutely these claims at a former period; and it was his settled conviction that the claimants were not entitled to one cent.

Mr. Tyler gave a brief, animated, clear and eloquent outline of the history of these claims from 1778 to the present day. He had examined the evidence on which they were founded, with the utmost care, and he had never met with any that in his opinion could justify the passage of such a bill. Mr. T. offered several objections; one of which was the fact that almost all of these claims were in the hands of insurance companies. It was well known that Europe was convulsed to the very centre at that day; that merchants engaging in that hazardous trade were compelled to insure at a high premium, and that the losses fell on the insurance companies. Now Mr. Tyler contended that if government was bound to indemnify these underwriters, every principle of justice demanded that they should divide the spoils with the government. He for one was ready to go into an examination of this matter, whenever it was thought proper by the claimants to state the account current. Mr. Benton followed, and said a great deal on the same side; that is, he was very verbose and flatulent; but there was no point in his remarks upon which my mind could rest.

Mr. Preston took the side of the claimants. He was, he supposed, placed on the committee by accident, or because he came from a section of the country which opposed all extravagant appropriations of money, no matter for what purpose. He examined laboriously the reports that had been made on the subject, pro and con, with a prejudice against the claimants; but in spite of his prejudices, the testimony convinced him that the claims were just, and that this government ought to liquidate them. All know his disposition to guard the Treasury against impositions. His constituents had to contribute a large share of the revenue, from which these and all claims were paid; but if the honor and the honesty of the country required it, there was no sacrifice of blood or treasure which he would not make. He came directly to the opposite conclusion from Mr. Tyler and bet's had examined the documents.

Mr. Shepley took the floor after Mr. Preston concluded his very eloquent and patriotic remarks; but I am not only unable to give you any idea of what he said, but even of which side he took. He is an intolerable bore, and very few can have patience to follow him. His voice, features, gesture, and articulation or twang are truly ludicrous. But were his exterior in his favor, his prolixity and enunciated ideas would prevent his succeeding in exciting attention.

Misprint.—We learn from Missouri that all the proposed amendments to the State Constitution except the 7th, 11th, and 12th, have been rejected by the Legislature. The 7th turns out the Circuit court Judges on the first of January, 1836. The 11th abolishes the mode of appointment and tenure of office of the clerks of courts; and the 12th provides for their election by the people.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.

It is not expected that there will be any discussion to excite much feeling until after the holidays, when it is understood that the Senate intend to dispose of the portion of the Message which relates to France. The interest of the country require that it should be so disposed, as to remove all apprehensions of war. The commercial and planting interests are now suffering from the attitude which the President assumed in his late message. If the Senate postpone final action on the subject till the next year the French will be more disposed to act on the subject than they would with a threat hanging over them. Already the high price of insurance and the hesitancy of men about to engage in planting, evince the injury which would befall the country from the course pointed out by the President.

The supplemental report of the Secretary of the Treasury was laid before the Senate to-day and ordered to be printed. It is of enormous size, and so dense that it will require a pierce eye intellect to see through it. Levi Woodbury is physically and mentally a solid man; and so profound, that there are few who can comprehend him until they have pondered over his lucubrations. To-morrow the Senate proceed to the election of a chaplain; but this is a business that concerns nobody but the ladies. It is their province to elect the chaplains, and you might see them to-day, cold as it was, endeavoring to further the interest of their favorite candidates.