

Monday, May 14.

In the Senate, the Post Office bill was taken up, read a third time and passed. Mr. Holmes gave notice that, to-morrow, he would ask leave to introduce a bill for the abolition of Postage on Newspapers. Mr. Dickerson gave notice that he would, on Wednesday, call up the bill to repeal, in part, the duties on Imports. This bill is the first which was reported from the Committee on Manufactures, and is limited to unprotected articles. The Pension Bill was taken up, and Mr. Holmes spoke at length in its support. The question being on the motion to re-commit the bill, with instructions so to amend it, as to provide for the officers and soldiers who served in the Indian wars during the revolution and subsequent to it, till the year 1795; a division of the question was called for, and the motion to re-commit was rejected by a vote of 19 to 21.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. J. S. Barbour offered a resolution directing the Judiciary Committee to inquire into the expediency of reporting a bill defining contempts against either House of Congress which was adopted.

Case of Gen. Houston.

Mr. Archer rose and offered a paper on the part of the accused for the consideration of the House. The accused, when brought before the House for judgment, was entitled to state orally the contents of the paper—but the great respect the accused felt for the House, had induced him to submit, beforehand for their consideration, what he proposed to offer. Mr. A. wished not to be understood as acting in consequence of any direct communication with the accused. He had not seen him excepting in the Hall. But having been requested to present the paper, which contained nothing but what was perfectly respectful, he wished it might be read for the information of the House.

Mr. Burgess asked what the paper was?

Mr. E. Everett wished the gentleman from Virginia would state the substance of the paper.

Mr. Archer said the accused was about to be brought to the bar of the House to receive judgment for an offence of which he had been declared guilty. It was perfectly within his constitutional privileges, to state at that time the considerations in that paper by way of protesting against the competency of the House to pronounce such a judgment. The accused might have done this without permission, it being his undoubted right—but he thought it more respectful to the House to communicate his intention beforehand. He assured gentlemen there was nothing disrespectful in the language of the paper.

After some conversation between Messrs. Barringer, Vinton and Archer, in which the former gentleman objected to the reading of the paper, Mr. McJuffie said the proposed form was the most unexceptionable one for the accused to do what he had an undoubted right to do. Any man brought up to receive sentence has a right to state the reasons why it should not be pronounced.

Mr. Archer said the accused had no doubt of the right, and the only reason of presenting the paper, by the hand of a member of the House, was to manifest his respect for the House. Mr. A. said, for his own part, he did not care whether it was read or not—he had not the slightest wish on the subject. The accused was willing to apprise the House of what he proposed to say when called before them for judgment. He had been requested by a friend (we understood him to say the counsel of the accused) to offer this paper for the previous information of the House. Whether it was read or not, the contents of the paper would be known throughout the country.

Mr. Barringer withdrew his objection, and the paper was read as follows—

To the Honorable the House of Representatives of the United States:

The accused, now at the Bar of the House, asks leave respectfully to state,

That he understands he is now brought before the House, to receive a reprimand from the Speaker, in execution of the sentence pronounced upon him.

Was he to submit in silence to such a sentence, it might imply that he recognized the authority of the House to impose it.

He cannot consent that it shall be thus implied. He considers it a mode of punishment unknown to our laws, and, if not forbidden by the prohibition of the Constitution against "unusual punishments," yet inconsistent with the spirit of our institutions, and unfit to be inflicted upon a free citizen.

He thinks proper to add, in making this declaration, that he has been unwilling to trouble the House.

That though he believes the whole proceeding a-

gainst him, as well as the sentence he now objects to, unwarranted by the constitution of his country, yet circumstances may exist to justify or excuse a citizen in determining (as he has done on this occasion) to suffer in silent patience, whatever the House may think proper to enforce.

May 14.

SAMUEL HOUSTON.

Mr. Archer then moved that the accused be permitted to present this paper to the House at the bar, which was agreed to.

The Speaker then ordered Gen. Houston to be placed at the bar; he soon afterward appeared, accompanied by the Sergeant at Arms.

The Speaker informed him if he had anything to offer to the House before the judgment was pronounced upon his case, it would be received.

General Houston rose and delivered the above paper.

The Speaker then addressed him as follows:

"SAMUEL HOUSTON!—You have been charged with a violation of the rights and privileges of the House of Representatives, in having offered personal violence to one of its members, for words spoken in debate! In exercising the high and delicate power of ascertaining and vindicating their own privileges, the House have proceeded throughout this investigation, and in relation to your individual rights, with all that deliberation and caution which ought to characterize the dignified and moral justice of such an assembly!—

You have been heard in person in your defence; You have been ably and eloquently defended by eminent counsel, and every facility afforded you, to place your cause fully and fairly before the House, and to urge upon its consideration, matters of principle as well as fact, in explanation and justification of your conduct!

Whatever the motives or causes may have been, which led to the act of violence committed by you, your conduct has been pronounced by the solemn judgment of the House, to be a high breach of their rights and privileges, and to demand their marked disapprobation and censure—

If, in fulfilling the order of the House, I were called upon as its presiding officer to reprimand an individual uneducated and uninformed, it might be expected that I should endeavor, as far as I was able, to impress upon him the importance and propriety of sedulously guarding from violation the rights and privileges secured to the members of the House by our invaluable Constitution; but, when addressing a citizen of your character and intelligence, and one who has himself been honored by the people with a seat in this House, it cannot be necessary that I should add to the duty enjoined upon me by dwelling upon the character or consequences of the offence with which you have been charged and found guilty.

Whatever has a tendency to impair the freedom of debate in this House—a freedom no less sacred than the Constitution itself—or to detract from the independence of the representatives of the people in the rightful discharge of their high functions, you are no doubt sensible, must, in the same proportion, weaken and degrade not only the legislature of the nation itself, but the character of our free institutions.

Your own mind will suggest to you probably more suitable reflections than anything which I can say could convey. To those reflections I am prepared to trust; not doubting, that, had you at the time considered the act of violence which you have committed in the light in which it has been regarded by the House, you would have been spared its disapprobation and censure, and I the duty of declaring to you the result of it.

I say more than to pronounce the judgment of the House, which is, that you have been guilty of a high breach of its privileges, and that you be reprimanded therefore at its Bar by the Speaker; and in obedience to the order of the House, I do reprimand you accordingly.

You will now be conducted from the Bar of the House, and discharged from the custody of the Sergeant at Arms."

After Gen. Houston had left the bar, Mr. Archer moved that his protest be entered on the Journal—which was agreed to.

Mr. Stanberry then moved the rules of House be suspended to enable him to offer a resolution inquiring into the contemplated fraud between John H. Eaton and Gen. Houston—which was carried—Ayes 169, Noes 13.

The resolution was then, after some conversation, adopted.

Mr. E. Cooke presented the following letter from Dr. E. S. Davis:

Brown's Hotel, May 12, 1852.

Hon. E. COOKE Sir:—During my examination before the House of Representatives in the case of Gen. Houston, you very impertinently asked among other questions my business in this city. Whilst the trial of General Houston was pending, I deferred calling on you for the explanation which I now demand through my friend, Gen. Demery. I am, very respectfully, your most obedient,
E. S. DAVIS.

Mr. Crane then offered the following resolution: Resolved, That the communication of the Hon. E. Cooke, a member from Ohio, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of seven members, to report the facts and their opinions whether the same establish a contempt and a breach of the privileges of this House or not, and that said Committee have power to send for persons and papers.

Mr. Stanberry, in the course of debate hereupon, reiterated the statement that assaults on members of the House for words spoken in debate were encouraged by the language used by the President of the United States, and said he asked but half an hour to prove the assertion by unquestionable evidence. Mr. Polk (and perhaps others) having declared the statement to be unfounded, Mr. Stanberry moved to amend the resolution so as to institute an inquiry into this matter. After a stormy debate, the Previous Question was called for and carried, precluding the amendment proposed by Mr. Stanberry. The question was then taken by Yeas and Nays on Mr. Crane's motion for a committee, and decided in the negative by Yeas and Nays: Yeas 85—Nays 87.—So the resolution was rejected.

Mr. Adams, from the Bank Committee, made a report expressing the reasons of his dissent from the report of the Committee. Ten thousand copies of this and the other report and documents, were ordered to be printed.

After an ineffectual attempt of Mr. Barbour to get up the Virginia claims bill, the House took up the amendments of the Senate to the Apportionment Bill; and, after Mr. E. Everett had obtained the floor, the House adjourned.

Tuesday, May 15.

In the Senate the Chair communicated a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting a statement made by him, in obedience to a resolution of the Senate, showing the amount of duties collected under the existing law, and the amount which will be collected under the bills reported from the committee on manufactures of the Senate, and under the tariff, submitted by the Secretary of the Treasury. Fifteen hundred copies were ordered to be printed. Mr. Holmes introduced a bill, on leave, to abolish postage on newspapers, which was twice read and referred to the committee on the post office and post roads. The resolution some days ago offered by Mr. Benton, for printing blank number of copies of the report of the committee on the Bank investigation, and blank number of the documents accompanying the same, was taken up. On motion of Mr. Dallas, it was amended so as to include the counter reports of the minority of the committee, and the first blank having been filled with five thousand, and the second with one thousand, the resolution was adopted. Mr. Dallas gave notice, that on Tuesday next, he would call up the bill to renew the charter of the United States Bank. On motion of Mr. Smith, the bill authorizing a subscription on the part of the United States to the stock of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, was taken up for consideration. Mr. Smith commenced a speech in support of the bill, and after speaking a short time, he yielded the floor for the delivery of a message from the House of Representatives. The message was then delivered from the House of Representatives by Matthew St. Clair Clarke, Esq. their Clerk, announcing the death of Mr. Hunt of Vermont, and stating that his funeral would take place next day at 4 o'clock. Whereupon, on motion of Mr. Prentiss of Vermont, the Senate resolved to attend the funeral, and to wear crape on the arm for 30 days. Then, on motion of Mr. Webster, the Senate adjourned till Thursday.

In the House of Representatives, after the Journal was read, Mr. H. Everett rose and announced the death of his colleague the Hon. Jonathan Hunt, to whose memory he paid an appropriate and feeling tribute of eulogy. Mr. E. moved that the members of the House, in token of respect for the memory of Mr. Hunt, wear black crape on the left arm during the remainder of the session, which was unanimously agreed to. Mr. E. said he should make no further motion, as it was the wish of the deceased and his friends that his funeral should be a private one. After sending a message to the Senate informing them of Mr. Hunt's death, on motion of Mr. E. Everett, the House adjourned over till Thursday.