

Mr. Whittlesey's Letter.

From the Richmond (Virginia) Whig. Messrs. Editors:—As your columns have been opened to the subject of Antimasonry, I hope you will have no reluctance to give the subjoined letter in them. It is ably written, and takes the most dispassionate and satisfactory view of the subject, that I have seen. It was written in the course of private correspondence, and without the slightest idea of publication. The correspondent being a good deal struck with its intelligence and force, applied for, and obtained leave of the writer to publish it; and as it contains nothing which he did not firmly believe to be true he had no objection to give it the sanction of his name. The reader need not be told that Frederick Whittlesey is a highly respectable member of Congress from New York.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 10, 1831.

Dear Sir: The views expressed in your letter of Freemasonry, are such as most men of candid minds would take, who reside distant from the scene of Masonic outrages, and among high minded individuals of the Masonic fraternity after the perusal of the tragedy of William Morgan, and an examination of the obligations which led to it—still, I imagine that such views are erroneous in some essential particulars. The outrage upon Morgan, looking upon it as a simple, isolated violation of the laws however heinous it might have been, is as such undeserving of the great importance which has been given to it. Like other undetected and unpunished crimes it might be a matter of regret with the lovers of justice that it should remain unpunished; but it could furnish no occasion for any general movement in the public body. It is not as such simply that it is viewed; but it is looked upon as the window through which a flood of light has been let upon the principles of the Masonic Society and the obligations which binds its members together. It has been the means of disclosing to us the fact that a very numerous, powerful and influential society exists in the land, whose members are scattered all over it, found in every station in society and who are under the most solemn obligations to each other, to assist each other, in all cases, whether "right or wrong,"—to keep each other's secrets in all cases, "murder and treason not excepted"—to sustain each other's reputation and preference, and providing the punishment of death for the breach of such obligations.

These various obligations according to their literal import are opposed to the first and plainest duties which a citizen owes to society—they conflict with his oath as a judge, juror or witness—they conflict with his oath of office in any office to which he may be elected or appointed—they are, in fine, so far as regards the persons taking these obligations in terms, the paramount law, to which all other duties and all other obligations must yield. Without further proof, we should, however, be slow to believe that these obligations could have been understood according to their literal import. We should charitably presume, that they were taken in subservience to their more essential duties as citizens and good officers, and that their requirements would practically extend only to cases warranted by the laws and the public good. The Morgan outrage, however, discloses to us the further and startling fact, that their obligations are looked upon, by many of the members of the fraternity at least as binding even to the very letter, and that literal obedience is to be rendered to the Masonic oath, even though it should involve the infraction of the most cherished and necessary laws of the land. The Masonic oath taken by Morgan incurred the penalty of death, if he should break it. He was about to reveal certain secrets which rendered him liable to that penalty. This was no sooner known than Freemasons laid their plans to inflict upon him the appropriate punishment. Numerous members of the fraternity, from different and distant places, met to consult about the means to be adopted. Members were engaged in an attack upon the office where the manuscript was printing, with a view to destroy both manuscript and type—members were collected at Batavia, when the office was fired—members were engaged in the arrest of Morgan, and in transporting him from Batavia around by Canandaigua, one hundred and fifty miles, to Fort Niagara. Carriages and relays of horses were furnished upon the road by the mystic brethren. Two or three different consultations were had about the manner of disposing of him. He was finally put to death.

No adhering member of the fraternity, with but a single exception, gave any assistance to bring the perpetrators to justice. On the contrary, they threw every obstacle in the way of investigation—They circulated false rumors and poisoned the public mind with unfounded slanders and misled it by groundless stories. The escape of the offenders was connived at. The Grand Chapter of New York, contributed money to aid in such escape, and in the protection and support of the offenders. Grand Jurors were false to their oaths, to truly present—Witnesses upon trial were false to their oaths to truly testify—Peit Jurors were false to their oaths, to truly try—Witnesses in some instances spurned the authority of the Court and refused to testify, and in some instances even to be sworn. Sheriffs corruptly returned partial grand jurors. I might extend this list of enormities, but it is unnecessary. It is sufficient to say that of the whole black catalogue, all of them were committed by Freemasons. The number engaged in the original outrage, were considerable, and they were not harmless,

ignorant and inverte men. They were generally men who well understood the duties they owed to society—who stood high in that society, and who had the confidence, respect and esteem of the community in which they lived. Sheriffs, Magistrates, Officers of the Army and Militia; Members of the Legislature, and even clergymen, were among the number of offenders. They were prompted to the commission of the outrage by no motive of private malice or personal revenge, but solely by a conviction of duty. The obligations which they had taken as Masons, required them thus to break the laws of society, according to their literal import, and they believed that such obligations were imperative upon them according to the very letter—and they acted under such belief. The question then, I apprehend, is are the oaths which are published as the obligations of Freemasonry, the oaths which are actually taken by Free-Masons? and are the same oaths in substance administered all over the union? As to the first branch of the question, I apprehend the fulness of proof can leave us in no doubt.—More than three thousand persons who have seceded from the Society have averred, under the sanction of their reputation, that the disclosures are true—that just such oaths are taken by Freemasons. Nearly one hundred witnesses and some of them adhering Masons, have proved the same fact, by witnesses, when under judicial examinations. Many others have proved the same thing by affidavits extra judicially taken. All these, too, say that Masonry is an unitary system; indeed we know otherwise that it is; and besides there is a general system extending over the whole Union, which must be uniform. There is a Great Grand-Chapter of the United States in existence—all of which facts leads us irresistibly to the belief that the Masonic obligations are substantially the same throughout the Union, and I have no doubt they are throughout the world.

When your Virginia Freemasons say that their Freemasonry is not the same as New York Masonry, I presume they mean only this—that they, as individuals, only understand that these obligations are assumed in their view, and will be acted upon by them in strict subservience to the laws of the land and to the duties they owe Society; and that in no case are the Masonic obligations to be considered paramount to either. A just knowledge of their social duties would teach all, that no obligations could be binding, which conflicted with the claims which society has upon them from their birth. It is nevertheless true, that the Masonic obligations are by their literal import, made superior to all other duties and obligations; still I have no doubt, that not only a majority, but a very great majority of Freemasons throughout the Union, do not so view their Masonic oaths, and will not in practice, so act upon them, that they shall interfere with higher and more essential duties. It is not to be believed that Washington, Franklin, and La Fayette or the gifted, eminent, and patriotic men of the present day, who are Freemasons, would suffer such narrow and pernicious ties to shackle their conduct, in the discharge of their public or private relations in society—all such, without doubt, look upon such obligations, as subservient to more important duties, and do in fact practically disregard the binding force of such oaths. Masonry will not be an instrument of mischief to the world, in their hands. Still, it is equally true, that obligations of such tenor and import, are actually taken by all Freemasons; and they do, in fact, shackle more men with their influence than an ingenuous and generous mind is willing to believe without the fullest proof. This was found by experience, in N. York—this you will find in Virginia, or any other State, as soon as the institution is assailed, with vigorous and determined effort. Give it but a single home blow—wound it with the arrows of truth; you will find men of whom you would suspect no such thing, acting as if the spirit of the very fiends possessed them. It is argument enough against the institution, that it is useless—but it will be perceived at once, that it is worse than useless, if its obligations are such, that even by weak and ill-regulated minds, it can be used to purposes of extensive mischief. It must show some purposes of great utility which it subserves, to be able to put in even a plea for its existence, when its capacity for mischief is so alarming and extensive. It has shewn none such. The great strength of the order, consists in the names of the eminent and venerated men, who have belonged, or who do now belong to it. It is capable of making no other defence. Is this a good plea? No one will say that it is; for, by it, there is no corruption, or abuse, or prevalent vice, that might not be defended.

The truth is, that the Institution itself, is, by its very constitution bad, inherently bad. It is not a good Institution, the benevolent purposes of which have been perverted by bad men—but it is a corrupt Institution, whose capacity for mischief has been restricted by the number of good and virtuous men who have been its members.

We ask all who unite with us in abrogating it, and particularly we should desire those who belong to it, to come forward, and yield it up for the public good. As they have not done it with us, we have felt bound, by an obligation of imperious public duty, to take such peaceable methods, as the constitution has put in our hands, to destroy it. We were convinced that no mode, except the most efficient, would ensure the desired result. Our resolutions—our addresses—and indeed, all our early efforts, were mocked at and ridiculed. The elective franchise is the only efficient organ of public opinion—that remained to us, and we saw no mode but to exercise it for the destruction of Free-

masonry—we were, and are convinced, that an instrument less efficient, would not effect our object. This we do. We do not ask all to aid us politically, though we conceive this the most efficient aid—but we do desire, that people should examine the subject fairly, candidly, impartially, and then, they will act as their conscience shall dictate.

Have troubled you with a long, perhaps too long letter.—I could not well be more brief—my apology must be the importance which the subject has in my own mind, and the importance too, which I believe it to have, as regards this people.

I am respectfully, your obedient servant, FREDERICK WHITTLESEY.

CH. V. B. B. S. S. Twenty-Second Congress—First Session.

Monday, Feb. 20.

The Senate did not sit on Saturday. In the House of Representatives, the resolution from the Committee on the Public Buildings, for the execution of a marble statue of Washington, to be placed in the Rotunda of the Capitol, was taken, and passed by a vote of ayes 114, noes 59. Various private bills were reported and acted on, after which the House, on motion of Mr. Carson, went into a Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speight in the chair, to compensate Mrs. Decatur, for the destruction of the frigate Philadelphia, in the harbor of Tripoli. The consideration of this well known case, occupied the House during the residue of the sitting. The bill appropriates the sum of \$100,000 for this purpose, and provides for its distribution among Mrs. Decatur, the widow of Commodore Preble, and the officers and crew of the United States schooner Intrepid, or their legal representatives. Mr. Carson addressed the committee in support of the bill, and Mr. Tracy proposed an amendment to distribute the sum according to the provisions of the prize law, but the amendment was negatived. Mr. Pearce moved a further amendment, that \$10,000 of the \$31,000, allotted in the bill to Mrs. Decatur, should be paid to the nieces of Commodore Decatur. Upon this a long discussion ensued. Before any decision was arrived at, however, the committee rose and reported, and the House adjourned.

Tuesday, Feb. 21.

In the Senate, yesterday, Mr. Ewing concluded his speech, on the subject of the tariff, in favor of Mr. Clay's resolution and the protective system. The appropriation bills from the House for fortifications; for revolutionary and other pensioners; for the naval service, and for naval arrearsages, were read twice, and, on motion of Mr. Smith, referred to the Committee on Finance. The bill from the House, providing for the settlement of the claims of the State of South Carolina against the United States, was also read twice, and, on motion of Mr. Miller, referred to the Committee on Military Affairs. Mr. Miller, of S. C., has the floor to-day.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Everett, of Mass., presented a memorial from J. J. Audubon, the distinguished naturalist, praying that his history of American birds may be imported free of duty. A variety of other memorials and petitions were presented; and several resolutions on the subject of private claims, were introduced.—The acts of incorporation of the Bank of the United States, and the charter of the old bank, were, on motion of Mr. Thomson, of Ohio, ordered to be printed. Mr. Thomas, of Louisiana, submitted a joint resolution directing an adjournment from this day until Thursday, in honor of the centennial birthday of Washington, which was read a first, second, and third time, and passed. Four engrossed bills were read a third time and passed; and the bill to define the qualification of voters in the Territory of Arkansas, was ordered to be engrossed. The bill on the subject of relieving certain insolvent debtors of the United States, occupied the attention of the House during the remainder of the sitting.

Wednesday, Feb. 22.

In the Senate, yesterday, Mr. Chambers submitted a resolution, amending the rules of the Senate, by providing that the special order shall not be called up till two o'clock, instead of one. The Appropriation bills received from the House on Monday, were passed. Some private bills were matured. At one o'clock, Mr. Clay's resolution was taken up, and Mr. Miller spoke two hours in opposition to it, when he gave way to a motion to adjourn.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Irvin, from the Committee on the Public Lands, reported a bill to reduce and graduate the price of the public lands, which was committed to a Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union. The House proceeded to the consideration of the resolution proposed by Mr. E. Everett, (as modified by the mover) calling on the President for part of the Treaty concluded with the Chickasaw Indians in the year 1830, &c. Mr. Everett again modified his resolution, directing the Committee on the Public Lands to elicit the information which seemed to be the object of the original enquiry. The resolution thus modified was agreed to, yeas 92, nays 77. At an early hour the House adjourned over to Thursday.

Friday, Feb. 24.

In the Senate, yesterday, Mr. Benton, from the Committee on Military Affairs, reported a bill repealing the laws establishing brevet rank in the Army; also a bill to increase the number of Assistant Surgeons in the Navy. Mr. Clay's resolution was taken up after the morning business, and Mr. Miller concluded his speech in opposition to it. Mr. Dallas has the floor for this day. In the House of Representatives, Mr. Clayton submitted a resolution for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the transactions of the Bank of the

United States, with power to send for persons and papers. It was postponed until Monday next. A bill defining the qualifications of voters in the Territory of Arkansas, was passed. The House spent some time in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, upon the bill making appropriations for the army for the year 1832, and the general appropriation bill for 1832. Various amendments were adopted, when the Committee rose, reported the bills, and the House adjourned.

Saturday, Feb. 25.

In the Senate, yesterday, the Vice President communicated a letter from the Governor of Virginia, transmitting the resolutions adopted by the Legislature of that Commonwealth, on the subject of the removal of the remains of George Washington from Mount Vernon. Some private bills were acted on, and, at one o'clock, the Senate proceeded to the consideration of Executive business, after which they adjourned to Monday.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Watnough, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, reported a bill to re-organize the United States corps of Marines. Various local bills were reported from the Standing Committees. At an early hour, the House went into Committee of the Whole, on the bill for the benefit of Mrs. Susan Decatur. An animated discussion ensued, in which Messrs. Carson, Wickliffe, Drayton, Doddridge, McDuffie, White of Louisiana, Pearce, Howard, E. Everett, Burges, and Wilde, participated. On motion of Mr. Watnough the committee rose, reported progress, and the House adjourned.

Various Matters.

JAMAICA.—By the brig Enterprise, which arrived at Savannah on the 2d inst. files of Jamaica papers have been received, down to the Montego Bay Chronicle of the 14th January. The rising of the blacks had been a very general one; but the disturbance was the greatest in the vicinity of Montego Bay. The paper of the 7th gives a list of 106 plantations of sugar, destroyed in the parish of St. James alone. By the prompt action of the Governor, Sir Wiloughby Cotton, and of Commodore Farquhar, and the naval commanders, citizens and sailors had been put in requisition, in addition to the regular forces. Numbers of the insurgents had been taken and shot or hanged by military or civil tribunals. The number of the whites killed is not mentioned.—During his absence in the interior, whether he had gone to put down the rebellion, the Governor had suspended martial law at Montego Bay, and numbers were left for trial, confined in the Court House or on board of the vessels. Several missionaries had been arrested, who remain for trial, after the excitement shall have subsided. The rising, is, as is usual, most falsely, as we believe, charged to their labors to instruct the blacks. Many insurgents have fled to the mountains; and a new Maroon war was expected. Coffee was 15 cents, rum 75, and sugar 7.—The works being destroyed, the cane would be mostly lost. An embargo took place which lasted 14 days. Capt. S., of the Enterprise, says his vessel for several days was crowded with females seeking refuge.

LONGEVITY AND HEALTH.—The Keene [N. H.] Sentinel, states, that Mr. John Whitcomb, of Swanzy, one hundred years of age on last Thanksgiving day, died with the Governor of the State, by invitation, on the 5th ult. He was in good health, with a fair and even ruddy countenance, and likely to continue a tenant in the world's premises, perhaps 10 or 15 years to come! has a remarkable memory, sound teeth, and can read well with suitable glasses.

The loss of property by the late fire at St. Thomas is estimated at between two and three millions of dollars. Vast numbers were houseless, and the government was issuing rations to the destitute. The light was seen at Porto Rico, 72 miles, whence a vessel was despatched, next morning. A government order has been published, forbidding any advance on the necessaries of life.

CABINET ARRANGEMENTS.—The rumors of the new Cabinet arrangements, which have been circulated of late, are assuming a more probable and definite shape. Mr. Rives, being poor, is to be transferred to England, in order that he may have the advantage of another outfit of 9000 dollars, without being put to any extra expense, beyond the amount of stage and steamboat fare from Paris to London. Mr. Livingston is to go to France. Mr. Tazewell to take the State Department. Gov. Cass is to have some new situation, so as to make room for Colonel R. M. Johnson in the War Office.—The object of placing the Colonel there, is to remove him out of Mr. Van Buren's path to the Vice Presidency. There is no intrigues, management now-a-days—Oh no!—New York Commercial.

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 30.

Another Affair.—A meeting took place on Saturday between two gentlemen of this city; at which, after the first fire was exchanged, one of the parties stepped forward and offered his hand to his antagonist, who refused it. The ground was then retaken, and the party refusing, shot instantly dead.

A COLLEGE FIGHT.—A letter from Schenectady, states that a fight, or duel between two students from the southern states, took place the other day. They fought with pistols and dirks, and both were wounded, but not dangerously. It is stated that the civil authorities have taken cognizance of the matter.—Albany, N. Y. Advertiser.

DISASTROUS FIRE.—On the night of the 9th inst. the dwelling house of Mr. James Lewis, of Salfield, took fire, which had made such progress before discovered, that it in-

mates, eighteen in number, had been compelled to save their clothes; they were compelled to travel about a quarter of a mile to their neighbors, in their night clothes, and barefoot, with one exception, during which time the most of them had their feet badly frozen. The following circumstance, which probably was the means of saving many of the inmates from destruction, is worthy of notice.—The family had retired to bed and were in a sound sleep, when the dog, either to make known the danger, or to be relieved from suffocation by smoke, jumped against the bedroom door of Mr. Lewis, and howled so as to awaken the family just in time for them to make their escape.—Hart. Times.

Soda in Washing.—A few ounces of soda will soften a hoghead of the hardest water. It is said to be greatly superior to either potash or pearl ash. It gives a delicate whiteness to the linen without the slightest injury, and never, unless excess is used, in the least affects the hands. To glasses, decanters, table-spoons, &c., it gives a lustre equal to the highest polish, without labor, if washed in water, in which a small quantity has been dissolved.—N. E. Fair.

Breakers Jail.—The two individuals confined in our jail for robbing the boot of the Western Mail Stage, made an attempt to break jail, on Sunday night last, [Feb. 19.] They had sawed off their hobles, with the main spring of a watch, and with the bolt of the hobles had succeeded in making a large hole in the wall, nearly through, but morning appearing rather soon for them, they were detected and secured in such a manner as to render another attempt hopeless.—Hagerstown Free Press.

The Monumental Committee appointed by the citizens of Frederickburg, Va. have accepted the offer made by Mr. Silas E. Bernow, Esq. of New York, for erecting, at his own expense, a Monument to be placed over the remains of the Mother of Washington, which lie interred in the vicinity of Frederickburg. A committee was appointed to request, the President of the United States to officiate in laying the corner stone, which invitation the President has most cheerfully accepted, and will, for this purpose, fix upon an early day after the close of the present session of Congress.—[Ibid.]

Pennsylvania Legislature.

HARRISBURG, Feb. 21.

In the Senate, yesterday, petitions were presented for various objects already before the Legislature. Mr. Boyd presented a petition for the incorporation of a steam tow boat company, to tow vessels on the Delaware, going and coming from sea; Mr. Robinson, a memorial from the Columbia bridge and bank company, stating that the bridge had been nearly destroyed by the late freshet, and praying for a renewal of their charter for Banking privileges for the term of fifteen years, from the expiration of the charter—the State to relinquish her claim to the tax on Bank dividends, and also to increase the capital stock from the present time, \$100,000, the State subscribing such part thereof as would enable the company immediately to rebuild or repair the bridge in a permanent manner, leaving the balance of the stock to be disposed of at the discretion of the company. Mr. Kerlin, from the committee on the Judiciary System, reported a bill to abolish the Circuit Courts, also, the House bill supplementary to the \$100 law. The following bills were severally read a third time and passed, viz: the bill relative to the sale of the real estate of Samuel Wilson, and authorizing John Wharton to execute a deed for certain real-estate in Bucks county; the bill to attach an island in the Susquehanna, now owned by George Porter, to Clinton township, Lycoming county; the bill to confer on Hannah Withers, the rights and benefits of a child born in lawful wedlock; the bill supplementary to the act incorporating the Bald Eagle and Nittany turnpike rail-road company; and the bill to incorporate a company to erect a bridge over the Schuylkill at Matson's ford, in Mont. co. The bill to incorporate the Northampton Horse Insurance company, and to provide for the detection of horse thieves, was passed in committee of the whole, Mr. Pettkin in the chair. The bill authorizing Samuel Duxsey and Priscilla his wife, to sell and convey certain real estate, and to invest the proceeds thereof in other real property, was also passed in committee of the whole, Mr. Packer in the chair.

In the House, yesterday, numerous petitions and remonstrances were presented on various subjects. Mr. Smith, from the judiciary committee, reported against divorcing David Owen. Also, against the extension of the jurisdiction of justices of the peace, to cases of assault and battery. Mr. Wallace reported a bill for erecting a new county out of parts of Erie, Crawford, Venango and Warren. Mr. Kechner moved to re-consider the vote on the bill to empower courts of Quarter Sessions to charter boroughs and fire companies, taken on Saturday last, which was agreed to, and the further consideration of the bill was postponed till Thursday next. The Girard bank bill came up on second reading. The amendment to strike out \$10, offered to the amendment of Mr. Greenough, was agreed to, and the amendment was then agreed to. Mr. Felton then moved an amendment, providing \$30,000 of the bonus to be paid to the holders of refuge, in three equal annual instalments. It was supported by Messrs. Felton and Goddman, and opposed by Messrs. Ridgell, Patterson, Wash., and Dunlop, and disagreed to. Mr. Brown then moved an amendment providing for the payment of the bonus in three annual instalments, of \$25,000 each, which was agreed to, and the bill was ordered to be transcribed for a third reading.—[Reporter.]