

MR. ADAMS AND MR. WHITNEY.

Four years ago Mr. Adams united in a report made by the minority of the Bank Investigating Committee, and signed by himself, Mr. McDuffie, and J. G. Watmough, in which they charged Mr. Whitney with having been an "informer," and of having told an "artfully devised story, which was intended to blast the reputation of a highminded and honorable man;" and, upon this charge, thus made by themselves, they held him up and presented him before the world, as "a blasted monument of the speedy and retributive justice of Heaven." The public might well be led to suppose, that an individual, to be thus anathematized, and by persons, some of whom once held distinguished places in the confidence of the people, must have been most clearly proved of having been guilty of the crime imputed to him.

But what was the truth, as shown by the evidence taken at the time; and also shown in the defence of Mr. Whitney, made by Judge Clayton, the chairman of the Investigating Committee, which we lately published? Why, that every fact stated by Mr. Whitney was clearly and fully proved by the books of the Bank and the witnesses who were examined. But, that in a circumstance connected with these facts, viz: the date at which he stated he had a conversation with the President of the Bank in relation to them, he was in error; that instead of its having taken place on the 26th or 27th of May, it could not have taken place till the 1st or 2d of June.

Mr. Adams, however, was not satisfied in merely uniting with his colleagues of the minority of the committee, in thus holding Mr. Whitney up to the world as a "blasted monument;" he made, in addition, an individual report, occupying over fifty pages of public documents; between seven and eight of which were specially dedicated to the purpose of blasting the reputation of Mr. Whitney, and in framing an "artfully devised story" for that purpose. He most distinctly charges Mr. Whitney with having been guilty of PERJURY; because he did not accurately recollect a date connected with a circumstance after the lapse of eight years.

In what situation is Mr. Adams now placed? Mr. Adams, in relation to General Jackson, the Florida treaty, and himself, has in his place in the Hall of the Representatives of the nation, and before the nation, stated as facts, and connected with the same, a detail of circumstances, both of which it has been shown are untrue! To employ the exulting ejaculations of Nicholas Biddle in the case of Mr. Whitney, and in reference to him, he is "enclosed between two dates, beyond which he cannot escape."

After the sentence pronounced by Mr. Adams upon Mr. Whitney, for having been in error as to a circumstance only, what will be the sentence the public will pronounce upon Mr. Adams, for having been in error, both as to the circumstances and the FACTS?

Mr. Adams, in his report, gives as a truism the following: "The instinct of calumny is inventive of details, precisely because details make their way more easily to the credit of the hearer; and it has long been remarked, by keen observers of human action, that he who accustoms himself to make a truant of his memory, is oftentimes the first to credit his own lie."

If report speaks truly, Mr. Adams does not permit his memory to act the truant. He diarises facts; in what manner, may be judged by the following declaration made by Mr. Dallas, in open court, in Philadelphia, in trial of the celebrated slander case of Harris against Lewis, on which occasion the testimony of W. H. Crawford conflicted directly with that given by Mr. Adams. Mr. Dallas then said, "we will show that he (Mr. Adams) has in this case been the slave of his passions and prejudices, bending the facts to them, instead of controlling them by the facts; and that when he diarised, he put down not the facts, but what he wished to be the facts." This was a bold declaration for any individual to make against another, if untrue, when unprotected by a constitutional privilege, as was the case with Mr. Adams when reporting against Mr. Whitney.

In the late statement of Mr. Adams, in relation to General Jackson, it appears that if he diarised the facts, he must have done so in the manner Mr. Dallas declared he did in the above case. In regard to the details which Mr. Adams entered into, we have from his own pen that "the instinct of calumny is inventive of details."

It would seem, however, from the explanation which Mr. Adams undertook to make after he had been detected and exposed, that he must have diarised the facts, because he claims extenuation only as to circumstances. He said, "he had spoken from recollection, and with that degree of diffidence which every one must do, so speaking with regard to mere incidental circumstances, at the expiration of sixteen or seventeen years."

Did Mr. Adams extend to Mr. Whitney the same charity, and grant the same allowances for the frailty of his memory, in relation to a "mere incidental circumstance," after a lapse of eight years, which he now craves for himself?

Mr. Adams, in his report, thus expressed himself: "The subscriber, in charity to the infirmities of human nature, would willingly believe that the testimony of Mr. Whitney, upon his first examination, was the result of self-delusions, produced by long cherished and pampered suspicions of trivial error, till imagination, supplying the place of memory, had swollen them into imputations of embezzlement and fraud." Mr. Adams continues: "Mr. Whitney had been stimulated to bear testimony against the Bank from abroad. The more aggravated the charges which he could bring to bear on public opinion against the president of the bank, the fairer would be the prospect of success in defeating the renewal of the charter, and the more acceptable to the spirit of party would be the service he might render by the testimony he should give."

Now, does Mr. Adams wish to have extended to him, "in charity to the infirmities of human nature," that the testimony which he gave in the first statements he made in the House, in which he gave a detail of his having left the Florida treaty with General Jackson, which has been fully and clearly contradicted, was the result of "imagination supplying the place of memory?" Whatever may be his wishes, is it not much more reasonable to suppose, from the well known character of Mr. Adams, that he was "stimulated" to give the testimony he did, under the belief that "the more acceptable to the spirit of party would be the service he might render by the testimony he should give?"

Mr. Adams reported that Mr. Whitney, upon his examination, had been asked, "what had been his motive for giving the testimony?" and that he answered, "he had no particular, but general motives, for giving the testimony." What will be thought of

the integrity of Mr. Adams, when neither such a question can be found propounded to Mr. Whitney, nor such an answer given by him? The question which was asked of Mr. Whitney was, "whether he had any particular motive for making a communication," which he stated he had made to the chairman of the committee; and the answer which he gave was, that "he had no particular motives; his motives were general."

Mr. Adams reported, that Mr. Whitney retracted an assertion which he made after it had been "blasted by the production of the books." He then continues: "*Yet the retraction itself was not frank and candid. It was by assuming an alternative, which, while it abandoned all pretence of sustaining the fact, was yet unwilling to abandon the offensive imputation.*"

There is nothing in the evidence to be found to sustain Mr. Adams in these statements. The statements made by Mr. Whitney of facts, were confirmed by the examination of the books. The same evidence will show that the retraction made by Mr. Whitney as to a discrepancy relating to a *circumstance*, was "*frank and candid*"

How is it with Mr. Adams? Is it not clear, that in the explanation which he gave after his statement had been *blasted* by the production of evidence which he could not controvert, he endeavored to protect himself by assuming an "alternative" which existed previously, neither in shadow or substance? He was "*unwilling to abandon the offensive imputation*" contained in his first statement, that *General Jackson was here at the time the treaty was ready for signature*; and then resorts to the "alternative" by way of "commutation of the terms" that he was "*at or near that time.*" Mr. Adams, in reference to a memorandum which Mr. Whitney produced to confirm his statement of facts, said, "*his, Mr. W.'s, dishonored memorandum found no endorsement for the honor of the drawer.*"

It may be a very questionable matter, whether the dishonored statement made by Mr. Adams will find an endorser to the "*explanation or commutation of its terms*" made by him.

To the future historian and biographer, is reserved the task of doing justice.