To J. S. Gardner
May 9th 1901
from
C. H. G.

W. Lowndes.

LIFE AND TIMES
OF
WILLIAM LOWNDES
OF SOUTH CAROLINA
1782–1822

BY

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TO THE MEMORY OF

MY MOTHER

REBECCA MOTTE RUTLEDGE

ONLY DAUGHTER OF

WILLIAM LOWNDES

IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHOSE EARNEST WISH

THIS BOOK HAS BEEN COMPILED

IT IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE

A WORD of explanation — perhaps of apology — is necessary in presenting this book to the public. Of apology that the life of a statesman should be attempted by one who has no skill in statecraft, of explanation why it has been so attempted.

Mrs. William Lowndes during her long widowhood carefully collected all letters and papers which might be useful for a life of her husband. She died in 1857, bequeathing these letters to her daughter, Mrs. Rutledge, to be used whenever a competent writer should be found. Early in 1860 the Honorable William J. Grayson, than whom none could be more competent, offered to undertake the work, and by the help of these papers prepared a memoir. But for two curious accidents this present book need never have been written.

Mr. Grayson died during the war between the States, and his MS. passed into the possession of the late Major Rawlins Lowndes, of New York, and was carried by him to New York with a view to its publication. Before completing the arrangements Major Lowndes also died, and in some unexplained manner the MS. was lost. No trace of it has ever been found. The loss was the more severe since

the materials from which it was prepared had all perished in the great fire of Charleston in 1861.

Fortunately it had been previously examined by the son-in-law of Major Lowndes, George Chase, Esq., of Boston, who introduced copious extracts into his valuable genealogical work, "Lowndes of South Carolina," thus preserving many important facts.

These repeated accidents caused an abandonment of the work for years. It was found, however, that a collection of private letters and note-books had escaped the conflagration, not having been thought of sufficient importance to be carefully secured. These, too familiar and slight to be offered to a professional writer, might still furnish some picture of the man, if treated with patient and reverent care.

It is for the most part from these stones rejected of the builder that the writer has made her book. She was encouraged in so doing by the knowledge that although seventy-eight years have passed since the death of Mr. Lowndes, he is yet remembered wherever the history of the early part of the last century is studied. Among his own people his name is held in honor, and the chief military corps of Charleston, the Washington Light Infantry, still keeps his memory green, delighting to recall, among all its more recent glories, that ninety-four years ago he was its first captain.

For authorities the writer has relied for the earlier chapters upon Ramsay, Drayton, and Garden, his-

torians of Carolina, Mr. McCrady's invaluable work, "South Carolina under the Royal Government," not having appeared when she was writing. Also upon "Elliot's Debates," Wirt's "Life of Patrick Henry," papers by Ex-Mayor W. A. Courtenay in the "Year Books of Charleston," 1880–1887, Gregg's "History of the Old Cheraws," etc., etc.

For the more recent period she has had the assistance of a MS. sketch of Mr. Lowndes by the late Mr. Daniel Ravenel, and of another by an anonymous writer evidently well acquainted with his subject. These MSS. are generally referred to when any personal detail not otherwise credited is given. The "Abridged Congressional Debates" and many newspapers of the time have been used. She has also relied upon Mr. Chase's "Lowndes of South Carolina," Mr. Adams's "History of Jefferson's, Madison's, and Monroe's Administration," upon Randall's "Life of Jefferson," J. Q. Adams's "Diary," and the lives of Story, Pickering, Cabot, and others, — these more particularly for points affecting New England.

She is greatly indebted to the grandson of Mr. Lowndes, Thomas Pinckney Lowndes, Esq. (who has passed away since this MS. was completed), for carefully collected notes upon his grandfather, and for letters in his possession.

To James Lowndes, Esq., of Washington, and to Langdon Cheves, Esq., for help of the same kind. To Edward McCrady, Esq., to the Hon.

William A. Courtenay, LL. D., and to Prof. della Torre of the Charleston College, for much kind assistance.

HARRIOTT HORRY (RUTLEDGE) RAVENEL.

CHARLESTON, S. C., January 24, 1901.

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LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM LOWNDES

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE

1782

THE beginning of the year 1782 was a critical period in the history of lower South Carolina. The British forces, recoiling before the successes of Marion, Sumter, and Greene, had abandoned the middle country to the Americans, only to intrench themselves the more securely in Charles Town and its vicinity. From these fortified posts, they made, with their armed galleys, frequent descents upon the plantations and villages of the coast, plundering and destroying everything that they could find, without the slightest regard to the privileges conferred by the parole, which, offered after the fall of Charles Town in 1780, was supposed to afford security to the families and property of those who had taken it. Governor Rutledge, writing to the delegates from South Carolina in Congress, says: —

"The enemy seem determined, if they can, to break every man's spirit, and if they can't, to ruin him. Engagements of capitulation and proclamations are no security against their oppressions and cruelties."

Nevertheless, the spirit was not broken, and the people now knew that the tide of fate had turned, that Greene was coming nearer day by day, and that the many skirmishes which took place along the coast were the last flashes of the war.

It was just at this time, February the eleventh, 1782, that the subject of this sketch, William Lowndes, was born on the Horseshoe plantation in the parish of St. Bartholomew's, Colleton. And here I may observe that, although when he had achieved national reputation, he was known to the world as "Lowndes of Carolina," he would at any time have described himself as "of St. Bartholomew's," for the Carolinian of that day, like his English cousins, always identified himself with the place where his lands lay, and was first, and before all things, a country gentleman.

He was the youngest and only surviving child of the Honorable Rawlins Lowndes, by his third wife, Sarah, daughter of Colonel Charles Jones, of Georgia. Mr. Rawlins Lowndes had been one of the leaders of the Revolution, even before he himself knew whither he was going; for as judge of the Court of Common Pleas and General Sessions he had, in 1754, ordered the release of one Powell, a printer, who had been arrested and imprisoned by order of the Governor's Council, of which Sir Egerton Leigh was then president. Powell was arrested because he had presumed to print some of the proceedings of the said council, and Mr. Justice Lowndes, then Speaker of the Commons' House, ordered him set at liberty; asserting that the "law of the land gave the council not the least right to commit," and pointing out, with scarcely veiled irony, that it could not derive such right from an imagined identity with the House of Lords.

He also, in the same Court of Common Pleas, —

that unsalaried court in which some of the best men of the province gave their time to their country, — gave, in 1776, the first judgment pronounced in America against the Stamp Act, declaring it "against common rights and the constitution," and refusing to enforce it. For these offenses a frivolous charge was brought against him, and he was dismissed the bench.

Of his services there, one of his colleagues, William Henry Drayton (afterwards chief justice of the State of South Carolina), writing, under the signature of "Freeman," a defense of himself and his brother judges, says: —

"A few years ago the bench of justice in this colony was filled with men of property, and if all of them were not learned in the law, there were some among them who taught their brethren to administer justice with public approbation; and one[1] in particular had so well digested his reading, although he had never eat commons at the Temple, that he was, without dispute, at least equal to the law learning of the present bench."

By "the present bench" Drayton means the judges who had been sent from England to hold the office as soon as salaries were attached to it. He also says, "Mr. Lowndes and myself are the only two judges who have ventured (and with success, too) to charge juries in contradiction to the rest of the court."

Later on, it was Rawlins Lowndes who proposed the erection of the statue of the great Chatham, which still stands in the city square of Charleston, in memory of the gratitude of a spirited people to the defender of its rights. Afterwards he was a member of the various Councils of Safety, etc., which engineered the beginning of the Revolution.

[1] Rawlins Lowndes.

But although a resolute and fearless man, he often in these councils provoked his more impetuous colleagues, Arthur Middleton, William Henry Drayton, and others, by the caution of his movements and his unwillingness to take steps which should render war inevitable if liberty could be secured in any other way.

In the Council of Safety, Middleton and Drayton were the leaders of the "extreme party" — Lowndes and Parsons (a distinguished lawyer) of the "Moderates," the latter representing the opposition. It was Arthur Middleton who moved to attach estates in case of the flight of the owner, and to *excommunicate* from all social privileges all persons who should refuse to sign the "Provincial Oaths," as the resolutions of non-intercourse, etc., introduced by the Provincial Congress, were called.

William Henry Drayton says on this point, "Nothing has been determined upon but the tender of the oath to those people. I have twice pushed hard for the 'Resolution for attaching estates in case of desertion,' but have not been lucky enough to get a second; the matter, however, is not rejected — only *postponed*.

"Rawlins, *postponator*, declares the resolution not fit to proceed from the Committee of South Carolina, and so arbitrary, that only the Divan of Constantinople could think of promulgating such a law."

This opposition was continued to the very end, for when the delegates to that Congress which signed the Declaration of Independence were elected, Mr. Lowndes pointed out the dangers to which they would be exposed. The opinions of the Northern Colonies were, he said, much more advanced than those of Carolina, inasmuch as they "denied the superintending power of Parliament, a

doctrine which no one here admitted; and unless our deputies from this colony appeared in Congress with limited powers, they, being outnumbered, would be bound by votes upon points which they absolutely denied."

The event proved the foresight of the objection. The powers *were* limited, and the outnumbered deputies from South Carolina hesitated long before signing the Declaration, not knowing if their people would support them. The English guns in Charles Town harbor, on the 28th of June, 1776, settled the question.

It is evident that all these men disputed vehemently, but that they acquiesced loyally when the vote was taken; sometimes deciding an important measure by a majority of one! — acting as became the sons of Englishmen who had not lost their political birthright of good sense.

Of their differences the son and biographer of Drayton says: "It must not be supposed that the individuals whose names have been mentioned as leading opposition in the public councils had any other than the purest views in so doing; as every free and independent citizen of this community has from the first settlement of this colony maintained his right to comment on the proceedings of the government." Mr. Drayton remarks on the kind treatment which the colony had received, and continues: "Hence the public mind weighed how far it should support violent measures against the ancient government. . . . For these reasons the opposition members were always kept in place, as eliciting by their opposition more prudent measures. And that their conduct in so doing was not disapproved, the high public stations to which many of them were called during the most critical times of the Revolution will be the best assurance of the public approbation."

That Mr. Lowndes was in no way ashamed of this opposition is shown by his alluding to it during the debates on the Constitution in 1788; when he reminded his hearers how he had opposed a Declaration of Independence, but had yielded it just observance when once adopted.

His first call to "high public station" was in 1778, when Mr. John Rutledge resigned the presidency of South Carolina, not approving of the Constitution then adopted, and especially objecting to the insufficient authority conferred by it upon the president, and the withholding the veto power. Mr. Lowndes held the office for a year, acting with energy and resolution, both in rejecting without hesitation the British *ultimatum* sent by a flagship into Charles Town, and in making every preparation for the invasion, which after the fall of Savannah all knew must surely come.

His term of office was for one year only, and at the end of that time Mr. Rutledge resumed the position, with the title of "Governor" (instead of "President") and "dictatorial" powers, conferred on him by the legislature.

Among all these public employments Mr. Lowndes had found time to marry three times. His first wife was the beautiful Amarinthia Elliott. She lived only one year, and he then married Miss Mary Cartwright, by whom he became the father of many sons and daughters. One little touch of sentiment softens and embellishes his somewhat stern character, for when his first daughter was born he named her, not after her own mother, but Amarinthia, for the young wife who had been buried with her baby in her arms.

The second wife also was no sooner dead than he married the third, Miss Sarah Jones, he being over fifty and she sixteen. A portrait of this lady,

in the possession of the writer, said to have been taken at the time of her marriage, shows a dark-eyed, rosy-cheeked girl, more fit, one would say, for the schoolroom than for the head of a household. Nevertheless, she did so well both as the wife of an old man and as the mother of children as old as herself, that her stepchildren loved her, and counted her son as one of themselves.

By the end of the war the gout, that tormentor of our grandfathers, had laid its clutches upon Mr. Lowndes. Just a month before his son William was born, he had been summoned to attend the General Assembly at Jacksonborough. This was a matter of great importance to the State, for it was the first assembly that had been held since the fall of Charles Town, two years before. John Rutledge had been keeping up a civil government with little but resolution and an untiring spirit to support it, — driving from place to place, as the enemy took, or abandoned, one or another position, and often barely escaping capture. He now saw his opportunity, under the protection of Greene's advancing army, to summon the legislature to arrange for the new era about to begin, and to resign the authority which he had held through such troublous times.

Mr. Lowndes was chosen a delegate from St. Bartholomew's and did his best to attend, but did not arrive until the assembly had begun its debates. He was reprimanded for want of punctuality, and answered "that he had used due diligence, but that the enemy having carried off all his horses, and he being helpless with the gout, he had been forced to harness six *oxen* to his coach; hence his slow progress. Mrs. Horry, of South Santee, had met him on the road, and could testify." It helps one to recognize how short a period our history

covers, to know that the present writer has heard this scene described, by one who saw it. Mrs. Horry's little daughter, who, looking from the window of her mother's chaise, saw the coach with its clumsy steeds — the oxen swaying from side to side, the negro drivers running and shouting, and the old gentleman bowing his powdered head, and apologizing for interfering with Mrs. Horry's progress.

The assembly sat in safety, though not without apprehension. It had really been summoned to Jacksonborough (which was a little village on the Edisto River, about thirty miles south of Charleston, and twenty from the coast), as a sort of manifesto of renewed possession of the low country. But, in truth, the danger was great: the country was intersected by navigable streams, the village was within easy reach of the British galleys, and Greene kept vigilant watch on the approaches. John Rutledge, writing on the 29th of January, says: "The assembly has been sitting every day since the 18th, and has received no interruption from the enemy. I hope they will give us none. Indeed I don't think they will attempt any." An opinion based somewhat on Rutledge's indomitably hopeful disposition, and also on the knowledge that the nearest British outpost had been captured some nights before. The assembly did its work, discussed among other things the subject which was to be a burning one for many a day, the punishment to be meted out to Tories and evil-wishers, and adjourned in peace.

By the time that the little William Lowndes was ten months old (December, 1782), the British finally departed, leaving the State, as it was now to be called, to bind up her wounds, count her losses, and set about repairing them. The losses were indeed

heavy, especially to the planters along the coast, whose slaves had been carried off by hundreds, generally to be sold in the West Indies, and whose houses and barns had been burned. But it was not only the coast that had suffered; every region of Carolina had borne its part. In the letters to the delegates to Congress already quoted, Governor Rutledge writes, wherever he goes, of the trials of the people. From the very northern portion, near the border of North Carolina, he says: —

"It was really melancholy to see the desolate condition of poor Hill's plantation and the situation of his family; all his fine ironworks, mills, dwelling-house and buildings of every kind, even his negro houses, reduced to ashes, and his wife and children in a little log hut. . . . I was shocked to see the ragged, shabby condition of the brave and virtuous men who would not remain in the power of the enemy, but have taken to arms. This, however, is but a faint description of the suffering of our unfortunate country, for it is beyond a doubt that the enemy have hanged many of our people, who from fear and the impracticability of removing had given parole, and from attachment to our side had joined it; . . . they have burned a prodigious number of houses, and turned a vast many women, formerly of affluent or easy fortune, with their children, almost naked into the woods. . . . Tarleton at General Richardson's widow's" [this is in what is now Clarendon County, the centre of the State] "exceeded his usual barbarity, for having dined in her house, he not only burned it, after plundering everything that it contained, but having drove into the barns a number of cattle, hogs, and poultry, he consumed them, together with the barn and the corn, in one general blaze. . . . Lord Cornwallis is going on burning and hanging; Captain Conyers

assured me yesterday that two hundred houses had been burnt. . . . It is said (and I believe it) that of the prisoners whom Brown took at Augusta (Georgia) he gave up four to the Indians, who killed 'em and kicked their bodies about the streets; and that he (Brown) hung upwards of 30 prisoners." This was in the extreme west of the State, and in Georgia. In the same letter comes: "Davis says Tarleton is in quest of Marion, and doing much mischief in burning houses on Santee" [which is in the southeast portion of the country]. There, too, were felt the cruelties of Major Wemys; who, when captured by Sumter, had in his pocket such a damnatory list of houses burnt along the Pedee and in Williamsburg County that he was forced to throw himself upon the mercy of his captor, and implore his protection against the vengeance of the infuriated militia; while the atrocities perpetrated in the middle and upper country by Cunningham, "the Bloody Scout," probably surpass any ever committed by a white man on this continent.

With these things fresh in their memories it was not strange that the cry should be for retribution; but it must not be supposed that revenge alone filled the hearts of the victors. Justice, it seemed to them, was on their side, and demanded that their losses should be repaired. They were poor and ragged, homeless and hungry, the army which had fought so gallantly was unpaid, and despairing of ever being paid, — there was literally no money, and no present way of raising any; while the Tories, active or passive, were comparatively rich.

The assembly, accordingly, passed acts of confiscation, banishment, amercing, etc. [not, it may be feared, without laying itself open to charges of injustice and partiality]; and besides these acts, affecting property alone, wild justice was sometimes

done to those ruffians who had incurred personal enmity by their barbarities.

Yet, on the whole, considering the provocation, the acts of violence were surprisingly few, owing chiefly, it is said, to the great and wholesome influence of Marion, who, fiercest in the fight, was most forgiving when the fight was done. Even the fines were less numerous and less heavy than might have been expected. For a time, indeed, it was hard to interfere in behalf of the sufferers without being accused of being a "dumb Tory" or a "British sympathizer," but gradually the feeling arose that the country could only be a country by the free assent and well-being of all, and that to keep a class of suffering and proscribed people among them would be a horrible element in the body politic. The party of mercy finally prevailed, the greater part of the exiles were permitted to return, their fines were lessened, and half a million pounds sterling, actually in the possession of the State, was returned to them.

What precise part Mr. Lowndes took in all this controversy there is no way of telling. Probably, as he had opposed confiscation at the beginning of the war, he opposed it still, but it is not recorded. Mr. Bancroft indeed has said that after the fall of Charles Town he had himself taken British protection, but Mr. Bancroft has nowhere given his authority for the statement, and the most diligent search fails to discover it. It can only be supposed that he has in this been confounded with his brother Charles, who did so shelter himself. His name is on no list of fine or confiscation, and he was at once called to the public service. From fragments of his correspondence (only fragments remain) it is clear that he strongly upheld the principles of business integrity, in the vexed question of the pay-

ment of debts due to "the other side," and that he exerted himself to secure those due to his personal friends. There are several letters thanking him for his kindness in this respect. The following from Mr. Robert Williams (of whom I know nothing but that he was one of the first pewholders of St. Michael's Church) is interesting, as showing the feeling in England over "the long invocated peace."

LONDON, April 12th, 1783.

DEAR SIR, — I wrote to you on the 12th of Feby. via Bermuda, expressing the earnest desire to be informed of the disposition of my countrymen towards me now they have attained the object of their wishes, and requesting you would communicate to me the proceedings of your Legislature from time to time, respecting persons in my situation, that I may be enabled to adopt some plan for reuniting myself to my family, from whom I have not heard since our separation, which is no small addition to my distresses. This Nation is reduced by contending factions to such a state of anarchy, that until these few days we have had no Ministry since the dismission of those who made the Peace with which all Ranks of People are extremely dissatisfied; however the public Faith being pledged, it is imagined the definitive Treaty, as well as that relative to Commerce, will be immediately resumed and brought to a close; so that by a restoration of the blessings of Tranquillity, I am hopeful my fellow-Citizens will be guided by those principles of Justice and Equity for which they formerly were conspicuous. My Solicitude and your Sensibility will apologize for my writing to you again on this subject, etc., etc.

I am with the sincerest regret, Dear Sir,

Your Most Obdt. humb. Serv.

ROBERT WILLIAMS.

THE HONORABLE RAWLINS LOWNDES ESQR.

South Carolina had been remarkably fortunate in her clergy. Sent out by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, they appear to have been selected with care, and were, with few exceptions, men of character and merit. Some, such as Commissary Garden and the Rev. Mr. Clarke, were far above the average, and it was undoubtedly due to this cause that the attachment to the Established Church was so strong as to outlive the establishment, and keep so many of the congregations in the ancient ways.

It was perhaps even more remarkable (considering that almost all of them were Englishmen born) that the great majority of the clergy should have taken the side of the colonists and cast in their lot with the new State. "Out of twenty," says Dalcho, "only five adhered to Great Britain and left the country." Of these five, however, two were men of importance, the rector and assistant rector of St. Michael's. The assistant, Mr. Bullman, had not been very long out from England, when quite in the beginning of the troubles he preached a vehement political sermon, proclaiming the supremacy of the government, and warning "silly Clowns and illiterate mechanics not to censure the conduct of Princes and Governors." This was in 1774, when things were becoming stormy, and it was no great wonder that Mr. Bullman was desired "no longer to officiate at St. Michael's Church."

The case of the Rev. Robert Cooper was a more serious matter. He had been in the colony for a long time and had married there, officiating first as assistant minister of St. Philip's. When the present St. Michaels was built in 1759, the congregation desired to have a new clergyman sent over from London. They would like one, they said, "middle-aged and of a grave deportment, and with a

good audible voice," very judicious and reasonable requirements surely, and, one would suppose, easy to find when a comfortable house and a salary of £112 sterling were offered withal. No clergyman came, however, and after some delay the congregation "called" Mr. Cooper from St. Philip's.

From this time (1761) he officiated regularly, and seems to have been much liked, so the distress must have been great when early in the morning of June 30, 1776, almost before the guns of Fort Moultrie were hushed, the vestry of St. Michael's was hurriedly convened because its rector had refused to take the oaths to defend the Constitution of South Carolina established in the March previous. The vestry promptly ordered that there should be no divine service that day, nor until they had time to inquire into it; whereupon Mr. Cooper declared that he considered himself dismissed, and left the country. Doubtless he thought of himself as of a non-juror of Charles's or James's time, and comforted himself with the great companionship of Sancroft and Sacheverell. His martyrdom was neither long nor painful, for when he reached England he was given a pension of £100 as a loyalist, and various preferments, becoming eventually rector of St. Michael's, Cornhill.

The friendship between this gentleman and Mr. Lowndes, who was at one time one of his vestry, appears to have been close, and it is another instance of the singular regard for the freedom of private opinion, which was one of the strongest traits of Mr. Lowndes's character, that even such difference as this did not destroy it. When his son William was born, five years after, he made Mr. Cooper (in England) his godfather, and there are several letters of thanks from the latter, such as —

"I have only to repeat my bare but sincere

Thankfulness to you for the Continuance of your never-to-be-forgotten services; and ever shall approve of and admire, the well timed and satisfactory Compromise, accomplished Sir, by your kind Exertions; but must refer you for the just Reward of Goodness so generous and so diffusive, to the Delight and Joy of your own Heart."

Of all the valuable citizens lost to Carolina in these years, none seem to have been as gently considered and much regretted as Dr. Garden. He was by birth a Scotchman, but had lived for over thirty years in Charleston, practicing medicine and studying the sciences — more especially botany. "He never," says Ramsay, "complained that the climate was too hot for study;" and when one remembers the woods and swamps, in which his specimens must have been sought, the simple statement becomes expressive. His botanical learning gained him the coveted F. R. S., and also the friendship of Linnæus, who has embalmed his name in the beautiful flower, Gardenia.

He was also a great favorite socially, and his skill as a physician was highly esteemed. The letters of the time are full of allusions to him; "Our good Dr. Garden says" — "The good Doctor and Mrs. Garden beg to be remembered to you" — "Doctor Garden is as ever most kind and considerate."

Still, he too, like Dr. Cooper, was British born, and some natural anxiety must have been felt as to what part he would take if the crisis should really come. In May, 1775, Henry Laurens writes to his son John, then studying law in London: —

"Dr. Garden has changed his mind and does not accompany your uncle to London. You will be surprised when you come to know that he has declared his readiness to associate with the injured

inhabitants of this Continent in every article of opposition to the arbitrary power of Parliament: he excepts only to the actual bearing of arms against the king, in which he is not single, we all agree with him, — we will not bear arms against the king."

Events were to carry both the Laurenses faster and farther than they knew. The father was very soon to be the President of the Congress defying the king, and the son to lose his life fighting against him. Dr. Garden, as befitted his birth, was more consistent. He remained in Charleston after the surrender, and probably declared himself a British subject, for he went to Europe at the time of the evacuation, as many loyalists did. The general feeling towards him seems to have been friendly, but still he came under the head of those who had abandoned the country, and his property was confiscated, more especially a house which had belonged to Mrs. Garden.

Very soon after the close of hostilities Mrs. Pinckney wrote to say that, "as soon as her son (Colonel Charles Cotesworth Pinckney) returns to Carolina, he will make every effort for the recovery of Mrs. Garden's house." The house had been declared "public property," and as such had been occupied by the then governor — Governor Mathews.

Mr. Lowndes and other gentlemen exerted themselves in the matter, and, not without great trouble, got the house returned.

Governor Mathews moved out and paid the rent for the time during which he had occupied it. Unhappily the gentleman to whom this money was paid, instead of remitting it instantly, *borrowed* it (apparently with no ill intent), and then seems to have persuaded himself that it was quite unreason-

able to expect him to return it at all, — at least he took certainly fifteen years about it! Two notes from Mr. Lowndes are given as specimens of his letters — of which so few remain : —

Dear Sir, — Another request from Mrs. Garden puts me to the necessity of *again* troubling you for payment of the amount of the money which you received for the rent of her House.

The nature of this debt, Sir, calls loudly not only on your justice, but on your Honour, for Satisfaction. It is for money actually received by you in Trust and Confidence for a Friend.

These applications, especially a repetition of them, are exceedingly disagreeable to me, but Mrs. Garden's solicitations I cannot resist, and I hope they will have influence also on your reflections.

I am with regard, dear Sir
Your obdt Humble Servt,
Rawlins Lowndes.

Broad St., 26th June, 1790.

This note, written in a beautiful hand, is copied on the back of the letter answering it; a long account of bad crops, broken rice banks, and low prices, which goes to the heart of a planter, but protests too much, and is rather shuffling withal.

In the very year before his death the old man writes again : —

Sir, — Mrs. Garden, in a letter just received by my son Thomas, requests of him to solicit you for payment of the money you owe her for the House Rent, rec'd by you on her account from Gov'r Mathews many years ago. She desired that if you cannot pay the whole you will immediately pay the one half, as she is compelled by law in England to

account for what income she is entitled to receive from America. I shall make no observations Sir on this Transaction, but take the Liberty to transcribe an Extract from your letter to me dated 29th of June 1790 (9 years ago) relating to this matter, the promises in which you have over and over reiterated since (and I hope have not escaped your recollection) which have as often prevented me resorting to coercive Measures. I am Sir, etc., etc.

Whether poor Mrs. Garden ever received her money we have no way of knowing. Dr. Garden certainly never did, for he died in London in the year 1792.

CHAPTER II

YEARS OF RESTORATION

1783–1788

THESE were but inconsiderable things in comparison with what the men of that time had to do, and it is astonishing to know how quickly and wisely they set about their work.

With no loss of time, with the echoes of the war still in their ears, and hatred and revenge still disturbing the peace, the legislature and the people of Charles Town (and Charles Town was in a very special manner the mainspring of the State) set themselves to build up their country. Their commerce was destroyed, their agriculture was reduced to the planting of provisions; there was absolutely no money, and they had to furnish it, or what would pass for it, to prevent great suffering. They tried to start a bank in the very first year, — 1783, — but failed. Then the legislature issued bills of credit to a limited amount (£100,000), which it called "paper medium," and lent these bills on mortgages. The merchants, with great public spirit, came forward in a body and agreed to take these paper bills at par. They might well have expected them to turn to dead leaves on their hands (there had been such sad experiences before), but so far from it, all parties behaved with good faith, the depreciation was very slight, and the interest honestly paid was clear gain to the State.

Not only were tradesmen and craftsmen thus enabled to make a fresh start in life, but the planters, borrowing money upon their lands, could get to work once more, and restore the agriculture upon which the State depended. Charles Town itself put on a new fashion, and the legislature, "taking into consideration the situation and circumstances of Charles Town, as it had then become a great place of trade, with a full population and a growing and vastly increasing commerce," decided, in August, 1783, to incorporate it "into a body politic by the name of the 'City of Charleston,'" — with intendants and wardens accordingly. The name was changed, but the old fashion of speech remains, and in the low country of Carolina to this day "going to town" is going to Charleston.

It is impossible to help suspecting that this account of the place at that time was somewhat prospective. Eight months had not passed since the liberated town had been described as "prostrate," and a hopeful and helpful spirit must have dictated the above.

In the new little city everything was astir. New societies were formed and old ones revived, — wisely, for the touch of the shoulder helps to action. The chamber of commerce and the agricultural society arose in those years, the latter established by a lottery, as Faneuil Hall had been built, not so many years before! The agricultural society offered prizes for improvements in agriculture and machinery, and concerned itself with everything pertaining to the plantation. Under its influence Michaux, the French botanist, established himself and his botanic garden in Charleston in the year 1786, and stocked it with "curious exotics as well as American species."

After a time, and especially after the war debt

due to the State had been paid (it amounted to the unexpectedly large sum of nearly a million and a half of dollars), three banks were founded, so that within eight years of the departure of the English the city might be said to be fairly equipped for commercial enterprise.

All other interests in the State were as nothing compared with its agriculture. This had been kept alive astonishingly during the war by the women and their faithful people, but now there came gradual changes, which were to give it immense development. In one particular, indeed, it declined. Indigo, which had for more than forty years been the chief highland crop of the province (amounting in 1775 to over one million, one hundred and seven thousand pounds, worth $1.50 a pound), now had to contend in the market with the cheaper product of the East Indies, and was deprived of the "British bounty," which had done much to foster its cultivation. Moreover, the Georgians were planting cotton, which grew in the same kind of land as indigo, was much more easily made, and was not so exhausting to the soil. Slowly the old industry gave place to the new, and by 1795 Carolina also was a cotton-growing State.

Rice, however, was the chief staple of the low country, and with rice Mr. Lowndes was chiefly concerned. He had lands on the Combahee, the Ashepoo, and the Santee, and his fortune was largely derived from them. Up to this time rice had been planted only in inland swamps, that is, low places formed by the sluggish streams of the low country, and watered by embanked ponds called reserves. The spots convenient for this culture were limited; therefore the supply was limited also, although fair fortunes had been made by it, and in 1770 the export had amounted to over a million and a half of dollars.

By the close of the Revolution, however, the idea had got abroad that the great body of absolutely level swamp land bordering the great rivers, and the deltas lying between their mouths, might be cultivated by the tides, and that the water might be made to do the work of the hoe. Ramsay says that a Mr. Gideon Dupont first suggested this, but it has been ascertained that the scheme had already to some small extent been tried. At all events, about that time when the State most needed help this new plan came. The planters set to work, and the work was enormous.

Miles upon miles of splendid cypress forests, melancholy and majestic, but terribly hard to fell, covered the ground; the ground was half land and half water, "the haunt of coot and hern," dear to the heart of the sportsman, but icy cold in winter and pestilential in summer. The forests were felled and the land was embanked and drained. The mighty rivers had to be kept out, and the embankments must be continuous, for a break on one man's land would drown his neighbor as well as himself. A whole system of banks and drains, cross-drains and quarter-drains, was devised; canals were dug, flood-gates and trunks (a trunk is a small flood-gate) made and put down. If the work were badly done, and the least leak occurred, the trunk "blew out," and all had to be done over again. It was a struggle of man's body and brain against the powers of nature, and sometimes nature would arise in her strength, and in a few hours of rushing flood or sweeping hurricane would destroy the fetters which man had put upon her. They were destroyed for the time, but always replaced. Of course it was years before the splendid culture was reached which we remember prior to 1860; when the fields with their cross-banks looked like gigan-

tic checker boards, and stretched from the river mouths to the head of tidewater; but the profits began early, and when a clever young machinist, Mr. Jonathan Lucas, came out from England with an invention for threshing and pounding (or separating the husk from) the rice, which had hitherto been done by the old flail and the hand mortar, the battle was won. The work became comparatively light and easily accomplished, the returns were great, and the planters reaped the reward of their care and labor.

When General Washington visited the State in 1791, he crossed in his journey all the large rice rivers from the Waccamaw to the Savannah, and he expressed to Mr. Charles Pinckney, then governor, his admiration of what he saw. "He had no idea that the United States possessed such agricultural improvement as the tide-lands showed."

I have advanced the story to show at once what gave the State its great impulse. The first mill was built in 1787, and those put up later were improvements, but wealth and comfort came early and continued for seventy years. How early it came the carefully kept account books show. From a heap of old bills is learned that in 1786 one lady orders from London "that article of luxury, a Coach," price £320; and sends a hundred tierces of rice to pay for it. A gentleman buys a pair of horses from New York for £53, and a "pair of brown geldings," which Mr. Lowndes imported from England, cost, delivered in Charleston, £200. There are smaller things mentioned, too, dresses, liveries, "sett of Mad-de-Genlis," etc., all showing easy, comfortable fortunes.

While South Carolina was thus reclaiming her swamps and clearing her uplands, her sister States were not all as much at ease, and the general

government, the much harassed Congress, was having a troubled and undignified existence.

The letters of Adams and Jefferson show how painful was the position of the Ministers abroad. They were sneered at, and asked whom or what they represented, were twitted with the powerlessness of Congress to enforce certain articles of the treaty of peace (with which the rights of the States conflicted), and were frightfully snubbed when they tried to borrow money, and told that their credit was not good.

At home vexed questions of boundaries arose, and the settlers from Connecticut in the valley of Wyoming had very nearly endured another massacre "on Susquehannah's side," not at the hands of Indians, but of the Pennsylvanians, who claimed, and gained, possession of the district.

New York and New Hampshire were at daggers drawn about the Green Mountain region, and people got accustomed to seeing the militias of the different States arrayed against each other. In Massachusetts in the confused *émeute* known as the "Shays's Rebellion," caused by "rag" (or paper) "money," there was actual fighting, and when the ringleaders were taken and tried, it was only "executive clemency" that saved them from the gallows.

Then there were many troubles about trade and navigation acts. New England, the chief shipowner, not unnaturally expected that her vessels should be privileged, and would have sacrificed all other commerce to serve her own; and New York, quite alive to her geographical advantages, taxed everything and everybody impartially to bring coin to her coffers. There was endless confusion over discriminating duties, and differing customs.

The great States, whose boundaries reached out

to the Mississippi, were furious when they found that New England (advised by John Jay) wished to yield the free navigation of the great river as the price of a commercial treaty with Spain (who behaved with audacity and insolence curious to read of now); and the smaller States looked with envy upon the almost boundless claims of New York and the Old Dominion. The far Southern States were happier. Georgia was planting cotton, and improving rapidly, and neither she nor South Carolina had any ships to quarrel over. They furnished cargoes and collected duties with equal satisfaction from Old or New Englanders. In South Carolina there was some trouble, which did not go very far, over paper money, but bounded as she was by powerful neighbors, she knew that there was no hope for her of territorial expansion. It did not trouble her much, for she also knew that in her soil and climate there lay possibilities of wealth which would occupy and suffice her people for generations to come; *provided*, that she could get slave labor in abundance. This labor might be cut off; this was the cloud, as yet a very small one, on her horizon. This was not a pleasant condition of things for States supposed to live under a "league of friendship," as the Articles of Confederation were called. New England threatened secession on the one hand, and Kentucky on the other, and it seemed as if the kingdoms of Europe were to be gratified by the falling to pieces of the young Republic.

Things had come to such a pass that there were but few dissentient voices when, Virginia, as became her, taking the lead, circulars were sent to all the different States, requesting them to send commissioners to meet and discuss matters concerning the public weal. Then met that convention

which framed the Constitution of the United States, pronounced by the highest authorities to be the most wonderful work ever wrought by man's brain, but which was adopted by the States with great hesitation and small majorities. In Virginia, Massachusetts, and South Carolina the opposition was decided, but in Carolina the fight was fought not so much in the convention of ratification itself as in the state legislature which met the preceding January.

The great peculiarity of this debate was that it was fought by one man against ten or more, and those ten the ablest men in the State. The attitude of Mr. Lowndes in this great controversy is like nothing so much as that of the boy who, setting his back to a tree, dares the whole school to come on. Of course the boy loses the fight, *we* know beforehand that it must be so, but he hopes, trusting to his strong right arm, and we praise his pluck and prowess. The whole story is told in "Elliot's Debates," and I do not know more interesting reading.

The legislature listened to the reading of the "proposed Federal Constitution," and then went into committee of the whole to discuss it. It was apparent from the very first that, while the delegates from the coast parishes would almost unanimously favor the new plan, the sturdy farmers of the middle and up-country, representing, as one of them said, "a people, brave, honest, and virtuous, caring for nothing so much as their liberties," would oppose it with almost equal unanimity.

They cared little for commercial relations, and still less for diplomatic; but they knew that they had fought and suffered for seven years to shake off the authority of the king, and they had no mind to construct for themselves a government

which should be as powerful as any king. These men looked, in peace as in war, to the gallant Sumter as their chief; he was present in the legislature but did not speak. They found a spokesman in Rawlins Lowndes.

The debate was opened by speeches from Charles Pinckney and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, cousins, and both members of the Constitutional Convention; the former said to have been the youngest man there. They explained and advocated their work. Then Mr. Lowndes rose and spoke.

His whole argument was based upon the conviction that in politics as elsewhere interest would guide, and the strongest would prevail. He did not think the rights of minorities sufficiently guarded. He objected strongly to the two thirds representation in Congress, not considering it at all equal to the rule of the Confederation, which required nine States. "Was it consonant with reason, with wisdom, with policy, to suppose that in a legislature where a majority of persons sat, whose interests were greatly different from ours, we had the smallest chance of receiving adequate advantages? Certainly not."

He objected to the great powers given to the Senate; especially to the treaty-making power, which was to be supreme, "anything in the Constitution or the laws of any State notwithstanding." He declared that "in the known world" no ruler could do so much.

Colonel Charles Cotesworth Pinckney answered, "That the Honorable gentleman's arguments were ad captandum, and did not coincide with the honorable fair mode of reasoning he in general made use of." He, Mr. John Rutledge (also of the Federal Convention), and the speaker, Mr. John

Julius Pringle, all eminent lawyers, poured forth a flood of legal lore on the point of treaties. Dr. Ramsay, who was to be the historian of South Carolina, and Mr. Ralph Izard also spoke.

Mr. Lowndes answered "that he hoped gentlemen would consider that his antagonists were mostly gentlemen learned in the law, who were capable of giving ingenious explanations to such points as they wish to have adopted." He then reiterated his objections to the two thirds representation and to the article on treaties, and observed that he "believed that the gentlemen who went from this State to represent us in Convention [i. e. Messrs. John Rutledge, C. and C. C. Pinckney, and Major Pierce Butler], possessed as much integrity and stood as high in point of character as any gentleman that could have been selected; he also believed that they had done everything in their power to secure us a proportionate share in the new government, but the very little we had gained proved what we may expect in the future." He then passed to the question of the slave trade, which had been limited to twenty years. He objected strongly to this limitation, and thought for his part this trade could be justified on the principles of religion, humanity, and justice, for certainly to translate a set of human beings from a bad country to a better was to fulfill every part of those principles; and he reminded Charles Cotesworth Pinckney that in a speech not long before he had said, "that as long as an acre of swamp land remained unreclaimed in South Carolina he should resist restricting the importation of negroes."

He (Mr. Lowndes) "did not see that the right to import slaves for twenty years was much of a 'reciprocal bargain' for agreeing to New England's commercial policy forever, . . . how call that a

reciprocal bargain which takes all from one party to bestow it on the other?"

This drew down a storm of argument from all the "Constitution men." Some of the statements made and convictions expressed sound strange enough to-day, but Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, who had fought this point, inch by inch, in the Federal Convention, spoke out boldly, as was his wont. He was, he said, "of exactly the same opinion as when he had spoken before, but that the religious and political prejudices of the Middle and Eastern States, and the inconsistent opinion of Virginia, had controlled them" (in convention). After much difficulty the freedom of importation was granted for twenty years, and "only granted by the assistance of the delegates from the Eastern States, as a bargain for their trade."

He did *not* think it a very poor bargain because "we have a security that the general government can never emancipate the slaves, for no such authority is granted, and it is admitted on all hands that the general government has no powers but what are expressly granted by the Constitution, and that all rights not expressly granted are reserved to the States. We have obtained a right to recover our slaves in whatever part of America they may take refuge, which we had not before. In short, considering all circumstances, we have made the best terms for the security of this species of property that it was in our power to make. We would have done better if we could, but on the whole I do not think them bad."

There were many other speeches, all on the one side, the opposition mute. Mr. Lowndes made yet another effort; praised the Confederation and the men who had made it, for the large amount of liberty which it secured to the States, and the pros-

perity which they had enjoyed under it. He discussed the question of electing a President, and said that "there was one man to whom all America looked up, and for whom he most heartily should vote, but when his term of office was over, where should they find another who could unite ninety-six votes in his favor?" He touched on some minor points, and protested that "although he had been accused of obstinacy in holding out against such a formidable opposition, he could sincerely assure the House that he was as open to conviction as any gentleman on that floor." In conclusion he thanked the House for permitting him to take up so much of its time: the importance of the subject must be his excuse. If the proposed Constitution should be sanctioned by the people, it should have his hearty concurrence and support. He had been originally against a Declaration of Independence, and also against the installment plan, but when they received the approbation of the people, it became his duty as a good citizen to promote their due observance. He also thanked the gentlemen on the other side of the House for the candid, fair manner in which they had answered his arguments. Popularity was what he had never courted, but now he spoke merely to point out the dangers to which his fellow-citizens were exposed, dangers which were so evident that when he ceased to exist, he wished for no other epitaph than to have it inscribed on his tomb, "Here lies the man who opposed the Constitution because it was dangerous to the liberties of America."

This was too much for Mr. John Rutledge. Hitherto the debate had been carried on in the most courteous manner, the speakers generally prefacing their remarks with complimentary phrases, "the great abilities and experience of the honorable

gentleman," and so on; but John Rutledge had been chairman of the committee that framed the Constitution, and he could not hear it so abused. He sprang up and made a fiery little speech, — "Often he had listened with pleasure to the honorable gentleman, but now he wondered at his wasting the time of the House — that his boasted Confederation was not worth a farthing, and if Mr. Chairman was intrenched in such instruments up to his chin, they could not save him from one national calamity," — etc., etc. He wound up, having apparently talked himself into good humor, by saying that the "honorable gentleman's allusion to obstinacy reminded him of what had been said of another gentleman once a member of that House — 'It has been imputed to me that I am obstinate: it is a mistake, I am not so, — but I am hard to be convinced.'" Mr. Rutledge sat down, and Mr. Lowndes, probably feeling that anything would weaken the force of his (own) last words, made no reply. This was the last time that these two men, both working for the same ends, but ever since the elections for the first Congress in opposition, ever met in debate. Mr. Rutledge's son, years afterwards told his wife that his father had always considered Mr. Lowndes his most formidable antagonist, "not that he feared him, or any man, but when he was going to speak against 'old Rawlins' he always thought beforehand of what he was going to say."

Mr. Lincoln, of "Ninety Six," then rose, and modestly disclaiming the ability to speak in that assembly, yet in the name of his constituents, whom he praised, as has been said above, "returned hearty thanks to the gentleman who had so nobly opposed this Constitution, it was supporting the side of the people; if any one ever deserved

the title of man of the people, he, on that occasion, did." Colonel Mason offered a vote of thanks to Mr. Lowndes for upholding the cause of the opposition, "by the desire of several gentlemen, members of this House," and also thanked the gentlemen on the other side for explaining their views so fully that they (the country members) could go home and make all things clear to their constituents!

So all ended peacefully at last and the legislature adjourned, after agreeing to call the convention to meet in Charleston in May.

In that convention Mr. Lowndes refused to serve. The people of St. Bartholomew's were anxious to send him, but he refused firmly. He knew that he had failed, and accepted defeat.

In the convention the fight was short and slight in comparison. General Sumter made a gallant effort to gain a postponement until September, hoping to secure another convention and perhaps a Southern Confederacy, but the tide was too strong and the point was defeated. The Constitution was then adopted by a vote of 140 to 73, and ratified by the State in May, 1788.

Mr. Lowndes has been much praised and much blamed for the part he took in this struggle — probably both praise and blame depend on the latitude whence it comes. Mr. Bancroft calls him "querulous," which is hardly a descriptive epithet, and Mr. Fiske calls him "silly," for his praise of the old Confederation; yet few men have called Patrick Henry "silly," and Henry used almost the same language in the Virginia Convention which met soon after. He says, "I represent their feelings (of the people of this commonwealth) when I say that they are exceedingly uneasy, being brought from that state of full security which they enjoyed

to the present delusive appearance of things. A year ago the minds of our citizens were in perfect repose," etc. "The Confederation, in my opinion, merits the highest encomium ; it carried us through a long and dangerous war, it rendered us victorious in that bloody conflict with a powerful nation," etc. ; "and shall a government which has been thus strong and vigorous be accused of imbecility, and abandoned for want of energy ? " etc.

The truth was that Lowndes and Henry were speaking for Virginia and Carolina ; the Confederation had worked well for them, as their peace and prosperity showed. No impoverished State could have made the magnificent gift of lands to the Union which Virginia made in 1789. No impoverished State could have made the progress which Carolina had done, actually causing her to be taunted for her wealth (by the member for Delaware) in the Federal Convention. They were fighting like Harry of the Wynd, each "for his own hand."

The present writer has *no* political opinions, and is absolutely impartial, — as she must needs be, seeing that her two great-grandfathers led the opposing hosts. Yet, looking at things in the light of accomplished facts, she can but see that although undoubtedly Charles Cotesworth Pinckney was right when he said "it was the best we could do," Mr. Lowndes was also right when he pointed out the dangers. Within a very few years the Jay treaty drove the South to such wrath that Judge Iredell, of North Carolina, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, says in his letters that the "sentiments *publicly* expressed by Mr. John Rutledge, on the subject of the treaty, which procured his rejection by the Senate as Chief Justice, although nominated by General Washing-

ton, were shared by almost every man south of the Potomac; even by those personally friendly to Mr. Jay, and stanch Federalists."

Of other points: the two thirds majority did overwhelm the South; the Supreme Court, with Judge Taney at its head, could not enforce the fugitive slave law, when public opinion of the North decided against it; and the "reserved rights of the States" could not protect slavery when a "military necessity" demanded its abolition.

Even now, when that vexed question is forever at rest (and no one can desire its revival), there is dread of overcentralization, and few States would like to "try a fall" with the creation of their own hands at Washington.

This was Mr. Lowndes's last appearance in public life: he refused all offers for the legislature, etc., and devoted himself to his family, his friends, and his affairs, in which he was always active; there are memoranda of lands purchased within a short time of his death.

CHAPTER III

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

1788–1800

THE domestic life which Mr. Lowndes had probably expected to enjoy on his retirement from public affairs was not to be his for some years longer. Mrs. Lowndes's health had been much impaired by grief for the loss of her first two children, and she now became seriously ill. The doctors advised a residence of two years in England, and it was decided that her little son should accompany her. Business made it impossible for Mr. Lowndes to leave Carolina at the moment, but he hoped to join her the next year, and her old friends, the Coopers and Gardens, were still in London, and from them she was sure of kindness and attention. Letters from Dr. Cooper show that Mr. Lowndes had requested him to prepare for her coming.

LONDON, June 22d, 1789.

DEAR SIR, — Your very obliging favour of the 28th of March came to hand by the 29th of April, and hoping that the "Amelia" might have as short a passage I suffered the only opportunity that offered till the Present, to pass without acknowledging my friend's letter, and how pleased I was to receive his commands to look out for a proper place for the reception of the beloved passengers.

Just then the town was more full than ordinary,

owing to the great resort of people from the Country, to participate in the Festivities and Galas, given in Commemoration of our Sovereign's happy Recovery, and there was at that instant no great Choice, but I engaged Apartments the moment we learned that the ship was in the Downs, and the second day afterwards we had the great Happiness to congratulate the welcome strangers on their safe arrival. . . .

From experience I can figure to myself something of what you felt on making the voluntary Sacrifice, which I assure myself will be amply made up to you next year when with the young Ladies you pay the passengers a visit. . . .

Exclusive of seeing several old acquaintances, our winters (not all like the last) being neither so long nor vigorous as to the Norward, and our summers always temperate and pleasant, an Invalid, which will not I hope be Mrs. Lowndes's case long, has more chances to become a Convalescent here than in any of the States, I believe.

Dr. Garden, whose own ill health confin'd him at Paris until a short time before Mrs. Lowndes arrived, and soon after hurried him to Scotland, has not recommended nauseous draughts, but to leave all to change of air, and climate and Nature, which combined there is no doubt will in Time render Medicine unnecessary. . . .

As you will be informed that my Godson is intended for some school near Town (where I shall not seldom see him) by a readier and better Scribe (tho' not of the Pharisaical tribe), I shall here take my leave for the present. . . .

It must have been very pleasant to the poor ill lady to have kind old acquaintances about her in her solitary journey; and Dr. Garden seems to

have been a physician ahead of his time, judging by the prescription given above. The project of a visit from her husband and daughters never was carried out, nor did she improve as rapidly as had been hoped. A letter from Messrs. Bird, Savage & Bird, who seem to have been the factotums of half the people in Charleston, mentions to Mr. Lowndes their regret at her continued ill health "which will oblige her to spend another winter in this country, . . . and that they will have great pleasure in furnishing her with money." This was in November, 1790, and she remained abroad three years in all, her health by that time being entirely reëstablished. Unfortunately, however, the English visit had not as happy an effect upon her son. He was upon his arrival in England an extremely pretty and healthy child. A miniature taken there shows a lovely complexion, beautiful blue eyes, and a quantity of softly curling fair hair. He was just seven, — too young, we should say, for a boarding school, but it was the fashion of the time, and to school he went. He is said to have made great progress and to have been a general favorite, but on one unlucky day, being tired after a game of ball, with schoolfellows all older than himself, he sat down on a bank to rest, and fell asleep. The game being finished the boys went home, not remembering their little playmate. Some time passed before he was missed, and then search being made he was found in a heavy sleep and half buried in snow. It seems hard to believe that such a little fellow was scolded and threatened with flogging instead of being put into a warm bed! No care was taken and by morning rheumatic fever had begun. For some time his life was despaired of. He recovered, but never had any health again.

Upon their return home, in 1792, he was placed at

the school of Mr. Henry Osborne, an Englishman, he being then ten years old. The school bills show that he continued here until 1795. One of his schoolfellows, Mr. James Deas, afterwards of Mobile, wrote of him in 1859: "Mr. Osborne was an Englishman, strict and severe in his discipline, as was the order of the teachers of that day. Young Lowndes, then in the Latin classics, was called up for recitation and translation, without his having paid the least attention or knowing a word of his lesson. His preceptor told him that he deserved and would receive the rod, unless he gave him a translation, without the book, and at his little table, and to attend to the only chance he should have of saving himself. He read to him fifty lines of the 'Satires' of Horace and closed the book. Such was his intellect at that early age that he furnished a correct translation, to the astonishment of all his schoolfellows. He was always regarded by them as possessing a wonderful intellect." He could not at this time have been over thirteen and perhaps this feat was rather one of memory than of intellect, properly speaking, although of course it implied a good knowledge of Latin.

At thirteen William Lowndes was removed to what was then the best school in the city (in the bills it is called "the college"), which was probably quite unique in one respect, in that it was kept by three clergymen, all of different denominations.

The head was the Rev. Dr. Gallagher, a Roman Catholic priest, and his associates were the Rev. Dr. Buist, of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Dr. Purcell, Rector of St. Michael's. Here the boy soon distinguished himself. "His mind," Dr. Gallagher said, "drank up knowledge as the earth drinks up water." His health put him at times to all sorts of inconvenience; occasion-

ally he had to recite lying on the school bench, and sometimes had to submit to being taken to school in a chair. His inordinate growth had probably much to do with this weakness, for by the time that he was nineteen he was six feet six, and terribly thin and narrow-chested; however, in his intervals of comparative health he was gay and bright, and a great favorite with his schoolfellows, who thought his memory simply marvelous. One of them, Mr. Charles Fraser, the distinguished artist, who long outlived him, said that by once reading a passage in any book he could repeat it correctly. He translated the "Odes" of Horace into verse, and wrote some original verses on the death of a schoolfellow. Very often, however, he could not go to school for weeks at a time, and then "he was dependent on his parents for his various sources of amusement, reading with his mother, or discussing with his father (with whom he lived on terms of singular familiarity) questions, as they would arise, or making them for the exercise of his reasoning faculty." This sentence is taken from an unsigned manuscript sketch written in 1835, evidently by one who had known the persons of whom he wrote. There is no clue to the authorship. In after years Mr. Lowndes told his wife that these discussions with his father and brothers had been of great service to him, teaching him to look at every side of a subject and sift it thoroughly. He added that at first his father had been angrily impatient of opposition, but that when he had ventured to suggest "that it spoiled the game," he controlled his temper, and the arguments were continued.

"To my brothers," he said, "he was imperious, but my youth and my miserable health made him very tender of me, except when he thought that I needed rousing, and then he would give me a rub

with the rough of his tongue, which did me good." These two elder brothers, Thomas and James, were Mr. William Lowndes's best friends through life, helping and advising him in every possible way. His sisters also were devoted to him and to his mother, and one of them, who lived to a great age, used to speak of her stepmother as "a very sweet girl."

By this time society in Charleston was wider and gayer than it had ever been before. The newspapers of the day, the "Charleston Courier" and the "Gazette," are full of advertisements of amusements of all sorts. Of these, the races were perhaps the most important. From early colonial days the planters had bred and run their own horses among themselves for country sport, and the "York Course," near the old town of Dorchester, had long been a place of general meeting. From 1786 the chief course was the "Newmarket," just outside of Charleston, and here the "race week" was held once a year, in February. Horses from all parts of the State came, and their owners, with their families, came also, to what was to them the most important event of the year. Dr. Irving, in the "History of the Turf in Carolina," and Mr. Fraser, in his "Reminiscences," give glowing accounts of the excellent sport; of the fine horses, the careful management, and the good tone of the whole affair. They are also animated in describing the assemblage; the handsome equipages (many four in hand), the fine carriage horses, the liveried outriders, and the gallant cavaliers in attendance. The ladies were all in their best array, the gentlemen well mounted and equipped in boots and buckskins; all classes went; the schools gave holiday and the law courts adjourned, for no schoolboy could be kept to his books, and the lawyers were as eager as the boys.

The judge and the master went too, and forgot for the day wig and rod. It was bad to be ill in race week, for the doctor abandoned his patient, and invalid and nurse chafed at their own detention. The shops in Broad and King streets closed for the racing hours, and the clerks hurried to the course, while the negroes, who crowded the surrounding fences and walks, were the gayest of the throng, proud sometimes to recognize a son or brother in the funny little jockey who wore the winning colors. It was a great open-air festival, enjoyed in hearty fashion by the whole people.

The Jockey Club ball (always on Friday) was the handsomest and gayest of the whole year; for it the ladies kept their best gowns, and the gentlemen their best wines. Many who never went to any other festivity made a point of coming out to meet "the Jockeys," and greeted friends from far and near.

This condition of things (with inevitable changes of fashion) lasted to 1860, and many still living can remember those merry days.

One very important change, which threatened indeed to break up the club, took place before the end of the century, when the "Newmarket" course was abandoned, and the "Washington" substituted for it. It was then proposed that the horses should run, not for plate as they had hitherto done, — a cup, a bowl, a tankard, or a salver, worth £100, — but for a purse of the same value. This was vehemently opposed, Dr. Ramsay says, by Mr. Daniel Ravenel, an ardent turfman, and others, on the ground that it would result in the intrusion of professionals into what had hitherto been in the exclusive management of gentlemen, and would lower the tone of the amusement.

The point was carried, however, and "from con-

scientious scruples Mr. Ravenel left the turf in consequence." It may be feared that the dread was well founded — it could hardly be otherwise; and it was a pity to give up the pretty old bowls and cups — still to be seen on many sideboards — "won on the York (or the Newmarket) course" by Mr. A's mare "Lucy," or Mr. B's horse "Conquest," for money soon spent and lost to sight. Eager among the schoolboys on these occasions was the young William Lowndes. Years afterwards he writes that he "always enjoyed the races and had a passion for horse-flesh," and one of his first independent purchases was "a chestnut mare, thoroughbred, from Colonel Wade Hampton."

Besides the races there were the St. Cecilia concerts, the dancing assemblies, and many private entertainments. The St. Cecilia was still a musical association, the performers all amateurs, gentlemen of the city. In 1792, it sends to Major Thomas Pinckney, then Minister to England, a request that he will have purchased for it "a grand piano-forte with twenty pounds' worth of the best modern music for a concert." The Dancing Assembly Association gave three balls every winter; the subscription to each of these societies was five pounds per annum, as we see by Mr. Lowndes's carefully kept receipts.

The theatre had no permanent existence in Charleston, Mr. Fraser tells us, until 1793, but before that there were many transient attempts at one. Then it became at once the favorite amusement, and "all classes of the community were enchanted by the representations." The theatre, which was in Broad Street, was large for that day, and was built, according to the custom of the time, with a pit, sunk below the level of the stage and boxes, and occupied entirely by men; next came

the boxes and dress circle, more boxes and the "family circle were above," and the "gallery of the gods" above all.

The scene was said to have been very brilliant on a full-dress night, as ladies and gentlemen were in evening clothes, and, judging by the jewelers' advertisements of necklaces, "carcanets," and aigrettes, there can have been no lack of gems to enlighten the picture. The system of "stars" was not then established, and the theatres depended upon their stock companies, although, of course, distinguished actors appeared from time to time. The orchestra owed much of its reputation to the French refugees from St. Domingo, as many of them performed in it. These poor people came in 1792, flying from the horrors of a servile insurrection. They were naturally most warmly welcomed in Charleston, and were received as guests into many private homes until permanent arrangements could be made for them; nor did any one ever have cause to regret the kindness thus shown. In all their misfortunes these courageous people kept their Gallic grace and cheerfulness. Arriving as they did, absolutely destitute, help was imperatively needed. The general government sent $1750, and the city gave $12,500, besides the proceeds of a concert and gifts of food and clothing; but they exerted themselves honorably, as soon as possible, for their own support. Those of the lower class practiced various crafts; within the memory of the present writer, the best baker, confectioner, mantua-maker, milliner, hairdresser, and clear-starcher in Charleston were refugees, or children of refugees, from St. Domingo. Many of them were gently born and bred, accomplished and elegant; but few had any knowledge of business; those who had succeeded well in various branches. Most of them

became teachers, musicians, singers, actors, or artists. By their presence and tuition the more graceful arts became much more widely known than when those accomplishments were within reach of the rich only. Most of the pretty pastel and water-color drawings with which Charleston houses were adorned forty years ago were done by them or their pupils, and every beau and belle of the beginning of this century had learned to dance from M. Tastet or M. Fayolle. The advertisement of this last is a curiosity: —

"Le Soleil se lève pour tout le Monde.

"Mr. Peter Fayolle's Dancing Academy will open for the season at 8:30 in the morning for young ladies, and at 12, for young men. Mr. P. Fayolle will attend in schools, and also in private residences if called for."

For young ladies who want the more useful arts "Madame Widow Marineau" offers her services to teach "young females" French, embroidery, and lacework. The principal girls' schools in Charleston for almost the first half of this century were taught by ladies from St. Domingo, one a mere child at the time of the flight. At the first of these schools there was a peculiar class. When the carefully conducted young lady took her books from her maid and entered the house door, the maid entering by the gate proceeded to the servants' hall, and while *ces demoiselles* were saying their verbs, reciting Racine, or reading Télémaque, the maids were learning fine sewing, darning and marking, lacewashing and *manners*, all taught by the Ma'amselle's good creole maid, Annette. A very old woman showed her still beautiful sewing to the writer a few years ago. Her manners and her curtsies spoke for themselves.

The Charleston Library, almost destroyed by fire during the Revolution, had arisen from its ashes, was conveniently housed, and was gathering in books. By 1808 it had 4500 volumes. The churches were flourishing and well attended. The Rev. Mr. Smith, who had proved his patriotism during the Revolution, still held St. Philip's, and was soon to be the first bishop of the diocese. The same carefully kept accounts, quoted before, show that five pounds a year was the pew rent both for city and country churches; for little St. Bartholomew's as well as for St. Philip's. "Pon-Pon Chappel," which is constantly needing repairs, gets the same annual amount, and the "Protestant Episcopal Society" is five pounds also. With a larger population came also the need for larger organized charities, and the Orphan House, still the pride of Charleston, was begun about this time.

Like most institutions of the sort, it owed its origin to public and private charity, the city appropriation being augmented by a long and liberal subscription list; the stimulus being the frequent epidemics of yellow fever, leaving many orphans behind them, to which, in those quarantineless days, the city was subject. Every one helped, from Mr. Thomas Coram, a childless merchant, who left it his whole estate, to the amateur performers who gave a concert (of which Mrs. Pinckney says, in a letter to her daughter, "the concert was very successful, the little choir-boy sang a solo like an angel"), and "the young ladies of Mrs. Mason's English School, who 'request the ladies who superintend the female economy of the Orphan House' to accept their trifle towards the support of the orphans under their direction."

"The Ladies Superintendents of the Female Economy" were by no means figure-heads in this

business. It is not a thing of to-day that "women of good," as the Scotch have it, should take their share of management, and the dignified and determined manner of their interposition is worthy of note? They write with a sanitary sense ahead of their time.

To the Gentlemen Commissioners of the Orphan House, — The ladies superintending the female economy of the Orphan House, having understood that your honorable body was about to pass a resolution to appropriate a part of the inclosure of the Orphan House as a place of interment for the deceased of the Institution; and thinking (for the reasons hereinafter stated) that it is not going beyond the line of their duty to express their disapprobation of such a measure; they beg leave, with due reference to your superior judgment, to state: —

1st. That in their opinion the healthiness of the Institution will in some sort be jeopardized by the establishment of a cemetery so near to it; they feel their conviction on this subject strengthened by the opinion of the Physician of the Institution, which coincides with theirs.

2d. That the ground which would be appropriated for the purpose aforesaid must be taken from that which is now used as a garden; and that such an appropriation would be a deprivation to the children, of so much comfort as they now enjoy from the vegetables produced therefrom; and that not only on the score of comfort, but of health, the Ladies would recommend an increase instead of a diminution of vegetable diet in the Institution; and

3d. That all the inconveniency arising from the great distance of, and the delicacy on the subject of interring the children of the Institution in the com-

mon Burial Ground, may be obviated by the appropriation of part of the City Lands, which have formerly been used as a Burial Ground, to sueh a use for the Institution only.

The Ladies therefore suggest the expedieney of an applieation to the City Counеil on this subjeet.

(Signed) HARRIOTT HORRY.
REBEKAH EDWARDS.
SUSAN MCPHERSON.
ANN FERGUSON.
MARY SMITH.

Indorsed: —

The Commissioners, having taken into eonsideration the above Memorial, yield without hesitation to the opinion of the ladies, and unanimously agree to reseind the Resolution.

W. JOHNSON, JR.,
Chairman protem.

So the poor ehildren were spared the eonstant eontemplation of their playfellows' graves.

Again the ladies, "understanding that some complaints have been brought forward against the Matron, take the liberty of mentioning to the Gentlemen Commissioners that as far as they are able to judge, they are unanimously of opinion that she has been extremely assiduous in the performance of her duties," etc., etc., ete., "very much to their satisfaetion." The matron stayed!

Mr. Lowndes had always taken a great interest in the Orphan House, and the year before his death wrote the following letter: —

CHARLESTON, JUNE 28, 1799.

GENTLEMEN, — Reviewing some very old Transactions which passed under my Directions many Years ago I find there is a Sum of Money remain-

ing in my Hands of £1192 old Currency, which does not belong to me. It was received in virtue of a Power of Attorney from England, and recovered from a mercantile Bankrupt House in this Town, which consisted of various Firms of Copartnership, and involved a Diversity of Claims, which could not be arranged & adjusted without great Difficulty, nor *legally* proportioned without recurring to the Court of Chancery : the Parties declined or never resorted to this Mode of Settlement, & I have not for near forty years heard anything more of the Matter. As there is now scarcely a Possibility of reviving or bringing this Transaction to any legal Decision or of ascertaining in whom the Right may exist after so long a lapse of Time, & the great Changes & Revolutions consequent thereto, it has occurred to me as an expedient, in which all Parties would readily concur, could they be consulted or known, to appropriate this Money to the Use and Benefit of the Orphan House in this City ; an Institution in which every benevolent Mind must feel an Interest, in contributing to the Support of, and which is placed immediately under your Patronage and Government. I therefore, Gentlemen, request that you will receive this Money, amounting to about £170 cy, which I have desired my Son James to deliver into your Hands to be applied in such manner as you shall judge most conducive to the Interests of the said Institution.

With Respect & Consideration, I remain Genm,
Your most obed't Servt,
RAW^{S} LOWNDES.

TO THE HON. INTENDANT & WARDENS OF CHA^{S}TON MET IN COUNCIL.

A few months later he writes again, resigning the

honor of being commissioner; a step, absolutely neeessary, he says, on aceount of failing health; and the eommissioners aecept the resignation solely on aeeount of the reason given, and assure him that they have always "eonsidered him a Father and Benefaetor."

In the mean while Carolina, like the rest of the western world, had felt the stirring influenee of the French Revolution. The fair promises and beautiful theories with whieh that terrible time began had fascinated the mind and fired the imagination of Ameriean youth. And not Americans only, for does not Wordsworth himself say, —

> "Good was it in that dawn to be alive,
> But to be young was very Heaven."

Even the elder men, who had given their own youth to labor and pain in the service of Liberty, when they heard her onee more invoked by their former allies, believed for a moment that their history was to be reënaeted, and that the eountrymen of Lafayette would form for themselves a republie of the same fashion as that built by the countrymen of Washington.

From sympathy and enthusiasm they established Jaeobin clubs; then when eame the exeesses of the Reign of Terror, they shrank from the very name of Jacobin. The delusion did not last long, but enough had been said and done to leave much bitterness behind; Washington had been insulted and the country taunted by insolent foreigners and by her own deluded sons. Happily, perhaps, the *outrecuidance* of the Freneh and their followers beeame so absolutely unendurable that when the envoy, Citizen Genet, undertook to defy the President and raise levies in Charleston to attack the Spaniards in Florida, Governor Moultrie, who

could tolerate no such nonsense, stopped the whole proceeding abruptly, appealed to the law-abiding citizens, and sent the mischief-maker to Washington himself.

The French insolence roused the war spirit, and the people prepared for defense. They subscribed for the John Adams frigate, and built, by the freely offered labor of the mechanics of the town, Fort Mechanic on the last point of solid land on East Battery.

Happily the war scare blew over, and the events of the day do not affect this narrative, except that the leaven of democracy thenceforth leavened the intense conservatism which had been the characteristic of the State. It was the parting of the ways between the old Federalism and the new spirit of unrest, thenceforward called Republican-Democracy.

In this time the young William Lowndes grew up, — precociously clever but fearfully delicate. At fifteen he left school, his master, Dr. Gallagher, who was esteemed a learned man, telling his father that he "had learned all he could teach him, and was beyond him." His health prevented his being sent to a Northern or European college, and after reading (especially history and the classics) for some time at home, he entered the office of De Saussure & Ford, and began the study of law.

While still a student he had to endure his first great sorrow — the death of the stern old father, who had, as he said, "been always kind to him." Between the man of eighty and the boy of eighteen there seems to have been a genuine affection.

Mr. Rawlins Lowndes, although he had been for years a sufferer from the gout, was fortunate in preserving to his last days unimpaired vigor of mind and faculties, — the letters already given show

this, — and he is said to have kept every part of his large estates under his own direction to the end. Perhaps it is even more remarkable in a man of his rugged character that he should also have kept a touch of his early romance, the love of his first wife. A short time before his death he gave to his young, favorite son, a small Queen Anne salver, and told him "if he should ever marry and have a *pretty* daughter, to give it to her, for it had belonged to Amarinthia." It is marked in the old fashion, — "$\frac{\text{A}}{\text{R}}$ = L," for Rawlins and Amarinthia Lowndes.

The men of the Revolution were passing away. Mr. Lowndes died May, 1800, and Mr. John Rutledge a few months later. So these two dominant figures left the stage almost at the same time. Constantly in opposition, they yet aimed in different ways at one object only, the good of their country, — Mr. Lowndes, nearly twenty years older than his eloquent opponent, thoroughly English and thoroughly conservative, always willing to give the present order an opportunity to show itself worthy, and dreading nothing so much as the "experiments in politics" which Mr. Rutledge's keener imagination easily adopted, but upholding them loyally when once they became law.

He has been called narrow and stubborn, but he was a great instance of the man of his kind, — the man of his State. He had come as a child to Carolina from his West Indian birthplace; had remained here, a boy, when his family returned to the Islands, had won for himself friends, consideration, influence, and wealth. It was no wonder that he loved the country which gave him all these, and held her liberties his dearest good. To him, his country was his State. His horizon, perhaps, *was*

narrow. The son whom he had reared and taught was to take a wider, calmer, more benign, but hardly a clearer view, and to his own chosen epitaph might be added one line, —

"That with all his strength he loved Carolina."

CHAPTER IV

EARLY MANHOOD

1800–1811

If in the preceding chapters too much time and space have been given to the earlier years of William Lowndes, it has been not only from the wish to show as much as might be of a place and people whose peculiarities were then well marked, but also to show the influences of men and things under which he grew to manhood. Those influences must have been especially strong upon a youth whose want of health and strength made his life peculiarly a home one, and brought him into the close companionship of a father, said by his contemporaries to have been "of great power of mind and energy of character." Thus his training had been exclusively English and Carolinian; there is no reason to suppose that up to his thirtieth year he had ever visited the Northern States, and all his teachers had been natives of Great Britain. Yet, as we shall see, William Lowndes's views were modified by the newer day about him; the concentrated patriotism of his father was widened by greater culture, and by a youth of lettered leisure such as Rawlins Lowndes had never known. But though widened it was not weakened. The habit of debating and weighing all questions as described had undoubtedly encouraged a dispassionate habit of mind in the young man, whose

especial characteristics were already great honesty of thought and a wise gravity beyond his years.

In his town life he had seen the more recent events here related, and had heard the changing politics of the day discussed, while in the country, where the winter months were generally spent, he had read and thought. Those long plantation evenings, with only books and talk to occupy them, were great helps to study and reflection; and the planter who read his Locke and Burke, or pondered over the "Wealth of Nations" or the "Esprit des Lois," came not unprepared to public life, when his neighbors summoned him "to serve the State."

Since writing the above, I have found in the "History of Mr. Jefferson's Administration," by Mr. Henry Adams, a passage which sums up so admirably what I have tried to show of Carolina and its people that I may be pardoned for quoting some sentences here. In a sketch of the chief cities of the Union, about the year 1800, he says of Charleston: "Nowhere in the Union was intelligence, wealth, and education greater in proportion to numbers than in the little society of cotton and rice planters who ruled South Carolina. . . . Not even New York seemed more clearly marked for prosperity than this solitary Southern city, which already possessed banking capital in abundance, intelligence, enterprise, the traditions of high culture, and aristocratic ambition." And again: "The small society of rice and cotton planters at Charleston, with their cultivated tastes and hospitable habits, delighted in whatever reminded them of European civilization. They were travelers, readers, and scholars; the society of Charleston compared well in refinement with that of any city of its size in the world, and travelers long thought it the most agreeable in America. . . . Before the Revolution large

numbers of young men had been educated in England, and their influence was still strong in the society of Charleston. The younger generation inherited similar tastes. Of this class the best known name that will appear in this narrative was that of William Lowndes, and no better example could be offered of the serious temper which marked Carolinian thought than was given by the career of this refined and highly educated gentleman, almost the last of his school."

William Lowndes was at the time of his father's death just eighteen. He alludes to this in a letter written four years later to one of his brothers, who had referred to him some family disagreement which had arisen out of the settlement of the estate. "To the best of my recollection," he says, "the facts were" so and so, "but you know that, although named executor by the will, my minority prevented my acting in that capacity." It is peculiar that the brothers make this much younger half-brother the arbiter of their dispute, with a perfect trust in his ability and justice.

A sharper grief than even the loss of his father was at hand, for a few months later, as he was driving his mother along a country road in a chair (as a high two-wheeled vehicle was then called), the horse took fright and dashed into the woods. The chair was overturned, and while the young man was taken up insensible, his mother, who had been thrown against the trunk of a tree, was killed on the spot.

Mrs. Lowndes had been a most amiable woman; her son loved her passionately. It was months before he rallied from the shock of her death, and it made the lasting and painful impression on him that it was due to his own want of strength and skill. He never again, fond as he was of horses, would

drive a lady or a child, invariably giving the reins to a coachman unless accompanied by men only. The sole letter of his remaining, which belongs to these early years, shows this feeling; it is a fragment and undated, but must have been written before his marriage in 1802. It is to a lady, a very distant connection.

Dear Madam, — On my return last evening from the play, I was told that you had obligingly offered to take a ride to the races in my Curricle. I confess that with horses unused to the tumult of the course, I should feel apprehensive with a lady in my charge. In case of any apparent danger, the little skill in driving which I might otherwise possess would be lost in excessive solicitude for her safety. The recollection of what I have lately suffered will, I am sure, induce you to excuse me. But as Mr. T—— has been much more practiced in driving than I, if he be in town, my Curricle and horses, which otherwise will not be used, are quite at your service.

To this time belongs also another letter from his half-sister, Mrs. Brown, given to show the affectionate feeling between the different branches of the family. Mrs. Brown was a widow with one son, Lowndes Brown, who afterwards married a daughter of the Hon. John R. Livingston and removed to New York. I do not not know what was the "present" to which she refers.

Accept, my dear William, on paper, those thanks my conscience reproves me for a deficiency in before you left Town. To a feeling mind, a remissness in acknowledging an obligation is even more distressing than a repetition can possibly be

to the conferrer. Your very handsome present to my son, rendered doubly so by your manner of presenting it, ought certainly to have called forth my warmest gratitude; but my heart was full of what I may with truth say was unwished for on my part, nevertheless the obligation was not the less for my being perfectly satisfied with what I had already received. You will, I hope, approve of my keeping it a secret from my son, until I find him capable of making a right use of it. And now to have done with acknowledgment, save what is engraved on my heart, let me ask — are you never to confer *Trifling obligations?* Here have you whisked out of town, without giving a moment's notice to any one, which occasions my shelves still to be incumbered with empty phials, when you cou'd so conveniently have obliged Mrs. T. and poor sick negroes! You never sent to let Mrs. X. send one kind message or sweet sugar plum to her grandson! It is a very great reflection on your character, Mr. William, and I foresee the pangs of remorse will certainly seize upon you. . . . I have no news to write you, or if I had I should be afraid (as a certain lady) to trespass too much on the time (not attention) of a man so full of business? I took a ride the evening you left Town to your House [probably "The Grove," just outside of the town], to have done what your lazy nephew neglected to do before he went to the dance. I met with Mr. Tunno [the family factor], who observed that the most secure way to keep wine is in barrels headed up well. For a Bachelor, moreover a careless one, 't is particularly clever. I would recommend, then, your sending down a few empty barrels for the purpose and direct to have them made strong [by his plantation coopers at the Horseshoe]. If you will give yourself the trouble to re-

member, pray remember me to all the family at Woodville [his brother James's place], and do your best to make sweet Thomas [his little nephew] comprehend you. . . . God bless you, my dear Brother.

Thus ends my epistle, or whatever you may call it. H. L. B.

For the next year Mr. Lowndes gave himself to reading and studying at home; reading "particularly Greek and the works of La Place." Under this judicious regimen his mind recovered its tone, and he returned to his law books. He also fell in love with and proposed to Miss Elizabeth Pinckney, the eldest daughter of Major (afterwards General) Thomas Pinckney, a quiet, thoughtful girl about a year older than himself.

The offer was very agreeable to the lady, and would have been accepted at once, but marriages were then family affairs, and "my dear papa" was by no means favorable.

Major Pinckney objected first on the score of age. Great disparity of years in marriage was then common, and had the lover been twenty or even thirty years the senior, no one would have thought of objecting; but the superiority of even twelve months on the lady's side was held to be a monstrous drawback. Besides the elder gentleman thought the younger (of twenty) too young to be married at all, and few persons will disagree with him. A second well-founded objection was his health. How Mr. Lowndes argued Major Pinckney out of this point does not appear. On the first he is said to have asserted, very truly, that he was older than his years, and would soon be older still; but it is not easy to see how he could have established any reassuring fact about the latter, although

this does seem to have been the strongest period of his life.

The third objection, much worse than any other could possibly be, was his political degeneracy! The dreadful tale had gone forth that "Lowndes was a Republican," "a Republican-Democrat;" — shocking but true! And, moreover, others of the younger men — Joseph Alston (son-in-law to Aaron Burr), Daniel Huger, and many more — had wandered from the Federal fold, led by that wolf in sheep's clothing, the brilliant author of the Declaration of Independence.

But though the new doctrines had made political way in the State, society in Charleston was still ruled by the older gentlemen, who had called Washington their friend and knew no faith but his. To them republicanism was synonymous with Robespierre, Danton, and all their wild deeds. It meant irreligion, immorality, and all that was bad. To bring such a thing into one's own household was not to be thought of, and Mr. Lowndes's suit was rejected.

Besides his principles (or prejudices), which were those of his class, Major Pinckney had a personal reason for detesting the new party. The strongest affection of his life was perhaps that for his elder brother, General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney.

In 1801 this adored brother had been invited by the Federal party to stand for President, in the hope that the regard felt for him in the South would counteract the Republican influence. The hope was vain: the Republicans offered to vote for him if he would allow his name to be associated on their ticket with Mr. Jefferson's instead of Mr. Adams's, but he firmly declined the offer as inconsistent with principle. He received the Federal

votes, but the all-important casting vote fell to South Carolina, in which by that time the Republicans had the majority, and the State, to which political fidelity has always been the supreme duty, gave it, against her own son, to Jefferson.

General Pinckney bore the defeat silently and proudly; saying, when it was pointed out to him that one of his own kinsmen had acted against him, "That a vote should express public policy, not private consideration." His brother felt the party action more keenly than he, and when very shortly after Mr. Lowndes's suit was presented, it was undoubtedly distasteful to him.

However, *ce que femme veut, Dieu veut*, and here the lady knew her own mind. Moreover, the young man was, notwithstanding his politics, too highly esteemed to be easily dismissed. His brother Thomas, and his friend Mr. Frederick Rutledge, both stanch Federalists (the latter the son of Governor John Rutledge, and the husband of General Pinckney's niece, Miss Horry, and highly esteemed by him), exerted themselves in the lover's behalf, declaring that "although a Republican, Lowndes was a moderate one, and from his temper of mind would never be otherwise." The father yielded and gave his consent, and the marriage took place on the 16th of September, 1802; the groom still lacking five months of one-and-twenty. It may at once be said that it turned out a very happy marriage. Miss Pinckney was intelligent, well educated, and sympathetic. During her father's English ministry she had had the instructions of excellent masters, and of a capable governess, and during his Spanish mission she had remained for two years at the Parisian school of the famous Madame Campan. To these advantages she owed her familiarity with and enjoyment of the literature

of both languages, an enjoyment which never failed her. She had also a good clear head for business, such as her grandmother Eliza Pinckney's had been. In connection with this may be told an anecdote, which she herself told to show how soon her father had begun to appreciate her husband. It was, she said, but a few weeks after her marriage, and she was busy writing in a blank book. Her father, who was walking up and down his library apparently deep in thought, asked what she was copying. She answered, "Recipes from my grandmother's book to take with me when I go to 'The Grove'" (Mr. Lowndes's place near Charleston). "Very good," answered her father; "but I advise you, Elizabeth, also to study the plantation books, and learn to keep your husband's; you will find it necessary." She answered modestly that "Mr. Lowndes already kept his books carefully, and would probably prefer doing so himself." "He will have no time," answered Major Pinckney. "Before many years Lowndes will undoubtedly be called to public life. A man once embarked on that career, his private affairs must suffer. Lowndes cannot escape it, for the country will demand it, and you must learn to manage his business for him." She took the advice, and was in every respect a helpmate, managing judiciously during his many absences in Washington, and through thirty-five years of mourning widowhood.

The young couple established themselves at the Horseshoe Plantation, which Mr. Lowndes had inherited from his father, and instead of a house in town, they had for a summer residence "The Grove," a pretty place just outside of Charleston, opposite the race-course. This place had during the Revolution belonged to an old Mr. Gibbes, and had been adorned with many rare shrubs and ex-

oties. The British had wantonly destroyed these lovely plants, and it was said that the shock had been so great to the owner that he had died in a fit in consequence.

In Mr. Lowndes's time these exoties had been replaced by oaks and orange-trees. A double row of the latter edged the river bank from the gate to the house, and fine oaks dotted the lawn.

The road leading to this pretty home was beautiful with oaks, jessamines, and the Cherokee rose, and was for years the favorite drive in the environs of Charleston. The trees are almost all gone now from the road, and the place has long since passed from the family, yet they are still generally known as "Lowndes's Grove" and the "Grove Lane." It must be confessed that the place was not as healthy as beautiful — in the late summer months it was liable to fevers; and much ill health in Mr. Lowndes and his family might have been traced to their residence there.

In 1804, as has been said, Mr. Lowndes was admitted to the bar, and formed a copartnership with Mr. Cogdell, then city attorney. On proposing this partnership, Mr. Lowndes asked modestly to be taken as a nominal partner only, with no share of the profits of the firm, but receiving his reward in the advantage of the elder lawyer's advice and guidance. Mr. Cogdell, nevertheless, recognizing the young man's character and ability, refused the offer, and made liberal arrangements in his behalf.

Mr. Lowndes soon found, however, that, although the science of law interested him greatly, the practice was most distasteful; and when a year later a hurricane which swept the coast ravaged his plantation and laid waste his fields, he resolved to withdraw from the bar, and devote himself to the restoration of his estate. This resolution distressed

ASHLEY RIVER HOUSE

his friends, who had anticipated for him a brilliant success; and Mr. Fraser remarked to him that "his career was short." "Yes," he answered, "very short; and in that time I have had but one case in which my conscience and my duty concurred."

From this time to 1810 he devoted himself to the restoration and improvement of his property. The plantation book shows every detail of work. The names and positions of the different fields, which needed ditching and banking, and which were in good condition. How many "squares" of rice were planted on each, what labor was spent on them, and what they yielded. Lists of negroes on each place, their ages, their children, their ailments, their needs; —the things "given out," so many blankets, so many shoes, and so on. How many were coopers and carpenters, what houses were built or repaired, how many barrels made for the rice. Now and then there are entries of experiments and a little theorizing on what might be done. His right hand was Alick, his colored overseer, or, as we should now say, "foreman;" a very intelligent, faithful negro, in whom he had great confidence. During this time two sons and a daughter, Rawlins, Thomas Pinckney, and Rebecca Motte, were born to him — the last in 1810. These were the happiest and healthiest years of his life, but while thus busy and interested at home, he was watching with earnest, thoughtful eyes the course of public affairs.

Those were by no means tranquil days when Mr. Jefferson held sway at the White House, trying to rule his countrymen by a kindly but somewhat impractical genius, and to combat those grim warriors, England and France, by commercial restrictions and non-importation acts.

Few men in our national history are more interesting in our day, or were more misjudged in their

own, than Jefferson, the trouble lying not in himself or in his contemporaries, but in the changing time in which they lived. New England had passed through her visionary period, and could not understand the gentle-hearted theorist at Washington; and the Southern Federalists, by this time a small but influential class, although patient, because the President was a Virginian, hardly knew what to make of the declaration, "peace is our passion," by the man whom the Emperor called "the friend of France."

France, which then meant Napoleon, was the object of their dread and their hatred, and they could not but believe that Jefferson, who had openly professed "French ideas," was in some way the ally, or the tool, of the terrible Corsican. Jefferson, in truth, held and loved the theories of the Revolution, which were beautiful, but the practices and the excesses of the Revolutionists and of Bonaparte were abhorrent to his benevolent nature. In his youth he had believed that the "brotherhood of man" would make all peoples happy; but he was no youth now when he filled the presidential chair, and might have said, as Southey did, that he "was no more ashamed of having been a radical than of having been a boy."

There can be no doubt that he immensely overrated the importance and influence of his own country with the great nations of Europe, and really believed in, and tried passionately to bring about an era of peace, a time when the kingdoms should stand back and hold their fleets and armies in check, lest they should lose the advantage of commerce with the still young and insignificant republic across the seas. So, he thought, might the awful miseries of war be averted, and peace and plenty bless his people.

If ever this condition of things does come to pass, — before the millennium, — it should be remembered that it was the dream by night and aim by day of the much struggling Virginian, who left the White House a broken man, reviled by half the nation, but carrying with him the conscience of an honest endeavor for the good, or, as he would have said, "the happiness" of his countrymen. Virginia at least was true to him, and it is pleasant to think that at Monticello he had peace and friends around him.

England and France were then almost in the death grapple: all other interests circled round that great struggle. Each country claimed that whoever was not for, was against her; but America, safeguarded by the Atlantic, remained neutral; she even contended that neither combatant had the right to forbid her trading where and with whom she pleased. It was of special importance, because the rich products of the West Indies were locked up in their ports, and could seek no markets in their own ships. Jefferson's great doctrine, that "neutral flags make neutral goods," was of especial value here, and he was bent upon supporting it.

For answer England simply seized and searched the vessels, and Napoleon jeeringly declared that what America called "her flag" was "only a piece of striped bunting," since it could not protect the ships beneath it.

The system was ably attacked in a very remarkable pamphlet called "War in Disguise, or the Fraud of the Neutral Flags," written by James Stephen, the distinguished father of a more distinguished son. Stephen denounced the whole theory as false, and claimed that in practice the ships were not really American, but French or Spanish, carrying the produce of their own countries

and fraudulently covered by American flags. There probably was some truth and more exaggeration in what Stephen alleged; but the pamphlet gave Mr. Lowndes an opportunity of expressing his views on a subject of national interest. He wrote a series of articles in the "Charleston Courier," over the signature, "A Planter," examining and discussing the question. They were said at the time "to be good for any one, but excellent for so young a man." He himself afterwards wrote of them: "After all, though as an argument I think well of the 'Planter,' it was not adapted to its purpose, it was not adapted to the readers of a newspaper."

The work, however, attracted public notice and approbation, and he was elected a member of the General Assembly of the State, for the parish of St. Bartholomew, in the year 1806. The legislature of South Carolina, the lawmaking body of one of the smallest of States, has (or rather had) peculiarities about it which I might try to describe, had not that been already done by a pen which I cannot hope to emulate.

The most perfect of Carolinian writers, William Henry Trescot, who has but lately passed from among us, has left in his "Sketch of the Life of General Johnson Pettigrew" a picture of that legislature, so vivid, so truthful, and so discriminative, that I cannot resist the temptation of inserting some part of it here. He says that to compare a very small to a very great thing, the English Parliament, — "The legislature of South Carolina has preserved much curious resemblance to its great ancestor. . . . The reverence for parliamentary law, the influence belonging to the silent body of country gentlemen, the long continuance of individual representations . . . the peculiar respect and dignity attached to the office of Speaker, the antiquated

and stately costume of the presiding officers of both branches of the General Assembly, the unwritten and unbroken law of adjournment, so that the parish representatives should be upon their estates at Christmas, all were traditions of the habits and thoughts of our English blood. Session after session the same men, the natural leaders of the State, the men who represented broad acres and thousands of slaves, the men who had won power and honor by professional labor, the men who in less conspicuous walks of life had made for themselves names for industry, honesty, and ability, met to make the laws of the State. A member's name was an indication of the district he represented, and the public life of the State was developed in full and fitting sympathy with the personal affections, the traditional associations, the local attachments, that made its private life. They were bound together by that unity of spirit which sprang from a deep but unaffected devotion to the State, whose honor and whose interests were intrusted to their keeping. They had trained and disciplined many men whose fame as orators and statesmen had become national, and, with the exception of Mr. Calhoun, I do not know a great reputation in the State, the foundation of which was not laid broadly and solidly in the legislature."

In this sedate body William Lowndes sat, as his father had sat before him, as the member for St. Bartholomew's. Happily no such stormy scenes were to occur in his time as had marked the last year of Rawlins Lowndes's term of service. One matter only of more than usual importance came before him. It arose from the increase in population and importance of the upper part of the State. South Carolina had been settled originally by emigrants from England and other countries of Europe,

all coming by sea, and landing at the port of Charles Town, or, as the old people used to say, "coming by the front door." They settled in the lower part of the State, which was afterwards divided into parishes; and these parishes, none of which lay more than a hundred miles from the sea, contained at the time of which we speak by far the greater number of wealthy men and large plantations. The great body of the negro population was massed here, along the rice rivers, upon the sea islands, and where the black seed cotton grew, all in the "low country." In the mean while the "up country," which might be said, roughly speaking, to begin about the latitude of the present city of Columbia, where "the ridge" crosses the State, had filled up with settlers who came down generally from North Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. They began to come about 1750 (urged, it is said, by the Indian depredations upon the frontiers of those States), moving in wagons with teams of horses, driven by the long smacking whips which for generations gave the name of "crackers" to the country people. Hardy yeomen farmers, what were called "plain folk," they settled and throve in the healthy uplands above the ridge and back to the mountains, but with few exceptions they did not make large fortunes. Their farms were not as large, or their negroes as numerous, as those of their wealthy neighbors of the coast; but they fought splendidly at Hanging Rock and King's Mountain, and even claimed that they were better rebels than their more Europeanized countrymen.

These people now had a grievance. Until the beginning of the present century the legislative representation of the State was apportioned by wealth alone. A parish or district (as the counties were called after the Revolution), assessed at so much

property, sent two representatives; if richer it sent three, quite irrespective of population. The parishes were rich, but small in extent, and often had but comparatively few white inhabitants. The districts were large, poor, and increasing in population every year. The Senate was arranged in the same way. Every parish had its senator, while Fairfield, Richland, and Chester had between them but one member of the "Upper House," as the people still called it.

But by 1806 the white men of the up country began to resent this. They felt their rights infringed by the fact that "the silent negro vote" (viz. the wealth invested in negroes) should prevail over the numbers of the free white men of the upper part of the State; numbers which now equaled, if they did not exceed, that of "the parishes."

The point had been under discussion for some time, and there was much hard feeling excited between the sections. The legislature appointed a committee to find some plan of adjustment, and a bill was brought forward proposing that henceforward population and wealth should both be represented, and that (a new census being taken, and a new assessment made), — to use the words of the act, "The House of Representatives shall consist of one hundred and twenty-four members: to be apportioned among the several election districts of the State, according to the number of white inhabitants contained, and the amount of all taxes raised by the legislature . . . paid in each. . . . In assigning representatives to the several districts of this State, the legislature shall allow one representative for every sixty-second part of the whole number of white inhabitants in the State, and one representative also for every sixty-second part of the whole taxes raised by the legislature of the State."

There are many careful details about fractions of representation, etc., but the above is the gist of the whole matter. The election districts remained the same, except in some small rectification of boundaries between some of the up-country divisions.

This proposition brought peace, and became a law in 1808. It continued in force until 1866 swept all things away. The bill was reported to the House by Colonel Blanding, of Columbia, and Mr. Lowndes (although of the committee) never laid any claim to the credit of it. After his death, however, his friend, Judge Huger, who was in the House at the time, stated that the plan was Mr. Lowndes's, that the original draft was in his handwriting, with corrections and emendations, and that it was presented by Colonel Blanding because it was thought more likely to allay the irritation of the up-country men that "the proposition should have the approbation of a judicious member from that quarter." Both gentlemen being on the committee, and good friends, the arrangement (necessarily a private one) was made between them, and never divulged in the lifetime of either. The Honorable William Grayson, the biographer of Mr. Lowndes, to whom this statement was made by Judge Huger, examined the draft and recognized the handwriting. I have no wish to put forward any claim for Mr. Lowndes which he did not make for himself: but as the above has been published by Mr. Chase in his "Lowndes of South Carolina," I give it here from deference to the memory of the two gentlemen on whose authority the account rests. Possibly the scheme may have been a joint work, suggested by the brain of each, put on paper by the hand of one. Mr. Lowndes claimed no share of it, and Colonel Blanding was of much too high character to have maintained pretensions to which he had no good right.

I may say here that the plan had the high approbation of Mr. Calhoun, who said of it years afterward, that it was the best system of representation ever devised.

At the time when Mr. Lowndes thus entered public life, the aggressions of England had become yet more open and violent. Claiming the high seas as her kingdom, she there knew no will but her own. Ships might sail here, and might not sail there, as she bade them, and anywhere or everywhere she would search an American vessel, whether man-of-war or merchantman, and take from it sailors whom she called hers. In the discrimination a British officer was not nice: an able-bodied blue-jacket was apt to be carried off, whether he hailed from Old or New London,—from Boston in Lincolnshire or Boston in Massachusetts. They were clapped, despite papers and protestations, into English frigates, and set to work the English guns. Several of these men were killed serving under the Union Jack at Trafalgar. The wonder was that New England, the nursery of seamen, stood it. She nevertheless deprecated resistance, advised every possible concession, bore the insolence of Canning and the irony of Wellesley, saw her sons imprisoned, and her commerce ruined, and yet endured, so averse was she to quarrel with the only power which openly resisted France. Some years later one of her representatives actually called the wrong "endurable," since "only twenty-five men had been taken in the last twelve months." It is hard to believe that such things were only ninety years ago. Fancy Germany, for instance, stopping the Pacific fleet, and carrying off any American born Hans or Fritz, who might be found under the Stars and Stripes.

The country was roused, however, when in 1807 occurred the intolerable outrage of the massacre of

the Chesapeake by the Leopard at the very doors of New York. The justly enraged people demanded the vengeance due on those who "shed the blood of war in peace," and it was only the strong aid of the Federalists which strengthened Jefferson to resist their cries.

England, tardily, and with great reservations, disowned the act of her officer, and apologized lamely enough. The government professed itself satisfied, but the people were not, and the angry feeling grew. In South Carolina, always prompt to take the sword, it had the very fortunate effect of calling attention to the militia. Drilling and training took a new impulse; for, despite the apology, the scent of war was in the air. Several new companies were raised, of one of which William Lowndes was made captain. "He was in appearance the least military of men," his friend Judge Huger said to the present writer, "but his talks and speeches were invaluable in inspiring and maintaining the patriotic spirit." His captaincy did not last long, but the company, the "Washington Light Infantry," named after the Father of his country, and observing the 22d of February as its anniversary, is still the "crack" company of the State, and has borne a gallant part in two wars. The leopard skin on its helmets keeps the memory of its origin. Twenty years later the widow of Colonel William Washington, the great cavalry leader of South Carolina, presented to the company the little battle-flag, made from her crimson silk gown, which she had given to her husband's troop during the Revolution. It is still carried on state occasions, tattered and faded, but bearing the proud name "Eutaw," to which other names as proud might now be added. It is believed to be the only Revolutionary flag still in existence.

Mr. Lowndes, thus introduced to the notice of his fellow-citizens, seems to have increased in their esteem, and in 1810, "as soon as he was old enough," as one of his biographers remarks, he was chosen to represent "Beaufort and Colleton of South Carolina" (the district in which his property lay) in the national Congress, and took his seat in November, 1811. His elder brother, Mr. Thomas Lowndes, had represented Charleston in Congress from 1800 to 1805. See Appendix II.

In the last two years the condition of the country had gone from bad to worse, the greatest evils coming from the French and English wars, and from the dissentient feeling at home concerning them, and the efforts of both powers to implicate America in the conflict. Besides the annoyances already mentioned, England had declared a blockade, mostly upon paper, of all ports "under French influence," which meant practically western Europe, and forbade intercourse with French or Spanish colonies; while Napoleon retaliated with his Berlin and Milan decrees, forbidding all nations to trade with England, and asserting his right (or power) to seize all vessels from her ports. Between them the Yankee skipper had a dreadful life. If he tried to take his salt fish to Barcelona or Marseilles, an English cruiser pounced upon him even in mid-ocean, under the plea that he was "breaking the blockade," and not only impressed his men but confiscated his ship. If he tried to run a cargo of cotton or lumber into Liverpool or Bristol, a French corvette would bear down upon him, declare his goods "colonial," and therefore "contraband of war," and carry him a prize to Havre or Bordeaux. Still, America adhered steadily to her peace policy, and to all these grievances opposed only the remonstrances of her ministers and a (constantly

evaded) non-importation act, to which had latterly been added an embargo.

This peace policy had been inaugurated by Mr. Jefferson, who in so doing had doubtless remembered the example of his great predecessor in signing the Jay treaty, which, while it sacrificed much, secured that peace without which the infant country could not have grown to manhood. It had now so grown, but the policy remained, and induced a passivity which, to countries accustomed to win every advantage, and defend every right at the point of the sword, seemed pusillanimous in the extreme. They could not understand how a people, which apparently cared for trade alone, could aspire to treat with them on an equal footing, and ask position and respect for her envoys at their warlike courts. The unfortunate envoys endured much and gained little, although many of them were men of tact and talent. The taunts and sneers borne by William Pinkney, of Maryland, and by Mr. Monroe in England, and by General Armstrong in France, are hardly to be believed today. Their most reasonable demands were scorned or slighted, and their complaints treated as impertinence. In that very amusing book, the "Bath Archives," Sir George Jackson says: "Such is the exasperation felt at the impertinent conduct of the Yankees that there exists a general inclination to give them a drubbing." The impertinent conduct consisted in remonstrating on the injuries detailed above, and on the insolence of Captain Douglass, who had threatened to burn down the city of Norfolk because his watering casks had been damaged. America was simply despised.

If these measures of commercial retaliation had resulted in prosperity and unanimity at home, they might have proved acceptable to those members of

the community who preferred peace to praise; but the last measure, the embargo, had been to a large part of the country an almost intolerable burden; a burden which, instead of oppressing England and France, paralyzed many of the American States. It had been supposed that New England, which Quincy had described in picturesque language, as living by the ocean alone, would suffer most. "Of the land," he said, "they think very little. It is, in fact, to them only a shelter from the storm, a perch on which they build their eyrie and leave their mate and their young, while they skim the surface, or hunt in the deep." But with characteristic cleverness New England turned to manufactures, her genius took a new development, she made shoes, hats, cotton goods, etc., and throve by supplying the wants of her neighbors. The embargo proved the beginning of her great wealth, and when a few years later it was proposed to remove the non-importation act which she had so fiercely opposed, it was found that her interests had changed, and she now insisted upon its retention.

On the agricultural States the embargo bore heavily. Virginia, perhaps, suffered most of all; Carolina suffered also. Neither possessed the flexible habit of mind and hand of their Northern countrymen: their laborers were negroes, good at their own work, but hard to turn to unaccustomed ways. They manufactured nothing, and their tobacco hogsheads and cotton bales stood piled in their barns, while the necessaries of life were wanting. They did not repine, and each man among his own people did what he could. The people had to be clothed, and the planters hunted out their old looms and set the women to work. They wove not only cotton homespun, but a serviceable stuff of wool and cotton something like jeans, eking out the scanty

supply of wool by recourse to the high-piled mattresses on the old-fashioned bedsteads. Wool was indeed so scarce that the sheep led charmed lives, and even the locks left on the brier patches were gathered up, as by the pious "shepherd of Salisbury Plain."

Some weavers acquired a certain degree of skill: the present writer has seen a very decent tablecloth, of a wide-checked pattern, woven on her grandmother's plantation at this time. Ladies and children wore shoes from the hides of their own cattle, tanned and made by the plantation craftsmen. "If the embargo had lasted long enough we should have been a manufacturing people," the old men used to say. But, in truth, their works did not amount to more than home industries; there was no concerted action, — the intense individualism of their training prevented that, — and except these few plain things, they went without, or bought from their clever neighbors. In South Carolina, trade resolved itself into a species of barter in which new men made great fortunes. Shopkeepers who had laid in a good stock of goods before the ports were closed could sell them for what they liked. I have seen some coarse, horn-handled knives (inferior kitchen knives now) which were bought — a dozen of them — for three bales of cotton, equal to about one hundred and twenty dollars. If money *had* to be raised (taxes, for instance, must be paid), the same obliging shopkeeper would possibly give five dollars for a couple of tierces of rice worth perhaps fifty.

When the embargo was removed, these men had their yards piled with bales and barrels of price, which had cost them hardly anything, while the planters were impoverished and their debts had accumulated. Many such tales were told fifty

years ago. They were impoverished, but they took it with wonderful spirit and firmness. The older men, stanch Federalists though they were, shook their heads grimly and cursed the French (it was always the French who were supposed to have done the harm), but made no resistance, for these were political experiments, and, in such, Carolina is always interested; and was not the President, whose plan it was, a Virginian, and is not Virginia the chief of all the Southern States? Dr. Ramsay, writing while the trouble was fresh, says: —

"A chain of suffering encircled the community; all this was magnanimously borne by a great majority of the inhabitants. Their reproaches fell not on the administrators of their own government, but on the authors of British orders and French decrees. . . . While others contended that they suffered most from the embargo, the Carolinians, with justice, preferred their claim to the honor of bearing it best. . . . It might be added that if the embargo had been as faithfully observed and as patiently borne in every part of the Union as it was in Carolina, the issue would probably have been very different, and certainly more to the honor of the United States;" — (written apparently in 1808).

The effect upon the younger men, although Republican-Democrats, was to give them an intense dislike to all these measures, by which their so-called party had striven to avoid the taking of arms. With clearer sight than their fathers, or than their Federal contemporaries, they saw that the time had come when the country *must* assert herself or lose her self-respect forever. The new representatives sent by South Carolina to the Twelfth Congress were Langdon Cheves, William Lowndes, and John C. Calhoun, — all young, able,

and ardent, unshackled by previous bonds, and owing allegiance to no especial leader. Calhoun and Lowndes were nine-and-twenty, born within a month of each other; Cheves, about five years older. There was also David R. Williams, a man of much force and integrity, who had vainly endeavored to rouse the spirit of the last inert Eleventh Congress. The desire of all these men was to awaken the patriotism of the country and achieve for her a place among the nations, without regard to politics or party.

They had set themselves no easy task. To those who have lived through the great changes of the last fifty years, it is curious to look back to the great excitements and agitations which very slight causes produced when this government was new. Men, not foreseeing the wonderful way in which a free and self-governing people can adapt itself and its laws to the exigencies of an untried system, thought every new move a mighty matter, and cried ruin and disaster whenever their theories were opposed.

The Louisiana purchase, whereby territory large as an empire was secured on the easiest and honestest possible terms, had, in 1800, driven the Northern Federalists to fury; and now the application of the southernmost portion of that territory to be admitted as a State renewed their agitation. Their opposition was based on the point that such an acquisition, not having been provided for in the Constitution, must be repugnant to it, and they seem really to have believed that "the framers" expected the country to retain always its original bounds, despite the designs upon Canada which had been agitated from the beginning of the Union. They especially dreaded the addition of a State southern in position and institutions; and uncon-

scious of the extraordinary powers of assimilation to be developed by the United States, they regarded the Spanish and French people, language and laws of the newcomer, as the Hebrews regarded the wedge of Achan. They could never consider it a State like their own, they said; its people would be natives "of a foreign country girt upon us, but never citizens of the United States." One such violation of the Constitution, as they deemed it, broke, they thought, all bonds, and in their indignation they were ready to dissolve the Union, lest they themselves should be corrupted. Nor did they consider this as any desperate deed. We must remember that no peculiar sanctity attached to the Union in the minds of the men who made it. They had bound their States together for mutual advantage: should that advantage cease to exist, they were ready with small scruple to cut the bonds themselves had made.

Jefferson and Fisher Ames might be held to represent the political poles: but in 1803 Ames gravely declared, "Our country is too big for Union;" and Jefferson, also alarmed at what seems to us this very moderate vastness, said, a little later, "Whether we remain in one confederacy, or break into Atlantic and Mississippi confederations, I believe not very important to the happiness of either part." These were geographical considerations, more important were the political ones; but the famous Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 were moderate in comparison with the demands and plans of Pickering, Griswold, Quincy, and others, men of New England, "where there is," says Cabot, "among the body of the people more wisdom and virtue than in any other part of the United States." They, in 1804, in order to "save New England" (by which they meant the Federal party), decided

that they must part her from the South and West as from an evil thing, and they prepared to form a New England Confederacy (hoping much to carry New York with them), with as strong a sense of right as the Southerners had in 1861. They were held in check by the wiser heads among them, — George Cabot, Adams, etc., — not that their plan was wrong, but that the time was not yet ripe; "although," Cabot says, "a separation at some period not very remote may probably take place." They desisted for the moment, but not until their understanding with the English cabinet was such that there can be little doubt that if the "Essex Junto" had carried its measures, it would have done so under the protection of a British fleet. It seemed as if Lord North's "rope of sand" was beginning already to dissolve. The South was tranquil; wishing for relief from its financial embarrassments, but not willing to force the President's hand, or depart from those "peace principles" which formed the guiding star of the Jeffersonian Democracy. The West had rejoiced at the purchase of Louisiana (Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee were then the West), securing to them as it did the free navigation of the Mississippi and unlimited commerce. It had never felt safe before, remembering Jay's proposition to surrender this right to Spain in order to secure the Spanish trade to New England. The Pinckney treaty of 1795 had indeed assured, as well as might be, the free navigation and "right of deposit" (i. e. of warehouses) at New Orleans, but treaties are but paper and may be broken: the purchase made it sure. The West, therefore, was willing to admit the new State; but the feeling of apprehension was general, for, although the proceedings of the Essex Junto were not known, Quincy's famous speech, eloquently

declaring the right of a State to shape her own destiny, had startled all men. In January, 1811, in the last session of the Eleventh Congress, he had said: "I hold my life, liberty, and property, and the people whom I have the honor to represent hold theirs, by a better tenure than any which this national government can give. . . . We hold them by the laws and customs of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Behind her ample shield we find refuge and feel safety. . . . If this bill passes [viz. to admit the State of Louisiana], it is my deliberate opinion that it is virtually a dissolution of this Union, that it will free the States from their moral obligations, and as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, definitely to prepare for a separation, amicably if they can, forcibly if they must."

Such was the feeling at home and abroad when the Twelfth Congress met.

CHAPTER V

CONGRESS

1811–1812

In the year 1811 the journey from Charleston to Washington was long and tedious. To traverse the two Carolinas and the State of Virginia required from ten days to three weeks, according to lightness of vehicle and swiftness of horse. One had to cross great rivers, often swollen by freshets, in flats poled by negroes. Sometimes the carriage would slip down the muddy banks into the river, sometimes it stuck in a swamp, and again the horses stalled in a sandy waste. The old journals are full of these misadventures. The wayside taverns were abominable, and although the neighboring planters were delighted to receive travelers, their houses were apt to be so widely surrounded by their own acres that it lengthened the journey too much to go in search of them. To avoid this fatigue and trouble, Mr. Lowndes, on his first journey to Congress, went by water, taking the Philadelphia packet, which was esteemed better than that to Baltimore or Norfolk.

His letters to his wife begin at this moment, and as they show his disposition and character more clearly than any mere account can do, passages from them are given here. The constant careful directions for the plantation work are generally omitted, as are also the kindly messages to his

brothers and sisters, and much of the affectionate talk of and to the children. This, not compressed into a sentence or two at the end, as in many paternal epistles, runs throughout most of them in a loving and tender strain. These early letters give also his first impressions of many of the distinguished men of the time; impressions which were to be confirmed or modified by further acquaintance. He writes: —

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 23d, 1811.

I will adopt hereafter, my dear Elizabeth, the same plan of numbering my letters which your sister practices. This will enable you to discriminate between the negligence of the Postoffice and mine. My first was written on shipboard and put into the office at Newcastle immediately upon my landing. . . . I am very comfortably lodged here at Mrs. Benson's, where I found Mr. and Mrs. Cheves, Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy, Hugh Rutledge, and Mr. Toomer. It is a Carolina house [all the above were from Carolina]; Mrs. Cheves is a very pleasant and amiable woman. Mr. Cheves and I have occasionally touched on the subject which in conversation you know I very much dislike — politics. But I felt much anxiety to know his opinions, because I believe that they either are or will be those of nearly all the members from Carolina. He carries his wife and two children to Washington. . . . I shall set off in a day or two for Washington, by the way of Lancaster, traveling slowly and spending two or three days at some of the farms upon the road. I begin to long for a peep at you and the children, but I must make a requisition upon my patience for six months.

WASHINGTON, Saturday Night.
November 2 or 3, 1811.

Here I am, you see, at the end of my journey, in a comfortable room with a good fire, and I believe in a pleasant mess. I do not well know all of them, but I think it will consist of Mr. and Mrs. Cheves (and two children for the musical part of the company), Mr. Clay, whom they call "the Western Star" (I believe he is a clever man), and his wife; Mr. Calhoun from our State, and perhaps two other gentlemen. I have so far done better than I had expected. I came from Baltimore in the stage-coach with the élite of the Federalists. I liked the little I saw of Mr. Emmott [representative from New York] very much. Of Mr. Quiney [of Massachusetts] I have seen more and think less. He is always looking out for a prettiness in thought or language, always declaiming — he declaims ill; and even his language (which is doubly offensive in a pretty speaker) is very inaccurate. But what are Mr. Emmott and Mr. Quiney to you? I had better write about myself: I mean to do so. I am quite recovered from the slight indisposition which I had at Philadelphia . . . and Dr. Physick says it will be my own fault if it ever returns again. I await the winds of the Capital without tremor.

I will not return to Carolina by water, I will not return in the stage: how I shall return I do not yet know, but these stages are not the things for me. My present disposition, if my health continues good, is in favour of returning on horseback. But I must not yet think of the manner of returning. . . . I meant to have written some directions to my overseers and to the carpenters, but my plantation ideas have got so completely to the bottom of my brain that I shall "tumble up everything," as the

ladies call it, if I rummage for them. . . . If I keep this letter two days I may frank it: if I send it now you will have to pay for it: however, I feel so anxious to have to pay for a letter from you, that I will impute the same anxiety to you and send off my letter. When you answer it, it is not necessary that I should say, "tell me everything about the children." I suppose you will soon be going into the country. . . . You can send word to Boineau [an overseer] to break Napoleon for Rawlins, who will want him next summer, for I am afraid Glum's [the old pony] night is setting in. If my letter is to go to-day I must send it now. I wish myself at home.

Such letters require but little comment. Dr. Physick, then the head of his profession in this country, certainly benefited him, for his health improved for some time. A recent brilliant novelist makes one of her characters remark that "General Washington never was anything but a homesick country gentleman;" to which an English traveler replies that "the same might be said of most members of Parliament." It certainly is, or was, true of those Southern members of Congress who left their beloved plantations for the unfinished city and raw society of Washington. The letter just given, and the following, written only a few days after the opening of a session which must last six months at least, are striking proofs of this, but it is visible in every letter. This also gives his first impressions of Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 7, 1811.

From this place one who does not write politics can hardly find anything to write, and I never feel any disposition to write, nor would you to read them. I find my notions on the subject less singu-

lar than I had supposed them, and there is some degree of satisfaction in receiving for one's opinions the confirmation afforded by another's. Of opinions, however, in respect to our best policy, the diversity is very great, and the want of some controlling or at least some concentrating influence is very obvious.

I think our mess a pleasant one, the most so, perhaps, in the place. We have, too, the honor of having the Speaker [Mr. Clay] among us. [Mr. Clay had been made Speaker since his previous letter]. Mr. Calhoun, of S. Carolina, has joined us within a day or two. I had heard a very favourable character of him; but skeptical as I am on the score of character, this did not at all lessen by preparing me for the pleasure of an acquaintance with a man, well informed, easy in his manners, and I think amiable in his disposition. I like him already better than any member of our mess, and I give his politics the same preference. . . . This delay affords no encouragement to try the Norfolk packet for expedition in returning home, and indeed I have written to you that I had determined against it on other grounds. I shall indeed, I think, return in a very convenient way with Mr. Calhoun, who wishes to buy a carriage here. Each of us wishes to buy a pair of horses, but if we cannot do that, then each will buy one low-priced horse, and we shall travel, a little more leisurely perhaps, to Carolina together. In regard to my health, there is no reason for your feeling any solicitude; I am quite well, and take nearly, or perhaps quite, exercise enough. The streets will soon be too bad for walking, and I am looking for a saddle horse. . . . Tell Rawlins [his eldest son, about eight years old] that I am very impatient for his message, and would turn from Mr. Randolph's most brilliant

harangue to read it: tell him his father thinks of him every day, and a hundred times a day, and never without wishing to be with him.

It seems curious that having been so long in the legislature, and therefore neeessarily in company with men from all parts of the State, Mr. Lowndes should never have met either Mr. Cheves or Mr. Calhoun until their congressional life began. It may as well be said at once that the friendship for these two gentlemen, which arose early in their aequaintanee, eontinued unbroken to his life's end. No rivalry or personal ambition interfered with their high estimation of each other, the kindest offiees were exchanged between them, and twenty years after Mr. Lowndes's death, Mr. Calhoun, visiting his widow, said, with an emotion rare in that great man, "that there had never been a shadow between his friend and himself."

In the House Mr. Lowndes had as yet been silent, a silenee which annoyed his friends at home, — most of all, his old preceptor, Dr. Gallagher, who exclaimed impatiently, "Why does he not speak? Let him speak and show what he is." His reasons for not doing so he gives in the following: —

November 24, 1811.

Of what are usually considered comforts of life we have as mueh here as eould reasonably be desired while we are separated from our families. This separation, when we get busily engaged in politics, may possibly be less vexatious than now, as one snbjeet of anxiety may expel another. At present there is nothing here which interests me: not but that the subjeets of deliberation in the House are important, but because I am not vain enough

to expect to alter, or sanguine enough to think that I shall approve, the result.

And again a little later: —

December 1, 1811.

I write every Sunday and I shall certainly at no time of the session be too busy to do so. In fact I do not expect to be at all busy. I have not yet made any other effort at speaking in the House than an "aye" or "no," and I am not sure but that these may continue to be the only specimens of my eloquence. I never have spoken, and I think I cannot speak without the expectation (perhaps always a mistaken one) of making some converts, but I am not vain enough to think of making a convert here in public debate. Something in this way is done in conversation; much, I think, has been done by the open declarations of the new members, behind which the timid may rally, and on whose opinions the lazy may in some measure repose: but this is something very different from conviction.

A young and modest man might well be doubtful of his influence in such an assemblage as the Twelfth, or, as it was called in the peaceful years after 1815, the "War Congress." A new spring of life and talent seemed to have come to the House, presided over by the "Western Star," Henry Clay. The more prominent men whom he had with him from the South, besides the four from Carolina, were Johnson of Kentucky, Felix Grundy of Tennessee, Barton Key of Maryland, Macon of North Carolina, Forsyth and Crawford of Georgia, and Randolph of Roanoke, now an old man, but who still dominated the House. From New England came Quincy, the leader of the Federals, and Pickering of the "Essex Junto." Grosvenor of New York

was chief speaker from the Middle States, and Seyburt of Pennsylvania, a physician, who was therefore, Mr. Lowndes says, nicknamed "the Chemical Congressman." These were the leading men, gathered, as the Carolinians firmly believed, to shape their country's future for glory or disgrace.

The session opened, of course, with the appointment of committees, and it is said that the Speaker was "somewhat embarrassed at finding upon his hands three men of powers so entitled to recognition as Mr. Cheves, Mr. Lowndes, and Mr. Calhoun, all coming from one State, and that one of the smallest in the Union." However, he made the following appointments: Mr. Cheves to the Naval Committee, Mr. Lowndes to Commerce and Manufactures, and Mr. Calhoun to Foreign Affairs; Mr. Cheves being chairman of the Naval Committee. The slow progress of affairs was very trying to impatient spirits. "Our politics scarcely move, they crawl," Mr. Lowndes writes at this time. Still, the first positive word is given in the next letter: —

WASHINGTON, December 7, 1811.

You ask whether I go to balls, etc. I suppose they do not think it cold enough for balls, for I have not heard of any, but there will, I think, be no probability of my going to one during the winter. I have never derived any pleasure from seeing other people play cards, or dance, or eat. I do not like the entertainment in which I cannot share, and you know that six years ago I thought myself too old to dance. But Mrs. Madison's levee I think I shall like pretty well. I have not yet attended it on account of the little accident I mentioned in one of my earlier letters [his horse had fallen with him and bruised his face]. I have seen the great man [President Madison], however, and had an

invitation to dine with him, which I declined, as I did not consider my health quite established. I am to dine with him next Tuesday, and if there be anything very peculiar in his dinner, I will set it down for your edification. They say his dinners are not very good. . . . I can answer your grandmother's" [Mrs. Motte] question as to the probable price of rice during the winter, on authority much better than my own. Mr. Monroe [Secretary of State] supped with us last night, and expressed the opinion that until war shall be actually declared, flour and rice will sell higher than if war were not expected. I do not place much confidence in this opinion myself, but you may learn from it at least how familiar we are with the great men of the nation.

As to your "symptoms of accommodation with England," they were never less. Our government has not sent and will not send a minister to negotiate on our present differences with England. Nor has our *chargé d'affaires*, nor will he have, directions to make any proposition to that government. We have, indeed, nothing to propose, but England, if she chooses to avoid a war, may possibly repeal her Orders in Council. On this it would be very foolish to calculate, and without it we shall certainly have war before the close of the session. There did, indeed, at one time prevail some doubt as to the disposition of the Administration for war, but Mr. Monroe has given the strongest assurances that the President will coöperate zealously with Congress in declaring war, if our complaints are not redressed by May next.

In the next letter is a reference to what was to be for many years his chief thought: the condition of the navy, at that time a neglected and unpopu-

lar branch of the service. It is to Mrs. Lowndes spending her Christmas with her father at Santee.

December 25.

You have my best wishes for a Merry Christmas, although the expression will not reach you until the festivity of the season is forgotten. My Christmas too, or at least this Christmas day (for we have no longer holiday), will not in common opinion be a dull one, as it will be spent at the French Minister's and enlivened, I suppose, with burgundy and champagne. I should not be averse to company if the custom of the place permitted me to go in boots, but the exposure of a leg unprotected by flesh or leather is, in this windy place, an uncomfortable thing. . . . As to Pinckney [his second son] being a sailor, as you say your brother recommends, I have but one objection, and I still hope that that will be surmounted; I mean that the prejudices against the navy here are such as to render it doubtful if he can ever be an admiral. I have not, therefore, as yet applied for even a midshipman's warrant. The weather here is now very cold. I am told that the Potomac was frozen in a single night. Unluckily, too, our coals failed us in our utmost need. The boat which was bringing them sunk in the river, and wood in a grate we found but a bad substitute. I cannot say, however, that I have been at all incommoded by the severity of the weather, although the old members say they never knew it greater. It is luckily clear and dry, but the wind almost takes away the breath. Although the accommodations here are better than I expected, yet the comforts of a city are such in winter that I think I shall spend the next (if I come here at all) in Georgetown.

Looking at Washington to-day, it is curious to think of leaving it for Georgetown, in order to secure the comforts of a city. But Washington was then only a straggling village, hardly even deserving its nickname of the "city of magnificent distances." Sir James Jackson, who was British Minister in 1808, said in the "Bath Archives," "The City of Washington (as they call it) is five miles long, the scattered houses are intersected with woods, heaths, and gravel pits. I put up a covey of partridges within three hundred yards of the House of Congress, yclept the Capitol." He says it is "more like Hampstead Heath than a city," but that the neighborhood is beautiful and he admires the scenery compassed by the Potomac and the hills about it.

The new year opened with anxiety both public and private.

January 2, 1812.

I have put off writing my letter for this week so long that it may serve as well for the ensuing Sunday as the last. . . . Although I have had nothing to do, my mind has been anxiously occupied within a few days by the business of the House. I had great fears of the failure of a measure which seemed to me important. It has been carried by a large majority, but many a reluctant vote was given in its favour. I am now in better spirits, because I see many disposed, and many obliged, to vote rightly. . . . I ought not to have gotten so far in my letter without thanking you for the information you have given me in respect to the Horse Shoe. The loss which has been suffered, and which probably will be still greater, is of the kind the most distressing. . . . I meant to have written long letters to the overseers, but have

given up the plan as much from judgement as from laziness.

This alludes to an epidemic of malignant fever on the plantation, which Mrs. Lowndes, at her own imminent risk, had gone to attend. She took strong measures, removed the people from their customary quarters to huts hastily built in the high pineland, changed their diet (persuading them with great difficulty to eat mutton broth), stopped the epidemic at last, and was said by the doctor to have saved many lives, although many were lost. In the letters for weeks to come there are constant passages on the subject, Mr. Lowndes being very anxious on her own account as well as about his people. The letter continues: —

"The dreadful event at Richmond" [the burning of the theatre on the 26th of December, 1811], "which, living as we do here among the friends and relations of the sufferers, seems to be nearer to our view than it would otherwise be, has been, I suppose, particularly described in the newspapers. The best consolation, it seems to me, which the mind can feel in such a calamity is afforded by the instances of courage, and disinterestedness, and affection, which in this case were very distinguished. Many who had it in their power to escape remained with their families, whom they could not extricate. One gentleman (Lieut. Gibbon of the navy) after having got out of the playhouse returned to endeavour to save a lady to whom he was attached, but who was engaged to be married in a day or two to another."

Notwithstanding the quiet tone of these letters, it is easy to see the anxiety of the writer.

He and his colleagues knew, none better, that the country was unprepared for war, and that

every day not spent in preparation was a day lost. The state of the navy engaged the earnest attention of Cheves and Lowndes. This greatest of the services had been neglected on principle by Mr. Jefferson, who considered it a wanton expense and a temptation to sinful warfare. He had indeed expressed the belief that all that was needed was a few small vessels to look after the Barbary pirates, and that the frigates might be laid up in the eastern branch of the Potomac. Over the Barbary pirates, Preble, Rodgers, and Decatur had gained signal victories, even in Mr. Jefferson's time, but this, the sole military achievement of his administration, had not made him more favorable to the navy. His successor had followed the same plan of neglect, and it was difficult to repair it quickly.

On November 19, 1811, Mr. Cheves, in behalf of the Committee on Naval Affairs, had addressed a note to Paul Hamilton, of South Carolina, then Secretary of the Navy, requesting a full statement of its condition. The account that Mr. Hamilton had to give was frightful.

There were half a dozen frigates, several gunboats, all in bad order, hardly any stock of munitions, and not a single dry dock. The vessels, he said, had to be "heaved down," i. e. turned over on their sides, for repairs. It was not Mr. Hamilton's fault: he had received the navy in this condition, and Congress would vote it no money. How the war party dared throw down the gage of battle with the fleet in this state, when England had a thousand ships, God and their own stout hearts only knew. . . . This correspondence was followed, on January 18, 1812, by a bill brought in by Mr. Cheves, in favor of appropriations for both army and navy, advising a levy of two millions of dollars and possibly ten millions more, a monstrous sum

according to the ideas of that day. It so shocked the Washington correspondent of the "Charleston Courier" that he writes: "If the good people of South Carolina do not shortly request your Cheves and Williams and Lowndes, notwithstanding their abilities, to stay at home, they will deserve the evils they must suffer."

Mr. Cheves spoke eloquently in support of his bill, saying proudly that he did so "irrespective of party, for the great interests of the nation," thus stating the policy of himself and his colleagues for the coming struggle.

Little opposition was made to the grants for the army, and David R. Williams for the military committee carried through the bill which he proposed. The objections made to the navy are almost incredible; the debate is curious reading. Mr. Seybert, of Pennsylvania, declared that a navy was a dangerous thing, and brought countries to ruin: Holland and Venice had fallen because they had navies. Mr. McKee thought that America should have none, "because our little navy has already contributed much to the irritation which exists between this country and England." Mr. Johnson, of Kentucky, avowing the most absolute sectional selfishness, said that great difference of opinion existed between the States lying upon the seaboard and those distant from it. He declared a navy most dangerous to public liberty, much more so than an army; went to ancient history and bewailed the "plunder and piracy" of Tyre and Sidon, Crete, Rhodes, Athens, and Carthage; dreaded that the possession of a navy might lead the United States to similar deeds; thought commerce could exist unprotected by one, but recommended letters of marque and privateering, probably as unconnected with "plunder and piracy!"

To privateering Mr. Lowndes was uniformly and strongly opposed. He had already given his vote against permitting merchant vessels to arm, when a bill to that effect had been brought in, in December. It had been carried by the Federalist vote as profitable to the New England shipping. Now Mr. Lowndes spoke his convictions. On January 21, 1812, he made his first speech in support of Mr. Cheves's motion, and, strange to say, there is not the least allusion to it in the letters to his wife. We can only conclude that those letters, being of more general interest, may have been put into the parcel of "important papers" and so burned; none remain written between the 12th and 16th of January.

Few of Mr. Lowndes's speeches remain except in the most abridged form. Reporting was then a new art, and his voice was so low that often members left their seats and crowded round to hear him. His speech was never written out beforehand; a card or a half sheet of note-paper, with a few lines numbered 1, 2, 3, etc., to recall to him the heads of his proposed address, were all that he ever used. Mr. Benton, in his "Thirty Years in Congress," says that only one speech was ever prepared by him for publication, but in his letters he speaks of another, and two in manuscript found among his papers (not in his own handwriting) were probably submitted for his approval. This first, on the navy, published in the "Charleston Courier," is tolerably full, and I give some extracts.

"The honorable gentleman from Kentucky, who spoke yesterday, offered objections to a navy which, if they were well founded, would supersede all further reasoning. 'He opposes a Navy now, he will oppose it forever. It would produce all possible evil and no possible good. It would infallibly destroy the Constitution.' Will the honorable gen-

tleman tell us why? How? He sees the danger clearly, will he explain it? An ambitious general might corrupt his army and seize the capital, but will an admiral reduce us to subjection by bringing his ships up the Potomac? The strongest recommendation of a navy in free governments has hitherto been supposed to be that it was capable of defending but not of enslaving its country.

"The honorable gentleman has discovered that this is a vulgar error. 'A navy is really much more dangerous to liberty than an army,' etc., etc. Yet there is a view in which this question of a navy is closely connected with the Constitution. That Constitution was founded by the union of independent States, that the strength of the whole might be employed for the protection of every part. The States were not ignorant of the value of the rights which they surrendered to the general goverment, but they expected a compensation for their relinquishment in the increased power which should be employed for their defense.

"Suppose this expectation disappointed, suppose the harbor of New York blockaded by the English seventy-fours. The commerce of that city (which exists only by commerce) destroyed, the protection of the general government claimed. Your whole navy could not drive these seventy-fours from their station. Would the brave and enterprising people of New York consent to see their capital emptied of its inhabitants, and their whole country beggared by so contemptible a force? Their own exertions would raise a fleet which would drive off the enemy and restore the city to its owners. But if a single State shall find herself able to raise a greater fleet than the general government can or will employ for her defense, can it be expected that she will consider that government essential to her safety, entitled to her obedience?"

He goes on to show clearly the duties of the government, sweeps aside the comparisons from ancient history, and examines those from modern; shows that Venice fell, not from possessing, but from neglecting, her navy; points to the long prosperity of England, and her fostering care of her fleets; makes elaborate calculations of expense (a bagatelle to the sums we hear of now), and ends, looking to the conclusion of the war: "To succeed in negotiation with a rival people, you must convince them that they will gain as much as you by the treaty which you propose. To terminate your war with England honorably, you must show that she will lose as much as you by its continuance. But when your whole trade, your foreign and your coasting trade, are destroyed (and without a navy it seems to me that they must be destroyed), what argument would your most dextrous negotiator employ, to show that the loss of England would be equal to your own, from the continuance of the war? What equivalent could we offer her for the restoration of that commerce which peace would give you? I know not; but if the resources of the country be employed prudently, economically, vigorously, in the acquisition of a naval force, the command of your seas obtained, your coasting trade protected, the West Indian trade of your enemies threatened, then indeed you may negotiate on equal terms. You may then obtain respect for your flag without sending a national ship into every sea of Europe and Asia, and you will be paid in return for the safety which peace with you must give to the trade of England with her colonies. Your war will then have been honorable, your peace will be secure."

These selections have been made with a view to showing, as much as possible, the line of thought

which pervades Mr. Lowndes's public utterances, — which seems to have governed his life. There is, it will be noticed, not one single appeal to the passions of his audience, no invective against the enemy, no fiery patriotism, no deification of naval glory or renown. He addresses himself immediately to the questions: Do we need this defense? Is it the best that we can employ? Do the Constitution and the laws justify us in so doing? These are the points which all through his career engage his attention. What is expedient? Is the expedient right?

Another characteristic, his oft-quoted courtesy, is shown in the speech, but not in the extracts. At one point Mr. Seybert, of Pennsylvania, interrupted him to make some explanation of his own previous remarks. Mr. Lowndes on resuming said: "I always hear my friend with pleasure and often with conviction, but on this occasion am forced to differ with him."

This speech placed him, it is said, at once "in the foremost rank in the House, and satisfied the expectations of his friends."

It did not, however, carry its object. The prejudice against the navy, as an aristocratic institution, the tool of the Administration, was too strong. The Republicans who had voted the army appropriation resisted this, and Cheves, Lowndes, and Calhoun voted against them with the Federals. The House gave *one* dock, and gunboats, but refused the frigates for which Cheves pleaded. It was ill preparing to fight England with cockle-shells.

From this time to the end of the session I find no speech of any length, only a few remarks now and then, and votes always in support of the warlike side. The legislators waited while the diplomats made their last moves. I give a few extracts from the letters: —

January 26, 1812.

The session has now lasted three months, and I suppose you must begin to think yourself what they call in Connecticut, and perhaps elsewhere, a "widow bewitched." I believe I have not told you that since my last letter I have been to an assembly and to a grand ball at the British Minister's. To the assembly I went in the most agreeable manner: I mean half an hour before supper with a senator of the mess, Mr. Bibb (of Kentucky), who is I think as lazy as myself. We took a look at the ladies, whom you may be sure we thought inferior to those of Carolina and Kentucky, but when supper was announced I was disappointed to find that a third only of the party could sup at a time, and we were of course excluded by the ladies. . . . I am also going to a ball at the French Minister's to-morrow. The truth is, that here as in Carolina I do not like these parties, but I am more ready to go to them, because I do not like home as well here as there. I begin to be very tired of absence from my family. I think I would willingly have the trouble of putting Pinckney every night to bed, if I could have him to play with during the day. For want of him, however, a little boy of Mrs. Cheves's comes into my room to hear stories and make boats, so that when I return to Carolina the boys will still find me a good playmate.

February 9.

As our mess is certainly the strongest war mess in Congress, we excite, I believe, not a little surprise and perhaps some suspicion by our attending the parties of Mr. Foster [the British Minister]. Mr. Duane [editor of the "Aurora"], they say, means to give a list of all those who attended on the Queen's birthnight. Our whole mess, male

and female, were of the party, so that you will see us in print. But we have committed the yet more unpardonable offense of inviting him (Mr. Foster) to dinner, and I dare say some of the papers will consider this as an overt act of treason.

February 16, 1812.

I have not been quite as gay as usual for the last fortnight. I was invited, indeed, during that time to a small party, as the note expressed it, at which I am told there were 180 persons, but I felt too lazy to go. Mr. Monroe inquired particularly after your health and your father and sister's, when I first saw him, and very politely told me that Mrs. Monroe would be glad to see me on account of her regard for you. But I have been so very lazy, that though I like him, from the little I have seen of him, very much, I have been rude enough to neglect his invitation to call, although I did not that to dine with him, and everybody agrees that he gives the best dinners in Washington.

At this time the coming event cast its shadow so markedly that there are frequent allusions to applications for commissions in the army. One of these was from Mr. Lowndes's nephew, Lowndes Brown. Mr. Lowndes, "not liking to ask a favor for so near a relation," gave the application to Mr. Cheves, "as Brown is one of his constituents," not without some not unnatural trepidation as to what his sister's feelings might be on the subject. He was relieved, however, for in the same letter quoted above he says: —

My sister bears Lowndes's plan of going into the army much better than I expected. She says she thwarted him in one of his plans [that of be-

coming a planter], and she does not think it right to object to this. Yet if anything unfortunate should happen, I should rather not have been the instrument of his appointment.

There are at this time frequent mentions of loss of crops from storms and other causes that try the soul of the planter, but Mr. Lowndes was fortunate that his brother James lived near the Horse Shoe and gave kind assistance in its management. The next letter alludes to an often discussed but never accomplished plan, of moving to the up country. He had been much struck by the health and other advantages of that section, and thought seriously of settling there. Paris Mountain is an outlying spur of the Blue Ridge, which rises suddenly near Greenville, S. C.

March 15.

I am more disposed than ever to get a place in the back country. But I prefer Paris Mountain so much to any other place that I have seen, that I shall make no purchase until I hear your news in regard to it confirmed or contradicted. The labour of our negroes will, I think, be unproductive in war, and the most advantageous employment of them, therefore, must be in the improvement of land. The spirited planter will clear and ditch and dam; but as I am not a spirited planter I should be satisfied with settling myself on a back-country farm.

Washington, March 23d, 1812.

It is still as doubtful as ever when we shall adjourn. It will certainly be late enough to make me expect to find you at the Grove. We hear from all quarters that the people do not expect war: I look forward with great uneasiness to the shock which an unexpected declaration will give to the

mercantile class. Nothing is more true than that, in political as in private life, popularity should be the result, and not the object of our measures. No artificial excitement should be resorted to; yet I am much afraid that in the present state of the public mind the slow but steady approach of our government to war is unnoticed, and without an embargo, which I fear will not be resorted to, the war at its commencement must be necessarily disastrous. My politics are too hastily expressed for any ear but your own. There is much to disappoint us at Washington; many follies which we cannot conceal from ourselves, and which in the present state of the country we cannot with prudence publicly censure. But you must be almost as weary of politics as I am.

The letter of the next week was to convey a piece of news both interesting and unexpected.

March 28th, 1812.

I am glad to hear that you have got to Alderly [her sister Mrs. F. K. Huger's place on the Waccamaw River], where I dare say you will spend your time more to your satisfaction till summer, than you could do anywhere else. As to your arrangements for going to Charleston with your father's family, the news from this place may perhaps affect them. You have probably already heard of his appointment as Major-General. We are afraid here that he may not accept. There was some little objection in the Senate to the confirmation of his appointment, the result probably of that illiberality of faction from which no public body can be expected to be altogether exempt. The opposition, however, consisted, I believe, of one or two men only, and even as good a Federalist as you are

will, I think, allow that this circumstance (as four fifths of the Senate are Republicans) is honorable to the party. The universal approbation (without the Senate and House) which the appointment has met with here, — the gratification which it has afforded to the present officers, and the high testimony to the military merits of your father which it has brought forward from several Revolutionary officers (particularly from General Lee and Colonel Hammond), it must give you pleasure to hear, although if he accept the commission you will, I suppose, regret the occasion. You will let me know (if you hear them) his plans.

This appointment created much surprise, for Major Pinckney, thus created Major-General to command the Southern States, was an unswerving Federalist, absolutely identified with that party. He felt this so strongly that he proposed to decline the appointment, saying that "the views of the Administration could best be executed by those in sympathy with it." It was pointed out to him, however, that the war would surely come, when it would be the duty of every man of whatever opinion to serve his country to the best of his ability, and that by his example a broad and patriotic sentiment would be encouraged in the community. He yielded, not very willingly, and the result justified the expectation of the President, for the nomination was received with pleasure by all classes in Carolina, where General Pinckney was generally popular. The Southern Federalists, a small but influential body, were pleased that one of their leading members should be so distingnished, and the "peace Democrats," who found it hard, even at the instigation of their brilliant representatives, to abandon their constant policy, were pleased that

the defense of their homes should be intrusted to one whom they had long known and trusted and in whose knowledge and energy they believed. At Washington, the appointment gave rise to a report, that under the influence of his son-in-law he had become a Democrat. An amusing idea, since Mr. Lowndes used to complain that "so stubborn were the Pinckneys that he had never been able to convert his own wife," who remained an unflinching Federalist to the end.

The satisfaction in Charleston was shown by addresses of congratulation, etc., of which the papers are full. One very touching one from the veteran comrades of the Cincinnati asks that he will place them where by counsel, at least, they may serve their country.

Mrs. Lowndes evidently indulged in a little Federal exultation, for her husband writes: —

"I see that you have assumed the politician as well as I, and as I make your father's appointment the subject of praise to my party, you make the necessity for Federal appointments an occasion for sarcasm against the party that you are opposed to. Now as I do not think that we live in a glass house, I have no objection to the amusement of throwing stones. To be serious, however, though I should abhor the persecution which would exclude from office the talents or virtues of any party, I do believe that what is called the Republican party, having so large a proportion of the population of the States, has enough of talents and of virtue to serve the country, if the administration knew how to select and employ them. There is certainly something to be dissatisfied with here. I feel my situation a very unpleasant one; keep this, however, to yourself. As to my going into the army, the mode of appointment (really by the delegation)

made it awkward for me to apply. I have regretted frequently since, however, that I did not get over the scruple. Yet the circumstances which render Washington unpleasant to me would perhaps have made the army equally so.

"The newspapers, which, thanks to my silence and obscurity, had before treated me civilly, are now beginning a pretty lively attack on me. I do not know, however, anything which anybody could consider as an evil, which I can bear with more Philosophy, or rather with more indifference. The sentence which they quote against me, if I used it (and my friends here say that I did not), seems really to be susceptible of the construction which they give it. They represent me as being implicitly governed by the majority of my own party, in saying that I would not call up a bill which I had supported for admitting English manufactures. I said that I would not do it unless a change should take place in the opinions of a majority of those with whom I usually acted. I had before said that I would do it if there were any hope of its passage, and my meaning clearly was (and my friends here say my words were) that I would not call it up to provoke unavailing discussion.

"These little attacks are fair enough in newspapers, and the caucus principle which they impute to me is so abominable, that I should have deserved all their censure if I had adopted it. My writing so long a paragraph on this subject is, however, a bad proof (but I do not think that you will require any) of my indifference to it."

This idea of entering the army, extraordinary as it seems to us, was a favorite one with Mr. Lowndes. He frequently returns to it. I can find nothing of the newspaper criticism of which he speaks except the following from the "Charleston Courier" (Federalist): —

WASHINGTON, April 20th. (Private Correspondence.)

The Vice-President died this morning. Mr. Lowndes took occasion to say that he should not call up the Importation Bill, as he had no expectation that it could be carried in its present or any amended form. I drop these lines, as the remarks of Mr. Lowndes may be considered of much importance.

If there is any hidden sting here, it is at least well hidden.

By this time the public was becoming impatient of the long delay, and accusations were not lacking of false play on the part of the Cabinet. Vacillation there undoubtedly was. A letter to the "Courier," signed "Virginia Patriot," says, on April 24, 1812: "A large portion of the present members of the House are new members, almost all inexperienced in the pitiful contrivances and electioneering intrigues of the Cabinet. Such men as Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Lowndes, Mr. Cheves, and many others, seriously believed the Executive in earnest when hostile measures were recommended. They see very differently now," etc., etc. (abuse of Mr. Madison and his Cabinet).

It could hardly have been more agreeable to have been considered such a dupe, than to have been accused of trickery one's self.

These various annoyances, and the weariness of the endless talk, found relief in a jaunt to Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, April 29th, 1812.

I think it will surprise you a little to receive a letter from me dated at this place. It was, indeed, rather a foolish plan to come here. I had, indeed, something to do here, and this is the reason I give for coming; but I could have done it as well by

letter. My true reason was a wish to run away from Washington and its politics. I came here on horseback, in three days, which, on a hard trotting horse like mine, is good riding. I shall stay two, and take three to return, which, as I set off and shall return on Sunday, will make one Congressional week. If anything in which one vote will have been of consequence shall have passed, my constituents I suppose will quarrel with me; but I had reason to think that I might leave Washington safely, and perhaps it would be a lucky thing for me if my constituents should quarrel with me. I have just returned from seeing, but I ought not to tell you of it, a famous picture, of which I suppose you have heard, by Westmuller.

It is the picture, in a very licentious taste (though the ladies here all go to see it), of Danae, with a shower of gold breaking into her apartment. The gold, and the bars, and the absurdities of pagan mythology are kept out of view, and the attention is absorbed by the figure, not of a divinity, — she breathes too much of human passion, — but of an exquisitely beautiful woman, who has no other dress than a braid of pearls for her hair. I do not mean, however, to give you a description of this fascinating picture, for though it may do you no harm to read, it may do me some to write or think of it. I had so little taste as to think that if the painter had given her a little drapery (as transparent as he pleased) of cambric or lace, so that she might have thought herself covered, the effect of the picture would have been heightened. . . . You will have heard of the failure of the plan for a recess [a recess of Congress, to enable the members to visit their homes]. . . . I have now no expectation of getting away before the expiration of the embargo [the 3d of July]. . . . I shall then have

been absent more than ten months, and shall probably not be able to spend more than three at home. This business of a Congressman is certainly fit only for young men without families who are fond of traveling. They would have more comfort, and I believe quite as much wisdom as we have.

WASHINGTON, May 10th.

Of the plans of our Administration I know nothing, and wish to know nothing. The Committee of Foreign Relations [Mr. Calhoun, chairman] say that we may get away in the first half of June; and I dare say that they suppose the projects of government fully formed and fully communicated to them. I still think, however (though not from any communication with those who are in the secret, if there are any such), that the chances are that we shall get away in the beginning of July.

I am afraid that there is not as much variety in your amusements (at Waccamaw) as in mine. This country affords pleasanter rides than Waccamaw or even Horse Shoe. I went yesterday with a large party of ladies and gentlemen, to see the falls of the Potomac, ten miles off. The view was a pleasing one to me, who had never seen anything of the sort before. The ride was, on the whole, pleasant, but I met with a disappointment of which I ought not, for the credit of my gallantry, to complain. The party was, as I thought, very well arranged, five ladies and six gentlemen. Now as I dislike extremely to have the beauties of a scene pointed out to me, and as I knew that I could walk a great deal faster and see a great deal more alone than in company, I set out to clamber over the rocks by myself.

One of our gentlemen, however, had an unlucky headache, which compelled me (not a little reluc-

tantly) to take a lady (and a pretty one, too) under my protection. I like company very well in a drawing-room, but with ten talkers it is impossible to feel the beauty of a cataract.

Mrs. Lowndes seems to have been scandalized by the "Danae;" when in France, she, as a *jeune fille*, had probably not been taken to see such pictures, for Mr. Lowndes answers —

May 27th, 1812.

I think that you were not in quite as good humour when you wrote your reflections on the Philadelphia "Danae" as I was when I wrote the description. I do not now remember what I said about her, but there is a matronly gravity in your style, which makes me fear that your disgust towards the painter is joined to some little displeasure against the describer of the painting. He must be strangely unreasonable who is not satisfied that his wife should now and then scold him in proof of her modesty. And though I do not require such a proof of yours, yet I think your remarks on the painting, on the ladies who visit it, and the sensualists who admire it, perfectly just, and in a lady of Carolina natural.

The picture alluded to above is now owned by Mr. Heaton, of New Haven, Conn., and is said by Miss Wharton in her recent work on miniature painting to be the "celebrated Danae," one of the most remarkable examples of purity in the nude composition in America. "*Autre temps, autre moeurs.*" The views of that day in relation to art were certainly primitive, for Miss Wharton adds: "The English artist named Pine brought with him a plaster cast of the 'Venus de Medici,' which

was kept shut up in a case, and only shown to persons who particularly wished to see it, as the manners of our country at that time would not tolerate the exhibition of such a figure."

There are no letters between this of May 27th and June 28th, which strengthens the belief that those (even to his wife) of public interest were burned, for in this interval the die had been cast.

It is well known now that there was reason for suspecting the firmness of the Cabinet, and especially of the President. But his first term of office was drawing to a close, and there were doubts of his renomination. Mr. Clay, the most important then of his supporters, speaking in the name of those who felt with him, assured Mr. Madison, in a private interview, that he would not be renominated unless he gave the desired pledge of support to the war party. The President yielded, and was named in the Democratic caucus. Of this caucus the "Charleston Courier" of May 30th says, that it was a meeting "exclusively Democratic" for "the Presidential Hard Scrabble," and that "Messrs. D. R. Williams, Cheves, and Lowndes from South Carolina, and Macon of North Carolina, all Democrats, refused to attend the late meeting of members of Congress to nominate a President and Vice-President of the United States, on the ground that it was improper, inexpedient, indelicate, unconstitutional, and a monstrous usurpation of the rights of the people." Things are differently managed now. Mr. Lowndes's expression, "the caucus principle which they impute to me is so abominable," etc., has been already quoted, and he never changed his opinion on the subject. I know not if it is to this caucus that the memorandum refers, but among the few notes in the handwriting of Mrs. Lowndes is, "Mr. Lowndes never would at-

tend a caucus, deeming them unconstitutional. On one occasion, being pressed to do so by Mr. Calhoun, he answered, 'No, Calhoun, I shall give my views in the House.'" Mr. Benton, in his "Thirty Years in Congress," says of Mr. Lowndes, "He never would use any party machinery, shrinking from such as from the touch of contamination."

The support of the Executive being thus assured, Mr. Calhoun, for the Committee on Foreign Relations, brought in the report which determined the declaration of war. The report might have been termed the formal indictment of Great Britain, being a grave recital of the wrongs sustained at her hands and the fruitless efforts for redress. There was much discussion. The representative who should declare such views to-day as many did then would not hold his seat for half an hour. One long-suffering gentleman protested that England was not so bad after all, as she had only taken ninety-three seamen out of our ships that year!

On June 19, 1812, war was formally proclaimed. The news, as Mr. Lowndes had feared, was in many places received with profound dissatisfaction. The chief cities of New York and New England protested against it, and promised no support to the Administration. The South had by this time become indignant, and in Charleston, where the opposition had been so strong, the declaration was received with unexpected favor. A meeting was held in St. Michael's church, attended by all the principal citizens, with Mr. John Julius Pringle, long Speaker of the General Assembly, in the chair. Mr. Pringle was then the leading lawyer of the State, and all men knew that General Washington himself had made him District Attorney of South Carolina, and that Jefferson had offered him the position of Attorney-General of the United States.

His opinion had great weight. The meeting passed resolutions of approbation and promised loyal support to the government, commending at the same time their congressmen for the position which they had taken. There were many similar expressions of opinion from other bodies. On June the 28th the weary Representative wrote his last letter for the session.

My dear Wife, — I hope that this will be the last letter which you will receive this session from me. This is Sunday, and the latest day that is spoken of for an adjournment is to-morrow week. I shall go home very comfortably, in a carriage nearly as light as our volante, with a very good pair of horses [bought a few weeks before from "the Jerseys"], and my riding horse, which draws very well, may if necessary assist the carriage horses. Mr. Gaillard [Senator from South Carolina] goes with me. We hope to travel between forty and fifty miles a day.

He goes on to explain how he had tried to get a commission in the army, but that finding that it would only be given on political grounds, and would not allow of active service, he had in disgust withdrawn the application; he adds sorrowfully (so little do even the wisest men know what is best for them), "Not engaging in the army now, I must give up all hope of ever leaving the pursuit of civil life. To make rice in Carolina and speeches in Washington must be the narrow limit of my ambition. . . . I cannot but think that the scheme of your two brothers to take their sick wives under the guns of Fort Moultrie [to General Pinckney's summer home on Sullivan's Island] is a strange one. I

certainly think an attack upon the fort very improbable, but many an alarm may be given by the appearance of a strange sail. . . . After receiving this letter you had better direct none to me north of Fayetteville."

CHAPTER VI

IN WAR TIME

1812–1815

THIS being the biography of a single individual and not the history of the War of 1812, it is not necessary to give an account of the various small battles and skirmishes of those poorly conducted campaigns. It must be said that for the first two years things went badly. Along the Canadian frontier, where the fighting was done, a series of blunders and mishaps, often caused by contradictory orders and unseemly squabbles between the Secretary of War and his generals, brought discredit upon the country. There was very little military spirit; at one place the general failed his men, at another the men would not support their general; they were on most occasions far more inclined to lay down their arms, or to retreat, than to fight to the death like the men whom we remember. It was not until the sifting power of events had brought good men — Harrison, Winfield Scott, etc. — to the top that any success began.

In the Southern department (which at first included North and South Carolina, Georgia, the lands west of them to the Mississippi, and the new State of Louisiana) the enemy for some time gave little trouble. General Pinckney did the best he could with the small forces at his command, garrisoning and fortifying all important places from the

Virginia to the Florida line, except Port Royal entrance, which, weak from its own magnificent proportions, could not be fortified. The largest guns of that day could have done nothing for it. The Florida frontier General Pinckney esteemed his most dangerous quarter, expecting attack thence, but for a time there was an idea that Don Onis, the Spanish governor of Florida, might "cede" that province to the United States. Very soon after his return to Washington, Mr. Lowndes wrote to General Pinckney about this.

This year Mrs. Lowndes accompanied her husband, having taken a house in Georgetown for the winter, so until the spring the letters to General Pinckney are the only ones that we have.

GEORGETOWN, November 27th, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR, — I suppose the intentions of Government in respect to Florida may have been explained to you before this by Mr. Monroe, who speaks of having lately heard from you. If they have not (although I have had no conversation on this or any other political subject with any member of the Administration), I believe that I am enabled, by the report of persons more in its confidence, to state what are its present views. No attempt will probably be made, or at least none will be recommended by the President, to pass a law authorizing the occupation of Florida, at any rate before February, and there is reason to believe that a cession may be made of it, by Don Onis, before that time. I have no doubt that Administration expects the cession, although if Don Onis be at all the character I have heard him represented to be, he will give any promises to induce a recognition of his authority, without the influence, and perhaps without much anxiety to procure their performance.

There are no news here; the case of the merchants' bonds has been reported on, but their fate is very doubtful.

It is needless to say that Don Onis was true to his character, and that Florida remained to Spain. A letter from General Pinckney details the arrangements which he has made; the small assistance given him by the government: "No gunboats for the protection of the harbors; and . . . we have not on the whole extent of this frontier, which is 600 miles in length, a singular regular officer above the grade of captain except at Charleston, where I have placed Colonel Drayton. . . . As we are situated, an officer of the militia would probably take the command at any other place than where I may happen to be at the time." The old gentleman had seen the rout of the militia at Camden (where he had been severely wounded), and had small confidence in untrained soldiers. The worst grievance was the threatened bill for making the term of service only twelve months, — a measure said to be popular with all *except* the officers, who knew the impossibility of keeping an effective army on those terms. At Point Petre, on the St. Mary's River, the boundary between Georgia and Florida, he had collected what he thought a sufficient force, and was busy drilling the men and fortifying the position, which he considered a good one; but how will it be when "I understand that the term of service of our riflemen is nearly expired, and that almost all who are here must be discharged in August next"? Mr. Lowndes's letters show how annoying these bids for popularity are to his simple, straightforward mind.

GEORGETOWN, December 13, 1812.

I am sure that no difficulty on the subject of your letters would arise from the committee of the House to which I belong [the Military, to which he had lately been assigned], if the Executive Government would propose its plans, or give us reason to believe that anything that we could do would be useful. The disposition to support any plan of the Administration which may offer the faintest hope of giving vigor to the war was strongly proved by the increase of pay, which a majority of the committee thought to be injudicious, but which they agreed to report to the House, in compliance with the urgent wishes of the Cabinet, which was unanimous in its favour until it was passed. It is impossible that any advantage can arise from measures forced upon them, and they seem to me to adopt no measure voluntarily from which they do not expect an effect upon the elections, or, as their phrase is, "to give an impulse to the public mind." Under these circumstances the situation of a man who has voted for war may be a painful one, but his duty is plain: in the House to give his vote for every measure which may enable the Administration to conduct the war successfully, and out of it to avoid as much as possible intercourse and connection with men who have no higher object than to secure their places, and who expect to effect this object by "management" at home. . . . In appointing committees the precaution is always used, and it is very necessary that it should be, of securing a majority of each in favour of the Cabinet, and in practice they are the organs through which the schemes of the Administration are most frequently introduced to the House. It has, I suppose, commonly happened that the committees have been ready to adopt whatever has been proposed to them, but dur-

ing this session and the last we have frequently had to regret the want of this concurrence of opinion. In respect to this last military plan, I have been unable to convince myself as one member of the committee which is desired to report it, that the enlistments for twelve-months' men can be wise; but, anxious not to embarrass the Administration, I have agreed that the bill should be reported, although I could not vote for it in the House. I believe that a more consistent course would have been to move the substitution of some other member in my place, but I should wish to avoid this as long as possible. There can be little doubt but that the loan required for the next year will be twenty-three millions of dollars at least. As yet we have appeared much more fruitful in expedients for spending money than for raising it.

There are other letters much to the same effect. On January 16th he writes that the whole army bill has been carried, although "there were not half a dozen men who approved it. Every one was sensible, however, that to deny to the Executive the means which he thought necessary to carry on the war would be a measure of very doubtful propriety. . . . It was fortunate for the Administration, or at least for their wishes in this particular measure, that the opposition selected it as the occasion of a general discussion of the war, its causes, and the necessity for its continuance. The vote was by many considered a vote of approbation to the war, rather than to the measure."

It may be as well to say at once that there were no important actions on the South Atlantic coast. The enemy did, as General Pinckney expected, attack Point Petre on the St. Mary's, sending fifteen hundred men in boats up the river for that purpose;

but the fortifications were good, and the garrison, under an old Revolutionary officer, Major Messias, made so brave a show, that the English concluded that the post was too strong to be carried and withdrew. They also threatened the little town of Beaufort, some distance up the river above Port Royal; but there, too, the small force succeeded in daunting the enemy, who, believing its numbers much greater than they really were, retreated. The English, however, as they had done in the Revolution, entered Port Royal and the many unguarded inlets along the coast, and made predatory attacks on the coast plantations to the alarm of the inhabitants. Many allusions to these are in Mr. Lowndes's letters. The letters also show constant efforts to procure the cannon and arms and money for which General Pinckney asked, but apparently with very little success. Money was indeed becoming already a very serious question, and to this was due the debate about the merchants' bonds already mentioned.

As early as November, 1812, Mr. Gallatin, the very able Secretary, looking about him with an empty treasury and no means of filling it, bethought himself of the large sums then at hand from a peculiar source. During the long negotiations prior to the declaration of war, America had said that if Great Britain would rescind her Orders in Council she would withdraw her Non-Importation Acts, and there should be peace and commerce between the countries. After long hesitation Great Britain did rescind the Orders: she might as well have done so long before, but one of her recent historians has whimsically said that "she *overlooked* the provocation that she gave." It was certainly not for want of being reminded of it that she did so, as the long diplomatic correspondence shows. Be that as it

may, she did at last repeal them, and the merchants rushed into the market to buy and ship goods to America. It was not for American purchase only, but to be reshipped to those ports, "under French influence," where England herself could not trade.

In the mean while, four days before the repeal of the orders, on the 19th of June, war had been formally declared at Washington. Not until September was the news received and an answering declaration proclaimed at London. For the intervening two months, richly laden vessels had been daily sent across the seas to the American ports. On arriving, the American acts being still in force, the goods were seized and sold. Five millions of dollars, and bonds worth eighteen millions more, were in charge of the treasury, but had not been confiscated, for the purchases had been made in good faith, and the matter had not been adjudicated. Mr. Gallatin now proposed that the government should, as a penalty, confiscate the five millions, seizing it as the fine due under the act. He sent this proposition to Langdon Cheves, the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, to whose necessities it must have seemed like water in a thirsty land. The need was sore, the temptation great, and technically, perhaps, the plan was legal. But Mr. Cheves, though seeing the help that five millions would be to a depleted treasury, could not in conscience recommend it to the House. He was in the same predicament as the Military Committee mentioned in the last given letter. He stated the plan to the House, suggested that it should be referred back to the department, warned the House that it should not without extreme consideration put its hands into private pockets, and withheld all further advice.

There was much difference of opinion. Gallatin, a just man, thought it a perfectly justifiable mea-

snre, and many agreed with him. Mr. Calhoun spoke strongly against the bill, and Mr. Lowndes is said to have done so also. I can find no mention of this speech in the "Abridged Debates," but Mr. Henry Adams (whom I have quoted before) says: "Lowndes fortified Calhoun's position by showing, that 'if the plan of confiscation, and of a rigid execution of the law were dismissed, no just principles of policy, not even the interests of the treasury, could justify an exaction which would resolve itself into a tax.'" I have told this long story chiefly to be able to introdnce the first of the many eompliments which from this time forth were frequently paid to Mr. Lowndes by his fellow members in debate, which show the impression made by him upon his contemporaries. Mr. Grosvenor, of New York, speaking March 2, 1813, says: —

"I shall not enter into any argument to show the impoliey, the injustice, the danger of such a measure; that task has been most ably and successfully performed by an honorable gentlemen from South Carolina (Mr. Lowndes). He has shown that, connected with the maritime power of the enemy, and with other bills already passed this House, this measure has all the blasting qualities, without even the few equivoeal benefits of a broad restrictive system. And he has demonstrated the irreparable misehief which must result from such weak and mongrel measures. His reasoning has not been met; it cannot be refuted. I will not weaken its effect on the House by attempting to enforce it."

Finally a bill was sent down from the Senate remitting all penalties on goods owned by Americans and shipped from England before September the 15th, when the declaration of war was published there. It was carried in the House by the

votes of Cheves, Lowndes, and Calhoun, who, voting with the Federalists, gave them the narrow majority of three which turned the scale. This proceeding so amazed their party that Felix Grundy, of Tennessee, complained: "Gentlemen have assumed a strange high-minded position in this argument, the force of which is, I confess, beyond my comprehension."

To a strict party man it must have been bewildering; but the strength of these men lay largely in the fact that they were thinking, not of their party, but of their country. To them it did not matter what a policy was called, or by whom proposed, so that to their judgment it was right. And so, when occasion came, they threw their weight now to this side, now to that, voting sometimes with the Federalists, sometimes with the Republicans, caring most for the *character* of the country.

The sentiment was short-lived perhaps; perhaps it could only have existed in the presence of a foreign foe, but it was beautiful while it lasted, "when none was for a party, and all were for the state."

They had in them that pure element of enthusiasm which, not stopping to count the cost, or thinking of individual interest, insisted, as upon a right, on what was noble, just, and honest.

Calhoun struck the note when he said, early in 1813: —

"Our union cannot exist on the cold calculations of interest alone, it is too weak to withstand political convulsions; we cannot without hazard neglect that which makes a man love to be a member of an extensive community, the love of greatness, the consciousness of strength."

The failure of this plan (viz. the merchants'

bonds) had the unfortunate effect of causing the resignation of Mr. Gallatin, the ablest financier (with the exception, perhaps, of Robert Morris) whom the country had ever produced. He knew that there was an absurd prejudice against him because of his foreign birth, and conceiving the rejection of the bill as a censure upon himself, he insisted on resigning. Many considered this resignation, in the then troubled condition of affairs, as that of a soldier in front of the enemy, — that is, as desertion, — and he was much abused in consequence. The first letter to Mrs. Lowndes, after her return home in June, alludes to this, and to a most distressing event.

WASHINGTON, June 7th, 1813.

As yet, my dear wife, our weather is very pleasant, and I hope your journey to the Grove will have been less painful than I thought you had reason to expect. I believe that your father will spend this summer upon Sullivan's Island, as I learn that the camp at St. Mary's is to be broken up and the troops dispersed along the coast. We have just heard news from the land and the water, of victory and of most unexpected defeat. But the success at Fort George cannot compensate us, — at least cannot reconcile us to the capture of the Chesapeake. There are still persons, however, who disbelieve the afflicting narrative; but I cannot see any opening for doubt.

The length of the session will depend very much upon the disposition of the Federal gentlemen to enter into the discussion of the general question of war. If they waive it and confine themselves to the question of finance, I yet think we may get away by the 15th of July, but I have little hope of their taking this course. We have a hundred new members eager to break a lance, and nearly as

many old ones who will talk from habit if they have nothing to say. For myself, unless it shall be proposed to shoot Mr. Gallatin for desertion, I shall maintain my accustomed silence during the session.

The bad news of the Chesapeake was but too true. The only satisfaction hitherto since the beginning of the war had been the naval victories; no one had expected to cope with England on the sea, and the elation was the greater for the surprise.

When Lawrence, in the Hornet, captured the Peacock, men felt that the murders of the Chesapeake were avenged; unhappily, Lawrence, in the same ill-fated Chesapeake, went out to meet the Shannon, and met more than his match. The Chesapeake was, as the sailors say, "ill found," and the Shannon, under the gallant Broke, was in splendid fighting trim. Lawrence and many of his men were killed, and, in spite of his dying cry, which has become almost a proverb, the ship *was* given up. It was the first great reverse at sea, and a severe one, for there were so few frigates.

I give a few sentences from the other letters of this session (1813), most of them on the danger of attacks by the English vessels already mentioned, and on the unnecessary talking in Congress, written with annoyance worthy of Carlyle.

WASHINGTON, June 23d, 1813.

At last, my dear wife, we have the tax bills before us. We got yesterday half through one of them, and if all general discussion be avoided, if we say nothing on either side of the origin of the war, do not accuse of moral murder, or recriminate by charge of moral treason, we may, I think, adjourn in a month. You may readily suppose

me anxious for the event, for the present state of our politics makes me at once inactive and restless. Besides ordinary motives, too, I never felt the same anxiety for a crop, and it never indeed was so absolutely necessary. . . . Tell Mrs. Brown [his sister] that we have here from New York a Connecticut man, Oakley, a great favourite of Dr. Dwight, who has given us one of the best speeches I ever heard. The papers of his own side mention it only as a good speech, but I believe that every man in the House who can be considered in any degree capable of judging (whatever may be his party) considers him as raising Connecticut to the highest form on our floor. I know *she* loves to hear the praise of Connecticut, and for my part I can praise merit wherever I find it.

A little later Mr. Lowndes writes: —

"I am very sorry that your mother has decided to spend the summer on the Island. I have thought hitherto that the objection to staying there was the danger of being frightened, rather than that of being hurt. But now I should not be surprised at the English landing on the Island. They seem to have adopted the plan of alarming us by debarkations, doubtless to prevent reinforcements being sent to the North as well as to increase the expense and unpopularity of the war. They have lately landed a considerable force in the neighborhood of Norfolk, and I really do not see why they might not land one near forts Moultrie or Johnson."

These little invasions were doubtless annoying, but the blockade which the British had established from New York to Darien was still more so, and the "pocket pinch" was already beginning to be felt. Only the New England ports were open, for in order to foster the well known disaffection

there, Boston, Salem, etc., were not only left free by Great Britain, but the West Indies were licensed to trade with them, as a reward for their friendship. By some curious process of reasoning, their merchants persuaded themselves that, as they thought the war unjust, they might "religiously and morally" give aid and comfort, and derive profit, by trading with the enemy. So they sent droves of cattle and wagons of provisions to the Canadian frontier, and victualed the British ships whenever they got a chance; much as if in June, 1898, Florida had sent food to General Blanco, or supplied the fleet of Admiral Cervera.

Their bias was yet more clearly shown by the notice which Decatur declared they gave of his movements to the enemy. Having put into the port of New London for repairs, he was kept there for months, for whenever he proposed to steal out, blue lights and other signals told the watchful Englishmen of his design, and he was forced to remain inactive. There was great reason to fear that Massachusetts and Connecticut would openly declare for England.

From New York to Georgia, on the other hand, the blockade was strict. Planters and merchants could sell nothing; rice in Charleston and Savannah sold for three dollars a hundred, and cotton at nine cents a pound, while in Boston they brought twelve dollars, and twenty cents, respectively. Imports were the other way. Sugar was eighteen dollars at Boston and twenty-six at Baltimore. It was a matter of endurance for principle, and was borne patiently.

To this state of things the Administration put on an embargo, primarily intended to check this treasonable trade, but in 1814 Calhoun brought in a bill to repeal it, embargoes and non-importation

acts being against the Carolinian creed. It was better for the interests of the treasury that one part of the Union, at least, should be prosperous and have customs to pay, than that all should fail alike. Lowndes supported Calhoun's bill, and it was carried; but it brought them into opposition with the government, for Madison and his Cabinet had inherited the "commercial restriction" policy, and it went hard with them to give it up.

Some of the devices resorted to at the South to help the poor to help themselves remind one of the efforts of the Irish ladies during the great famine, as the following taken from the "Charleston Courier:" —

"Donations of cotton will be thankfully received by the Ladies' Benevolent Society, for the purpose of employing indigent women in spinning, who cannot at this time obtain a sufficiency of work to earn a subsistence. Jan. 12, 1814."

For the public service, and fortifications, too, money had to be raised, as this letter shows.

"On reading your letter over I observe that you have determined to subscribe rather labour than produce or money. I believe that you have determined correctly, but I would much rather err on the side of liberality than of penuriousness, and if many people have subscribed produce, and my subscription of labour is not already among the most liberal, I should wish to add fifty barrels of rice to my subscription. If there be no peace, the rice, if I keep it, will be without value, and if there be peace, I hope we shall be able to get along without it."

This letter, however, was not written until spring, and in January, 1814, Mr. Lowndes had the great pleasure of moving a vote of thanks and praise to

many gallant sailors, living and dead. He was at this time chairman of the Naval Committee, and so had the right to present it, and the navy was always, as has been said, his dearest care.

To Lawrence, thanks for the capture of the Peacock were mingled with mourning for his death on the Chesapeake, so quickly had the actions succeeded each other. Congress voted a gold medal to each of his surviving officers. Mr. Lowndes in support of this resolution said : —

"I should be inexcusable if I were long to detain the committee from the vote — I hope the unanimous vote — which they are prepared to give upon the resolutions. The victories to which they refer are indeed of unequal magnitude and importance ; but the least important of them, if it had been obtained by the subjects of any nation on the continent of Europe, would have been heard with admiration and rewarded with munificence."

He spoke of each battle, and enumerated the officers concerned in it with care ; dwelling peculiarly on the battle of Lake Erie by Perry, from which he hoped that the House would learn a lesson favorable to his great desire,— large ships and fleets. The other sea fights had been by single ships, but Commodore Perry's little fleet, built by himself from the forests around, had achieved so much, — the safety of northern New York, and the opportunity given to General Harrison to repulse the Indians without an English army in his rear, — that it was easy to point out the value of concerted action. He eloquently praised the courage and daring, and the "fertility of resource," which had changed almost certain defeat to victory, and concluded : "Captain Perry and his gallant associates have not only given us victory in one quarter, but shown us how to obtain it in another yet more im-

portant. How deep is now the impression on every mind that we want but ships to give our fleet on the Atlantic the success which has hitherto attended our single vessels. We want but ships. We want then but time. Never had a nation when first obliged to engage in the defense of naval rights by naval means, — never had such a nation the advantages or the success of ours. . . . To such men we can do no honour. All records of the present time must be lost, history must be a fable or a blank, or their fame is secure. To the naval character of the country our votes can do no honour, but we may secure ourselves from the imputation of insensibility to its merit; we can at least express our admiration and our gratitude."

Mr. Chase says of this speech that "it was received and read with enthusiasm in every part of the country," and that "it deserves especial attention from the extensive popularity that it gave to its author." The approbation, however, was not universal, for Mr. Quincy declared, speaking of the action of the Peacock and the Hornet: —

"It is not becoming a moral and religious people to express any admiration of military or naval exploits which are not immediately connected with the defense of our seacoast or soil." To how many maritime leagues of distance should our fleets be limited?

Soon after this Mrs. Lowndes joined her husband in Washington, and there are therefore no more letters to her to the end of the session. It may as well be said here that notwithstanding the fatigue of the long journey with three little children, the difficulties of housekeeping, etc., she enjoyed the Washington life on the whole. Besides the privilege of being with her husband and watching over his health, she liked the varied society.

Mr. and Mrs. Monroe, whom she had known in her girlhood when abroad with her father, received her most kindly, and introduced her at once to all that was best. An exceedingly quiet and reserved person, she yet took her part becomingly, and particularly liked the foreign element which already began to give a cosmopolitan tone to "the capital." She spoke French fluently, and Italian tolerably, accomplishments rarer then and more esteemed than now, and this made her society agreeable to strangers. With the wife of the French Minister, Madame la Baronne Hyde de Neufville, a very charming woman, she became intimate, and corresponded for years. A much greater aid and comfort was the friendship of Mrs. Langdon Cheves, the wife of her husband's colleague and friend. Mrs. Cheves, a woman whose great beauty adorned an admirable character, had preceded Mrs. Lowndes in Washington by some years, and could give many useful hints. The two Carolina ladies held together, as their husbands did, to the same advantage, as their letters and notes testify. Now sympathizing over domestic difficulties, now lamenting the pranks of their schoolboys, now offering help in entertainments, and now planning to buy together and divide "a bolt of nankin, which is cheap by the piece, and will be a great help for the boys," viz. for their trousers. Mr. Calhoun was another constant visitor, and Mrs. Lowndes would often in after years point to an old brown volume of maps, and tell how Lowndes and Calhoun would bend over it, eagerly debating where the roads and canals, for which both longed, should go. There could be no doubt that good roads were a military necessity, and Mr. Calhoun, as Secretary of War, had the question at heart. Mr. Lowndes wished for them, too, as means of interstate communication, particu-

larly with the western country, "that the people might know each other better and commerce be facilitated." Canals, too, were discussed. Where were the best lines, the easiest levels? Could the newly invented steamboats be used on them? Then the rights of the States. How without infringing them could these long roads be made? Could the States be induced to consent and to accept assistance? Should it be loans or subsidies? So planned the two friends, ignorant of railroads yet to come.

For the rest of the session (winter and spring of 1814) Mr. Lowndes continued busy with the naval affairs. Mr. Chase (to whose careful research I am greatly indebted) says that "the bills passed under his influence at this session were laws in aid of the naval establishment and the general system of national defense; to authorize an increase of the marine corps, and the construction of floating batteries; to allow rank to be bestowed on naval officers for distinguished conduct; to provide for the appointment of flotilla officers, for bounties for prisoners captured on the high seas and brought into port, and for pensions for the widows and children of those slain in action." A good amount of work for one session.

By this time the American privateers were the terror of the seas. Light, swift schooners, they darted about like sea birds, pouncing on every English merchantman which came in their way, and doing, undoubtedly, great damage to the enemy's commerce. The country at large delighted in and prided itself upon them. But to privateering Mr. Lowndes was unalterably opposed; and as he had two years before, so now again he spoke and voted against it, though quite aware that he ran the risk of incurring much unpopularity by so doing. He

admitted that the country had unusual facilities for this species of warfare, and might, or did, derive some *immediate* benefit from it; but he objected to putting into private hands what was, he thought, the duty of the government alone, viz. waging war and thereby increasing its horrors. No good, he thought, would in the long run result from a measure evil in itself. He failed to produce any effect, however, and it was reserved for another generation to approve his ideas.

There are a few letters to General Pinckney, from which I give some extracts: —

GEORGETOWN, January 19th, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have not as yet seen the Secretary of War, a disappointment caused by his having been unwell for some time after he came here, and in part by the House having lately remained in session pretty regularly for the whole time of office hours. I communicated to Mr. Monroe your wishes on the subject of any agency which it might be proposed to give you in the settlement of our Indian affairs. He tells me that the President approves very much of the position which you have taken for headquarters, and of the plan which he understands you have adopted. . . . It appears to me very plain that it was not the want of means of remittance, but the want of money, which prevented your being supplied in Georgia. The department, however, has now got a vote for a million and a half, and I hope that the South will receive some of it. I can hardly think it possible, indeed, that they will incur the mischief and disgrace of allowing the militiamen to return home without their pay.

This letter refers to that Indian war in which

General Jackson won his first laurels. The savages — incited by the English, who sent them arms, and bestowed upon their chief Hilishago the title of brigadier-general, together with a splendid uniform and a rifle, tomahawk, and scalping-knife, all emblazoned with the royal arms — burst upon the settlers in Tennessee and Georgia with their usual ferocity. Jackson marched upon them instantly, sending also to General Pinckney for aid. General Pinckney did all that the distances and the pathless state of the country permitted, sending the Georgia militia to his assistance, and following himself as fast as possible. He arrived only in time to see the victor sign with the red men the treaty of Fort Jackson, which ended hostilities for a time. It was after this that General Pinckney advised that his department should be divided, as altogether too large for one man's handling; and that the Southwest and Gulf coast should be made into a separate division, with General Jackson as its commander.

The battle of New Orleans showed the excellence of the advice. The painful want of money alluded to was greatly caused by the hostility of the large cities to the Administration. They would make no loans, the banks protesting incapacity, and this led to the effort to form another United States Bank, which was to be the chief occupation of the coming session.

GEORGETOWN, February 15th, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR, — I put into the Postoffice this morning some packets containing General Armstrong's [Secretary of War] report on the failure of our arms [against Canada]. The correspondence must be read with interest, but not I think with pleasure; the publication of Colonel Purdy's letter seems to me to have been a very wanton attack

upon an officer, whom it was the less necessary to assail as he seems from the correspondence to have announced his determination of resigning. Of this, however, I have heard nothing except from this correspondence."

April 16th, 1814.

We have rumours here of an armistice, or rather of a proposition for one, which I have not heard from any good authority, but which many circumstances induce me to believe. The repeal of the embargo and non-importation laws, which passed the House of Representatives by a very large majority, and will, I believe, pass the Senate by a much larger proportionally, has by some persons been supposed to be connected with a negotiation. If the President, however, has this reason for his change of policy, he did not think fit to communicate it to the House, nor even, I believe, to confide it to one of its members."

This was the repeal of the embargo already mentioned.

Before Congress met again Washington had fallen, — perhaps the only instance of the capital of a country being taken by an enemy with hardly a blow struck in its defense. It is a curious story altogether, but does not belong here, — the moderation of the victors being perhaps the strangest part of it. It was rather a keen mortification than a crushing blow, for Washington did not then contain anything of irreparable value. The mortification seems to have stirred the army to greater efforts and from that time the tide of fortune began to turn; the first letter for the autumn session mentions a military success, the battle of Lundy's Lane. It also shows the feeling of insecurity about Washington which the event had caused, and the talk of removing the capital.

WASHINGTON, September 25th, 1814.

I am now settled here, and shall remain in this mess to which I am now attached while Congress continues in this place (I mean for the session). They talk, however, of moving the seat of government, at least for a time; an attempt at least will be made to move it, and its success is not improbable. I have not told you who compose our mess. We have Mr. Gaillard, Mr. Giles, Mr. Brown, and Judge Tate (Senators), Mr. Cheves, Seybert, and myself (Representatives). We shall have such an addition to our number as to make it twelve, but we are not yet sure who they will be. As yet the mess is a pleasant one, although —— chatters incessantly. But as I have no great respect for his character, I do not condemn myself to be a very patient listener. . . . I have not yet mentioned the articles which we left here [in the house which they had rented for a year, the previous session], but I believe that we have not lost much. Our house, like almost every other on the hill, has been very much injured, not by the English but by a severe storm the night after they were here. I think that I shall get rid of it by paying half the rent. . . . I have not yet told you, I believe, that Mrs. Cheves is to stay at Philadelphia this winter. Mr. Madison has been very ill, so ill that his recovery has been extraordinary. You have, I suppose, heard of General Brown's success. He has made a sortie, killed and taken about 800 men, and destroyed the works which the English had advanced against him, and which indeed endangered his army.

On October 9th comes the first definite hope of peace. Commissioners from the United States and his Britannic Majesty had been named and accepted. Mr. Lowndes writes: —

WASHINGTON, October 9th, 1814.

I write so often that you will begin to think the privilege of franking a valuable one, but as you are no doubt very anxious for peace, I send you last evening's paper, which contains an account of the arrival of the "John Adams" at New York. Mr. Dallas has arrived with dispatches there, and the negotiation is, I believe, undoubtedly going on at Ghent. Its prospects of success are, however, still the subjects of speculation, not of information. My own opinion is (what it has been for some time past) that the English Government, in protracting the negotiation until the conclusion of the campaign, is influenced by the natural policy of leaving on our recollections, when peace shall have been made, impressions of her power, which may discourage future wars against her. I continue, therefore, to think (in private) that we shall have peace this winter. But the hope of peace is so apt to discourage exertion that it ought hardly to be expressed in public until it becomes confidence, if not certainty.

October 16th.

You will have seen the communications from our ministers at Ghent. The prospect is a gloomy one. I have no doubt of our ability to defend the country, but the effort must produce great individual sacrifices and distress. Of the disposition of the Government of this country to make peace on any terms which any honourable man in the nation could be disposed to accept, a full proof has, I think, been given. How long the war shall last must be determined by the enemy, although that determination will be much affected by our manner of conducting it. He will only wish for peace when persuaded that war will give him neither advantage nor glory.

It is commonly supposed here that Lord Hill will attack either the Southern ports or Louisiana. At such a moment, to be absent from one's family is very painful. I cannot think that the English will attempt to maintain the seat of war in the Southern States. If they were to attack Charleston and take it, their European troops would suffer more in the first summer than from the severest European campaign, yet our calculation should be that they will attack it.

We do not hear at this place a whisper of peace. If the Administration think it in any degree probable, they keep the secret of their opinions better than usual. It is, indeed, very important that our exertions should not be weakened by the opinion that they may be unnecessary. Yet the hope in which I sometimes indulge myself I cannot refuse to communicate to you, but I must beg you to say nothing of it to any one else.

This caution reminds me of an anecdote told by Mrs. Lowndes to her granddaughter. Being, she said, naturally silent and reserved, it was not hard for her to be extremely prudent as to her husband's communications to her, putting aside all indiscreet questions with a civil disclaimer of any particular information. She carried this, however, a little too far, for the inquirers thought her badly treated, and whispers arose of "poor Elizabeth, her husband gives her so little of his confidence. She knows less than the newspapers, absolutely nothing." She was naturally annoyed, and in order to avert these suspicions, she begged her husband always to put a word of warning, when facts or opinions were to be kept to herself, while those meant for the public were to be left unguarded,

and thus succeeded in restoring Mr. Lowndes's reputation among her friends.

October 23d, 1814.

I meant to have written to you to-night, but the House has adjourned to-day at one o'clock in consequence of the sudden death of the Vice-President, Mr. Gerry. He was on his way to the Senate, where it was his habit not only to insist upon punctually fulfilling all the duties of his office, but from the weak fear of confirming the opinions of those who thought him too old for his situation, to exert himself in doing as president much which a younger man would have allowed to devolve on a clerk. He is now dead, and his friends may, I believe, justly boast that in every political situation he firmly pursued the policy which he believed to be right; while his enemies, if they permit their enmity to survive its object, can say little more against him than that nature denied him the talents (even in the most moderate degree) which his political offices required. His country made him ambassador and vice-president, but he was certainly not one of nature's nobles. . . . You see by our last accounts that the negotiations at Ghent have not been broken off. Lord Hill will not be in America this winter. I feel less anxiety from the expectation of an attack on South Carolina than I have done.

The omitted portions of this and the other letters of this time are filled with anxious inquiries about crops, plantation work, overseers, etc., and the pressing question of ways and means. Mr. Lowndes's long absences, and the fact that his lands were liable to overflow from "freshets" in the river, had by this time begun to impair his fortune. Nowhere in the world is the master's eye

more needed than on a rice plantation; few are the overseers who can supply the intelligent vigilance which the situation demands. Elliek had proved incapable of conducting matters on his own responsibility, and Mrs. Lowndes was worried by fears that, while remiss about his own work, he, being dressed in a little brief authority, was severe to the people. The white overseers were little better, and Mrs. Lowndes determined to remain at Jacksonborough (the village nearest to the Horse Shoe) throughout the summer, in hopes that her presence would serve at once as a check and a stimulus. There were difficulties, of health and a school for the boys, and Mr. Lowndes writes, "I hope if your sister [Mrs. Huger] should go to the Horse Shoe (or, indeed, if she should not), that you will have everything done to your gloomy residence which can make it more tolerable. I fear that while war lasts we can calculate in Carolina only on the comforts which are to be obtained without buying; but whatever you can obtain either by the labor of the negroes or by credit I earnestly wish you to obtain." And again —

November 6th.

Our situation certainly requires great efforts and sacrifices. If the war should last many years, I believe that the nation possesses resources which will enable it to support it with honour. As to our *private* interest, I believe that should the war last three years longer, I shall not be worth more than fifty negroes after paying my debts. With these we must retire to some situation where we may enjoy health and tranquillity. And then it will be some consolation to reflect that if in my public situation I have supported measures which have impaired the fortunes of many of my country-

men, at least I cannot be accused of having made my own. About the pounding of the rice, etc. . . . Do inculcate upon Ellick, the necessity of turning the winter to as much account as possible, by putting his lands into high order [ample directions how to do this]. I am sorry to hear of your difficulties in establishing a boarding-house [for the next summer, in Jacksonborough], though they have not been unexpected. I certainly did not think when I left Carolina that the difficulties of a school were half removed.

Such were some of the troubles of a planter's wife. On November 30th Mr. Lowndes writes that the dispatches from Ghent are encouraging, and continues : —

"I now frequently pass my evenings at Cheves's [Mrs. Cheves had now joined her husband in Washington], and I find particular relief in the conversation of the children. Louisa and Sophia propose no projects of a bank, and Joseph has never started the subject of a conscription." This alludes to a passage in a recent letter, in which he says that the conversation at the "mess," turning entirely on politics, affords no relaxation from the labors of the day. He adds, "As to our own children, I am very anxious to know what you have done with them. If we have peace, I must spend next summer in the back country, and we shall therefore be as much at a loss about them in summer as in winter. It would not be easy to say what it is which recommends public life, and yet how few willingly quit it. I am sometimes surprised that I should have remained in it so long. Some men indeed want offices of honor or of profit, and three years ago I should have been glad of military employment. But at present I am sure

that there is no office from that of President to an ensigncy or a collectorship which I would accept. I cannot retain the place of Member of Congress, then, from the hope of its leading to anything else, and yet I have not *fully* resolved to decline. I sent you, a day or two ago, a pamphlet containing the dispatches of our commissioners. There seems to be some difference of opinion on the prospects of peace which it opens. . . . There are really in Congress (in both Houses, as I think) a good deal of zeal and of political courage. But although a vigorous system of policy may be adopted and pursued by the legislature, it must *originate* in the Cabinet. I have got too near the end of my paper to begin a political disquisition."

Peace was really much nearer than they knew, but for the time the terrible want of money made the bank question almost the chief interest of the session. Writing to General Pinckney early in December, Mr. Lowndes says: —

"In respect to ordnance, fortifications and men, I believe our difficulties are pecuniary. We have every reason to believe that as many recruits could be obtained as we could support, if we could supply bounties and clothing; but every post brings accounts of contractors and commissaries who are unable to furnish to the men already enlisted their ordinary supplies. The tax bills are passing with considerable expedition through both Houses, and their amount is very great in comparison with any internal revenue which the government has ever yet enjoyed, but very inadequate to the expenses of the year, if the hope of effecting a loan is to be renounced. When the new bank, if it shall pass (as I think it will), will be able to lend, or what will be the credit of its notes if it shall lend largely, are points on which there is much difference of opinion

here. There is none, however, in respect to the necessity of recurring either to such a loan or to an issue of government paper. I do not believe that an interest of ten per cent. would enable government to negotiate a loan of twenty millions with private contractors."

In such a condition of financial distress it was no wonder that the plan of a bank should be eagerly discussed. The difficulty, however, was that the first, the original United States Bank, established by Federalists, had undeniably failed. Would another, under Republican auspices, do better? No good Federalist could believe it. Mr. Dallas, the newly appointed Secretary of the Treasury, had a hard task before him, for money had to be raised in some way.

The private banks paid no specie; would a public one, a Bank of the United States, do more? Would the public, through faith in and desire to help the government, receive its notes as specie? If so, what amount of notes would it be safe to issue? Around these questions the discussion raged, painfully embittered by personal and by party feeling. Mr. Dallas proposed one scheme, Mr. Calhoun another. Mr. Lowndes supported Mr. Calhoun's plan with some slight alteration. The speeches were long, and some violent, and curious things were said.

The anti-war men considered the bank as an outcome of that iniquitous measure, and spoke accordingly. Mr. Law, of Connecticut, wailed over our "having struck the first blow in the dark, against the defenseless provinces of Canada, which resisted and repelled our attacks, and disgrace and mortification followed." He intimated that we richly deserved the punishment we met. Mr. Hanson, of Maryland, was even stronger in denuncia-

tion. He as a "moral man" rejoieed in the confusion of "those fell destroyers of its [the eountry's] rights, peace, safety, and honour, whose misdeeds have brought upon the people the suffering under whieh they smart, the burdens whieh foree from them deep groans which are heard throughout the land. No man feels for the wicked authors of our affliction [the war members] a more thorough sovereign contempt than I do, and if it is said that in eontributing to the relief and salvation of the eountry [by voting for the bank], I incidentally relieve them, I justify it by replying that even sueh men must be relieved in preference to eertain national bankruptcy," etc. After this it is not surprising that Mr. Calhoun was at once upon his legs. His speech is not given in the "Abridged Debates," but is described as "energetie," and "the Speaker [Mr. Cheves] ealled both gentlemen repeatedly to order, and earnestly endeavored to prevent the introduction of personal matter into the debate." At length, after two months of speechmaking, and innumerable votings, the bill was rejected. Another, mueh to the same effeet, sent down by the Senate, was taken into consideration, with apparently no more hope of a satisfactory eonelnsion. At last, February 17, 1815, Mr. Lowndes moved to postpone the Senate bill indefinitely. "He made this motion not from any hostility to a National Bank, wishing, as he did, that a National Bank should be established, but because he wished it done at a time and under eirenmstanees whieh would give the House opportunity to decide correetly on the subjeet. . . . In the fragment of the session which now remains there would not be time to enter into a eonsideration of these points. . . . The new state of things which now presents itself ought to suggest a reason for

postponement. Congress could not now establish a bank half so eligible, or half so durable, as it could at a future session."

This motion, which was carried by a close vote of 74 to 73, was of course made in view of the fact that on that same day President Madison was to announce to the Senate, and two days afterward to the House, the conclusion of the treaty of peace and amity between the United States and his Britannic Majesty, which had been signed on the 24th of December, 1814, at Ghent, by the commissioners of both parties.

The battle of New Orleans, the most important victory of the war, had been fought on the 15th of January, 1815, three weeks after the treaty had been signed, and a month before the news of it had been received at Washington. The English force had been the most important yet sent to America, and the apprehension had been great. On New Year's Day, 1815, Mr. Lowndes wrote to his wife:

"The beginning of a new year has been by long custom made the season of congratulation and enjoyment, but our present situation and our prospects here seem neither of them compatible with unmixed enjoyment. However, I do not mean to write about politics, and the gloom of the last sentence could only be justified by our political situation."

January 8th.

We have to-day an account of the English having destroyed our little flotilla on Lake Ponchartrain, after suffering a very severe loss in proportion to the numbers engaged. If they mean to attack New Orleans, of which no doubt is entertained here, this success will enable them to get within a couple of miles of the city conveniently and safely, but the difficulties of marching from the lake to the

river are such as to afford a reasonable hope that they may be repelled. However, you will see more about it in the papers than I could get into a letter. . . . But you must be tired of reading of the danger of New Orleans, and my own gloomy speculations on the effects of its loss, if it should be taken, prevent my writing with interest on any other subject.

His depression at this time was undoubtedly increased by a very severe cold, which made attendance at the House extremely irksome, and caused him to remain entirely in his own room when released from his duties there. Its influence is shown in this passage about his children: —

"Tell Rawlins he must ride as much as he can now, for M. de Grasse will not let him keep a horse at Georgetown. I am glad that he likes his present school, however, for the comforts of a man after he gets his reason are so small and so precarious, that I should like (if I knew how) to crowd as many into the years which precede reason as they could be made to contain. . . . As for Pinckney, I hope that he will be on board a frigate at 12 or 13. I will give my consent to his learning to dance as soon as he has assisted in taking down an English flag. This, I suppose, you will think shows more patriotism than parental fondness, but there is no patriotism in it, as the country apparently will never want for midshipmen. But I have tried civil life myself and found it very vapid. I am willing that my children should have one of stronger excitement. Let them have to complain of fatigue, disappointments, and hardships, but let them have something to do."

About the same time he says on the same subject: "I should like my sons to be, one a good general,

the other a good admiral. You will not agree in this wish, so I will change it: may they be both good men, a paternal benediction in the sense of which the fairy may share." The fairy was his little daughter, then five years old.

After all this gloomy apprehension, victory and peace must have been an immense relief. There is no letter just after the battle, but he says: —

February 17, 1815.

I wrote you a few lines on Monday to give you the news of the peace. The papers by the time this reaches you will give you the treaty. It contains no stipulation on any question or controverted right, and I do not know that it is the worse on that account. The time of making it is more fortunate than the peace itself. When the war in Europe was over I sometimes expressed the opinion that it would perhaps be best for both nations that England should try her undivided strength against a power whose resources she probably little understood. But I little expected that a well-appointed army of ten thousand veterans could have been foiled with the loss of half their number, by men who two months before had not left their ploughs. Orleans was our weakest point, and the best effect of the war is the deep impression which our enemy must feel, that on our own soil we are unassailable.

The relief was great, greatest of all to Mr. Madison and his Cabinet, who felt themselves saved. The Hartford Convention with its inadmissible demands and thinly veiled threats of disunion could hurt them no more. There was at first some dissatisfaction at the absence of definite stipulations referred to above; but it was hoped, and the hope has been happily fulfilled, that on those points time

would bring just decisions. We now know, better perhaps than the actors in that strife ever knew, what had been gained by the war. By it America had earned the respect of the world. Englishmen had learned that a Yankee frigate equaled an English one. Frenchmen heard that a handful of men on a sandbank at the mouth of the Mississippi had beaten back the proud English regiments before which they themselves had recoiled in the peninsula. Best of all, the people, when not blinded by hate or fanaticism, respected themselves, felt themselves a nation. The flag at which Napoleon had jeered had won its place by battle. Victory and poetry had touched it. It was no longer a "piece of striped bunting," but "The Star Spangled Banner."

CHAPTER VII

DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1815–1818

THE much-longed for adjournment was delayed by the fact that peace had hardly been proclaimed when the President was obliged to call the attention of Congress to trouble in another quarter, and to ask consent to sending a squadron against the Algerine pirates. These audacious marauders infested the Mediterranean and the adjacent waters, preying indifferently upon the vessels of all nations, and at this very moment ten or twelve American merchant sailors were in the galleys or the dungeons of the Dey. Decatur and Bainbridge were sent against them, and speedily reduced not only the Algerines, but all those Barbary States whose corsairs had long been the terror of the seas. Perhaps nothing has ever made a deeper impression upon the nations of Europe than that this shameful evil at their very doors should have been put down by a power from across the ocean. It had also a happy effect upon the American mind, for when the rejoicing people instantly proceeded to cut down its army to absurdly small proportions, the navy was left untouched for another session.

The utmost effort could only secure an army of ten thousand men, and the appropriation for its support was characterized as a burden hardly to be borne. This done, the weary congressmen were

allowed to adjourn, and on March 3d Mr. Lowndes wrote joyously for his horses to meet him at Fayetteville, North Carolina. The Cheves family were to follow shortly after, and he hoped for a long visit from them at the Grove; but letters here fail, and we know no more until the reopening of Congress. From this time the records of the House and contemporaneous notices are the sole materials at hand until the year 1819. Mrs. Lowndes spent the intervening sessions in Washington, and there is no correspondence.

The war being over, the war debt was the first consideration. The President's message at the beginning of the session of 1815–16 earnestly recommended a bank and measures for revenue. Mr. Lowndes was appointed chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means; but his first speech was a personal one on the question of pensions, urging great precaution in their bestowal, and that proof of actual service and suffering should be demanded. Afterwards the constant labor of his committee prevented his sharing in the great debates upon the treaty-making power, and upon the bank, which occupied so much of the session, although in his notebook there are pages of reflection and study upon both subjects.

He made his first report for the committee upon the 15th of January, 1816, to the House sitting as committee of the whole, "upon so much of the President's message as relates to the revenue," and offered resolutions based on the calculation that the revenue required was $25,369,000. He proposed to add forty-two per cent. to the rates of permanent duty, and by so doing relieve the internal tax of the burden of seven millions annually, this to be derived from the customs. He proposed to keep three millions of direct tax, and to devote

$13,500,000 to the interest and principal of the national debt.

The question was, "How should these customs be most justly distributed?" The resolutions were closely scanned and were discussed day by day for the rest of the session. It would be tedious now to give in detail such a by-gone question; yet it is interesting to note the fair and just anxiety of the chairman to do right by each commodity. As far as can be judged by the scanty reports, he made no set speeches, confining himself to explaining and defending, giving facts and figures, but no eloquence, in support of his propositions.

His committee proposed, —

"Be it Resolved, that it is expedient to continue in force, until the 30th day of June next, and until an act shall be passed establishing a new tariff of duties, the act entitled 'an act for imposing additional duties upon all goods, merchandise, wares imported from any foreign port or place, and for other purposes, passed on the first day of July 1812.'"

This was called "the double tax," and was in fact a tariff, and the discussion instantly began. Federals and Republicans alike tore the resolutions to pieces. Mr. Huger, the only Federalist representative from South Carolina, spoke strongly against the tariff as a whole, as injurious to the agricultural interest, and Mr. Lowndes answered that money had to be raised, and that this method distributed the burden more evenly than any other. Mr. Calhoun supported his friend.

Every point was contested; the relative deserts of common salt and brown sugar took days to discuss. Did they require protection, and if so, how much? Finally each received a duty. Salt fish exported was granted a bounty, but refined sugar,

"used only by the wealthy," was put into the direct tax list as a luxury. These imports were concessions to the "new acquisition," Louisiana, and to New England, so the extremities of the Union were content; but one gentleman deplored "the hard fate of those unfortunate States [the Middle] who are taxed to support the manufactures of the East and the products of the South." There was (perhaps of historic necessity) some debate on the stamp duties, but they were kept, and a proposal to reduce the rates of postage was, very naturally, eagerly agreed to. But fiercer grew the fighting when the wording of the "resolution" itself was brought forward, and Randolph of Roanoke joined in the fray.

He opposed the bill vehemently as "dependent on a contingency which may happen ['until an act shall be passed,' etc.], a curiosity of legislation such as I do most potently believe no man living or that ever lived did hear of." Nothing can be more entertaining than John Randolph's witty and brilliant speeches, a delightful relief from the monotony of congressional debate. With the instinct of genius he seizes on the point of vantage and darts his shafts at the joint of the armor. He told Calhoun sharply that he was legislating against his section, for the tariff would bear heaviest on the poor man and the slaveholder, a truth which Calhoun probably felt keenly enough in after days, but for which, conscious that he was doing his best for his whole country, he then cared nothing. He furiously attacked Clay for some expressions looking to war with Spain, and declared that he (Randolph) "would not be frightened by the raw head and bloody bones of old Spain." Even the members most accustomed to his eccentricities must have been amused to hear him extol "the great

principles of Mr. Jefferson" and sigh for "the good old times of his administration," — he who had been a thorn in Jefferson's flesh long before his administration had ended. In our day we are amused to know that he reproached Calhoun with "tendencies to consolidation and to destroy state government." His darts evidently told, for although he treated Lowndes more gently than the others, I find in Mrs. Lowndes's notes that "Mr. Lowndes, who was always scrupulously courteous, so resented some of Mr. Randolph's attacks, that although always observing the politeness due to an old and a distinguished man, he for years never offered him his hand, and never addressed him except on the business of the House."

It is evident, however, that in these debates the men charged with the help of the treasury struggled for that, and that only. They knew that without money the country could not be safe. The experience of the war had taught them, but had apparently taught the Congress at large nothing. Though its house had been burned over its head in 1815, it now, two years later, hesitated and haggled over every appropriation for the services; and only the seaboard States thought of the long, unguarded coast line, although the ruins of the Capitol were before their eyes.

These independent measures often brought reproach upon the Carolinians as deserters from their party. Lowndes was reproached for the tariff he proposed. The tariff was in truth so moderate that it has since been spoken of as "for revenue only;" but Lowndes, who had the spirit of the line, "Don't be consistent, but be simply true," frankly avowed that he thought some protection due to infant industries, and that the question was, "What measure of protection do they require?"

The most important debate was over cotton and woolen goods, and was participated in by the leaders on both sides. Mr. Lowndes spoke only to facts and figures. Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Ingham, of Pennsylvania, spoke for manufactures, and Mr. Randolph, like a precursor of Mr. Ruskin, deprecated all except "those conducted in the families of our citizens." The last act was to regulate the duties on "imports and tonnage," and after long debate the bill in its chief clauses was carried by a vote of 88 to 54, April 8, 1816. Thus the tariff was established and in a short time gave a surplus to the treasury; the duties were so light that no one suffered; on the contrary, the effect upon the immediate prosperity of the country was wonderful. Mr. Charles Fraser, in his "Reminiscences of Charleston" (1854), says: "In 1816 prosperity returned, and has continued unbroken to this day."

In other hands the measure has had a far different result; but it is one of the curiosities of legislation, that the first tariff avowedly for protection should have been brought in by Lowndes and Calhoun.

Mr. Lowndes may have had some misgivings as to the *ultimate* effect of his policy, for the late Colonel William Elliott, of South Carolina, told the writer that he distinctly remembered being, as a very young man, at a dinner party at which Mr. Lowndes was present. The conversation turned on recent measures, and the hostess, Mrs. Horry, reproached Mr. Lowndes (who was the husband of her niece) with the imposition of the tariff, saying that it "was the worst thing done since universal suffrage." Mr. Lowndes answered quietly that "neither was altogether good, but the best possible for the time." She persisted that "she should not, but he would, live to feel the evils of both." He

answered again, "We are obliged to leave some questions to posterity. We do our best with those that come to us, and future generations must bear their share of the trouble."

A measure about which there could be no misgiving was the support of the navy. Mr. Lowndes had the pleasure of speaking and voting for the report and resolutions brought in by Mr. Pleasants, of Virginia, chairman of the Naval Committee, for an "annual appropriation of one million dollars, for the next eight years, for the gradual increase of the navy." The navy was always his first interest, and it consoled him for the reduction of the army. In a memorandum he says: "With a navy strong enough to prevent invasion by sea, a small, efficient army on our northern and western frontier may *perhaps* be all that is absolutely necessary."

In Mr. Madison's last annual message, December, 1816, he was able to assure the country that the success of the financial measures adopted by the last Congress had been so great that "the revenue has far exceeded all the current demands upon the treasury, and that under any probable diminution of its future annual products which the vicissitudes of commerce may occasion, it will afford an ample fund for the effectual and early extinguishment of the public debt." . . . "At the close of the year there will be a surplus in the treasury of about the sum of nine millions of dollars."

This being the case, it was perhaps not extraordinary that many should think the taxes, and especially the hated internal revenue tax, too heavy. The management of the treasury was blamed, and it was asked if "the laws imposing taxes are to remain fixed and unalterable except at the pleasure of the chairman of the Committee of Ways and

Means?" The sinking fund (for the payment of the national debt) was especially attaeked in a long speech by Mr. Williams, of North Carolina, on the 17th of February, 1817. It is elear that Mr. Lowndes defended his favorite financial measure, bnt I find no mention of his speech exeept in Mr. Williams's qnotations from it. Mr. W. was at least a generous antagonist, for he says: "That gentleman, Mr. Speaker [pointing to Mr. Lowndes], at all times, and on all occasions, has so conducted himself on this floor as to secure, not only the confidenee and esteem, but I believe the admiration of every member of this House; but while I pay this just tribute to the merits of that gentleman, I must be allowed to say, that I think he was ineorreet when he stated in reply to the remarks I made on Friday, that I had failed to show any sufficient reasons in support of the resolutions then under eonsideration."

There was much talk, but little was done. In a few days Congress adjourned, and Mr. Madison's administration drew to its elose.

It should perhaps have been mentioned before, that in Oetober, 1816, Mr. Madison had offered the portfolio of War to Mr. Lowndes, who had respeetfully declined it, "conceiving himself to be of more use to the eonntry in his present position in the House," as a mntilated rough draft of his answer expresses it. In the next session Mr. Monroe made the same offer, and Mr. Lowndes replied in the same manner. An undated fragment of a letter to his wife does not refer to either of these offers, but it shows so clearly his determination to be absolutely independent of all administrative favors that I give it here.

They would have thought of offering the place

of Secretary of the Navy to me, if they had believed that I would take it, but they know very well that I would not take it.

Your Federal suspicions lead you to attribute this to hostility to the Administration, but the plain truth is that I would not accept any office in any administration. Now how to reconcile this to some Federal prejudices against office hunters is more than I shall undertake to do.

Your affect. husband,
W. Lowndes.

The following letter, kindly sent me by Mr. Salley, of Orangeburg, shows that a report of Mr. Lowndes having accepted one of these offers was generally believed. It is from Mr. Govan, afterwards a member of Congress, but then a very young man, to the Hon. George E. Salley. He says: —

New York, July 19th, 1816.

Mr. Lowndes has been within a few days appointed Secretary of the Treasury Department, and is I suppose as well qualified to discharge the duties of it as any person in the Union, — a man not only qualified for that office, but for any that government might give him. I had the pleasure of his acquaintance on my way to Philadelphia, which caused the time to pass very agreeably. He is perfectly sociable and easy in his manners, . . . does not treat with contempt the opinions of any man, whatsoever they may be, provided they are in strict unison with his conscience. I went on a few days ago in company with him to the city of Washington, at which place I was frequently in his company, which was highly interesting as well as instructing. He supports the highest standing here, as a modest, unassuming man, and also a man

of the greatest and most profound erudition: in fact, I think him the greatest man unequivocally I have ever seen. I am surprised to hear that he does not support that standing at home that he does abroad."

By this time Mr. Lowndes had become very generally known to the country at large, and his name was seldom mentioned without commendation; but there are always persons who cannot endure to see others admired, and on one of his journeys from Philadelphia to Washington the following amusing instance of this occurred.

He was traveling with his friend Mr. Rutledge, of South Carolina (who told the story), and stopped to dine at a wayside inn, where at table the conversation turned upon politics, and after leaving it, one of the guests said to Mr. Lowndes, "Sir, I want you to do me a favor. I have written a piece for our paper, but I am not used to writing, and though I know what I mean, there may be mistakes. You seem to be a fair-minded man; will you correct it for me?" Mr. Lowndes took the paper, corrected it carefully, and returning it said, "What do you know of this gentleman that makes you think so badly of him?" "Nothing positively," replied the man, "but I am tired of hearing him praised; every one talks of him, and praises him; and when you hear nothing but good of a man there must be something very bad somewhere." Mr. Lowndes smiled, and said no more. When they had resumed their journey Mr. Rutledge asked of whom the man had written. "Of me; he considers me a snake in the grass, and warns the world against me." "And you have corrected his letter?" "Certainly, every man has a right to express his opinions."

In the next year or two the mission to France

and special missions to Constantinople and to St. Petersburg were offered him, but he declined them all, still thinking that the House was his most useful position, and that "a public man should remain where he is of most use to the public."

The Fifteenth Congress met on the 1st of December, 1817, and Mr. Monroe was able to begin his first message by saying: —

"At no period of our political existence have we had so much cause to felicitate ourselves at the prosperous and happy condition of our country. The abundant fruits of the earth have filled it with plenty. An extensive and profitable commerce has greatly augmented our revenue. The public credit has attained an extraordinary elevation," etc.

How much of this happy condition of things was due to wise financial legislation it is easy to perceive. It did, however, fully justify the desire for relief from the internal taxation, which had been so much disliked. Mr. Lowndes accordingly brought in a bill to abolish these taxes entirely (three millions had been kept by the last Congress), frankly stating that he did so by desire of his committee, as he himself should have preferred to retain some portion of them for the present. He pointed out the happy effect of the tariff upon the country, and said that, moderate as it was, it had produced a revenue far beyond his expectations. The bill was passed at once without debate.

His favorite measure of the sinking fund, which had been so vehemently opposed, proved most beneficial. It consisted of an annual appropriation of $10,000,000, with the proviso that all the money remaining in the treasury over $2,000,000 should at the end of each year be added to it. By this plan the whole debt of $130,000,000 was paid off in four-

teen years, to the great advantage of the national eredit. Of this measure, Mr. Calhoun, speaking in 1839 of the final diseharge of the debt, said : —

" For this important step at so early a period the eountry is indebted to my friend, now unfortunately no more, — the amiable, the talented, the patriotic Lowndes ; the author of that simple but effeetive measure, the sinking fund act, passed shortly after the conelusion of the late war."

For some years past there had been felt in this eountry that spirit of disapprobation of the Spanish government, and of sympathy with the Spanish Ameriean eolonies in their struggle for liberty, whieh has but just reaehed its culmination. President Monroe alluded to this in his message quoted above, saying : —

" It was anticipated at an early stage that the eontest between Spain and her colonies would become highly interesting to the United States. It was natural that our citizens would sympathize in events whieh affeeted their neighbors," etc. " Through every stage of the eonflict the United States have maintained an impartial neutrality, giving aid to neither of the parties in men, money, ships, or munitions of war. They have regarded the eontest, not in the light of an ordinary insurreetion or rebellion, but as a eivil war between parties nearly equal, having, as to neutral powers, equal rights."

This was a perfectly truthful statement as regarded the government; but it was equally true that notwithstanding the many acts passed from time to time for the enforeing of this neutrality, it was eonstantly violated. Vessels were fitted out in our ports, and " men, money, and munitions of war " were furnished by private eitizens.

Filibustering had begun.

In the previous Congress Mr. Forsyth, of Georgia, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, had introduced a bill, which had been passed by a large majority of both Houses, to "prevent the fitting out, in the ports of the United States, of armed expeditions against nations in amity with the United States, and requiring bond and security that all vessels while at sea should respect the neutral obligations of the country."

In November, 1818, Mr. Monroe was obliged to send a message to Congress, saying that the laws were being evaded, and asking more power to enforce them. Mr. Forsyth offered an amendment to his bill of the year before, looking to its greater efficiency. The object was to maintain the good faith of the government by preventing its subjects from waging war on a nation with which it was on terms of peace and amity as strong as treaties could make. The popular sentiment and action were natural, considering our own Revolutionary associations; but it was *not* an honorable position for the government to hold, and so Mr. Forsyth declared. The Speaker (Mr. Clay) and Mr. Robertson, of Louisiana, however, warmly resented this interference with the liberty of individuals, declared that the bill was "unjust and vexatious," and "had been enacted for the benefit of his Majesty the King of Spain." They even went so far as to impute improper influence upon the President, insinuating that his recommendation had been obtained by the "teasing of foreign officials," viz. the foreign ministers.

Forsyth ably defended his bill, and Mr. Lowndes supported him. He began his remarks by "redeeming the Act of 1817 from the charge which had been alleged against it, as far as his opinion went, by declaring that act not to have been adopted

in consequence of any foreign remonstrance, but to have been the deliberate expression of the judgment of this and of the other House. He had listened with the greatest attention to the remarks of the gentlemen from Kentucky and Louisiana, but they had failed to convince him that the deliberate opinion of Congress at its last session ought to be reversed. But there was less difference on principle than he had expected to have found between those gentlemen and those who approved the act of the last session. The Speaker had conceded that the acts were unlawful which that law was designed to prevent, and the only difference between us," said Mr. Lowndes, "is that for the prevention of those unlawful acts we propose a remedy which they will not accept. On the question of the criminality of enlistment in a war between two powers with which we are in amity we perfectly agree. The opinion of the House and of the country *must* be that as long as we profess neutrality we ought to observe it, that our neutral obligations should be fairly and honestly fulfilled, and it was because he thought it the duty of Congress to prevent our citizens, by requiring bond and security to that effect, from engaging in the existing war, that he was willing to continue the act which the Speaker desired to repeal." He spoke of the danger of irresponsible parties in armed vessels turning their arms against any power which they might please to attack, and denied Mr. Robertson's assertion, that it was impossible to judge from the *cargo* of a vessel what her purpose might be; "fixed ammunition, etc.," he considered offered a strong presumption.

"For such depredations we are responsible, and have recognized the principle by paying claims founded on it. We have bound ourselves to respect

the principle in a manner equally obligatory, by preferring claims founded upon it against other nations. Having done so, every consideration of prudence, of respect for the character of our country, requires that we should exact the security which is demanded by the Act of 1817." "No duty," said Mr. Lowndes, "is by the Act of 1817 exacted from any individual which the Speaker does not think, as well as myself, ought to be performed; a bond only is executed that in certain suspicious cases that duty shall be performed. Where the hardship, then? Where the commercial inconvenience of being required to give bond that while on the high seas the suspected vessel shall not violate the laws of the country?"

Mr. Clay said "it was always with very painful regret that he found himself differing from the honorable gentleman who had just taken his seat, and from the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. When differing from them he almost doubted his own perceptions, but," etc., and then follows a curious speech which puts one in mind of the old legal joke, "No case, abuse the plaintiff's attorney," viz. the foreign ambassadors, and the gentlemen opposed to him. Mr. Lowndes at last, in the sharpest speech that I find recorded of him, rose and said that "He must vindicate himself from the charge of inconsistency, alleged against him by the Speaker, but which could not be properly established by taking a sentence or a half a sentence from a speech and founding an argument upon it. The Speaker infers that because I will not take measures to punish him who, without the jurisdiction of the United States, enters into a vessel armed by a foreign authority and cruises on the property of foreign nations, that I must therefore be willing that a citizen of the United States, within the limits of

the United States, in a vessel belonging to the United States, shall involve the government in a responsibility for his acts with equal impunity. Mr. Lowndes submitted to the committee [the House in committee of the whole] whether there was any resemblance between the two propositions."

Mr. Forsyth spoke again on the facts, and the question was continued, — the chief importance of the debate now being that the system of neutrality of the United States had been developed on the lines then suggested.

Only another branch of the same exciting question was the debate on the proposed recognition of the Spanish-American Provinces, which was moved by the Speaker a few days later. With the revolting provinces there was, as has been said, great sympathy; but there was an equally great lack of knowledge as to their real condition and people. The average American citizen took it for granted that the Spanish South Americans only wanted some assistance to throw off the yoke of Spain in order to establish regular and orderly governments, and to follow in all things the example of their northern neighbors. Old John Randolph had said bluntly that it could not be, and that "You cannot make liberty out of Spanish matter; you might as well try to build a seventy-four with pine saplings." In order to gain positive information, President Monroe had, in November, 1817, given a sort of roving commission to three gentlemen, "three distinguished citizens of the United States, Messrs. Rodney, Graham, and Bland," to visit in a ship of war different places and countries in South America "on just and friendly objects." They were in fact to see and judge whether the state of the provinces justified interference; but it might be wondered

whether traveling in that style was the best way to acquire information, and whether what is called in India "official whitewashing" might not be expected. Now, in March, 1818, an appropriation of $30,000 to pay their expenses was asked. Mr. Clay instantly pounced upon the act and tore it to pieces. He demanded to know by what authority the commissioners had been sent, and disputed both the utility of the mission and the legality of the appropriation. He declared that "of most of those countries our knowledge is complete," an absolutely untenable assertion. Mr. Forsyth endeavored to defend the act, and Mr. Lowndes moved to "postpone consideration until further information was received." Mr. Clay immediately moved to send a minister with a salary of $18,000 to "the Independent Provinces of the River La Plata in South America." John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, sent at once a report, showing the utterly unsettled condition of things in South America, winding up with, "It should be added that these observations were connected with others, stating the reasons upon which the present acknowledgment of the Government of La Plata in any mode was deemed by the President inexpedient in regard as well to their interests as to those of the United States."

Mr. Adams thus quietly asserted the rights of the Executive which Mr. Clay had ignored.

Mr. Clay made a long and splendid speech, depicting in glowing colors the iniquities and cruelties of Spanish rule, — a tale which we, alas, know too well. Mr. Forsyth followed, dwelling on the fact that although the Spanish rule was bad, we had no reason to suppose that that of the revolted colonies would be better, — an apprehension which the history of the past seventy years has surely justified.

Mr. Clay's magnificent rhetoric had dwelt largely on the resemblance between the struggles of these colonies and our own. Mr. Forsyth replied that the resemblance was confined to their being colonies revolting against the mother country, and gave many facts to prove that there was in La Plata no government worthy of the name.

There is in the "Abridged Debates" no mention of Mr. Lowndes having spoken on the question at all, but Mr. Robertson, of Louisiana, who there follows Mr. Forsyth, addresses almost his whole speech not to Mr. F., but to Mr. Lowndes, quoting him largely. I find among Mr. Lowndes's papers a speech, probably the reporter's copy, beginning "Mr. Lowndes of S. C. followed Mr. Forsyth." It is poorly reported, but I give some extracts to show his line of thought on this now interesting subject.

It is said that it was Mr. Lowndes's custom in speaking to begin by giving a synopsis of the views and arguments of his opponents, setting them forth as strongly and clearly as might be, and then proceeding to give his own opinions and arguments. On one occasion John Randolph is said to have exclaimed, "He has done that too well this time. He cannot answer that argument." But at the close of the speech Randolph was compelled to admit that the counter-argument was conclusive. So, in accordance with this habit, he began by stating Mr. Clay's propositions and remarking that to some of them he agreed. "There were many of the principles laid down by the Speaker which had his most unqualified concurrence. One of these was that Peace was a leading object connected with the best interests of the country. . . . Fully concurring with the Speaker in this position, he also agreed with him that, however desirable, however important to

the country, Peace was not an object to be sought under any circumstances which would lead to or involve a sacrifice of the rights of the country. Or, if the Speaker had satisfied that House that any nation had a just claim to a recognition of its independence by this nation, to which an injury was done by the delay to recognize it, Mr. Lowndes would admit that the recognition should be made without too nice a calculation of probable consequences." He then proceeded to show how very important peace was at that time to the country which was making giant strides in the arts and industries; gave many facts to show how much more rapid her progress had been than that of Russia, for instance, or of Prussia, both of which had been successful in war, and left free for improvement at about the same time as ourselves. On another subject he concurred most fully with the gentleman from Kentucky: that it was not necessary to refer to writers on the law of nations to prove the right of an oppressed people, such as those from South America undoubtedly are, to assume the right of self-government. On this head there could be no question in this House, or in the country, and the right to assist them in their efforts no reasonable man could deny. He then argued on the "propriety or policy" of exercising that right at that time; showed that the colonies were not agreed among themselves, so much so that the royal arms had been successful in Mexico simply because of the differences among the people. The force which had put down the republican party was an American and not a Spanish force. Were he even to admit the expediency of recognizing the independence of the Provinces of La Plata, he could not consent that that power which, whether wisely or not, was reposed in the Executive by the Constitution, should

be directed in its exercise, if not actually exercised, by Congress. As to the wisdom of that provision of the Constitution, he thought there could be but little difference of opinion. Congress should, he thought, only interfere with the duties of the Executive when there was reason to believe that those duties had been neglected. Unless some such circumstances were made out, the same motives which had induced the giving to the Executive the power to appoint and receive ministers rendered it highly imprudent in Congress to interrupt him in the exercise of it. He pointed out the fact that the President had many more means of gaining information as to the condition of foreign nations than Congress could possibly have, showed mistakes in Mr. Clay's facts, — not to be wondered at since he himself had sought information wherever he could expect to obtain it, and that he found that information, particularly in relation to the country embraced by the Speaker's motion, radically defective. He showed the anxiety of the Executive for fuller information by his sending the three commissioners to obtain it, and proved that in 1815 contests were going on in La Plata between the colonists themselves, "without the presence of a single Spanish soldier." The principle on which this discussion certainly turned, Mr. Lowndes said, was that provision of the Constitution which intrusts not only the commencement but the conduct of negotiations with foreign powers to the Executive. On this point there could scarcely be a difference of opinion, certainly none as to the terms of the constitutional provision, and he should suppose very little as to the wisdom of it. He knew of no other way by which that worst of all effects (so far as our foreign interest is concerned), the interference of foreign powers with our deliberations, could be avoided.

There is much more to the same effect too long to be entered here. He showed the evils that would follow a possible war with Spain, and the improbability that the trade of the South American provinces would in the event of their independence flow to this country instead of to England, with which their relations were already close. He did not believe that any advantage of maritime or navigating interests would follow to this country; "it is the navigation of England, and not our own, which is to flourish with the independence and increased opulence of the Spanish colonies." But these considerations weighed not on his mind. He anxiously wished the independence of South America, and should deplore as a calamity worse than war any indifference to the interests, to the liberty, to the happiness, of the people of South America. He carefully examined the different clauses of Mr. Clay's argument on the "advantages" of the South American support, — he had not understood the Speaker that these advantages were territorial, "for surely we want no foreign aid in defense of our own soil;" the maritime advantages would go to England, — and wound up by saying, that with these views thus cursorily expressed he hoped the motion of the Speaker would not prevail.

No one can feel more strongly than the writer how poorly this extract represents Mr. Lowndes's speech. She has, however, found it impossible to condense its twenty-seven pages more clearly, but fears that the argument has lost its weight in her treatment. The prediction has certainly been fulfilled, for English commerce rules in South America to-day. No speech of Mr. Lowndes's ever provoked such comment and such opposition as this. Mr. Robertson, of Louisiana, declared that "there are certain cabalistic words of great efficacy with old

women and with old men of weak minds, of the use of which the gentleman from South Carolina has availed himself. I allude, sir, to his remarks on the dangers of war and the propriety of casting censure on the conduct of the Executive;" and so on through three closely printed pages without adding information or reason to the case. This is, it may be observed, the only uncourteous remark that is recorded in the debates as being addressed to Mr. Lowndes in his whole career.

Mr. Floyd, of Virginia, laments "that the honorable chairman of Ways and Means should suppose that an acknowledgment of this kind [viz. independence] might involve us in national difficulties: can he, who is so well versed in the laws of nations, suppose," etc. He too regrets that the charge of interference with the prerogatives of the Executive should have been made, and says "from his usual benevolence of character it was not to be expected of him," etc.

Mr. Tucker, of Virginia, curiously mixed compliment and reproach when he said: "There is, Mr. Chairman, another course of remark, which I cannot but regret. It has been said that this proposition implies a censure on the Executive. I am well aware that the gentleman from South Carolina did not mean to intimate anything personal by the remark, yet it cannot but have its effect." Mr. Lowndes said that "as he frequently differed from the Executive himself, he could not disapprove a similar conduct in others." Mr. Tucker: "The observation from the gentleman was unnecessary. His uniform urbanity furnished a sufficient assurrance that the remark was not intended with any personal view. But though this is the case, the intimation that the proposition is not in consonance with executive opinion is *not* without effect. The

high standing and commanding talents of the gentleman render it personally unimportant to him whether he conflicts with executive opinion or not. It is not always so with others."

Only Mr. Smyth, of Virginia, supported Mr. Forsyth and Mr. Lowndes, yet Mr. Clay's resolution (to send a minister to the United States of La Plata) was defeated by a vote of 115 to 45. It was a triumph for the supporters of the government; but a spirit had been raised which it was not in the power of legislation to lay.

Perhaps the most striking point of this discussion in regard to Mr. Lowndes is the scrupulous care to prevent the House (his own favorite branch of government) infringing upon the privileges or usurping the rights of the Executive, and thus disturbing the just balance of the Constitution.

CHAPTER VIII

REMAINDER OF SESSION: VISIT TO EUROPE

1818–1819

Of even more consequence to the prosperity of the country than its foreign relations were its fiscal conditions at home, and of these the most important was the position and management of the United States Bank, then in great difficulties. On this subject Mr. Lowndes made two speeches, both of influence. The second, in February, 1819, was one of the few which he ever gave to the press. By that time, Mr. Jones, the first president, had resigned under much dissatisfaction. His letter of explanation and defense had been ordered to "lie on the table," and Mr. Langdon Cheves had been made president, taking the helm at a moment of great difficulty and danger.

Mr. Lowndes wrote to Mr. Cheves: "I have written off my speech on the bank, and given it to Gales. I was obliged to give him the rough draft, as I had not time to copy it, and I think it impossible that he should print from such a copy without mistakes which will make part of it unintelligible. I had calculated upon an opportunity of correcting the proof sheets instead of the draft, as Mr. Gales promised to have it printed in two days after receiving it. Some other business, however, has intervened; but it is likely that those who understand the subject will attribute that part of the errors which is really owing to those causes to the

pen or the press, and that others may not discover them at all." He continues, in a long letter on different points of vital interest to the bank, but it may be doubted if at this time, when the system is so much altered, whether either letter or speech would find interested readers. The speech was published in pamphlet form, and by its wide circulation added greatly to the reputation of its author. The argument is, however, too close, and the matter too technical, to admit of condensation or extract.

These years of 1818–19 were years of great activity with Mr. Lowndes; besides the speeches already mentioned, he presented, as chairman of the Committee on Coinage, a very carefully written report on the relative value of the coins of different nations and their relation to our own. The preparation of this report, judging by the notes which remain, cost him great labor. He concludes, speaking of a contract between the Bank of the United States and Messrs. Baring & Reed: "Under this contract gold and silver were to be furnished, if it were practicable in equal amounts, according to the American relative valuation of 1 to 15. Upwards of two million ounces of silver have been accordingly supplied, but not an ounce of gold. As the committe entertain no doubt that gold is estimated below its fair relative value, in comparison to silver, by the present regulations of the Mint, and as it can hardly be considered as having formed a material part of our money circulation for the past twenty-six years, they have no hesitation in recommending that its valuation shall be raised, so as to make it bear a juster proportion to its price in the commercial world. But the smallest change which is likely to secure this object (a just proportion of gold coins in our circulation) is that which the committee prefer, and they

believe it sufficient to restore gold to its original valuation in this country of 1 to $15\frac{6}{10}$."

The country was greatly agitated at this time about the conduct of the Seminole war, which had just been concluded. The Seminoles, living along the borders of Alabama and Georgia, had committed all sorts of atrocities, murdering men, women, and children with impartial barbarity. There was, as usual, much reason to suppose that the savages were incited by England and Spain. English emissaries furnished arms and supplies, while Spain offered a refuge upon her territories. Against these savages, Jackson, the greatest of Indian fighters, had been sent. He easily routed them, and pursuing as they fled, found them sheltered and protected under the walls of Pensacola and Fort Barrancas, Spanish territory. "Old Hickory," as his soldiers fondly called him, was not the man to hesitate under these circumstances; he pushed on, and as a "military necessity," as he wrote to the President, occupied the Spanish towns, wrung submission from the Indians, and hung with short shrift two Englishmen, Arbuthnot and Ambrister, who were found aiding and abetting them.

Public opinion differed so widely about these proceedings that in Congress the Committee on Military Affairs, divided against itself, brought in two reports. The majority (a majority of *one*) offered the resolution, "That the House of Representatives of the United States disapproves the proceedings in the trial and execution of George Arbuthnot and Robert C. Ambrister." The minority resolution is, "That General Jackson, his officers and men, are entitled to the thanks of the country in terminating the Seminole war." The House promptly referred the reports to the Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union,

and a most excited debate began, which embraced every possible point in connection with the subject and every possible difference of opinion.

Mr. Clay (then Speaker) spoke in eloquent condemnation of Jackson, and of all his dealings with the Indians from 1814 down. He made a rather amusing comparison of the treaty of Ghent, to which he had himself been one of the commissioners, with that of Fort Jackson, — amusing, because what resemblance could there be between a treaty arranged by the stately commission of Ghent and that concluded at the sword's point between Jackson and a Redstick Indian? He spoke quite beautifully of the wrongs of the Indians, a theme which unhappily admits of much piteous truth-telling, and arraigned, not only Jackson for oppressive tyranny, but the government for accepting his treaty and upholding his present acts. The President, he said, might weakly pardon the general, but the House should not shrink from its duty. "Let us assert our constitutional powers, and vindicate the instrument from military violation."

Mr. Clay's colleague, Mr. Johnson, of Kentucky, who had been a soldier himself, warmly defended Jackson, showing that had he taken any other course, he would have lost the fruits of victory, and the war be still continued. Mr. Rhea, of Tennessee, produced a fearful account of massacres and scalpings perpetrated by the Indians, of women butchered and children thrown into the flames; and depicted Jackson as a hero and a saviour; while one kind-hearted gentleman suggested that if the general had made a speech to the savages, reminding them of their crimes, and bidding them go and sin no more, had set them free, "it would better have accorded with the principles of humanity and with the laws of nations." The rhetoric is curious.

One border statesman declared, "I shall never fear that the keen prying sense of squint-eyed suspicion will ever find a spider's egg among the leaves, much less a serpent entwined about the branches of the full-grown wreath of laurel that adorns my general's brow. No, sir, Jackson's laurels can never scatter the seed that may hatch some future Tarquin to wound the tender breast of some chaste Lucretia."

The worst aspect of the affair was when the attack was turned from the general to the President. It could hardly be supposed that a victorious soldier who had just delivered the people of two States from a horrible danger would receive any severe rebuke for over-ardor in the field; but it might well be that the President, who it was claimed had permitted, or at least had not restrained that ardor, as the law demanded, might meet with severer judgment.

Mr. Tallmadge, of New York, closed his speech on this point with the words: —

"If I am correct in this position, General Jackson is justified, and the question only remains between the Executive and the country."

Mr. Lowndes did not rise until fourteen days of speechmaking had gone by; then he took up the defense of the President. Beginning, as he usually did, by recalling the statements of his opponents, he spoke directly to Mr. Clay, and said: —

"That before he entered into the consideration of the arguments on which he supposed that the determinations of the resolutions before the committee would principally depend, he should advert for a moment to some observations made by the Speaker in relation to the treaty of Fort Jackson. His absence from the country at the period of the treaty (at Ghent), and for some time after it,

sufficiently accounted for his information being incorrect on this topic. He had said that it would have been worthy the generosity of the government to have given some consideration to the Indians for the cession of land which it obtained. The records of the country would show that this *was* the course actually pursued. After the ratification of the treaty of Fort Jackson the journal of the commissioners who made it was laid before the House.

It contained a declaration of the chiefs who signed the treaty that they were not satisfied with its terms. The same paper furnished the proof that the cessions in the treaty were not made with the free consent of the chiefs and an exposition of the terms on which that consent would have been given. The House of Representatives, by, he believed, a unanimous vote, passed a bill which gave to the Indians the terms with which at the conference at Fort Jackson they had declared that they would be fully satisfied. This bill had become a law, and if the conditions of the treaty had been such as it was harsh to exact, the government, which gave a sum exceeding one hundred thousand dollars as an equivalent for a cession which by treaty was to have been made without any equivalent, had pursued precisely the conduct which the Speaker had declared he could have wished.

Mr. Lowndes, then courteously remarking that he will follow the example of the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Anderson), puts aside all irrelevant questions and goes straight to the heart of the matter. "Had General Jackson the right to take St. Marks and Pensacola? Had the President of the United States such a right? The rights of his subordinate officer were not greater than his own." He went into a statement of the constitutional powers of the President and of the Congress, pointing out

that the capture of these places was an act of war, and that Congress alone had the power of declaring war. He therefore considered it clear that the President had no right to authorize the capture of St. Marks and Pensacola; and the documents upon the table proved that such was the view which the President had taken of his own powers. To have retained Pensacola even until the meeting of Congress would have been to have changed the relations between the two countries. To such a change the power of the Executive is incompetent. To have retained Pensacola for a month or two against the will of Spain would have been war. The order for its restitution was therefore given promptly, and without the slightest intimation of any change in the condition of the Indian enemy, or of our own army, which would make its retention less necessary or less justifiable than its original capture.

He proved conclusively that the President's orders had been not to follow or attack the Indians within the Spanish frontiers, and *not* to occupy St. Marks or Pensacola. The responsibility thus rested with General Jackson alone. He then showed that the condition of things found by Jackson gave great provocation. The forts were not acting a neutral part; they were giving "aid and comfort, access and information, ammunition and provision to the Indians." "On these grounds they became associated in the war." He nevertheless maintained that Jackson was not authorized to occupy the forts, but dwelt on the difference between the acts of a soldier on the field pursuing his enemy and those of the civil government. What occasion, it has been said, is there to do anything on the subject? None, if General Jackson did not exceed the powers with which he was intrusted; but if he exerted one of the highest prerogatives of govern-

ment, which is confided to no less authority than the entire legislature of the country, are we willing to employ our own powers when we think it right, and when we do not to let any one else assume them? The character of General Jackson is said to be implicated in the vote proposed. The opinion of the world and of posterity will not be affected by that vote. There is nothing in the fact or the resolution to impeach his military glory or his patriotism. But the character of the country does not depend alone upon its military exploits. Its civil institutions, its liberty and laws, are elements of the national reputation quite as valuable. To suppress our disapprobation, if it were merited, would not raise the character of General Jackson, but would impair our own. He could, indeed, suppose cases where powers not given by the Constitution might be assumed by an Executive rightly and necessarily; but he could suppose none in which this assumption should be passed over in silent acquiescence. Indemnity might be extended to the officer and justification to the act, but the absolute necessity which could alone furnish that justification should be recorded by the vigilant guardians of the Constitution. He examined carefully the different circumstances of Ambrister and Arbuthnot, deciding that in his opinion the execution of the first was justifiable, but that of the latter was not. He implored the House not to run into hasty legislation on any of the disputed points. He could not willingly add to the evils of an act which he deeply regretted by making it the occasion of an improvident law.

I have given so much of this speech because it shows, I think, Mr. Lowndes's peculiar power, — a power not at once understood by the student of his speeches. On this occasion, almost every other

gentleman speaks with fire and fervor, appealing to the patriotism, the passions, and the prejudices of his hearers. Mr. Lowndes alone speaks calmly and judicially of the matter in hand, seeking first to ascertain the simple facts, and then the rights of the case. There is no oratory, no rhetoric, but a clear exposition of what has been done, and a statement of the laws and rights infringed or vindicated in the so doing, — what justice and character require of the country.

Every other speaker must have added something to the painful excitement of the House. He alone reminded them that its duty was not to inflame but to calm the people, and to show itself worthy of its powers as the lawmaking body of the nation.

The speech explains the remark often made of him, which has been quoted before, that he was "not the leader but the mediator of the House."

The House finally, after six weeks of constant debate, rejected all motions of censure (Mr. Lowndes voting with the minority that the seizure of the forts was illegal), but the affair was never forgotten. When Jackson was proposed for President it was popularly said that "it was absurd to choose a man as guardian of the laws who had in his whole life done nothing but break them."

This was Mr. Lowndes's last speech for the session. The House adjourned early in March, and he left immediately for a voyage to Europe. His health was failing and his doctors insisted upon the journey. He needed all the strength he could gain, for the painful Missouri struggle was already approaching.

His family remained in Washington that the boys' schooling might not be interrupted. The last sentence of the letter to Mr. Cheves, given before, is: —

Mrs. Lowndes and myself are very sensible of your kindness in proposing that she should spend the next summer with Mrs. Cheves. She desires me to say that it would be a great inducement to her to go to Philadelphia, that she might be with Mrs. Cheves or near her. But she has moved about so much for some years past that she is anxious for the next twelvemonth to be as stationary as she can. I tried some time ago to persuade her to join her brother, who will go to Ballstown, but I believe that she will confine herself to the ten miles square.

With great respect and regard,

Yours sincerely,

W. Lowndes.

This letter is written on the 4th of March from Washington. Later he writes to his wife: —

New York, March 9th, 1819.

I arrived here, my dear wife, about 8 o'clock last night, after a journey which some of my companions pronounced very distressing, but which would not have appeared even uncomfortable to me if it had not been carrying me from home. My first business this morning was to see my sister, who looks wonderfully better, fatter, and younger than when she left Charleston. She promises to go to Washington to see you, and perhaps she may tell me when I go to dine with her to-day when she will go.

The ship, which I have seen, is, they tell me, a very fine one, and I do not doubt it. Her accommodations are certainly excellent and my berth is as good as any in the vessel. You know I felt some solicitude as to whether the berth would be inclosed so as to give me a little cabin of my own to dress

in; they are all so, and I shall have my little cabin to myself. . . . We have but seven passengers, one of whom is a lady; . . . I have been introduced to one who seems to be a decent man.

You know that the children were all up when I left home, and I was not a little pleased with their farewell. Mr. Pinckney had a tear in his eye as well as the rest, and all felt, and all restrained, the distress which a father wishes his children to feel, when he leaves them. May they be happy, is my second wish in relation to them. May they deserve to be so, my first.

I was going to express the wishes for your welfare, and the sense of your kindness and virtues, which at the time of leaving the continent on which you are to remain it is natural that I should feel with peculiar strength; but as the subject places me in the situation in which I left my children I will not dwell on it. Be happy as you deserve to be. And to conclude with the wish which is directed, I hope, to the happiness of both: May we never again be separated as long as we now expect to be.

Your affect. husband,

W. Lowndes.

Mr. Lowndes's sister, Mrs. Brown, referred to in this and many other letters, was now living in New York, where her only son had married a Miss Livingston. Her affectionate kindness to her brother and his family ceased only with her life.

Liverpool, March 30th, 1819.

The date of my letter, my dear wife, will at once give you the information which it is the chief object of my letter to communicate; that of our arrival after a passage of 19 days, (as I think) of 20 days. . . . If I intended to fill my letters with what

I have seen and observed here, it would not be in my power as yet to write on other subjects. If I make any remarks on the country which I think worth communicating, I will consign them not to a journal, but to a sort of memorandum book which, if it be worth reading, you may read after my return. My letters, therefore, will be very short, but it will be only for want of opportunities if they are not very frequent.

He goes on with tender messages to the children, talk of the beloved plantations, and suggestions for her comfort, ending with, "I still hope that you may break the tediousness of the summer by some excursion. If Mrs. Madison invites you, I think that the visit would be better for health and pleasure than a long journey would be, but I wish you to take the journey, whatever that may be, which you should expect to find most pleasant."

No letters remain from this date to May 13, so that all record of personal experience is lost, with the exception of what can be gleaned from the note-book. The note-book is chiefly interesting at this date as showing the unwearying activity of mind, and constant search for what might be useful to his country, which made this tour rather a laborious search for information than a season of rest and refreshment. He begins with a careful computation of the different wealth of cities, the causes thereof, is the wealth real or apparent, Liverpool and New York, etc. He examines the vessels, the docks, the buildings, the navigation laws, and the manner of enforcing them, talks with merchants and manufacturers on all that they can tell him, and puts it down with "This may be useful" constantly recurring. Things are so changed that few of these notes would be interesting, and Amer-

ica has not now to go to Europe for machinery or invention.

He mentions dining with Mr. Roscoe, the historian of the Medici, and hears from him the story, then not known publicly, but often printed since, of the overthrow of the Catholic Emancipation and Dissenters' bill, by the personal action of the king, entailing the fall of the Grey and Grenville ministry. On leaving Liverpool he visits Birmingham, making studies of the canals, factories, etc., and the gentleness of the horses. "Everything here is trained."

Mr. E. S. Thomas, a native of Boston, but afterwards a resident of Charleston and Cincinnati, says in his "Reminiscences of Sixty-five Years:" —

"I was there [in Europe] in 1820 and followed directly in his [Mr. Lowndes's] path. The first question put to me upon almost all occasions was, 'Do you know Mr. Lowndes?' . . . His greatness and goodness were the theme of every tongue. Mr. Roscoe related to me the following anecdote: Mr. Lowndes was a very early riser, and so arranged matters with the porter of the Athenæum that he could have admission at an early hour; it was here he whiled away time until breakfast. One morning while he was thus engaged another gentleman entered, . . . they got into conversation together, neither having any knowledge of the other. . . . Some hours after, the Englishman met Mr. Roscoe and related to him his morning interview with 'the great unknown,' and said that he was 'the tallest man, the most unassuming man, he ever saw, and the man of the greatest intellect he ever heard speak.' Mr. Roscoe immediately replied, 'It is the great American, Lowndes, you have been conversing with. Come and dine with me to-morrow, and I will introduce you to him.'"

In London the same observations continue. On the docks, the dredging machines, the construction of bridges, etc.; also studies on the banks and the system of banking, and coinage. He seems to have been disappointed at his letters of introduction not having been more honored, and argues quaintly with himself why this should be.

27th. "I have been to the House of Commons. An American is struck with something of terseness and neatness, with the tone of good society on the part of all the speakers (with the exception of a few lawyers), and great disorder in the House. If they had had desks it could not have been greater. A bill to carry into effect the convention with the United States. Mr. Robinson said that it would be necessary to provide by law, etc., etc., *inter alia* for carrying into effect the Com. Convention prolonging the former law for ten years."

He has much conversation with some of the directors of the Bank of England, and declares that he finds "Mr. Brill, the great projector of large sea-going vessels, more interesting than all the lords and commons."

"As my scribbling is only to be seen by myself, I will say to myself that there is much more of the spirit of chivalry (so to flatter it) in England than of representative government. I have once got admission to the floor of the H. of Commons as a foreign gentleman, *not* as a member of a foreign legislature. But I dined to-day in company with two Italian counts, who have no more share in the government of their country than my cook has in that of America, and they are admitted frequently. I went upon the floor because it was convenient, and because I thought it a fair return for our courtesy to the English parliament; but if I have the opportunity (which in candor I do not expect) of

declining it, I shall, without assigning any reason for it, prefer fighting my way into the gallery of the Commons, and paying it into the Lords. . . . My two objects of observation in England are the people and the leading men. Thinking Rome like Mantua, 'Urbem quam Romam vocant, Melibœ, putavi stultus ego huic nostræ similem,' and having letters to Lords and Members of the Commons, I expected to see them; but as my letters have not procured me the compliment of a card, I must be satisfied to improve my acquaintance with the people. The manufactures and agriculture I hope to see something of upon my return from the Continent, where I shall go the sooner because I have been disappointed in the expectation of seeing something of the public men here. I do not think this is a want of hospitality. It is indeed probable that real hospitality is always less in populous societies saturated with strangers. . . . In England, I believe that a foreign Duke would be very hospitably treated by an Earl. I am sure that he would be by a baronet. If there is (as I believe) a difference on this point between England and the Continent, perhaps it may be that the English feel less respect for those who have any public station in other countries, and indeed less respect for other countries, and indeed that in England every man is trying to raise his situation by improving his acquaintance. . . . I am very sorry that I have not been able to get near enough to these great men to take their measure; but it would be impossible to be more kind and polite than some gentlemen have been to whom I brought no letters whatever."

"I have just returned from a visit to a highly improved seat and farm in Herefordshire (Mr. Durant's), where I have seen a great deal to admire;" describes wire fences, cast-iron sheds, subsoil tile

drainage, etc. "I did notice a circumstance at Mr. Durant's which is, I think, worth observing, to show how much, among the causes which discriminate, wealth predominates. He lives at the edge of two parishes. The rector of one and curate of the other live very near him. The rector has about £1,200 a year ($6,000), the curate £70 or £80 ($400), and though neighbours their families never visit. The rector, who supped with us, is a polite, well-informed man, and they say liberal, but my question, 'Does he visit?' seemed to surprise. It was not expected."

So there were snobs before the day of Thackeray.

He visited hospitals, asylums (which he did not think as well arranged as those in Philadelphia), and New Market, and returns once more to the House of Commons. "Attended the H. of C. A part of the business (not formal) done with six members. Still pleased with the style, in which there was great clearness of narration, and general neatness in the sentences, but except in Sir James Mackintosh great want of impressiveness. The 'hear him' is an exclamation given very profusely, and with at least as little sense of excellence as the clapping of a theatre. In praising Lord Camden's generosity some of the principal speakers attempted eulogiums, many of which studied. Tiernay fluent and clear, Castlereagh sensible, a little obscure, perhaps, to the hearer (his sentences too long), but his own views sufficiently clear. Wilberforce interrupted and not strong. Their greatest merit was that they were occasionally elegant. I could not help on another question contrasting the Secretary of War (Lord Palmerston) with Calhoun. The lord, if he had understood his subject, would have wanted language to explain it; but his knowledge was all of circumstances, not of essentials."

One would like to know who the persons were whom he did see; but he mentions in his diary only "where I dined yesterday I heard," or "at a breakfast I was told the secret of so and so," but no names. All those, of course, were in the letters to his wife, which have been lost. One note of invitation from Mr. Canning is found among his papers, and that is all.

He returns to the subject in the only letter to his wife which we have from London: —

My dear Wife, — I have put off writing . . . until the last hour of my stay in this city that you might hear of my being well just before I leave England. . . . I have rec'd yesterday the President's and your father's letters of introduction, and of course can make no use of them before my return. . . . I have so much reason to think that the Lords and Commons of this land disregard all letters of introduction (from the U. S.) that to spare myself the mortification, as an American, of finding the President's neglected, I think I shall keep it in my portefeuille.

You must not conclude that I have met with no hospitality. I have met with a great deal where I had no sort of right to expect it — the freest and largest; but, with the exception of Mrs. M.'s brother, it certainly has not been from those to whom I brought letters. It all illustrates the country, "you know;" but of all this say nothing until you hear more.

The President's letter was to Lord Holland; it still remains undelivered among his papers. With due submission it must be said that he made a mistake in not delivering it; for Lord Holland was the kindest hearted and most charming of

men, and belonged to the school of Fox, well inclined to Americans. A dinner at Holland House would have given the close observer much to see and hear; but by this time his national pride was evidently up, and he preferred asking no notice.

In France he enjoyed meeting Mr. Gallatin, then minister, and met interesting persons, Humboldt and others, at his table. He writes to his wife: —

"I do not find, as you may have expected, any difficulty from my want of French as yet. I do not mean that I always remember the word I want to use; on the contrary, I am often obliged to confess my ignorance and use a paraphrase. But I do not find this a serious obstacle to conversation, and if my readiness in the language improves as it has done in the last two days, I shall do very well in a week."

Through Mr. Gallatin Mr. Lowndes saw something of the public men of the day in France, and attended several meetings of the House of Deputies, which he thus describes: —

"House of Deputies. It is usual in England and even in France to laugh at this body, and perhaps it would provoke an incredulous sneer to remark that in some respects their mode of procedure is better than ours. In England the protraction of debate is prevented by clamour, and by the obstinacy of the House, which refuses to adjourn. By-the-bye, this obstinacy would bend were it not for the rule, at least a convenient one, which allows 40 out of to form a quorum. Their previous question is only a motion for postponement which is debated. In America we have borrowed the name of "the previous question," but changed entirely its character. With us it is a motion that the discussion shall close and the question be taken.

But as might be expected from a new application of an old machine, it is never employed without embarrassment. In France, when the Chamber of Deputies thinks that the discussion has lasted long enough, they move "*la cloture de la discussion.*" The importance of the subject, the short time the debate has lasted, any reason to show that the debate should go on is admitted. There is no difficulty in France, would be none in America in preventing a general discussion. Why not as easily as in a question to lay upon the table? The French, however, have the previous question, '*préalable*,' which they apply either to substantive motions or to amendments, and which, as in England, is substantially the motion that the question shall not be put.

"Their reading of speeches is of the very worst kind. When they speak *à l'improviste* they are fluent, and neither declamatory or affected. But as soon as they write a speech they press their scholastic rhetoric into service. Their manner of delivery, too, is somewhat tedious; their speeches are not committed to memory and spoken, nor are they simply read; their reading is interrupted and the sense perplexed by the awkward attempts at gesture of the orator. It puts me in mind of Roman acting, where one man furnished words and another gesture. Each was probably good of its kind, but in the French chamber each is bad. I see but one advantage in the practice. The more interesting the subject, and the rougher the altercation, the more certainly does this French assembly recur to its pen. The effect in moderating violence is here very plain, and in this view the plan is almost as good as if they were obliged to set their philippics to music and sing them.

"*We* have a difficulty to contend with in addi-

tion to many commonly remarked in America, in restraining useless and impertinent debate which exists nowhere else to the same extent. Public opinion of the town, and of the body to which they belong, has very little influence with members at Washington. The want of a public at Washington is in some measure the cause of the first, but both result in great measure from the dependence upon our constituents. "Populus me sibilat, sed ipse me plaudo contemplans nummuni in arca."

"The members may talk or leave their seats, and the galleries be emptied, — the member means his speech for his constituents and he goes on with it. A press which should state the truth, which speeches are heard and which not, would do some service, but such a press would not be supported."

Through Mr. Gallatin, also, Mr. Lowndes heard the following story of how Louis XVIII. managed a change of ministers. The Duc de Richelieu's ministry had split in a contest over the electoral laws, and the duke found it difficult to form a new one. He called to consult with the king (one of the most astute of men), told him of his failure, but said that in a day or two he would do better. "By-the-bye," says the king, "what do you think of that literary controversy which took place in Louis the Fourteenth's time?" They talked on literary subjects for some time, the king resisting every attempt to give the conversation a political turn. Upon the last attempt, the king reminded the duke of a pretty song written by his grandfather the courtier-general, and sang it to him. The conference closed and the duke retired. He had been unwell for some days, and fell down in a fit as soon as he returned to his own house. The king immediately sent for Décazes, etc. Décazes was a

personal favorite, and the king had wished for him him as minister all along.

Mr. Lowndes admired Paris extremely. "He could imagine nothing more beautiful than the part where the public buildings are," and found public affairs very interesting; but he was anxious to make a journey to the south before it should be too warm for comfort, and he left Paris after a ten days' visit, mentioning "General Lafayette says," the day before leaving.

He traveled *malle-poste*, he tells his wife, because in this way he could see something of the people of the country, his *compagnons de voyage;* and stopping at all the principal places, he hired a horse at each, and explored the vicinity by riding about. In this way he crossed the Pont du Gard and examined the Roman ruins of Nismes with great satisfaction. From Nice to Genoa he went in a small felucca, what should have been the pleasure of the voyage spoiled by the "incredible dirt" of his fellow passengers. At Milan he hired a carriage and, joined by an English officer, Colonel Temple, who had been in command of the Ionian Islands, traveled in six days over the Simplon to Geneva, and after a short stay, thence to Paris. Through all this rapid journey the note-book is filled with jottings, often curiously minute, of roads, bridges, canals, machines, roofing, agriculture, etc. All that he can learn either by sight or conversation that may serve his beloved country he sets down. "This may be applied to our roads in Carolina;" "this bridge is strong enough for our largest rivers." His notion of rest seems to have been learning; for when the *diligence* stopped, as it usually did for five hours in the middle of the day for repose, then he rode about as described above. His health had certainly improved wonder-

fully, for on the day of his return to Paris he says to his wife, "I assure you that not only am I well, but I have not had a moment's indisposition on my journey." At Paris he found letters telling of some financial trouble in America; but he answered cheerfully: —

"I am, as you may suppose, sorry to hear of the distresses of different classes in America, and particularly of the failure in trade of persons with whom I am acquainted. As to the country itself, I feel when I hear of such dangers and difficulties much as I do when I meet with descriptions of the dangers and difficulties of the hero in a novel. I am sure to find all removed in the last page. Do not think that I would speak slightingly of individual distress, but there are many people in Europe who confound the disappointments of individuals (to which the enterprising character of our people peculiarly exposes them) with the embarrassment and almost the decline of the country itself, so that I am forward in expressing here the mixed sentiment which I feel, of sympathy for the individual, and of proud confidence in the resources of the country, whose advance in power and wealth these distresses cannot prevent and can hardly interrupt."

His impressions of the French he sums up in this way, saying first modestly that it is a mistake to trust too much to such rapid observations: "The disposition to place this [commercial] confidence is greater in England, and it must be admitted, too, that the inducement to place it is stronger. With my little opportunities I am satisfied that it is common in England in the smallest business to set out on the principle that character is more important than the profits of each particular bargain can be. In France, each sale is a conflict

between buyer and seller." He instances the bargaining, the two prices for everything, and ends, "Shall I say the truth? Honesty and its companion confidence are, I think, less common in France." Nevertheless, he liked Paris, as who does not? especially the theatres; the *salons* to which he had been invited he found dull. He mentions visiting Mrs. Lowndes's old schoolfellow Madam Ney's "superb hotel" (but unfortunately the letter is so torn as to be undecipherable), and says that he has declined the honor of being presented to the king. After a fortnight spent in Holland and Belgium, where he saw many things most instructive to the rice-planter which he would have liked to apply to the Horse Shoe (pumping engines, etc.), but where he found his want of Dutch very embarrassing, he returned to England. The notebook of this second English visit is entirely occupied with accounts of docks, breakwaters, lighthouses, and machinery of all kinds. A letter to Mrs. Lowndes, dated Birmingham, September 10, 1819, tells her that he is on his way to Glasgow to "visit the great highland canal;" and also that he had been compelled to walk twenty miles the day before in order to get back from Warwick Castle, which he had gone to visit, and "where the Prince Regent having arrived the day before, they had the bad taste to prefer his company to mine." He had made the walk in five hours without over-fatigue, which shows how much he had benefited by his travels. He says: "A part of the two preceding days I passed with Lord Gambier, and as I have had but little opportunity of talking of lords, I might write to you about this nobleman. . . . But as I like him too well to be willing to draw a very imperfect likeness, and yet do not want to fill my letter with him, I must reserve him for parlour chat.

I certainly never became in so short a time more familiarly acquainted with an untitled man. His family, too, are pleasant," etc. Lord Gambier was a naval lord, had been in command of the British fleet in the attack upon Copenhagen, and was afterward head of the commission at the treaty of Ghent.

Mr. Lowndes also speaks of great kindness received from a Mr. Shaw to whom he had brought a letter from Mr. Sergeant, representative from New York, and adds quaintly, "I do not attribute all this to Sergeant's letter, which was in common form. *I improved my opportunities.* By-the-bye, I certainly never in my life have laboured half so hard to ingratiate myself even with people whom I have accidentally met as since I have been in England, and as to my success, I have often thought as Bonaparte said on raising the siege of Acre, 'but a few days more, and the place would have been mine.' I am sure that I have never succeeded so well in making favourable impressions, and never derived fewer advantages from them. The only consequence of all this is, that I have got a habit which I hope to lose before I return to America, of talking myself, and trying to make others talk a great deal too much."

An accomplished scholar points out to the writer that neither of the two quotations given above is accurate. The first from Virgil (Eclogues, I. 21) reads in the original, "*quam dicunt Romam.*" Mr. Lowndes has it, "*quam Romam vocant;*" and the second from Horace (Satires, I. 166) is in the original, "*Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo. Ipse domi simil ac numeros contemplor in arca.*" Mr. Lowndes has it, "*Populus me sibilat, sed ipse me plaudo contemplans nummuni in arca;*" "but," he goes on to say of these quotations, writ-

ten hurriedly in traveling, and of course without book, "while not accurately cited they are still good Latin, and express substantially the sense of the original. In fact, to my mind the departures from the text are a better evidence that William Lowndes was a good Latin scholar than an exact quotation would have been. It is the carelessness of the native, not the ignorance of the foreigner."

Mr. Lowndes returned to America in October, bringing with him "the prettiest toy in England, a perfect little steam-engine to play with next summer at the Grove. It shall saw wood, grind corn, raise water, turn a lathe, etc. Although I have got for fifty guineas what would have cost me 250 if I had ordered it, I am afraid that I have made rather a foolish purchase. I do not believe, however, that the largest machine in England is more perfect in all its parts."

As an offset, perhaps, to this little piece of extravagance he says in his note-book, "Sent from Paris a box of lace and millinery and one of silk stockings."

He also brought with him a number of books, many of them handsome and valuable, as an addition to the library which he had been forming since he was fourteen. This library at the time of his death completely lined the walls of a room thirty feet square, besides covering many desks and tables. It comprised, besides handsome editions of the classics, and those works of history and literature which might have been expected from his chosen vocation in life, many French books, everything (then) new upon natural science, physics, and agriculture. Unhappily it was completely destroyed in the great fire of 1861, only a few odd volumes which had been separated from the rest escaping.

But to a man of his habit of mind no material acquisition can have been as precious as the sentiment which remained to him from his journey, expressed in a letter: "Nothing can make a man so proud of being an American as traveling in Europe."

CHAPTER IX

MISSOURI STRUGGLE: ILLNESS

1819–1822

Mr. LOWNDES reached Washington before the opening of Congress and wrote to General Pinckney: —

WASH. Nov'r. 11th, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR, — I arrived a few days since and found my family well. My visit to Europe has been more interesting and amusing to me than I expected, and yet my expectations were not low, or I should not have undertaken the voyage. I have been fortunate, too, in my passages, as I made two in little more than the time supposed necessary for one. It is very gratifying to see the improvements which the arts have made, especially in England, but it is much more so to believe, as I do very sincerely, that in those which are most worthy of imitation we shall improve upon our models.

To Mr. Cheves Mr. Lowndes had written fully from London, upon the supply of specie for the Bank of the United States (California being yet afar off), giving information derived from the Mr. Shaw already mentioned, and from some of the directors of the Bank of England with whom he had become acquainted. He now wrote again (first speaking with great feeling of the alarming illness of Mr. Calhoun), to introduce another mer-

chant who might assist in this difficult business, the supply of specie. It is through the kindness of the grandson of Mr. Cheves, Langdon Cheves, Esq., that these letters have been placed in the hands of the present writer. Unfit as she feels herself to profit by their discussions of banking, currency, bullion, etc., she is consoled by the knowledge that an admirable account of this chapter of the financial history of the country, the management of the Bank of the United States, has been prepared by the great-granddaughter of Mr. Cheves, Miss Louise Cheves Haskell.

After thoroughly discussing all these questions, Mr. Lowndes adds in a letter dated Washington, November 21, 1819: —

"I do not know whether you have ever heard me confess my almost indiscriminate skepticism in respect to historical narration. Yet with this feeling as strong as ever upon me, I have a very great inclination to attempt the annals of a short period, and thus on my own principles to add to the number of fables for grown men. Could you now and then, at an odd moment, when the business of the bank allows you such, note in the historical way, any of the strange facts of which we have been witnesses? Three words sometimes are sufficient to bring to our minds what we have forgotten. Have you still Mr. Gallatin's project for carrying on the war? and if you have, have you any objection to giving me a copy? The truth is that this fancy, which occurred to me in the idleness of my last voyage, has gone no farther, and possibly will not go, than to the collection of a very few articles. I have mentioned it to no one else, because, unimportant as it is, I should be sorry that it should be known."

This was a favorite plan, and he frequently refers

to it in his letters of the next two years. In a note-book are some of the materials which he intended to use. It begins, "In this book I propose to collect the historical anecdotes which I hear, i. e. those not obtained from published books." Then follow a number of anecdotes chiefly derived from conversations with Mr. Madison, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Quincy, Mr. Monroe, Mr. Gallatin, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Forsyth, etc. The latter gentlemen had all been foreign ministers at exciting periods; but with time the interest of many of the stories has lapsed, and others have already been given to the public.

He had paid a visit to Mr. Madison in 1817, and to Jefferson, at Monticello, at the same time. The following is curious as an opinion of the great Virginian orator.

"He [Mr. Madison] thought Patrick Henry a man of genius, exactly suited to the body to which he belonged. He did not believe that he would maintain a high rank in the present Congress. To express my own opinion as to his meaning, it was that I, whom he thought a mere logician, would not estimate him highly. Mr. Madison thought the journals or debates of the convention should have no influence in the construction of the Constitution. An argument was often used in defense of a clause which its friends generally thought erroneous, but they had no interest in answering it.

"Mr. Madison has been more agreeably disappointed by the beneficial operation of that part of the Federal Constitution which relates to the Judiciary than by any other. He thought it necessary, and had voted in favour of such a provision that Congress should have a negative upon the State laws."

"Mr. Jefferson told me, that in his administra-

tion, when a war seemed probable with Spain, he directed General Wilkinson to state what number of troops would be necessary to conquer Cuba and Mexico. For Mexico, he required only provisions, landed at Vera Cruz. For Cuba, 20,000 men to take and hold it.

"I do not think General Wilkinson's estimates entitled to much credit. I remember seeing (in the first session of the Twelfth Congress) a memoir written by him, which proved that in a war with England Louisiana could not be defended by less than 20,000 men."

There are many other notes, but of course the plan came to naught, the time was too brief; but it served to please and occupy some weary hours.

Congress met December 6th, and in a few days Mr. Lowndes was appointed chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and became at once engrossed in public business.

The fateful question of the admission of Missouri to the Union, which had been opened in the last Congress, was to be the chief occupation of this; but before Mr. Lowndes had said more than a few words upon it he had the pleasanter duty of presenting a motion for the relief of the family of Commodore Perry, a measure which afterwards produced the most carefully reported of all his speeches. The law then was that only the families of those men who died from wounds should be pensioned. Perry had died from ill health consequent upon service, and the relief was not due to his family, therefore the resolution: "That the Committee on Naval Affairs be instructed to inquire into the expediency of extending to the widow of Captain Oliver Hazard Perry, the provision which is now made by law for the widows and children of naval officers who die from wounds received in action."

In support of the resolution, Mr. Lowndes merely said that "it was conceived that the family of Commodore Perry was embraced by the existing laws which provide for pensions, as it was not to be supposed the generosity or magnanimity of Congress did not intend to comprehend such a case; but as this appeared to be doubted, he had deemed it proper to propose the inquiry which he had submitted."

"Resolution adopted *nem. con.*"

The affair is remarkable for one of the very few compliments which John Randolph ever paid to a living man (of dead ones he spoke beautifully); he said: —

"He rose to offer a motion. He believed it would be very difficult for any member of this House — certainly it was not possible for him — to keep pace with the honorable gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. Lowndes] in the race of honor and public utility. That gentleman had by the motion which had just been adopted anticipated him," etc., etc., and after a short and beautiful speech he moved "that provision be made by law for the support of the family of the late Oliver Hazard Perry, Esq., of the United States Navy, and for the education of his children."

Mr. Lowndes "concurred with great cordiality," and confessed his own motion to be "very inferior."

Mr. Hazard, of Rhode Island (Perry's State), offered thanks to all, and the resolution being adopted, a committee of three was appointed to bring in a bill, etc.

Yet so slow was Congress that it was not for nearly a year later that Mr. Lowndes was able to write to his wife the *only* exultant letter to be found among his papers.

January 28th, 1821.

I have received more gratification lately from carrying our bill for the relief of Perry's family through the House than anything has given me for a long time. It is but $1,000 a year, but I believe they can live comfortably upon that. Randolph was unable to say anything in favour of it [Randolph was sick]. The House was, with some opposition, induced to take it up, expecting, as half of them told me, to be amused by a speech from Randolph, and to reject the bill by a majority of 4 to 1. Indeed, I did not converse with six persons who were in favour of it. I made a very short speech, which, however, was the result of the best effort I was able to make in its favour. It succeeded better than anything I ever did. We rejected almost unanimously an amendment which without my speech I am sure would have been carried by a very large majority [an amendment to limit the pension to five years], and ultimately the bill passed the House by a majority of ten votes. I believe there is no doubt of its passage in the Senate. In all this there may be vanity, but I hope there is not; I was so anxious for success and so doubtful of it that I was exceedingly delighted when it occurred. . . . I would not give my speech to Gales [for the paper], because I don't want the character of a maker of fine speeches, but I send it to you in the hope that it may please you.

Curiously enough, in the account of the passage of this bill in the "Abridged Debates" Mr. Lowndes's name is not mentioned. No one would know that he had then, January 23, 1821, spoken at all, but after his death, the speech, which he had written out at the request of his friend, Senator Silsbie, of Massachusetts, was inserted by Mr. Ben-

ton in the "Debates" as a "Supplemental Speech." Being printed there in full, — the only one of his speeches so printed, — it is not given here, although the MS. copy sent to his wife is still preserved by his descendants.

The efforts being made at this present time for the establishment of the rights of neutrals and the protection of private property upon the high seas give a peculiar interest to the following words of Mr. Lowndes taken from Niles's "Register." He had, as has been remarked, steadily opposed privateering, even when it seemed most advantageous to the United States, and now it came to him as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations to present a report on two "Memorials of citizens of Ohio, praying the suppression of privateering." The report says: —

"They [the memorialists] are considered by the Committee as recommending such a change in these laws as shall exempt the property of individuals from capture, either by public or private ships of war, at least when it does not consist of contraband articles, and is not destined to a blockaded port. The general benevolence which is expressed, as well as the opinion of Dr. Franklin which is referred to by the memorialists, seem to prove that it is their wish that the property which subserves no purpose of war should be as safe upon the sea as upon the land, *not* that it should be secured from private citizens to be left exposed to public ships, etc.

"It cannot indeed be presumed that the memorialists should wish a change in maritime law, which would produce very little diminution in the dangers of our commerce in a conflict with any considerable naval power, while it would wrest from our hands what we have hitherto considered as one of our prin-

cipal means of annoyance. It is the security of fair and harmless commerce from *all* attack which the memorialists must desire. It is the introduction of a system which shall confine the immediate injuries of war to those whose sex and age and occupations do not unfit them for the struggle. If these are the wishes of the memorialists, the Committee express their concurrence in them without hesitation.

"The Committee think that it will be right in the Government of the United States to renew its attempt to obtain the mitigation of a barbarous code whenever there shall be probability of success. They do not doubt it will do so.

"The Committee are not unaware that the United States are better situated than any other nation to profit by privateering, but they are far from opposing this calculation to a regulation, which, if the powers of the world would adopt it, they too should consider as a 'happy improvement' in the law of nations."

At the close of the Crimean War, a correspondence took place between Secretary Marcy and the European powers. Mr. Marcy's letter seems to have been anticipated by the report above, and also the efforts which at this present moment (June, 1899) the representatives of America are making at the Hague in the cause of civilization and humanity.

From December, 1819, to March, 1820, the debates upon what was long known as the "Missouri Question" went on. Missouri, a portion of the Louisiana purchase, having now sufficient population, applied to the government to be received as a State. Maine applied about the same time. The bill brought in was simply "to authorize the people of the Missouri territory to organize a Constitution

and State government, and for the admission of the same into the Union." Almost instantly came the amendment prohibiting "the further introduction of slavery or involuntary servitude except for the punishment of crimes," etc., and "that all children born within the limits of the said State, after the admission thereof into the Union, shall be free at the age of twenty-five years." This meant that there were already many slaves in Missouri, and looked to the emancipation of their children. The House sat as committee of the whole, and North and South for the first time stood solidly against each other.

It is an old story now, and it is needless to go into it. The simple constitutional question, "Has Congress power to limit the constitution of a State which complies with demands already prescribed?" was answered differently according to latitude, as such questions have been answered since. When one reads the speeches it seems wonderful that war was not declared then and there. The most opprobrious epithets were hurled at the slaveholders, who were quite able to take their own part. The real difficulty, screened by the humanitarian question, was the balance of power, as Rufus King, of New York, candidly declared. If the whole Louisiana purchase were cut into slave States, the South would gain the majority; if slavery were excluded, then the North, which held it already, would gain such supremacy that the South would find herself hopelessly outvoted. The Southerners knew well that to them it was life or death. That measure carried, their whole system of society would go, all soothing assurances to the contrary notwithstanding, and Macon of North Carolina meant just what he said when he declared, —

"It may be a matter of philosophy and abstrac-

tion with the gentlemen from the East, but it is a different thing with us. They may philosophize and *town meeting* about it as much as they please, but, with great submission, sir, they know nothing about the question."

In this controversy Mr. Lowndes at first spoke but little. He was one of the committee appointed to confer with the Senate, and as such spoke briefly in support of the compromise offered by the committee of conference, and urged with great earnestness the propriety " of a decision which would restore tranquillity to the country, which was demanded by every consideration of discretion, of moderation, of wisdom, and of virtue."

This compromise (the first on this question) allowed Missouri to make her constitution unrestricted, but forbade slavery in all other parts of the Louisiana purchase north of thirty-six degrees six minutes, north latitude.

This bill was voted on and carried on the 2d of March, 1820, and gave peace for a time.

The remainder of the session was chiefly occupied with the Spanish treaty and the revision of the tariff, on both of which questions Mr. Lowndes spoke at length.

Having himself proposed the first tariff for protection, he was deeply concerned now that the useful instrument should not become a weapon of offense. The manufacturing interest claimed such large increase of duties that he could but be alarmed. In his speech, April 20, 1820, he went largely into the danger of favoring one industry at the expense of others, contrary to every principle of political economy. He went considerably into detail as to where it was proposed to do this, and dwelt most especially on the injury which an excessive tariff discouraging navigation would be to the commerce,

the shipping interests of a country. The East Indian trade, he said, "would be almost destroyed by this tariff, and the East Indian trade gave bread to hundreds of hardy sailors, sailors who were invaluable to the nation in time of war," — thus returning, now that the end of his career was so near, to his first and abiding interest, the navy.

In November, 1820, Congress met again. Mr. Clay resigned the speakership, and Mr. Lowndes was among those spoken of as his successor. This appears to have been the *only* public position which Mr. Lowndes ever desired, but he was doomed to disappointment. Party spirit was naturally high, and Mr. Taylor, of New York, who had been one of the leaders on the Missouri question, was elected after three days of incessant balloting. "Mr. Lowndes had been within one vote of the requisite number," says John Quincy Adams in his journal, "but fourteen were diverted from him by the candidacy of General X——, of G——, a man ruined in fortune and reputation, yet who commanded votes enough to defeat the election of Lowndes, a man of irreproachable character, amiable disposition, and popular manners."

Mr. Lowndes took the disappointment philosophically; his wife had some natural regrets. He wrote to her on the 30th November a very characteristic letter. The first page is entirely filled with the threatened ailment of one of the children; then comes, —

"I am very sorry that you are so much mortified at the loss of my election. I am not sensible that I have felt any mortification. I do not think it was a personal question; but Mr. Taylor was preferred principally because he was a Northern man, and some of his votes were given to him under an engagement made the last session, when I refused to

serve. Some of those gentlemen from the North, indeed, who had asked me to serve and pressed it, finding that I would not, had entered into the engagement to secure a Northern Speaker. The most awkward part of the business was receiving their apologies. I told them that I had certainly no reason to complain, that I was very sensible of the compliment which they paid in first proposing me, and of the obligation afterwards imposed of voting for a different candidate.

"Perhaps one consideration ought to have mortified me more than it did. The strong objection to me certainly arose from the fear that I might employ the power I should have as Speaker to affect the result of the Missouri question. This was perhaps a compliment to my talents at the expense of my honour. I have no doubt but that I shall have more weight on that and on every question as a member than as Speaker, but I shall be unable to withdraw myself, as I hoped to have done, from the active business of the House."

This is followed by minute directions for "deep trench ploughing," "sowing lucerne," and remarks on making the Grove a "grass farm."

Congress was no sooner organized than the Missouri question came up again. Missouri, having been authorized at the last session to "form a constitution," now presented one with a clause prohibiting free negroes or mulattoes from settling within her boundaries. This instantly provoked opposition. A committee of three, Mr. Lowndes, Mr. Sergeant, and Mr. Smith, were appointed to report on the constitution.

Mr. Lowndes's report has always been considered one of the best ever brought in to Congress. (Abridged Debates, vol. vii. page 6.) It is too long to be given here and too good to be abridged.

It examines the case so calmly and dispassionately that Mr. Lowndes was asked ironically whether he came from North or South. Yet, yielding no jot or tittle of State's Rights, the report asserted that Missouri, having complied with the orders of Congress at the last session, was already a State, and as such entitled to admission to the Union. It stated the facts and precedents bearing upon the case, as, for instance, that Delaware had a similar clause in her constitution, and pointed out what would be the consequences of exposing the interests of the people and the government to the disorganized condition consequent upon rejection. It urged that, the State being admitted, doubtful clauses should be submitted to the Judiciary of the United States, as the last authority, concluding, "If Congress shall determine neither to expound clauses which are obscure, nor to decide constitutional questions which must be difficult and perplexing, equally interesting to old States, whom our construction could not, as to the new whom it ought not to coerce, the rights and duties of Missouri will be left to the determination of the same temperate and impartial tribunal which has decided the conflicting claims, and received the confidence of the other States. . . . The committee recommend . . . that the State of Missouri shall be, and is hereby declared to be, one of the United States of America, and is admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original States in all respects whatever."

Mr. Lowndes moved to refer the resolution to the House in committee of the whole, and remarked that it should not be taken up without full notice to all parties concerned; and if no other person did, he should himself, when proposing to call for the consideration of the report, give a day or two notice of his intention to do so. Whilst up he

took occasion to say, that "this report, as indeed all reports of committees, must be considered as the act of a majority, and not as expressing the sentiments of every individual of the committee." The report certainly did not express the sentiments of Mr. Sergeant, of Pennsylvania (the second member), for in the subsequent debate he became the chief opponent of the resolution.

On the 6th of December, Mr. Lowndes opened the debate on this new branch of the subject by a speech which is given in full in the "Abridged Debates," vol. vii. page 12. It is of this speech that Benton says that the first words were lost to the reporter from the noise made by members leaving their seats to get near him.

"Mr. Lowndes being one of those, so rare in every assembly, around whom members clustered when he rose to speak, so that not a word should be lost, where every word was to be luminous with intelligence, and captivating with candor. This clustering around him, always the case with Mr. Lowndes when he rose to speak, was more than usually eager upon this occasion, from the circumstances under which he spoke; the circumstances of the Union verging to dissolution, and his own condition verging to the grave. By his efforts and those of other patriots the Union was saved. No skill or care could stay his own march to that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns."

Mr. Thomas, of Massachusetts, quoted above, says "He was listened to, as to the oracles of truth."

The speech, carefully reported, is interesting, conveying as it does the views of an absolutely just and upright man, learned in the lore of statesmanship, not only on the particular case but upon the duties

of Congress and members of Congress towards the work of their own body. Could they grant a right at one session and resume it at another? Could Congress declare that unconstitutional in a new State which was constitutional in an old? Should Congress take upon itself to decide such questions as properly belonged to the Judiciary? Was not the Judiciary the proper tribunal for such questions at this? (the right to exclude free negroes) etc. The speech was said to have produced great effect; but the ranks were set for battle, not for debate, and after another week of "talking," as Carlyle would say, the bill for the admission of Missouri was lost by a strict North and South vote, 93 against 79.

In writing to his wife Mr. Lowndes says: "I send you a terribly long speech on the Missouri question. If you will try to read it, I advise you only to attempt the last two pages."

Mr. Benton says that this is the last considerable speech which he ever made; but he spoke several times in the succeeding weeks, briefly, on the bank question, and also on the motion of Mr. Archer, of Virginia, to "inquire into the condition of things in Missouri," and presented a memorial from citizens of Missouri, which the House refused to consider.

He still had great hopes of being able to effect a compromise by inducing Missouri voluntarily to remove the offensive provision from her constitution (which she ultimately did), and there are notes hardly more legible than shorthand, on scraps of paper, on this subject. But his health was giving way fast; others appear to have been more sensible than he himself was of the decline, and when, on February 10th, Mr. Clay, who had been absent for a great part of the session, revived the question of the South American Provinces, he was

not in the House. Mr. Reid, of Georgia, moved to "postpone consideration owing to the absence of the gentleman at the head of the Committee on Foreign Affairs." Mr. Clay answered "that he had conferred with his friend the head, etc., etc., who was absent from a slight indisposition, and did not wish to be sent for."

This "slightin disposition" was the beginning of the end, for, although he lived eighteen months longer, he never was well again. He wrote to his wife on February 13, 1821: —

My dear Wife, — As I know that you do not like to be kept in ignorance as to what of good or ill may betide me, I find myself obliged to tell you, that my old acquaintance the rheumatic fever has paid me his decennial visit. [It will be remembered that it was rheumatic fever contracted in England at the age of six which was the beginning of all his ill health.] I believe that the attack is not likely to be as violent as the preceding ones, and, having been bled twice at its first appearance, a good deal of benefit is likely to have resulted from that specific. . . . I have scarcely any rheumatism except in my limbs; my body and head are almost entirely exempt. My fever, too, is much reduced, and yet I do not mean to tell you that I am nearly well, for I find it impossible to go to the House even upon this all-interesting Missouri question. My friends think that they will carry it to-day. By-the-bye, my right hand and arm are by a good deal my worst limb, so that you will excuse a short letter.

Mr. Clay had taken charge of the cause of Missouri, but she was not admitted for another month — expunging the disputed clause.

The illness continued to the end of the session, and the notes to Mrs. Lowndes are curious tales of bleeding, etc. How any one who chanced to fall ill ever recovered in those days is a wonder. In one letter he says: "I am growing very uneasy in the apprehension that I shan't be able to go away for some time, and then by water. I have a strong repugnance to the change of plan, but may be obliged to submit to both. Your letters and the children's are the only things I can read, and it seems to me that I get fewer of these than I used."

Mrs. Lowndes was unable at this time to go to her husband, and his sister, Mrs. Brown, with her usual kindness, offered to come from New York to nurse him, but he declined the affectionate offer. By the 27th he was able to write: —

"I continue to grow better. . . . I should have been out to ride but the weather has been impossible, wet and windy. It is a little mortifying when one's interest in every public measure is so much heightened by having thought of it for two or three months to be excluded from Congress just at the time when it begins to act effectually. I ought, however, to be satisfied to have escaped with so little pain [!], and to have the hope of seeing my family so much sooner than I could have hoped two weeks ago."

March 5th, 1821.

My dear Wife, — I have been persuaded by Mr. Calhoun to stay a day or two with him before I leave this, and I was the more ready to adopt the plan because I thought that a change of residence might be a preparation for traveling. With all the kindness of the family here I find it so. If no accident happens, my present determination is to go to Norfolk if the weather be good on Thursday, though I think it very likely that I shall stay there quietly two or three days before I move further.

On the next day he wrote to Mr. Cheves in Philadelphia: —

"The Missouri bill has terminated in a way which I think will leave very little ill will in the minds of the members of any section in our country."

Missouri had been admitted a week before, on condition that she should refuse no rights to "citizens of the United States which they enjoyed elsewhere." This was the second compromise on the admission of this State, and the vote was close, 86 to 82.

Mr. Lowndes it is said felt keenly the impossibility of participating in these final scenes. He had naturally hoped to have had the leadership at the moment, but his friend Judge Huger told the writer that when he (Judge H.) had expressed his regret, Mr. Lowndes answered cheerfully, "It was probably best so. Clay had more influence with the Western men than I, and could persuade them to conciliatory measures."

The summer was spent at home, between the Grove and Sullivan's Island; his health slightly improved, but many of his friends saw that the end was near. His family, apparently, did not. The friend often quoted, Judge Huger, who lived near General Pinckney's island house, said that he could never forget that last summer, when he would lie still upon a couch, looking almost like a dead man, but with bright eyes and eager talk. "Upon politics?" asked the listener. "He *never* talked politics," was the answer; "he talked on questions of national interest, or on agriculture, or books, or on what the new inventions would do for the country. Always on *great* subjects. That was the character of his mind. And the weaker his body got, the brighter was his intellect." By the

autumn he thought himself well enough to return to Washington, but stayed at home until the end of December, when he took his seat and spoke briefly upon Transactions in Florida and some other subjects. His last work of importanee was upon the 11th of March, 1822, when he presented a report for the "Select Committee on Weights and Measures," proposing ways for insuring accuracy and uniformity. The report shows much labor and painstaking inquiry into every branch of the subject. His votes are recorded until near the end of the session, but he never spoke again.

It was at this time that Mr., afterwards President, Buchanan made what he himself considered to be the best speech of his life. It was in opposition to the Bankrupt Aet then proposed (Mareh 12, 1822).

Mr. Curtis, in his Life of Mr. Buehanan, says: "The reason was that he had derived much assistance from conversations with Mr. Lowndes upon the subject. That great and good statesman was then suffering under the disease which proved fatal to him soon after. He attempted to make a speech against the bill, but was compelled to desist by physical exhaustion before he had fairly entered upon his subject."

There are several letters at this time, written (probably beeause unfit for other work) at greater length than was usual with him.

The first, written on the 12th of February, 1822, says: "I have been making inquiries here about the expense of living at New Port, where I have a great disposition to spend the summer if you do not object to it. . . . A summer there would probably be beneficial to the health of both of us. I am *not* siek, but I do not feel as I did before the rheumatism. If we cannot go to New Port I

should have half a mind to hire a house on Sullivan's Island. . . . I have many reasons for wishing to spend a summer at the North, but unluckily I see many difficulties in the execution of the plan, — let me know your thoughts.

"You will have the pleasure next winter of seeing a painting in Charleston by Mr. Morse, of the representative chamber, with the portraits of sixty or seventy members. As usual I refused to sit, but he took my face from the gallery. As it is a profile, and I never saw my own, I cannot judge of the likeness, but I did not know it when I saw it. They say that it is a caricature, but so good a one that it is impossible to mistake it. The artist is very urgent that I should give him one sitting that he may endeavour to improve it, but I should then lose the compliment which I am told is now paid me by those who see the picture, that I am not quite as ugly as I am represented."

This picture — the only likeness of Mr. Lowndes except a miniature which shows him as a lovely boy of six years old — now hangs in the Corcoran gallery in Washington, D. C., and it must be confessed that his descendants are glad to know that it *was* a caricature. Nevertheless, with some slight reduction of the features, the likeness to his daughter, Mrs. Rutledge, becomes so strong that it is greatly to be regretted that he did not allow the proposed alterations to be made. Taken from a point much above him, the eyes are entirely lost, and the whole face is, as it were, seen in reverse.

It may not be amiss to quote here the description which Mr. Chase takes from Mr. Grayson's Memoir of Mr. Lowndes's personal appearance. He says:

"The personal appearance of Mr. Lowndes was remarkable; for his stature exceeded six feet six inches in height, and he was as slender as he was

tall. Though loose limbed he managed his length easily. His features were large, while the face was thin, long, and pale. [His hair was black.] He was habitually grave and thoughtful, and never relaxed into idle conversation or even social raillery, yet — *comitate condita gravitæ* — he was neither solemn nor severe, and his smile though rare was said to be inexpressibly engaging. His habitual seriousness was relieved by the presence of his children, and he was always cheerful when they were with him, or came to be tossed in his long arms. . . . His manners and address were full of dignity, and he was as invariably courteous in private life as he was in his public career. . . . As he was considerate and attentive to others, he was modest in his own share of conversation, and while insensibly guiding it, never took the exclusive control which would so often have been willingly accorded him. Conversation in his presence never became monologue."

It is curious that, at this time when his ill health must have been apparent to all, the President should have offered, and Mrs. Lowndes have wished him to accept, the mission to France; so it was, however, and he alludes to it in the next letter, the longest, perhaps, which he ever wrote: —

March 24, 1822.

As to my health, you may assure yourself that I do not intend to deceive you. I have been the better part of the session in the uncomfortable state of being neither well nor very sick. This you must understand because it is unfortunately very much your own case. I think that I have generally some fever and am hardly ever free from cough. . . . My great ailment, however, is weakness. I have never recovered my strength since the

rheumatism last year. I am sorry that you do not agree with me as to the French Mission. One of my reasons for being unwilling to go is derived from the belief, that in the present temper of the French Government it is not likely that a treaty could be formed. A stronger reason is derived from my unwillingness to correspond with Mr. Adams, who is so imprudent (or rather so selfish, for to avoid responsibility himself he exposes the character of his correspondents, and the interests of the government to risk) that I should either suppress in my letters to him what I ought to communicate, or be mortified by the publication of confidential communications. If these do not seem to you to be good reasons, I must add that in my actual state of health I do not like to undertake a public duty which will keep me from this country two or three years, and which will not always allow me to spend my time in the place or the manner which may be most conducive to my health. As to the effect of a visit to France upon our children, it is probably too doubtful to influence our decision. Becky's lessons in music and dancing might be better, but if she be fond of these arts she can learn them well enough for America in America. Two years at Westminster would probably do Pinckney some good, but we might send him there without going ourselves. It would, I confess, be with great difficulty that I should part with him, for I have associated him and his studies so much with my plans for the next summer, and even the next winter, that I should feel his absence very keenly. This, however, has nothing to do with the question of sending him away; if we are satisfied that it is for his interest he must go. . . . I proposed to you two plans for next summer, to take a house at Sullivan's Island or at New Port. You write nothing

about your own health, but I think New Port would be better for you than the Island, and I have become, since those plans were proposed, so much weaker that I think it is probably necessary to spend my summer at the North. . . . None of your letters or of Pinckney's inform me how he stands in his class. Becky, who writes longer letters, and, as girls generally do, better ones than Pinckney's, tells me satisfactorily her rank in her several classes. It is hardly worth while to write about it now, for I hope in a month more to set off for Charleston. . . . You would hardly expect in a letter which I fear shows that I am quite as much out of spirits as out of health, that I should give you an account of my having been at a second wedding. Governor W. was the enamoured youth, and the lady (whose maiden name I forget) is a very well looking woman of thirty-one years old. She is spoken of as amiable and sensible, and I believe that the first impression when the wedding party met was one of pity and melancholy for her fate. But we bear the misfortunes of others, they say, with great philosophy, and this melancholy soon wore off. I had taken off my mourning for the evening, in compliment to the occasion, and you will judge of my surprise at finding the bride and bridegroom both in full mourning, and this surprise was not diminished by the explanation that Governor W. wore it himself, and insisted on his bride's wearing it, in honour of the angel whom he had lost a month or two before (and whom his bride had never known).

We had very good music, and the bridegroom was in higher spirits than I have ever seen. In walking across the room he found it quite impossible to prevent himself from springing, and attempting — I think they call it — a pigeon wing. This

for a gouty man of seventy he performed very well. The girls sang songs illustrative of the motives which may make a woman marry an old man ; the shortness of the imprisonment and the delights of widowhood to which it leads. There was almost too much of truth and nature in some of these songs, and I was so much amused as not to be sorry that I had gone until the next day when I found my cough worse. The house, however, was but a few doors off or I should not have gone.

That Mrs. Lowndes should have wished him to accept the French Mission is not extraordinary. She had been a minister's daughter, and would have liked to be a minister's wife. Her father had been a Westminster boy (Grecian of his year), she would have wished her son to do likewise ; she remembered her own happy school days in France, and would have willingly had her daughter enjoy the same advantages; but most of all she thought — and never ceased to think — that going abroad *then* would have been of immense service to her husband's health, as it had been two years before. She yielded with great reluctance, not dreaming how soon, and how sadly, her wish was to be granted.

The long letter above is given almost entire, to show how keen an interest Mr. Lowndes still felt in life, and how far he was from anticipating his approaching end. In regard to his opinion of Mr. Adams, it must be remembered that as chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations his relations with the Secretary of State were necessarily intimate, and his knowledge of the latter's way of doing business was consequently full.

The plan of going to Newport was a favorite one with him. He refers to it again in a day or two.

March 30th, 1822.

This Sunday shines no Sabbath day for me. I do not mean that I spend it in visiting or reading or any intellectual labor, but in the more unpleasant duty of taking physic. Friday last I began with calomel, etc., etc. [a frightful list of dosings]. I don't think that you appear to look forward to a Rhode Island summer with much pleasure. There are, in truth, great inconveniences; the getting there and still more the getting back. Yet if our health shall be permanently promoted perhaps there is no convenience more important to consult. I am told that boarding at New Port is from $4 to $6 each, a week. More probably the first than the last. A fine climate, a fine harbour [Mr. Lowndes had always been fond of sailing], and the facilities for going in a short time to Boston and New York.

I am not without hopes of connecting with the care of my health (which I mean to make a principal object of attention during summer) the prosecution of some idle inquiries into our history which I have long wished to engage in, but in which I have made miserably little progress. Here I have the advantage of you, for while I am alive I shall always have some little scheme engaging enough of my attention to make me forget pains and difficulties. I do not mean, however, to flatter myself by the comparison. You bear with a much more unyielding patience what I am satisfied with eluding. I am a little tired with writing this short letter and fear that you will find it task enough to read it. I am uneasy at Becky's prolonged indisposition and hope that Rhode Island may do her some service. I really reproach myself with not answering her letters when she writes such long ones, but I hope to do better another session. Farewell.

CHAPTER X

NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT: DEATH

1822

It would hardly be supposed from the quiet tone of these letters that the highest prize in the country had been at this moment set before Mr. Lowndes's eyes; yet so it was, for on December 18, 1821, the legislature of his native State had nominated him for President of the United States. The preamble and resolutions read curiously now: —

"At a public meeting of the members of both branches of the Legislature of the State of South Carolina, held on the evening of the 18th of December, 1821, at the Hall of the House of Representatives in Columbia, Colonel Samuel Warren of Pendleton having been called to the chair, the following Preamble and Resolutions were adopted: —

"Whereas, the next Presidential Election, however distant, is becoming an object of interest throughout the United States; and whereas it is apprehended that in selecting an individual worthy of this distinguished honour, serious differences may arise, involving sectional divisions of alarming magnitude, a consequence, the bare apprehension of which obviously enforces the expediency of the people of this Union turning their eyes upon some individual who shall unite the confidence, respect and esteem of the North and West, the East and the South; who, remote from any connection with a

cabinet succession, shall be brought forth truly, strongly, and indubitably as the *National candidate*.

"Be it Resolved, that it is the sense of this meeting, under the existing state of public opinion in reference to our next President, that no individual in the Union unites more entirely the qualifications for this Station, with the prospect of success, if the Election be left entirely with the people, than our distinguished fellow-citizen, William Lowndes," etc.

These, and succeeding resolutions to the same effect, were forwarded to him in Washington, with the following letter from the gentleman who was to be his successor in Congress, and a popular leader of the State's Rights party of South Carolina in the troublous times that were to come in 1832, James Hamilton, Jr.: —

CHARLESTON, January 1st, 1822.

MY DEAR SIR, — If we could as easily make you our next President as we passed the foregoing resolutions, I do not know that the State of South Carolina could possibly make the Nation a more beneficial New Year's present.

Of this you may be assured, that although there was a serious opposition to a caucus nomination, yet as far as you were personally concerned more than three fourths of the State are decidedly in your favor, in preference to *any other individual* whatsoever.

I have put Mr. Poinsett [formerly Minister to Mexico, then M. C. from South Carolina] in possession of the facts connected with the whole transaction, to whom I beg to refer you. All we have to ask of you is, not to go abroad, and not to con-

cede your pretensions to any individual in the Country. I remain,

My dear sir,
Yours most truly and respectfully,
J. Hamilton, Jr.

Hon. Wm. Lowndes.

The especial meaning of this letter, and particularly of the phrase, "do not concede your pretensions to any individual in the Country," was that Mr. Calhoun had been nominated for the presidency by the State of Pennsylvania. Were the two Carolinians to be pitted against each other? and what effect would such rivalry have upon their chances and upon their friendship? Fate stepped in and settled the first question; no active rivalry was to be theirs. And for the second, it is evident that the two men took the situation in the high-hearted, honorable fashion that might have been expected of them.

Mr. Lowndes was completely surprised, and unwilling to stand in opposition to his friend. He also greatly disliked a "caucus" nomination, and said so plainly. He was assured that the primary motion had been confirmed by all but a very small minority of the legislature, but it was still distasteful to him. The only letter now extant from Mr. Lowndes on this subject is dated December 29th, three days before the one from Mr. Hamilton given above. They must have crossed on the road, and it is evident that there must have been a previous, probably informal, letter from Major Hamilton, since Mr. Lowndes refers to "your letter from Columbia." That not being now within reach, the second has been given to open the subject. Mr. Lowndes says: —

WASHINGTON, December 29th, 1821.

TO MAJOR JAS. HAMILTON.

You do not expect a formal answer to your letter which you did me the favor to write from Columbia, but a frank avowal of my opinion and feelings. There are few men who are not gratified by the public approbation of their conduct. But it is, after all, the favor of our own State which comes most home to our feelings. I am as grateful as any man can be for the good opinion which the members of the Legislature at Columbia have expressed of me. On the question on the course I mean to pursue, I do not see that I can deviate from that which I have pursued hitherto. I have taken no step, and never shall, to draw the public eye on me, as a competitor for the high office of which you speak.

I have no reason to think that there is any wish outside of our own State to raise me to it, nor did I know until yesterday, when I received your letter, that there was such a wish in the State except upon the part of two or three personal friends.

However this may be, the Presidency is not an office to be either solicited or declined. I have, however (and I express it freely), great [apprehension] as to the effect which the step which has been taken may have upon the reputation of the State.

South Carolina has no trait more admirable than her disinterestedness. She has always treated the men whom she has selected for public office with a liberal confidence, but she has never overrated their claims to the honours of the General Government, nor been disposed to press them upon a reluctant or less partial community.

I should feel regret more painful than any per-

sonal mortification if my name should be connected with any imputation upon the State to which I belong.

My opinion on what is past it would perhaps be improper for me to give, but let me state one view which belongs to the future.

I understand from Mr. Calhoun that he has already written to several friends that he has found himself obliged by a state of things which left him no alternative, that he should consent to be held up for the Presidency (A, note). They believe that there is a disposition in many of the States to support him, and I am quite sure that if he were supported by a sufficient influence in the other States, and the voice of South Carolina were all that was wanting to give him the Presidency, it would be given cheerfully and proudly.

Yet it may happen that the nomination which has been made may lead to the impression out of Carolina that he would not receive the support of his own State under such circumstances. For the interest of the Country and the character of the State let me hope that this impression may not prevail, or that means may be found to remove it.

If Mr. Calhoun should have sufficient grounds to calculate upon such a number of States as would make a majority with the aid of South Carolina, I hope and believe that she would zealously support him.

I should have delayed writing until I had received the fuller account of the transaction at Columbia, which you promised on your return to Charleston [probably the letter already given], but I wished to lose no time in making the suggestions which I have just taken the liberty to offer. I am not surprised at the conduct of Mr. Calhoun's friends. I know him and estimate him too well to

be mortified by any preference which they may express for him.

I am, my dear sir, with great respect,

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM LOWNDES.

Note A. He (Calhoun) had not done so until he found that his name was being improperly associated with Mr. Adams's. This communication he had made to me with his characteristic frankness some days before I received your letter, and I had answered him without hesitation that equally from public and private motives I should greatly prefer his election to that of any of his competitors for the office. The friends whom he has consulted think it impossible that he should now retract what he has done. Immediately upon receiving your letter I communicated its contents to Calhoun. Our conversation you will readily suppose to have been without reserve. He has seen the letter which I now write you but he wishes that the part which refers to him should not be allowed to get into the public prints. I have the same wish as to the other parts of the letter, and I think that your judgment and feelings must concur with mine. I must rest, however, on yours, not on mine.

To this, and probably to other letters, — for some of the expressions quoted do not appear above, — Major Hamilton answered a week later.

CHARLESTON, January 9th, 1822.

We regret as much as you can any apparent conflict between your interests and those of Mr. Calhoun, but we are *not* prepared to say or think that your claims ought to be so "conclusively postponed" to favour the promotion of Mr. Calhoun's as at once to "give them the go-by," and in effect to say that we have committed a fatal error in holding you up, and that we do accordingly ask leave to amend the manifesto by substituting the name of Mr. Calhoun. . . . Now I believe the fact to be that Carolina will be more than satisfied, she will be proud and delighted should either you or Mr. Calhoun be ultimately *the man*. Each of you separately would have her undivided support: both

of you candidates, she *must* be divided. We trust this consequence may be averted. . . . We agree with you most fully that the office of "the Presidency is neither to be solicited nor declined." We know that you have not solicited it, and we see as yet no reason why your friends should decline it for you.

Major Hamilton goes on at great length to point out to Mr. Lowndes that the claims of Mr. Calhoun had been warmly advocated in the meeting at Columbia, but that the preference of the State was decidedly for him. "The most influential members from the interior and middle country were with you. . . . The middle districts, northeastern, southern, and southeastern parts of the State were unanimously your friends; the country was divided between Broad River and Pendleton [the district which Mr. Calhoun had represented in Congress and where his home, Fort Hill, was situated]. . . . In Charleston it is not necessary for me to tell you how strong you are," etc. "In the existing state of things, I do not know that your friends here can practice a better lesson than to be patient and moderate, when we see you yourself afford us so good an example in these particulars," etc.

There are several other letters, from Major Hamilton, Judge Huger, Colonel William Drayton, etc., all pointing out the impropriety of South Carolina withdrawing or changing her candidate until the will of the Democratic party shall have made itself clearly understood, when, if the nominee of Pennsylvania be preferred, she will "cheerfully and proudly support him."

It is hard now to believe that there was a time when South Carolina preferred *any one* to Calhoun.

Ten years later there could have been no "division" when he was concerned.

Two personal anecdotes are remembered by the writer on the subject, — the one told by her father: that returning as a young midshipman from a cruise, and asking information about current affairs, he was told of the candidates, "that Mr. Lowndes had most of the State, but Mr. Calhoun had Pendleton district *and* Mr. William Lowndes."

The other, that people in Washington were amused and surprised to see that the daily walk which the two nominees had long been accustomed to take together, to and from the Capitol, continued as usual, not the slightest difference having been caused by the new state of affairs. In one of Mr. Hamilton's later letters he begs Mr. Lowndes not to show his letters to Mr. Calhoun's supporters.

The only mention of the affair in the letters to Mrs. Lowndes is a fragment preserved by Mr. Chase from Mr. Grayson.

WASHINGTON, January 6th, 1822.

You have heard of the caucus nomination in Columbia. I hope you have not set your mind too strongly on being President's lady. While you wish only a larger fence for the poultry yard, and a pond for the ducks I may be able to gratify you, but this business of making a President, either of myself or another, I have no cunning at. We live in a terrible confusion. I thought when I came here the question was a fact confined to two persons, Mr. Crawford and Mr. Adams. Now, we have all the Secretaries, and at least two who are not to be named. As to the answer which I have given to the notification, here it is: "I have taken no step, and never shall, to draw public attention on me as a candidate for the Presidency. It is

not in my opinion an office to be either solicited or declined."

The allusion to "all the Secretaries" bears upon a note made in his note-book some time before, early in Mr. Monroe's administration.

For many years the succession to the Presidency had passed to a member of the Cabinet; it was almost a dynasty, and was recognized as such. Mr. Lowndes writes (apparently in 1819 or 1820) in his note-book: "I remember Forsyth's telling me, speaking as if he personally knew it, that Mr. Monroe would have been quite willing to make Crawford Secretary of State if Clay had been willing. The difficulty was to give no decided advantage to either Clay or Crawford as competitors for the Presidency. The expedient employed was to make Adams Secretary of State, because, as Mr. Monroe said, 'it was impossible he should ever be President.' I confess I do not see exactly the impossibility."

Of course Adams *was* the next President.

Would the result have been different had Mr. Lowndes lived? It is impossible to say. His course on the Missouri bill and on the tariff had clearly shown the absolute justice and impartiality of his nature, and had shown also that he labored for that ideal republic which was constantly in his thoughts. By the commercial classes everywhere, and by those few in every community who took thought, as he did, for "the character of the country," he was most highly esteemed; nevertheless the spirit of section had already arisen, and that demon is hard to lay. Before the election came he was sleeping "in the vast ocean deserts of the North." After his death his success was spoken of as having been certain, but it *was* after his

death. Carolina was not to be gratified by the election of either of her distinguished sons, and the succession went, yet once more, to the Cabinet.

Mr. Lowndes returned to Carolina at the end of April, but it is uncertain how long he remained there. He seems to have gone with his wife and two younger children to the North during the summer. His health declined steadily and he resigned his seat in Congress. His wife, as often happens to the nearest, did not at all realize how ill he was. He had so often recovered from illness that she expected recovery again. His family were clearer sighted, yet neither he nor they were without hope. Before leaving home he commended his wife and children to the kindness of his eldest brother, Thomas, and told him that he would do everything possible for the recovery of his health, and be satisfied with whatever the Supreme Wisdom might ordain.

The affection of his family never failed him. There is a letter from his sister, Mrs. Simmons (a childless widow), telling him that she fears that his plans may be interfered with by want of money, and that she has just received a large legacy from her eldest sister, Mrs. Champneys, which she entreats him to accept of, hoping "you won't be so unkind as to refuse to take it for the recovery of your health which is so precious to me."

The resolution to undertake the European voyage must have been hastily adopted. The only letter regarding it is a short note from Philadelphia, from Mrs. Lowndes to her father, saying that "the doctor assures me that my husband's lungs are perfectly sound, and the whole trouble is in the liver." They were to sail immediately in the ship Moss; Mr. Cheves had made all the pecuniary arrangements, and would take charge of Pinckney. In the ship

Moss they accordingly set sail from Philadelphia on Monday, the 21st of October, 1822. They had with them their little daughter, twelve years old, and their faithful servant Amy. Two kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Connell, of Philadelphia, were also on board. For the first few days Mr. Lowndes appeared somewhat improved, but the weather became stormy and he was exhausted. On Friday Mr. Connell thought his condition alarming, and on Sunday morning, October 27th, he breathed his last.

Mr. Connell, writing to a friend in Washington, says: "No preparation having been made to preserve his body, it became necessary to commit it to the ocean. We preserved it, however, until Monday afternoon, when the writer hereof assembled the passengers and crew and read over his remains the funeral service of the Episcopal church before we committed his body to the deep. Mrs. Lowndes and her daughter were in their stateroom, and I believe they were not aware for some days of his body having been buried in the ocean, as we thought it too trying a scene for her to witness."

The last sentence is partly incorrect. Mrs. Lowndes, through (said her daughter) a mistaken kindness, was left in ignorance of the precise moment of the burial; but she knew that it must be. Suddenly they heard a plunge, the dread sullen sound that comes when the

> "heavy shotted hammock shroud
> Drops in its vast and wandering grave."

To her dying day — and she lived to be eighty — Mrs. Rutledge recalled with awe that solemn sound, and the scream of her mother who instantly recognized its import.

So ended, at the age of forty, all that was mortal

of this noble statesman and pure patriot. His life seems inconclusive, and yet the broken column has beauty of its own.

On reaching England, Mrs. Lowndes, in pursuance of the original plan, crossed immediately to France, where were friends prepared to receive her. Her old Washington friends, M. and Madame Hyde de Neuville, insisted on her sharing their "apartment" until she could make her own arrangements. From her cousin, Mr. Pinckney Horry, who had married and lived in France, and from his wife (Mademoiselle de la Faye de la Tour Maubourg) she received the greatest kindness and attention, and also from other Americans then resident in Paris. General and Madame de Lafayette, old friends of her father's, were especially devoted to her. The general wrote to Colonel F. K. Huger, his friend of Olmutz: —

Paris, April 28th, 1823.

My dear Friend, — This letter will be safely conveyed, as I intrust it to the care of your amiable and most unhappy sister, whose inexpressible grief may be somewhat softened by friendly sympathies, but is out of the reach of argument, since the loss is both immense and irreparable. She feels in a manner alarming for her health; it is become impossible for her to remain longer at a distance from her country and family. I am much comforted to think she has a female companion, Mrs. Connell, who has witnessed the cruel scenes, and lived with her in this city. Her sensible and affectionate daughter will at once occupy her thoughts and afford a consolation. But I have rarely seen misery and sorrow so deep and so well justified. . . . God bless you, my dear Huger, so say my whole family. Remember me respectfully and affectionately to

Mrs. Huger and family, and believe me forever your most tender and grateful friend,

LAFAYETTE.

To America, accordingly, Mrs. Lowndes returned as soon as it suited the Connells to do so; returned to take up the burden of a saddened and anxious life, of the guardianship of children, and of the management of a considerable but embarrassed estate, — all of which burdens she bore, and duties she performed, with courage and good sense, during thirty-five years of widowhood, dying in 1857, aged seventy-seven.

Mr. Lowndes left three children. Of these the eldest, Rawlins, always an invalid, married Miss Hornby, and died early without issue. The second, Thomas Pinckney, married Miss Margaret Washington, granddaughter of Colonel William Washington of Revolutionary fame, and died early, leaving three children; of whom one son, Thomas Pinckney, alone survives. He married Miss Anne Branford Frost, daughter of the Honorable Edward Frost, and has several children. The eldest son bears his grandfather's name. Mr. Lowndes's daughter, Rebecca Motte, married Commander Edward Cotesworth Rutledge, U. S. N., grandson of Governor John Rutledge, and died at the age of eighty-two, leaving one daughter only.

The writer is so painfully conscious of the inadequacy of the picture of Mr. Lowndes which she presents that she is glad to call to her aid those remarks of his contemporaries which show the impression made by him upon the minds of the men who knew him best. When the news of his death reached Washington, Congress was in session. Major Hamilton, Mr. Lowndes's successor in the House, rose and delivered a fervent panegyric upon

his predecessor. Major Hamilton, however, spoke as a Carolinian and a personal friend ; therefore one remark alone is quoted here: "He had less self-love and more self-denial than any man I ever knew." But Mr. Taylor, of New York, had been Mr. Lowndes's chief antagonist in the first debate on Missouri, and his competitor for the speaker-ship, yet he spoke with generous warmth: . . . (This is) "the greatest bereavement in the loss of a citizen which has befallen the Union since I have held a seat in its councils. The highest and best hopes of this country looked to William Lowndes for their fulfillment. The most honorable office in the civilized world — the Chief Magistracy of this free people — would have been illustrated by his virtues and talents. During nine years' service in this House it was my happiness to be associated with him on many of his most important committees. He never failed to shed new light on all subjects to which he applied his vigorous and discriminating mind. His industry in discharging the arduous and responsible duties constantly assigned him was persevering and efficient. To manners the most unassuming, to patriotism the most disinterested, to morals the most pure, to attainments of the first rank in literature and science, he added the virtues of decision and prudence so happily combined, so harmoniously united, that we know not which most to admire, the firmness with which he pursued his purpose, or the gentleness with which he disarmed opposition. His arguments were made, not for victory, but to convince the judgment of his hearers."

Mr. Archer, of Virginia, said in a long speech proposing that the House should wear mourning for a month, an unusual proceeding for one not actually a member, "Panegyric on this occasion was rendered unnecessary by the settled feeling and opinion of this

country in relation to Mr. Lowndes. . . . He was already ranked with the eminent names which had passed by and been consecrated to national respect. He was already ranked as a man superior in worth as he was in mind, — as one of the purest and ablest, and most faithful of the statesmen who might claim from our country the meed of honor."

Mr. Clay wrote to Mr. Cheves : —

WASHINGTON, 24th January, 1823.

. . . Poor Lowndes. How shall I speak to *you* of a friend whom we both so highly esteemed, and whose worth we knew so well. Although I was prepared by the knowledge which I possessed of the declining state of his health for the afflicting intelligence which we have just received, I heard the sad event with as much painful sensibility as if I had been unapprised of his previous illness. To have died at the moment when his great capacity for public usefulness was most mature and in full vigor ; when his country had such high hopes and expectations of him ; when, if he had not been utterly devoid of all visions of ambition, he might himself have cherished the loftiest expectations ; and when, too, he was far removed from all his friends and from his native land, was a rare calamity, which has justly excited undissembled and universal regret.

You, my dear sir, who had the happiness to know him so much longer than I did, must want, instead of being capable of communicating, consolation on this melancholy occasion.

With great regard,
I am faithfully yours,
H. CLAY.

LANGDON CHEVES, ESQR., PHILADELPHIA.

The newspapers from every part of the country were filled with eulogies. In Charleston a public meeting was called at which Mr. Stephen Elliott, the author of "Elliott's Botany," and a graceful writer and speaker, was appointed to deliver a biographical "funeral eulogium to be pronounced at a public meeting of the citizens." Mr. Elliott accepted the appointment, but unfortunately postponed the preparation of the discourse until himself overtaken by death. Nor was this a transient opinion excited by the emotion of the day. Years afterwards, Mr. Wise, of Georgia, Mr. Benton, of Missouri, Mr. (afterwards President) Van Buren, of New York, recorded their admiration, Mr. Benton declaring him to be the "brightest of the galaxy" which Carolina had sent to the Twelfth Congress.

Mr. Todd, of Pennsylvania, replying to Major Hamilton on a bill laying duty on imports, says: —

"On the memory of Mr. Lowndes I could go in the way of encomium perhaps farther than the gentleman from South Carolina. I have frequently heard him in this House — I have known him out of it. I speak not for the purpose of presenting any contrast, but give my opinion, often declared in the hearing of some who now hear me, that Mr. Lowndes was a statesman who has not left his superior in the nation, nor scarcely his equal. Everyone who remembers Mr. Lowndes remembers that with talents almost beyond the lot of mortality, and seeing nothing about him but respect and veneration, yet a man more unassuming never entered this House. There was nothing pompous in him, no blustering, no rant. Of one thing only did he appear ignorant — the magnitude of his own powers."

Towards the close of his life Mr. Clay told Colonel John Lee, of Maryland, that among the many men he had known he found it difficult to decide

who was the greatest, but added, "I think the wisest man I ever knew was William Lowndes;" and Mr. Cheves, in a conversation with the Reverend Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, late rector of Grace Church, Charleston, lately published in "Lippincott's Magazine," but prepared for the press many years since, said, "Mr. Calhoun is far more brilliant, and his mind more keen and rapid; he is a man of genius, and has the temptation of such men to leap to conclusions boldly, perhaps too hastily. But in the power of looking at a subject calmly, dispassionately, in every light, Mr. Lowndes had no superior. I should have preferred his judgment to that of any other man, and such I think was the feeling of their contemporaries. I will illustrate my view. If the nation were in great peril, and Mr. Lowndes recommended one policy and Mr. Calhoun an opposite one, I think that a majority of the American people would have said, 'Intrust the country to the guidance of William Lowndes, follow his counsel;' and in my judgment they would have done wisely."

The venerable Mr. Alfred Huger, of Charleston, a man of great talent, but who never entered public life, wrote in 1859: "I have read with great attention the speech of Mr. Lowndes on the tariff bill of 1820, and I remember very well the impression made upon the public mind when it was delivered. It was the habit of that profound thinker to exhaust *both* sides of the subject under discussion; and thus when he presented the two aspects to his audience as clear as light could make them, the House generally received their views of negative and affirmative from the same source. I have known him pursue this course in conversation. On one occasion, after hearing Mr. Lowndes state the argument of his adversary, Mr. Randolph exclaimed,

'He has done that once too often; he can never answer that.' But the Virginian was mistaken; he did answer himself, and so the House decided. I was permitted to hear him converse with Judge Huger, and to this day that unbroken chain of irresistible logic is before me. He dealt less in abstractions than Mr. Calhoun, and was more concise than Mr. Cheves, and accordingly he was more easily comprehended by men of ordinary comprehension. Every word was a thought and every thought was material for an essay. Fifty years ago I heard him use expressions that are now fresh in my memory. Judge Huger used to say, 'Lowndes's wisdom keeps his genius in check.' . . . I sometimes, now that I am nearing the end of my pilgrimage, turn to the men of that day to whom it was at times my good fortune to listen. *He* has left a deeper mark upon me than the others. There was a singleness in his character and a chastity in his intentions which politicians find cumbersome but which statesmen will venerate for all future time, and like a great intellectual conclusion he is to this day the very highest authority with virtuous men."

Enough, perhaps more than enough, has now been said and the writer has naught to add, except the hope that the student of American history, the youth preparing to take his part in the government of the country, may pause for a moment to consider the influence and honor that came to this man who did much and asked nothing. It was said of him that he had "no vision of ambition." None for himself, in truth, but all men knew that for his country his ambition was high and great as Washington's had been. For her he coveted the praise, and name, and honor which meaner men seek for themselves; and so men gave them to him freely, good measure running over.

And fate was kindest to him of all; for when he died he knew that by the war, which he had helped to create, the Republic was strong and respected abroad; and he thought, moreover, that within her borders peace and harmony had come to her, somewhat by his labors. And so, while happy in this thought, "God's finger touched him — and he slept."

APPENDIX I

SINCE this book was sent to press it has been suggested that nothing is therein said of the English ancestry of Mr. Lowndes.

The omission was intentional, the writer conceiving that the subject had been fully treated by George B. Chase, Esq., of Boston, in his "Lowndes of South Carolina," already mentioned.

As, however, the suggestion has been made, it may be as well to quote from that book, so far as to say that the South Carolina family is descended from that of "Lowndes of Overton," established in the county of Chester since the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and itself a branch of "the ancient family of Lowndes of Legh (or Lea) Hall, which received a grant of arms in 1180."

From this stem of Legh Hall have sprung many branches in different parts of England, members of which have emigrated to Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina.

Thomas Lowndes of Overton received in 1725 and 1726 from the lords proprietors of South Carolina the grant of four "baronies" of twelve thousand acres each, and the office of provost marshal, which last he held by deputy, as he never came to this country.

The arms borne by Rawlins Lowndes, first governor of South Carolina, in 1778, are the same as those of the families of Overton and Bostock House, Chester.

APPENDIX II

By the kind permission of Mr. Chase I have been enabled to use his account of Mr. Thomas Lowndes's congressional career as follows: "In the autumn of 1800, a few months after his father's death, having already served in the legislature of the State, he (Mr. T. Lowndes) accepted from the Federal party the nomination of representative from the Charleston district to the Seventh Congress. He took his seat at the opening of the first session, on the 7th December, 1801. On the next day he was appointed to the Committee of Commerce and Manufactures, and was prominent from that time in the discussions of the House. As early as December 14th, almost in the first week of business, he spoke upon the resolution of inquiry into the conduct of Mr. Pickering when Secretary of State, and he took part in an 'animated debate' — as the 'National Intelligencer' of that day, more mindful for the dignity of Congress than are the public journals of our own times, described in language somewhat euphuistic a stormy scene, so often repeated afterwards on any sectional issue — which occurred over an amendment to the Apportionment Bill providing that Maryland should be entitled to nine rather than eight representatives. The 'Intelligencer' tells us that 'a debate of utmost dilatoriness took place, much personal recrimination, chiefly on account of delay on the one side and precipitation on the other, were exchanged, which we think it our duty entirely to suppress.'

"Mr. Lowndes, on 15th March, 1802, opened the debate on the French Spoliation Claims, speaking in favor of their recognition, and urging prompt measures for their settlement. Little could he, or any statesman of that day, foresee the uncertainty of the legislation which the history of this measure was in itself to illustrate. Reported formally to Congress again and again by committees, it finally passed both houses only to become

void by the refusal of the Executive's approval. Again revived and apparently not yet despaired of, these claims, now as old as the century, have already outlived three generations of public men. At the end of the long debate, in April, 1802, in the act providing for the redemption of the entire public debt of the United States, Mr. Lowndes was in the minority of nineteen members, all Federals, who voted against the bill.

"Constant in attendance upon the House, he was earnest and assiduous in committee, and though mingling often in debate, he was yet able to contribute to the discussion something of value in fact and much of weight in judgment, enforced as his sentiments always were by a natural eloquence, which had been carefully cultivated under the sound opinion then entertained by all educated men, who valued the study of oratory, not as that of a graceful accomplishment, but as the mastery of an essential influence and tested power over the emotions and conduct of men. . . .

"He resumed his seat at the second session on 13th December, 1802. On 22d of that month he spoke in the discussion on the circulation of gold coin, which, owing to the erroneous valuation put by the statute upon the eagles and half eagles previously coined, below their metallic worth, had led to their being everywhere hoarded. In the long debate on 6th January, 1803, on the cession by Spain of Louisiana to France, he was early upon the floor, urging with force the proposed call upon the Executive for the precise facts of the transaction which had been withheld from Congress.

"Mr. Lowndes was re-chosen to the Eighth Congress, and took his seat in the House on 29th October, 1803. He spoke on 6th and 8th of the following December on the constitutional amendment relative to the method of election of president and vice-president in favor of postponement after the ensuing election, and again on 6th January, 1804, in opposition to the proposed impeachment of Samuel Chase, a justice of the Supreme Court, who was tried a few months later by the Senate and acquitted.

"At their session of this year the legislature of South Carolina had passed an act repealing all restrictions upon the importation of slaves. The subject early attracted the attention of Congress, and on Tuesday, 14th of February, as will be seen from the following extract from the debates, the following motion by Mr. Bard, of Pennsylvania, was taken into consideration in committee of the whole.

"'Resolved, that a tax of ten dollars be imposed upon every slave imported into any part of the United States.'"

"On motion of Mr. Jackson, it was agreed to add after the words United States, 'or their territories.'

"*Mr. Lowndes:* 'I will trespass a very short time upon the attention of the House at this stage of the business, but as I have objections to the resolution, it may be proper that I should state them now. I will do so briefly, reserving to myself the privilege of giving my opinion more at length when the bill is before the House, should the resolution be adopted and a bill brought in. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, to find that the conduct of the legislature of South Carolina, in repealing its law prohibitory of the importation of negroes, has excited so much dissatisfaction and resentment as I find it has done with the greater part of this House. If gentlemen will take a dispassionate review of the circumstances under which the repeal was made, I think this dissatisfaction and resentment will be removed, and I should indulge the hope that this contemplated tax will not be imposed. Antecedent to the adoption of the Constitution under which we now act, the legislature of South Carolina passed an act prohibiting the importation of negroes from Africa, and sanctioned it by severe penalties, — I speak from recollection, but I believe not less than the forfeiture of the negro and a fine of one hundred pounds sterling for each brought into the State. This act has been in force until it was repealed by the legislature at their last session. . . .

"'The law was completely evaded, for in the last year or two Africans were introduced into the country

in numbers little short, I believe, of what they would have been had the trade been a legal one. Under the circumstances, sir, it appears to me to have been the duty of the legislature to repeal the law, and remove from the eyes of the people the spectacle of its authority daily violated.

"'I beg, sir, that from what I have said it may not be inferred that I am friendly to a continuation of the slave trade. I wish the time had arrived when Congress could legislate conclusively upon the subject. I should then have the satisfaction of uniting with the gentleman from Pennsylvania who moved the resolution. Whenever it does arrive, should I then have a seat in this House, I assure him I will cordially support him in obtaining his object. But, Mr. Speaker, I cannot vote for this resolution, because I am sure it is not calculated to promote the object which it has in view. I am convinced that the tax of ten dollars will not prevent the introduction into the country of a single slave. . . . The gentleman from Pennsylvania, and those who think with him, ought, above all others, to deprecate the passing of this resolution. It appears to me to be directly calculated to defeat their own object, — to give to what they wish to discountenance a legislative sanction, and further, an interest to the government to permit this trade after it might constitutionally terminate it. When I say that I am myself unfriendly to it, I do not wish, Mr. Speaker, to be misunderstood; I do not mean to convey the idea that the people of the Southern States are universally opposed to it — I know the fact to be otherwise. Many of the people in the Southern States feel an interest in it, and will yield it with reluctance. Their interest will be strengthened by the immense accession of territory to the United States by the cession of Louisiana. . . . My greatest objection to this tax, Mr. Speaker, is that it will fall exclusively upon the agriculture of the State of which I am one of the representatives. However odious it may be to some gentlemen, and however desirous they may be of discountenancing it, I think it must be evident that

this tax will not effect their object; that it will not be a discouragement to the trade, nor will the introduction of a single African to the country be prevented. The only result will be that it will produce a revenue to the government. I trust that no gentleman is desirous of establishing this tax with a view to revenue. The State of South Carolina contributes as largely to the revenue of the United States, for its population and wealth, as any State in the Union. To impose a tax falling exclusively on her agriculture would be the height of injustice, and I hope that the representatives of the landed interest of the nation will resist every measure, however general in its appearance, a tendency of which is to lay a partial and unequal tax upon agriculture.'

"*Mr. Bedinger:* 'The gentleman from South Carolina has so fully expressed the opinions I entertain, I shall say but little. Every one who knows my opinions on slavery may think it strange that I shall give my vote against the resolution. There is no member on this floor more inimical to slavery than I am, yet I am of opinion that the effect of the present resolution, if adopted, will be injurious. I shall therefore vote against it.'

"When on Friday, February 17th, the third day of the debate, the House resumed the discussion of the bill, Mr. Lowndes rose, and after a rapid review of the subject, moved that its further consideration be postponed till the following December. By an amendment, the bill was set down for the second Monday in March, and thus the same end was accomplished, as the House did not sit on that day.

"Upon the issue of this debate, Mr. Benton remarks (Abridgment of Debates, iii. p. 142): 'To prevent an erroneous impression being made upon the public by the above proceedings, it is proper to remark that, during the whole discussion, not a single voice was raised in defense of the act of the legislature of South Carolina, allowing the importation of slaves, but that, on the contrary, while by some of the speakers its immorality and impolicy were severely censured, by all its exist-

ence was deprecated. A large number of those who voted for the postponement advocated it on the express and sole ground that it would give the legislature of South Carolina an opportunity, which they believed would be embraced, to repeal the act.'

"Just three years later the question was definitely settled by Congress. On the 13th of February, 1807, the House passed the Senate Bill, prohibiting the importation of slaves by a vote of one hundred and thirteen members in favor over five in opposition, — and this slender, indeed nominal, minority were members from both free and slave States, who dissented only upon matters of detail, so that, as Mr. Benton observes (Abridgment of Debates, iii. p. 519), 'the prohibition of the trade may be deemed unanimous.'

"Mr. Lowndes passed the summer at the North and in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. He did not reach Washington till the 6th of November following, after the second session of Congress had commenced, and had thus not been in his place when the committees of the House were appointed; but a fortnight later, on the announcement of the resignation of Mr. Samuel L. Mitchell, chairman of the Committee on Commerce, who had been appointed by the legislature of New York a senator of the United States, it was *Ordered*, 'That Mr. Lowndes be appointed chairman of the Committee of Commerce and Manufactures,' etc. He thus returned to his old place on the committee to which he had been first appointed on his entry to the House.

"He spoke for the last time in Congress on the 13th of December against a bill to regulate and permit the clearance of private armed vessels. His speech, though brief, was marked by the same quick, ready, and logical reasoning which had always characterized his appearance in debate. He left Washington on the 6th of March, 1805, and failing to obtain his reëlection to Congress on the general overthrow of the Federal party in the South, retired to private life. He continued, however, a steadfast adherent to the principles of his party, and earnestly supported John Quincy Adams when

nominated for the presidency against Andrew Jackson. He often remarked, in allusion to the brilliant political career of his brother, William Lowndes, that coming as a Republican later into public life than himself, his brother differed from him in no essential principle of his political faith." See "Lowndes of South Carolina," pages 18–22.

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