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Correspondence between General Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun

Andrew Jackson

John Caldwell Calhoun

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CORRESPONDENCE

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CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

GEN. ANDREW JACKSON AND JOHN C. CALHOUN,

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE U. STATES,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

**THE COURSE OF THE LATTER, IN THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE CABINET OF
MR. MONROE, ON THE OCCURRENCES**

IN THE

SEMINOLE WAR.

WASHINGTON.

PRINTED BY DUFF GREEN,

1831.

FLORID COLL 1 82-286326
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CORRESPONDENCE BETW
EEN GEN. ANDREW JAC
KSON AND JOHN 15000
290588

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

I COME before you as my constituents, to give an account of my conduct in an important political transaction, which has been called in question, and so erroneously represented, that neither justice to myself nor respect for you will permit me any longer to remain silent; I allude to my course, in the deliberations of the cabinet of Mr. Monroe, on the Seminole question. I know not how I can place more fully before you all the facts and circumstances of the case, than by putting you in possession of the correspondence between General Jackson and myself, which will show the difference between the views that we have respectively taken, and by what means, and through whose agency, this long gone-by affair has been revived.

I have not taken this step, strictly defensive as it is, without mature deliberation, and a calm and careful estimate of all the obligations under which I act. That there are strong reasons against it, I feel and acknowledge; but I also feel the most thorough conviction that the sacred obligation to vindicate my character, impeached, as it has been, in one of the most important incidents of my life, and to prove myself not unworthy of the high station to which you have elevated me, far outweigh all other considerations. Should my vindication have any political or personal bearing, I can only say that it will not be because I have either willed or desired it. It is my intention simply to place my own conduct in its proper light, and not to assault others. Nor ought I to be held responsible should any such consequence follow; as I am free from all agency in resuscitating this old subject, or bringing it to the knowledge of the public. Previous to my arrival here, I had confined the knowledge of the existence of the correspondence to a few confidential friends, who were politically attached both to General Jackson and myself; not that I had any thing to apprehend from its disclosure, but because I was unwilling to increase the existing excitement in the present highly critical state of our public affairs. But when I arrived here, late in December, I found my caution had been of no avail, and that the correspondence was a subject of conversation in every circle, and soon became a topic of free comment in most of the public journals. The accounts of the affair, as is usually the case on such occasions, were, for the most part, grossly distorted, and were, in many instances, highly injurious to my character. Still I deemed it my duty to take no hasty step, being determined to afford time for justice to be done me without appeal to you; and, if it should be, to remain silent, as my only object was the vindication of my conduct and character. Believing that further delay would be useless, I can see no adequate motive to postpone, any longer, the submission of all the facts of the case to your deliberate and final decision.

I am not ignorant of the trying position in which I am placed—standing unsupported, except by the force of truth and justice; yet I cannot but look with confidence to your decision. The question presented for your con-

sideration is not that of a controversy of two individuals, between whom you are to decide: viewed in that light, it would bear the aspect of a mere personal difference, involving no principle, and unworthy of your notice; but, regarded in a different light, as involving the character of an officer, occupying by your suffrage a distinguished official station, whose conduct in an interesting public transaction had been impeached, it assumes a far more important bearing, and presents a question of deep import for your consideration. The most sacred of all political relations is that between the representative and the constituent. When your suffrage places an individual in a high official station, a most solemn obligation is imposed on you and him, on the faithful discharge of which the existence of our free and happy institutions mainly depends; on him, so to act as to merit your confidence, and on you, not to withdraw that confidence without just cause. It is under a profound regard for this mutual and sacred obligation that I submit the whole affair to your determination, conscious that in this, as well as every other public transaction of my life, I have been actuated by a solemn sense of duty to you, uninfluenced by fear, favor, or affection. I cannot but look forward to your entire approbation.

I owe it to myself to state, that I come before you under circumstances very painful to me, and a reluctance which nothing but a sense of duty to you and myself could overcome. Among these circumstances, is the necessity of being instrumental in disclosing, in any degree, what I deem so highly confidential as the proceedings of the cabinet, and for which I feel myself justified only by absolute necessity. Acting under this impression, I have not felt myself at liberty to go, even in self defence, beyond strict necessity, and have, accordingly, carefully avoided speaking of the course of my associates in the administration, and even of my own, beyond what appeared to be indispensable. I have not put even Mr. Crawford's statement of his course in the cabinet at issue, except only incidentally, as bearing on his statement of mine. It is no concern of mine, except in this incidental way, what representation he may choose to give of his course, as to this subject, now or formerly, or whether his representation be correct or erroneous.

Before I conclude these prefatory observations, I deem it proper to make a few additional remarks, as to the commencement and motive of this movement against me.

The origin goes far back, beyond the date of the present correspondence, and had for its object, not the advantage of General Jackson, but my political destruction, with motives which I leave you to interpret. The enmity of Mr. Crawford to me, growing out of political controversies long since passed, afforded a ready and powerful instrument by which to operate; and it was early directed against me, with the view of placing General Jackson and myself in our present relations. With that motive, in the midst of the severe political struggle which ended in elevating him to the presidential chair, and in which I took a part so early and decided in his favor, a correspondence was opened at Nashville, unknown to, and unsuspected by me, in December, 1827, which commenced that chain of artful operations, that has terminated by involving General Jackson and myself in the present correspondence. A copy of the letter which opened this operation has been placed in my possession. It was written by Mr. Crawford to Alfred Balch, Esq. of Nashville, and is dated the 14th December, 1827. That the nature and objects of the operations against me may be fully understood by you,

I hereto annex the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to Mr. Balch, and a copy of a letter from the Honorable Wilson Lumpkin, a representative in Congress from the State of Georgia, to me, dated the 27th January, 1829, in which it was enclosed, with an extract from the letter of the Honorable Daniel Newnan, member of Congress elect from the same State. I submit them without comment.

The movement thus commenced did not terminate with this letter. It was followed by other attacks from the same and other quarters, some of which are indicated in the correspondence now laid before you.

It may be proper to state, that I remained ignorant and unsuspecting of these secret movements against me, till the spring of 1828, when vague rumors reached me that some attempts were making at Nashville to injure me; but I treated them with silent neglect, relying confidently for protection on the friendly relation which had so long existed between General Jackson and myself, and the uniform and decided course which I had taken in his favor, in the political struggle then pending. My support of him rested on a principle that I believe to be fundamental in our political system, and the hope that his deep rooted popularity would afford the most effectual means of arresting the course of events, which, I could not but foresee, if not arrested, would bring the great interests of the country into a deep and dangerous conflict.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

No. 1.

Copy of a letter from Hon. Wilson Lumpkin, enclosing extract of a letter from General D. Newnan to him, covering copy of William H. Crawford's letter to Alfred Balch, Esq. of Nashville, Tennessee.

WASHINGTON, 27th January, 1829.

DEAR SIR: I herewith enclose you the copy of a letter received from my friend General Daniel Newnan, in whom I have great confidence. I also give you an extract from my friend's letter.

The great confidence and friendship which I have long entertained, and still entertain, for General Jackson, as well as yourself, induce me to take the liberty of making this communication to you. I am confident the best interest of our common country requires, not only the harmonious and patriotic union of the two first officers of the Government, but of every patriotic citizen of the whole country, to frown indignantly upon all *intriguers, managers, political jugglers*, and selfish politicians, of every description, *who are disposed to divide and conquer*.

I feel the more at liberty and authorized to make this communication, because I know, of my own knowledge, you and your friends are misrepresented upon this subject. However, General Jackson, himself, must see and know the object of these shallow efforts.

I do not know one conspicuous friend of yours, but what has constantly, zealously, and uniformly supported General Jackson, from the day that Pennsylvania declared in his favor to the present time. How, then, can it be possible that General Jackson can suspect the friendship, constancy,

or sincerity of you or your friends? No; he cannot—he will not—he does not. I have quite too much confidence in the General to believe such idle tales.

Nevertheless, it is proper for you and him both to be apprized of the machinations of the mischievous.

You are at liberty to use this communication in any way you please.

With respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,

WILSON LUMPKIN.

HON. J. C. CALHOUN.

No. 2.

Extract of a letter from the Hon. Daniel Newman to the Hon. Wilson Lumpkin, dated near Nashville, Tennessee, 8th January, 1829, enclosing copy of a letter of W. H. Crawford to Alfred Balch.

“W. H. C. has done Mr. Calhoun a great deal of injury, as well by his private machinations as his extensive correspondence. In addition to the letter which he wrote to Mr. Balch, a copy of which I now enclose you, (and which has been seen by General Jackson,) he, a short time since, wrote a letter to G. W. Campbell, proposing that Tennessee should vote for a third person for the Vice Presidency, and requested Mr. Campbell to show the letter to General Jackson.

“I hope Mr. Calhoun will take the earliest opportunity of seeing General J., and putting all things straight; for I cannot believe for one moment the allegations of W. H. C.”

No. 3.

Copy of a letter from William H. Crawford to Alfred Balch, Esq.

WOODLAWN, 14th December, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR: By the last mail I had the pleasure of receiving a letter from you. If I understand your letter, you appear to think a public expression of my opinion on the approaching election to be proper. I cannot think a measure of this nature necessary or proper. In other words, it appears to me highly improper, and could hardly fail to stamp the charge of intolerable arrogance upon me in indelible characters. But few men can ever expect to arrive at that height that would justify a step of that kind, much less an individual who lives in the most absolute retirement, and who has no ambition to emerge from it. I am perfectly reconciled to my situation, and would not willingly exchange it with Mr. Adams. But my opinions upon the next presidential election are generally known. When Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Cambreleng made me a visit last April, I authorized them upon every proper occasion to make those opinions known. The vote of the State of Georgia will, as certainly as that of Tennessee, be

given to General Jackson, in opposition to Mr. Adams. The only difficulty that this State has upon that subject, is that, if Jackson should be elected, Calhoun will come into power. I confess I am not apprehensive of such a result. For _____ writes to me, "Jackson ought to know, and, if he does not, he shall know, that, at the Calhoun caucus in Columbia, the term "Military Chieftain" was bandied about more flippantly than by H. Clay, and that the family friends of Mr. Calhoun were most active in giving it currency;" and I know personally that Mr. Calhoun favored Mr. Adams' pretensions until Mr. Clay declared for him.* He well knew that Clay would not have declared for Adams, without it was well understood that he, Calhoun, was to be put down if Adams's influence could effect it. If he was not friendly to his election, why did he suffer his paper to be purchased up by Adams's printer, without making some stipulation in favor of Jackson? If you can ascertain that Calhoun will not be benefitted by Jackson's election, you will do him a benefit by communicating the information to me. Make what use you please of this letter, and show it to whom you please.

I am, dear Sir, your friend

And most obedient servant,
WM. H. CRAWFORD.

ALFRED BALCH, Esq.

A true and exact copy. [Noted in the handwriting of Gen. Newnan.]

* Mr. Crawford's assertion, that *he knew personally* what he here affirms, renders it proper to make a few remarks. How he could have had any personal knowledge of what he states, I am at a loss to understand. Our political intercourse had ceased for years. We had none subsequent to the fall of 1821, and in fact none of any kind after that, beyond the mere ordinary civilities of life.

My course in relation to the point in question was very different from what he states. When my name was withdrawn from the list of presidential candidates, I assumed a perfectly neutral position between General Jackson and Mr. Adams. I was decidedly opposed to a congressional caucus; as both these gentlemen were also, and as I bore very friendly personal and political relations to both, I would have been very well satisfied with the election of either. When they were both returned to the House of Representatives, I found myself placed in a new relation to them. I was elected Vice-President by the people, and a sense of propriety forbade my interference in the election in the House; yet I could not avoid forming an opinion as to the principles that ought to govern the choice of the House. This opinion was early formed, long before I had the least intimation of the course of the prominent individual referred to by Mr. Crawford, and was wholly independent of what might be his course, or that of any other individual. What the principle is that in my opinion ought to govern the House of Representatives in the case of a contested election, I leave to be inferred from my subsequent course. So completely did my opinion depend on what I considered a sound principle in the abstract, that, had the position of the two leading candidates before the House been reversed, it would not have influenced my course in the least degree.

As to the reason by which Mr. Crawford endeavors to sustain what he affirms he *personally knew*, I deem them wholly unworthy of notice.

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

GEN. ANDREW JACKSON AND JOHN C. CALHOUN,

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

MAY 13, 1830.

SIR: That frankness, which, I trust, has always characterized me through life, towards those with whom I have been in the habits of friendship, induces me to lay before you the enclosed copy of a letter from William H. Crawford, Esq., which was placed in my hands on yesterday. The submission, you will perceive, is authorized by the writer. The statements and facts it presents being so different from what I had heretofore understood to be correct, requires that it should be brought to your consideration. They are different from your letter to Governor Bibb, of Alabama, of the 13th May, 1818, where you state "General Jackson is vested with full power to conduct the war in the manner he may judge best," and different, too, from your letters to me at that time, which breathe throughout a spirit of approbation and friendship, and particularly the one in which you say, "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th ultimo, and to acquaint you with the entire approbation of the President of all the measures you have adopted to terminate the rupture with the Indians." My object in making this communication is to announce to you the great surprise which is felt, and to learn of you whether it be possible that the information given is correct; whether it can be, under all the circumstances of which you and I are both informed, that any attempt seriously to affect me was moved and sustained by you in the cabinet council, when, as is known to you, I was but executing the *wishes* of the Government, and clothed with the authority to "conduct the war in the manner I might judge best."

You can, if you please, take a copy: the one enclosed you will please return to me.

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your humble servant,

ANDREW JACKSON.

The Hon. J. C. CALHOUN.

Copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to Mr. Forsyth, enclosed in the above.

WOODLAWN, 30th April, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR: Your letter of the 16th was received by Sunday's mail, together with its enclosure. I recollect having conversed with you at the time and place, and upon the subject, in that enclosure stated, but I have not

a distinct recollection of what I said to you, but I am certain there is one error in your statement of that conversation to Mr. ——. I recollect distinctly what passed in the cabinet meeting, referred to in your letter to Mr. ——.

Mr. Calhoun's proposition in the cabinet was, that General Jackson should be punished in some form, or reprehended in some form; I am not positively certain which. As Mr. Calhoun did not propose to arrest General Jackson, I feel confident that I could not have made use of that word in my relation to you of the circumstances which transpired in the cabinet, as I have no recollection of ever having designedly misstated any transaction in my life, and most sincerely believe I never did. My apology for having disclosed what passed in a cabinet meeting is this: In the summer after that meeting, an extract of a letter from Washington was published in a Nashville paper, in which it was stated that I had proposed to arrest General Jackson, but that he was triumphantly defended by Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Adams. This letter, I always believed, was written by Mr. Calhoun, or by his directions. It had the desired effect. General Jackson became extremely inimical to me, and friendly to Mr. Calhoun. In stating the arguments of Mr. Adams to induce Mr. Monroe to support General Jackson's conduct throughout, advertng to Mr. Monroe's apparent admission, that if a young officer had acted so he might be safely punished, Mr. Adams said, that if General Jackson had acted so, that if he was a subaltern officer, *shooting was too good for him*. This, however, was said with a view of driving Mr. Monroe to an unlimited support of what General Jackson had done, and not with an unfriendly view to the General. Indeed, my own views on the subject had undergone a material change after the cabinet had been convened. Mr. Calhoun made some allusion to a letter the General had written to the President, who had forgotten that he had received such a letter, but said, if he had received such an one, he could find it; and went directly to his cabinet, and brought the letter out. In it General Jackson approved of the determination of the Government to break up Amelia island and Galveztown, and gave it also as his opinion that the Floridas ought to be taken by the United States. He added, it might be a delicate matter for the Executive to decide; but if the President approved of it, he had only to give a hint to some confidential member of Congress, say Johnny Ray, and he would do it, and take the responsibility of it on himself. I asked the President if the letter had been answered. He replied, no; for that he had no recollection of having received it. I then said that I had no doubt that General Jackson, in taking Pensacola, believed he was doing what the Executive wished. After that letter was produced, unanswered, I should have opposed the infliction of punishment upon the General, who had considered the silence of the President as a tacit consent; yet it was after this letter was produced and read, that Mr. Calhoun made his proposition to the cabinet for punishing the General. You may show this letter to Mr. Calhoun, if you please. With the foregoing corrections of what passed in the cabinet, your account of it to Mr. —— is correct. Indeed, there is but one inaccuracy in it, and one omission. What I have written beyond them is a mere amplification of what passed in the cabinet. I do not know that I ever hinted at the letter of the General to the President; yet that letter had a most important bearing upon the deliberations of the cabinet, at least in my mind, and possibly in the minds of Mr. Adams and the President; but neither expressed any

opinion upon the subject. It seems it had none upon the mind of Mr. Calhoun, for it made no change in his conduct.

I am, dear sir, your friend,

And most obedient servant,

HON. JOHN FORSYTH.

WM. H. CRAWFORD.

A true copy from the original in my possession.

May 12, 1830.

JOHN FORSYTH.

Mr. Calhoun to General Jackson.

WASHINGTON, 13th May, 1830.

SIR: Agreeably to your request, I herewith return the copy of a letter signed William H. Crawford, which I received under cover of your note of this instant, handed to me this morning by Mr. Donelson, of which I have retained a copy, in conformity with your permission.

As soon as my leisure will permit, you shall receive a communication from me on the subject to which it refers. In the mean time, I cannot repress the expression of my indignation at the affair; while, at the same time, I cannot but express my gratification that the secret and mysterious attempts which have been making, by false insinuations, for years, for political purposes, to injure my character, are at length brought to light.

J. C. CALHOUN.

To the PRESIDENT of the United States.

Mr. Calhoun to General Jackson.

WASHINGTON, 29th May, 1830.

SIR: In answering your letter of the 13th instant, I wish to be distinctly understood, that however high my respect is for your personal character, and the exalted station which you occupy, I cannot recognise the right on your part to call in question my conduct on the interesting occasion to which your letter refers. I acted, on that occasion, in the discharge of a high official duty, and under responsibility to my conscience and my country only. In replying, then, to your letter, I do not place myself in the attitude of apologising for the part I may have acted, or of palliating my conduct on the accusation of Mr. Crawford. My course, I trust, requires no apology; and if it did, I have too much self respect to make it to any one in a case touching the discharge of my official conduct. I stand on very different ground. I embrace the opportunity which your letter offers, not for the purpose of making excuses, but as a suitable occasion to place my conduct in relation to an interesting public transaction in its proper light; and I am gratified that Mr. Crawford, though far from intending me a kindness, has afforded me such an opportunity.

In undertaking to place my conduct in its proper light, I deem it proper to premise that it is very far from my intention to defend mine by impeaching yours. Where we have differed, I have no doubt that we differed honestly; and in claiming to act on honorable and patriotic motives myself, I cheerfully accord the same to you.

I know not that I correctly understood your meaning; but, after a careful perusal, I would infer from your letter that you had learned for the first time, by Mr. Crawford's letter, that you and I placed different constructions on the orders under which you acted in the Seminole war; and that you had

been led to believe, previously, by my letters to yourself and Governor Bibb, that I concurred with you in thinking that your orders were intended to authorize your attack on the Spanish posts in Florida. Under these impressions, you would seem to impute to me some degree of duplicity, or at least concealment, which required on my part explanation. I hope that my conception of your meaning is erroneous; but if it be not, and your meaning be such as I suppose, I must be permitted to express my surprise at the misapprehension, which, I feel confident, it will be in my power to correct by the most decisive proof, drawn from the public documents,* and the correspondence between Mr. Monroe and yourself, growing out of the decision of the cabinet on the Seminole affair, which passed through my hands at the time; and which I now have his permission to use, as explanatory of my opinion, as well as his, and the other members of his administration. To save you the trouble of turning to the file of your correspondence, I have enclosed extracts from the letters, which clearly prove that the decision of the cabinet on the point that your orders did not authorize the occupation of St. Mark's and Pensacola, was early and fully made known to you, and that I, in particular, concurred in the decision.

Mr. Monroe's letter of the 19th July, 1818, the first of the series, and written immediately after the decision of the cabinet, and from which I have given a copious extract, enters fully into the views taken by the Executive of the whole subject. In your reply of the 19th of August, 1818, you object to the construction which the administration had placed on your orders, and you assign your reasons at large, why you conceived that the orders under which you acted authorized your operations in Florida. Mr. Monroe replied on the 20th October, 1818; and, after expressing his regret that you had placed a construction on your orders different from what was intended, he invited you to open a correspondence with me, that your conception of the meaning of your orders, and that of the administration, might be placed, with the reasons on both sides, on the files of the War Department. Your letter of the 15th of November, in answer, agrees to the correspondence as proposed, but declines commencing it; to which Mr. Monroe replied by a letter of the 21st December, stating his reasons for suggesting the correspondence, and why he thought that it ought to commence with you. To these, I have added an extract from your letter of the 7th December, approving of Mr. Monroe's message at the opening of Congress, which, though not constituting a part of the correspondence from which I have extracted so copiously, is intimately connected with the subject under consideration.

But it was not by private correspondence only, that the view which the Executive took of your orders was made known. In his message to the House of Representatives of the 25th March, 1818, long before information of the result of your operation in Florida was received, Mr. Monroe states, that "orders had been given to the General in command not to enter Florida, unless it be in pursuit of the enemy, and, in that case, to respect the Spanish authority, wherever it may be maintained; and he will be instructed to withdraw his forces from the province as soon as he has reduced that tribe (the Seminoles) to order, and secured our fellow-citizens in that quarter, by satisfactory arrangements, against its unprovoked and savage hostilities in future." In his annual message at the opening of Congress, in

* See Appendix from A, to F, inclusive, being an extract, from a private correspondence between Mr. Monroe and Gen. Jackson in the Seminole campaign.

November of the same year, the President, speaking of your entering Florida, says: "On authorizing Major General Jackson to enter Florida, in pursuit of the Seminoles, care was taken not to encroach on the rights of Spain." Again: "In entering Florida to suppress this combination, no idea was entertained of hostility to Spain; and, however justifiable the commanding General was, in consequence of the misconduct of the Spanish officers, in entering St. Mark's and Pensacola, to terminate it, by proving to the savages, and their associates, that they could not be protected, even there, yet the amicable relation between the U. States and Spain could not be altered by that act alone. By ordering the restitution of those posts, those relations were preserved. To a change of them the power of the Executive is deemed incompetent. It is vested in Congress alone." The view taken of this subject met your entire approbation, as appears from the extract of your letter, of 7th December, 1818, above referred to.

After such full and decisive proof, as it seems to me, of the view of the Executive, I had a right, as I supposed, to conclude that you long since knew that the administration, and myself in particular, were of the opinion that the orders under which you acted did not authorize you to occupy the Spanish posts; but I now infer from your letter, to which this is in answer, that such conclusion was erroneous, and that you were of the impression, till you received Mr. Crawford's letter, that I concurred in the opposite construction, which you gave to your orders, that they were intended to authorize you to occupy the posts. You rely for this impression, as I understand you, on certain general expressions in my letter to Governor Bibb, of Alabama, of the 13th of May, 1818, in which I stated that "General Jackson is vested with full powers to conduct the war in the manner he shall judge best," and also in my letter of the 6th February, 1818, in answer to yours of the 20th January of the same year, in which I acquainted you "with the entire approbation of the President of all the measures you had adopted to terminate the rupture with the Seminole Indians."

I will not reason the point, that a letter to Gov. Bibb, which was not communicated to you, which bears date long after you had occupied St. Mark's, and subsequent to the time you had determined to occupy Pensacola, (see your letter of June 2d, 1818, to me, published with the Seminole documents,) could give you authority to occupy those posts. I know, that, in quoting the letters, you could not intend such absurdity, to authorize such an inference; and I must therefore conclude that it was your intention by the extract to show, that, at the time of writing the letter, it was my opinion that the orders under which you did act were intended to authorize the occupation of the Spanish posts. Nothing could have been more remote from my intention in writing the letter. It would have been in opposition to the view which I have always taken of your orders, and in direct contradiction to the President's message of the 25th March, 1818, communicated but a few weeks before to the House of Representatives, (already referred to,) and which gives a directly opposite construction to your orders. In fact, the letter, on its face, proves that it was not the intention of the Government to occupy the Spanish posts. By referring to it, you will see that I enclosed to the Governor a copy of my orders to General Gaines, of the 16th December, 1817, authorizing him to cross the Spanish line, and to attack the Indians within the limits of Florida, unless they should take shelter under a Spanish post, in which event, he was directed to report immediately to the Department, which order Governor Bibb was directed to

consider as his authority for carrying the war into Florida, thus clearly establishing the fact that the order was considered still in force, and not superseded by that to you, directing you to assume the command in the Seminole war.

Nor can my letter of the 6th of February be, by any sound rule of construction, interpreted into an authority to occupy the Spanish posts, or as countenancing, on my part, such an interpretation of the orders previously given to you. Your letter of the 20th January, to which mine is an answer, bears date at Nashville, before you set out on the expedition, and consists of a narrative of the measures adopted by you, in order to bring your forces into the field; where they were directed to rendezvous, the time intended for marching, the orders for supplies given to the contractors, with other details of the same kind, without the slightest indication of your intention to act against the Spanish posts; and the approbation of the President of the measures you had adopted could be intended to apply to those detailed in your letter. I do not think that your letter of the 13th instant presents the question, whether the Executive or yourself placed the true construction, considered as a military question, on the orders under which you acted. But I must be permitted to say, that the construction of the former is in strict conformity with my intention in drawing up the orders; and that, if they be susceptible of a different construction, it was far from being my intention they should be. I did not then suppose, nor have I ever, that it was in the power of the President, under the Constitution, to order the occupation of the posts of a nation with whom we were not at war; (whatever might be the right of the General, under the law of nations, to attack an enemy sheltered under the posts of a neutral power;) and had I been directed by the President to issue such order, I should have been restrained from complying by the higher authority of the Constitution, which I had sworn to support. Nor will I discuss the question, whether the order to General Gaines, inhibiting him from attacking the Spanish posts, (a copy of which was sent to you,) was in fact, and according to military usage, an order to you, and of course obligatory until rescinded. Such, certainly, was my opinion. I know that yours was different. You acted on your construction, believing it to be right; and, in pursuing the course which I have done, I claim an equal right to act on the construction which I conceived to be correct, knowing it to conform to my intentions in issuing the orders. But, in waiving now the question of the true construction of the orders, I wish it however to be understood, it is only because I do not think it presented by your letter, and not because I have now, or ever had, the least doubt of the correctness of the opinion which I entertain. I have always been prepared to discuss it on friendly terms with you, as appears by the extracts from Mr. Monroe's correspondence, and more recently by my letter to you of the 30th of April, 1828, covering a copy of a letter of Major H. Lee, in which I decline a correspondence that he had requested on the subject of the construction of your orders. In my letter to Major Lee, I stated, that, "as you refer to the public documents only for the construction which the Executive gave to the orders, I infer that on this subject you have not had access to the General's (Jackson's) private papers; but if I be in an error, and if the construction which the administration gave to the orders be not stated with sufficient distinctness in the then President's correspondence with him, I will cheerfully give, as one of the members of the administration, my own views fully in relation to the orders, if it be desired by General Jackson; but it is

only with him, and at his desire, that, under existing circumstances, I should feel myself justified in corresponding on this or any other subject connected with his public conduct:" to which I added, in my letter to you, covering a copy of the letter from which the above is an extract, "with you I cannot have the slightest objection to correspond on this subject, if additional information be desirable." You expressed no desire for further information, and I took it for granted that Mr. Monroe's correspondence with you, and the public documents, furnished you a full and clear conception of the construction which the Executive gave to your orders; under which impression I remained till I received your letter of the 13th instant.

Connected with the subject of your orders, there are certain expressions in your letter, which, though I am at a loss to understand, I cannot pass over in silence. After announcing your surprise at the contents of Mr. Crawford's letter, you ask whether the information be correct, "under all of the circumstances, of which you and I are both informed, that any attempt seriously to affect me was moved and sustained by you in cabinet council, when, as is known to you, I was executing the *wishes* of the Government." If by *wishes*, which you have underscored, it be meant that there was any intimation given by myself, directly or indirectly, of the desire of the Government that you should occupy the Spanish posts, so far from being "informed," I had not the slightest knowledge of any such intimation, nor did I ever hear a whisper of any such before. But I cannot imagine that it is your intention to make a distinction between the wishes and the public orders of the Government, as I find no such distinction in your correspondence with the President, nor in any of the public documents; but, on the contrary, it is strongly rebutted by your relying for your justification constantly and exclusively on your public orders. Taking, then, the "*wishes of the Government*" to be but another expression for its orders, I must refer to the proof already offered, to show that the wishes of the Government, in relation to the Spanish posts, were not such as you assume them to be.

Having, I trust, satisfactorily established that there has not been the least disguise as to the construction of your orders, I will now proceed to state the part which I took in the deliberations of the cabinet. My statement will be confined strictly to myself, as I do not feel myself justified to speak of the course of the other members of the administration; and, in fact, only of my own in self-defence, under the extraordinary circumstances connected with this correspondence.

And here I must premise that the object of a cabinet council is not to bring together opinions already formed, but to form opinions on the course which the Government ought to pursue, after full and mature deliberation. Meeting in this spirit, the first object is a free exchange of sentiment, in which doubts and objections are freely presented and discussed. It is, I conceive, the duty of the members thus to present their doubts and objections, and to support them by offering fully all of the arguments in their power, but at the same time to take care not to form an opinion till all the facts and views are fully brought out, and every doubt and objection carefully weighed. In this spirit I came into the meeting. The questions involved were numerous and important: whether you had transcended your orders; if so, what course ought to be adopted; what was the conduct of Spain and her officers in Florida; what was the state of our relations with Spain, and, through her, with the other European powers—a question, at that time, of uncommon complication and difficulty. These questions had all to be carefully examined and weighed, both separately and in connexion,

before a final opinion could be wisely formed; and never did I see a deliberation in which every point was more carefully examined, or a greater solicitude displayed to arrive at a correct decision. I was the junior member of the cabinet, and had been but a few months in the administration. As Secretary of War, I was more immediately connected with the questions whether you had transcended your orders, and, if so, what course ought to be pursued. I was of the impression that you had exceeded your orders, and had acted on your own responsibility; but I neither questioned your patriotism nor your motives. Believing that where orders were transcended, investigation, as a matter of course, ought to follow, as due in justice to the Government and the officer, unless there be strong reasons to the contrary, I came to the meeting under the impression that the usual course ought to be pursued in this case, which I supported by presenting fully and freely all the arguments that occurred to me. They were met by other arguments, growing out of a more enlarged view of the subject, as connected with the conduct of Spain and her officers, and the course of policy which honor and interest dictated to be pursued towards her, with which some of the members of the cabinet were more familiar than myself, and whose duty it was to present that aspect of the subject, as it was mine to present that more immediately connected with the military operations. After deliberately weighing every question, when the members of the cabinet came to form their final opinion, on a view of the whole ground, it was unanimously determined,* as I understood, in favor of the course adopted, and which was fully made known to you by Mr. Monroe's letter of the 19th of July, 1818. I gave it my assent and support, as being that which, under all the circumstances, the public interest required to be adopted.

I shall now turn to the examination of the version which Mr. Crawford has given of my course in this important deliberation, beginning with his "apology for having disclosed what took place in a cabinet meeting." He says; "In the summer after the meeting, an extract of a letter from Washington was published in a Nashville paper, in which it was stated that I (Mr. Crawford) had proposed to arrest General Jackson, but that he was triumphantly defended by Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Adams. This letter, I always believed, was written by Mr. Calhoun, or by his direction. It had the desired effect; General Jackson became inimical to me, and friendly to Mr. Calhoun."

I am not at all surprised that Mr. Crawford should feel that he stands in need of an apology for betraying the deliberations of the cabinet. It is, I believe, not only the first instance in our country, but one of a very few instances to be found in any country, or any age, that an individual has felt absolved from the high obligation which honor and duty impose on one situated as he was. It is not, however, my intention to comment on the morality of his disclosure; that more immediately concerns himself; and I leave him undisturbed to establish his own rules of honor and fidelity, in order to proceed to the examination of a question in which I am more immediately concerned—the truth of his apology.

I desire not to speak harshly of Mr. Crawford. I sincerely commiserate his misfortune. I may be warm in political contests, but it is not in me to retain enmity, particularly towards the unsuccessful. In the political contest which ended in 1825, Mr. Crawford and myself took opposite sides;

* *Acquiesced* would probably be more correct, at least as applicable to one member of the cabinet.

But whatever feelings of unkindness it gave rise to have long since passed away on my part. The contest ended in an entire change of the political elements of the country; and, in the new state of things which followed, I found myself acting with many of the friends of Mr. Crawford, to whom I had been recently opposed, and opposed to many of my friends, with whom I had, till then, been associated. In this new state of things, my inclination, my regard for his friends who were acting with me, and the success of the cause for which we were jointly contending,—all contributed to remove from my bosom every feeling towards him, save that of pity for his misfortune. I would not speak a harsh word, if I could avoid it; and it is a cause of pain to me that the extraordinary position in which he has placed me, compels me, in self-defence, to say any thing which must, in its consequence, bear on his character.

I speak in this spirit when I assert, as I do, that his apology has no foundation in truth. He offers no reason for charging me with so dishonorable an act as that of betraying the proceedings of the cabinet, and that for the purpose of injuring one of my associates in the administration. The charge rests wholly on his suspicion, to which I oppose my positive assertion that it is wholly unfounded. I had no knowledge of the letter, or connexion with it; nor do I recollect that I ever saw the extract. But why charge me, and not Mr. Adams? I had then been but a few months in the administration, and Mr. Crawford and myself were on the best terms, without a feeling, certainly on my part, of rivalry or jealousy. In assigning the motive that he does for the letters, he forgets the relation which existed then between you and himself. He says it had the desired effect; that you became friendly to me, and extremely inimical to him. He does not remember that your hostility to him long preceded this period, and had a very different origin. He certainly could not have anticipated that a copy of his letter would be placed in your hand.

These are not the only difficulties accompanying his apology: there are others still more formidable, and which must compel him to assign some other reason for disclosing the proceedings of the cabinet.

Mr. McDuffie's letter to me, of the 14th instant, of which I enclose a copy, proves that Mr. Crawford spoke freely of the proceedings of the cabinet on his way to Georgia, in the summer of 1818; and dates will show that he could not at that time have seen the extract from the Nashville paper, on which he now rests his apology. The deliberation of the cabinet took place between the 14th and 25th July, 1818. On the former day, Mr. Monroe returned to Washington from London, and on the latter a general exposition of the views of the Government in relation to the operations in Florida appeared in the *Intelligencer*. The letter of Mr. Monroe to you, of the 19th July, 1818, fixes probably the day of the *final* decision of the cabinet. Mr. Crawford passed through Augusta on the 11th August, as announced in the papers of that city, on which day, or the preceding, his conversation, to which Mr. McDuffie's letter relates, must have taken place. On a comparison of these dates, you will see that it was impossible that Mr. Crawford could have seen the extract from the Nashville paper when he

* I wish not to be understood as intimating that Mr. Adams had the least connexion with the affair. I believe him to be utterly incapable of such baseness.

† The letter of the Hon. George McDuffie, Appendix, marked G.

was in Edgefield, and he must consequently find some other apology for his disclosures. This was not the only instance of his making the disclosures before he saw the extract. He was at Milledgville on the 16th of August, 1818, a few days after he passed through Augusta; and a little after, there appeared a statement in the Georgia Journal, somewhat varied from that made in Edgefield, but agreeing with it in most of the particulars. I cannot lay my hand on the article, but have a distinct recollection of it. You no doubt remember it. Circumstances fixed it on Mr. Crawford, and it has not, to my knowledge, been denied.

With such evidence of inaccuracy, either from want of memory, or some other cause, in what relates to his own motives and actions, it would be unreasonable to suppose that Mr. Crawford's statements will prove more correct in what relates to me. I will now proceed to examine them. He first states that I proposed that you should "be punished in some form, or reprimanded in some form;" and to make my course more odious, as I suppose, he adds, that "Mr. Calhoun did not propose to arrest General Jackson." I will not dwell on a statement which, on its face, is so absurd. How could an officer under our law be punished without arrest and trial? And to suppose that I proposed such a course, would indeed be to rate my understanding very low.

The next allegation requires much more attention. He says: "Indeed, my own views on the subject had undergone a material change after the cabinet had been convened. Mr. Calhoun made some allusion to a letter that General Jackson had written to the President, who had forgotten that he had received such a letter, but said if he had received such a one, he would find it, and went directly to his cabinet, and brought it out. In it General Jackson approves of the determination of the Government to break up Amelia island and Galveztown; and gave it also as his opinion that Florida ought to be taken by the United States. He added, it might be a delicate matter for the Executive to decide, but if the President approved of it, he had only to give a hint to some confidential member of Congress, say Johnny Ray, and he would do it, and take the responsibility on himself. I asked the President if the letter had been answered: he replied, no; for that he had no recollection of receiving it. I then said that I had no doubt that General Jackson, in taking Pensacola, believed he was doing what the Executive wished. After that letter was produced, unanswered, I should have opposed the infliction of punishment on General Jackson, who had considered the silence of the President as a tacit consent; yet it was after the letter was produced and read, that Mr. Calhoun made the proposition to the cabinet for punishing the General." Again: "I do not know that I ever hinted at the letter to the President, yet that letter had a most important bearing on the deliberations of the cabinet, at least in my mind, and possibly on the minds of Mr. Adams and the President, but neither expressed any opinion on the subject. It seems it had none on the mind of Mr. Calhoun, for it made no change in his conduct."

It will be no easy matter for Mr. Crawford to reconcile the statement which he has thus circumstantially made, with his conduct in relation to the Seminole affair, from the time of the decision of the cabinet till the subject ceased to be agitated.

How will he, in the first instance, reconcile it with his Edgefield statement, of which Mr. McDuffie's letter gives an account? The contrast between that and the present is most striking; to illustrate which, I will give an ex-

tract from Mr. McDuffie's letter. Mr. McDuffie's letter says, that "he" (Mr. Crawford) "stated that you" (Mr. Calhoun) "had been in favor of an inquiry into the conduct of General Jackson, and that he was the only member of the cabinet that concurred with you. He spoke in strong terms of disapprobation of the course pursued by General Jackson, not only in his military proceedings, but in prematurely bringing the grounds of his defence before the country, and forestalling public opinion; thus anticipating the administration. On this point, he remarked, that, if the administration could not give direction to public opinion, but permitted a military officer, who had violated his orders, to anticipate them, they had no business to be at Washington, and had better return home." Such was the language then held, and such his tone of feeling at that time. We hear not one word of the letter which makes so conspicuous a figure in his present statement; not one word of the change it effected in his mind in relation to your conduct; not a word of his taking a course different from me: but, on the contrary, he then stated, directly, that he concurred with me in favoring an inquiry, and indicated no difference on any other point; and so far from exempting you from the charge of breach of orders, as he now attempts to do, he asserted, positively, that you had violated your orders. Shall we find the explanation of the contrast in the two statements in the difference of his motives then and now? Is his motive now to injure me, and was it then to attack another member of the administration? Or must it be attributed, as the more charitable interpretation, to the decay of memory? Whatever may be the true explanation, all will agree that a statement, when events were fresh in the memory, is to be trusted in preference to one made twelve years after the transaction, particularly if the former accords with after events, and the latter does not, as is the case in this instance. At the next session of Congress, your conduct in the Seminole war was severely attacked in both branches of the Legislature. Let us see if the course pursued by Mr. Crawford and his personal and confidential friends can be reconciled to the statement which he now gives of his course in the cabinet. Mr. Cobb, of Georgia, now no more, was then a prominent member of the House of Representatives. He was the particular, personal, and confidential friend of Mr. Crawford, his near neighbor, and formerly a law student under him. What part did he take? He led the attack; he moved the resolutions against you; he accused you expressly of the violation of your orders, and sustained the accusation with all his powers.* All this accords with Mr. Crawford's statement of his sentiment and his course at the time; but how can it be reconciled to his present statement? How could he, on any principle of justice, stand by and hear you thus falsely accused, in the face of the world, when he, according to his showing now, knew that it was all false? And how can he reconcile his silence then, when you stood so much in need of his assistance, with his disclosures now, when the agitation has long since passed away, and his aid no longer required? But let us turn to the other branch of the Legislature, and see whether any occurrence there can explain this apparent mystery. General Lacock, of Pennsylvania, the particular friend of Mr. Crawford, and in the habit of constant intercourse with him, was the chairman of the committee in that body to whom the part of the message which related to the Seminole war was referred. Mr. Forsyth, then and now a Senator from Georgia, and who now acts a prominent part in the transaction which has

*See Appendix H—letters from Hon. Robert Garnett.

given rise to the present correspondence, was also a member, and was then, as he is now, an intimate, personal, and political friend of Mr. Crawford. With two such able and influential friends on the committee, he had the most favorable opportunity that could be offered to do you justice. According to his own statement, he felt no obligation to observe silence in relation to the proceedings of the cabinet. Why, then, did he not interpose with his friends on the committee to do you justice? That he did not, I need not offer you arguments to prove. The report of the committee is sufficient testimony. Should he say that he was restrained by feelings of delicacy from interfering with his friends on the committee, how will he reconcile, on the principles of justice and honor, his silence after the report so severely assailing your motives and conduct was made, when, admitting his present statement, it was completely in his power to shield you from censure?

But why should I waste time and words to prove that Mr. Crawford's whole course is in direct conflict with his present statement of the proceedings of the cabinet, when there remains an objection that cannot be surmounted? The statement is entirely destitute of foundation. It is not true. Strange as it may appear, after an account so minute and circumstantial, no such letter as he refers to was ever before the cabinet, or alluded to in its deliberations. My memory is distinct and clear, and is confirmed by the no less distinct recollection of Mr. Monroe and Mr. Wirt, as will fully appear by copies of their statements, herewith enclosed. Feelings of delicacy, growing out of the political relation of Mr. Adams and Mr. Crowninshield, the other members of the then administration, both towards you and myself, have restrained me from applying for their statements, but I have not the least apprehension that they would vary from Mr. Monroe's or Mr. Wirt's.*

Comment is useless, I will not attempt to explain so gross a misstatement of the proceedings of the cabinet, but will leave it to those friends of Mr. Crawford who have placed him in this dilemma to determine whether his false statement is to be attributed to an entire decay of memory, or to some other cause; and if the former, to exempt themselves from the responsibility of thus cruelly exposing a weakness which it was their duty to conceal.

It now becomes necessary to say something of your letter of the 6th January, to which Mr. Crawford has given, in his statement, so much prominence. My recollection in relation to it accords with Mr. Monroe's statement. I came into his room when he had apparently just received the letter. He was indisposed at the time. I think he opened the letter in my presence, and, finding that it was from you, he gave me the letter to read. I cast my eyes over it, and remarked that it related to the Seminole affair, and would require his attention, or something to that effect: I thought no more of it. Long after, I think it was at the commencement of the next session of Congress, I heard some allusion which brought the letter to my recollection. It was from a quarter which induced me to believe that it came from Mr. Crawford. I called, and mentioned it to Mr. Monroe, and found that he had entirely forgotten the letter. After searching some time, he found it among some other papers, and read it, as he told me, for the first time.

Having stated these facts, I should be wanting in candor were I not also to state, that, if the facts had been otherwise; had Mr. Monroe read your letter, and intentionally omitted to answer it, and had it been brought before

*See my letter to Mr. Monroe and Mr. Wirt, and their answers; also, letter to Mr. Adams, and his answer, written since the date of this letter. Mr. Crowninshield, the other member of the cabinet, was absent: see his letter. See Appendix, J, K, L, M, N, O, P.

the cabinet, in my opinion it would not have had the least influence on its deliberation. The letter was not received till several weeks after the orders to you were issued, and could not, therefore, as you know, have had any influence in drawing them up; and such, I conceive, was your opinion, as I do not find any allusion to the letter in your public or private correspondence at the time, which would not have been the case, had it, in your opinion, formed a part of your justification. You rested your defence on what I conceive to be much more elevated ground—on the true construction, as you supposed, of your orders, and the necessity of the measures which you adopted to terminate the war, and not on any supposed secret wish of the Executive in opposition to the public orders under which you acted. Mr. Crawford, in placing your justification *now* on such grounds, not only exposes your motives to be questioned, but, as far as his acts can, greatly weakens your defence.

On a review of this subject, it is impossible not to be struck with the time and mode of bringing on this correspondence. It is now twelve years since the termination of the Seminole war. Few events in our history have caused so much excitement, or been so fully discussed, both in and out of Congress. During a greater part of this long period, Mr. Crawford was a prominent actor on the public stage, seeing and hearing all that occurred, and without restraint, according to his own statement, to disclose freely all he knew; yet not a word is uttered by him in your behalf; but now, when you have triumphed over all difficulties, when you no longer require defence, he, for the first time, breaks silence, not to defend you, but to accuse one who gave you every support in your hour of trial in his power, when you were fiercely attacked, if not by Mr. Crawford himself, at least by some of his most confidential and influential friends. Nor is the manner less remarkable than the time. Mr. Forsyth, a Senator from Georgia, here in his place, writes to Mr. Crawford, his letter covering certain enclosures, and referring to certain correspondence and conversations in relation to my conduct in the cabinet deliberation on the Seminole question. Mr. Crawford answers, correcting the statements alluded to in some instances, and confirming and amplifying in others; which answer he authorizes Mr. Forsyth to show me, if he pleased. Of all this, Mr. Forsyth gives me not the slightest intimation, though in the habit of almost daily intercourse in the Senate; and instead of showing me Mr. Crawford's letter, as he was authorized to do, I hear of it, for the first time, by having a copy put into my hand under cover of your letter of the 13th instant—a copy with important blanks, and unaccompanied with Mr. Forsyth's letter, with its enclosures, to which Mr. Crawford's is in answer.

Why is this so? Why did not Mr. Forsyth himself show me the letter—the original letter? By what authority did he place a copy in your hands? None is given by the writer. Why is your name interposed? Was it to bring me into conflict with the President of the United States? If the object of the correspondence between Mr. Crawford and Mr. Forsyth be to impeach my conduct, as it would seem to be, by what rule of justice am I deprived of evidence material to my defence, and which is in the hands of my accusers—of a copy of Mr. Forsyth's letter, with the enclosures; of a statement of the conversation and correspondence of the two individuals whose names are in blank in the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter furnished me? Why not inform me who they are? Their testimony might be highly important, and even their *names alone* might throw much light on this mysterious affair.

I must be frank. I feel that I am deprived of important rights by the interposition of your name, of which I have just cause to complain. It deprives me of important advantages, which would otherwise belong to my position. By the interposition of your name, the communication which would exist between Mr. Forsyth and myself, had he placed Mr. Crawford's letter in my hands, as he was authorized to do, is prevented, and I am thus deprived of the right which would have belonged to me in that case, and which he could not in justice withhold, of being placed in possession of all the material facts and circumstances connected with this affair. In thus complaining, it is not my intention to attribute to you any design to deprive me of so important an advantage. I know the extent of your public duties, and how completely they engross your attention. They have not allowed you sufficient time for reflection in this case, of which evidence is afforded by the ground that you assume in placing the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter in my hand, which you state was submitted by his authority. I do not so understand him; the authority was, as I conceive, to Mr. Forsyth, and not to yourself, and applied to the original letter, and not to the copy, both of which, as I have shown, are very important in this case, and not mere matters of form. I have asked the question, Why is this affair brought up at this late period, and in this remarkable manner? It merits consideration, at least from myself. I am in the habit of speaking my sentiments and opinions freely, and I see no cause which ought to restrain me on the present occasion. I should be blind not to see that this whole affair is a political manœuvre, in which the design is that you should be the instrument, and myself the victim, but in which the real actors are carefully concealed by an artful movement. A naked copy, with the names referred to in blank, affords slender means of detection; while, on the contrary, had I been placed, as I ought to have been, in possession of all the facts which I was entitled to be, but little penetration would probably have been required to see through the whole affair. The names which are in blank might of themselves, through their political associations, point directly to the contrivers of this scheme. I wish not to be misunderstood. I have too much respect for your character to suppose you capable of participating in the slightest degree in a political intrigue. Your character is of too high and generous a cast to resort to such means, either for your own advantage or that of others. This the contrivers of the plot well knew; but they hoped through your generous attributes, through your lofty and jealous regard for your character, to excite feelings through which they expected to consummate their designs. Several indications forewarned me, long since, that a blow was meditated against me; I will not say from the quarter from which this comes; but in relation to this subject, more than two years since, I had a correspondence with the District Attorney for the Southern District of New York, on the subject of the proceedings of the cabinet on the Seminole war, which, though it did not then excite particular attention, has since, in connexion with other circumstances, served to direct my eye to what was going on.

Of Mr. Crawford I speak with pain, and only in self-defence; but, that you may more fully realize the spirit which actuates him, and how little scrupulous he is of the means that he uses where I am concerned, I would refer you for illustration to facts in the possession of one who stands to you in the relation of a constitutional adviser, and who from his character is entitled to your entire confidence; I mean the Postmaster General. No one knows better than yourself how sacred the electoral college for the choice of

President and Vice President should be considered in our system of government. The electors are the trustees of the high sovereign power of the people of the States, as it relates to the choice of those magistrates; and on the degree of fidelity with which the trust may be discharged depends, in a great degree, the successful operation of our system. In order to prevent, as far as practicable, political intrigue, or the operation of extraneous influence on the choice of the electoral college, it is provided that they shall meet in their respective States, and that they shall vote, throughout the Union, on the same day, and be selected within thirty-four days of the time designated for the election; thus excluding with the greatest care all other influence on the choice of the electors, except the will of their constituents; but where the object was to injure me, the sacred character of the college was an insufficient restraint. Mr. Crawford wrote to Major Barry in October, 1828, (a copy of whose letter he has furnished me at my request,) requesting him earnestly to use his influence with the electors not to vote for me as Vice-President, though he could not be ignorant that I had been nominated for that office, on the preceding 8th January, when your friends nominated you, in a State convention, for the high station which you now hold, and that the electors were pledged to vote for you as President, and myself as Vice-President. This is not the only instance of his interference. He pursued the same course in Tennessee and Louisiana, as I am informed on the highest authority.

At an earlier period, he resorted to means not much less objectionable to injure my standing, and to influence, as far as I was concerned, the election. I am not ignorant of his correspondence with that view, and which, I feel confident, has not escaped your observation. But I will not dwell on this disagreeable subject. I have no resentment towards Mr. Crawford. I have looked on in silence, without resorting to any means to counteract the injury which he intended me; and I now depart from the rule which I have carefully observed ever since the termination of the presidential election in 1825, because his present attack comes through a channel, my high respect for which would not permit me to be silent. I have, however, in noticing what I could not pass over, situated as I now am, endeavored to limit myself by the line of self-defence, and if I have apparently gone beyond in making any remarks on his conduct, which his letter did not naturally suggest, my apology will be found in the necessity of showing the state of his feelings towards me, so that the motive which influenced him in the course which has caused this correspondence may be fully understood.

I am, sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

President JACKSON.

No. 4.

General Jackson to Mr. Calhoun.

May 30, 1830.

SIR: Your communication of the 29th instant was handed me this morning just as I was going to church, and of course was not read until I returned. I regret to find that you have entirely mistaken my note of the 13th

instant. There is no part of it which calls in question either your conduct or your motives in the case alluded to. Motives are to be inferred from actions, and judged of by our God. It had been intimated to me many years ago, that it was you, and not Mr. Crawford, who had been secretly endeavoring to destroy my reputation. These insinuations I indignantly repelled, upon the ground that you, in all your letters to me, professed to be my personal friend, and approved *entirely* my conduct in relation to the Seminole campaign. I had too exalted an opinion of your honor and frankness, to believe for one moment that you could be capable of such deception. Under the influence of these friendly feelings, (which I always entertained for you,) when I was presented with a copy of Mr. Crawford's letter, with that frankness which ever has, and I hope ever will characterize my conduct, I considered it due to you, and the friendly relations which had always existed between us, to lay it forthwith before you, and ask if the statements contained in that letter could be true. I repeat, I had a right to believe that you were my sincere friend, and, until now, never expected to have occasion to say of you, in the language of Cæsar, *Et tu Brute*. The evidence which has brought me to this conclusion is abundantly contained in your letter now before me. In your and Mr. Crawford's dispute I have no interest whatever; but it may become necessary for me hereafter, when I shall have more leisure, and the documents at hand, to place the subject in its proper light; to notice the historical facts and references in your communication, which will give a very different view of this subject.

It is due to myself, however, to state that the knowledge of the Executive documents and orders in my possession will show conclusively that I had authority for all I did, and that your explanation of my powers, as declared to Governor Bibb, shows your own understanding of them. Your letter to me of the 29th, handed to-day, and now before me, is the first intimation to me that *you* ever entertained any other opinion or view of them. Your conduct, words, actions, and letters, I have ever thought, show this. Understanding you now, no further communication with you on this subject is necessary.

I have the honor to be

Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON.

To the Hon. J. C. CALHOUN.

No. 5.

Mr. Calhoun to General Jackson.

STEAMBOAT POTOMAC,

1st June, 1830.

SIR: Though you intimate, in your letter of yesterday, that no further communication with me is necessary on the subject to which it refers, I feel myself impelled to notice some of your remarks, lest my silence should be construed into an acquiescence in their truth or justness. I shall be as brief as possible.

You say that I have entirely mistaken your letter of the 13th May, in supposing that it questioned either my motives or conduct. I am not aware that I have imputed to you an impeachment of my motives;

but I certainly did understand that you had questioned the sincerity and frankness of my conduct; and I must add that your present letter, notwithstanding the most demonstrative proof which I had offered to the contrary, shows clearly that I understood you correctly, and of course was not, as you suppose, mistaken.

I have no doubt that there are those who, actuated by enmity to me, and not friendship to you, have, in the most artful manner, for years intimated that I have been secretly endeavoring to injure you, however absurd the idea; but I must express my surprise that you should have permitted insinuations, as base as they are false, to operate on you, when every word and act of mine gave to them the lie direct. I feel conscious that I have honorably and fully performed towards you every duty that friendship imposed, and that any imputation to the contrary is wholly unmerited.

You mistake in supposing that I have any dispute with Mr. Crawford. That he bears me ill will is certain; but whatever feeling of unkindness I ever had towards him has long since passed away; so much so, that, instead of returning his attacks on me, the line of conduct which I had prescribed to myself, was, to bear patiently and silently all that he might do or say, leaving it to time and truth to vindicate my conduct. If I have apparently departed from the rule that I had prescribed in this case, it was not because there was any disposition on my part to alter the line of my conduct; but when you interposed your name, by placing in my hands a copy of his letter, addressed to Mr. Forsyth, I was compelled, by an act of yours, in order that my silence might not be interpreted into an acknowledgment of the truth of Mr. Crawford's statement, to correct his misstatements, and to expose the motives of enmity which actuated him, and which sought to use you as an instrument of its gratification.

You intimate, that, at some future time, when you may have more leisure, you will place the subject of this correspondence in a different light. I wish you to be assured, I feel every confidence, that, whenever you may be disposed to controvert the correctness of either my statement or conduct in this affair, I shall be prepared on my part to maintain the truth of the one, and frankness, honor, and patriotism of the other, throughout this whole transaction.

That you honestly thought that your orders authorized you to do what you did, I have never questioned; but that you can show by any document, public or private, that they were intended to give you the authority which you assumed, or that any such construction was placed on them, at any time, by the administration, or myself in particular, I believe to be impossible.

You remark that my letter of the 29th instant is the first intimation you had that I had taken a different view from yourself of your orders. That you should conceive that you had no intimation before, is to me unaccountable. I had supposed that the invitation of Mr. Monroe, in his letter to you of the 20th October, 1818, with the intention that the different views taken by you and myself of the orders should be placed on the files of the Department, and my letter to you of the 13th April, 1828, covering a copy of my letter to Major Lee, in which I refer to the public documents, and private correspondence between you and Mr. Monroe, as containing the views taken of your orders, and the offer which I made to present my views more fully, if not given sufficiently explicit in the documents referred to, were at least an intimation that we differed in the construction of the orders; and I feel assured that neither "my conduct, words, actions, or letters," afford the slightest proof to the contrary.

The charge which you have made against me, of secret hostility and opposition, which, if true, would so vitally affect my character for sincerity and honor, and which has caused a rupture in our long continued friendship, has no other foundation but that of a difference between us in the construction of your orders—orders issued by myself, the intention of which I, of course, could not mistake, whatever may be their true construction in a military point of view, and the right and duty of interpreting which belonged especially to me, as the head of the War Department. The mere statement of these facts must give rise to a train of reflections, the expression of which I cannot suppress.

Your course, as I understand it, assumes for its basis that I, who, as Secretary of War, issued the orders, have some motive to conceal my construction of them, as if I had no right to form an opinion whether the officers to whom they were given had transcended them or not, while the officer was at perfect liberty to express and maintain his construction. My right, as Secretary of War, was at least as perfect as yours, as commanding officer, to judge of the true intent and limits of your orders; and I had no more motive to conceal my construction of them than you had to conceal yours. The idea of concealment never entered my conception; and to suppose it, is to suppose that I was utterly unworthy of the office which I occupied. Why should I conceal? I owed no responsibility to you; and if you were not afraid to place your construction on your orders, why should I be afraid to place mine? It was an affair of mere official duty, involving no question of private enmity or friendship, and I so treated it.

In conclusion, I must remark, that I had supposed that the want of sincerity and frankness would be the last charge that would be brought against me. Coming from a quarter from which I had reason to expect far different treatment, and destitute, as I know it to be, of the slightest foundation, it could not fail to excite feelings too warm to be expressed, with a due regard to the official relation which I bear to you.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant.

J. C. CALHOUN

Gen. A. JACKSON.

No. 6.

Mr. Forsyth to Mr. Calhoun.

GEORGETOWN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

May 31, 1830.

SIR: Having, at the request of the President to be informed what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the subject of the Seminole campaign, laid before him a copy (except the omission of a name) of a letter from Mr. Crawford, which has since been communicated to you, the President has thought it just to permit me to read your answer of the 29th inst. to his letter enclosing it. Between you and the President, or between you and Mr. Crawford, or between you and the friends of Mr. Crawford, when spoken of *in general*, it is not my design to intervene. There are, however,

circumstances in your letter, of a personal character, that require to be placed in their true light, in justice to you and to myself. As to the first, you complain that the interposition of the name of the President deprives you of important rights: among these is enumerated "the right of being placed (by me) in possession of all the facts and circumstances connected with this affair." So far as I understand the point on which the President desired information, there is no circumstance or fact within my knowledge that can throw any additional light upon it. There is certainly no fact or circumstance within my knowledge, directly or collaterally connected with it, that is not at your service.

If desirable to you, you shall be furnished with a copy of my letter (a copy of it is in the President's hands) referred to in Mr. C.'s letter to me, and with the name of the gentleman to whom it was written, known also to the President. I cannot promise a copy of the letter from Savannah, to which my first was an answer, as I am not sure that it is in being; if it is, and can be found on my return to Georgia, you can have a copy of it. Having thus offered justice, according to your view of it, you will not be surprised that I should expect justice in return. Your answer to the President seems to be founded upon the presumption that there is some conspiracy secretly at work to do injury to your character, and to destroy your political consequence. With this presumption I have no concern; but the circumstances under which my name is introduced by you render it proper that I should be distinctly informed if this charge of conspiracy against you is intended to apply to me.

In justice to Mr. C., and for his use, I shall apply to the President for a copy of your letter of the 29th instant. If you have any objection, you will state it. I shall take it for granted that you acquiesce, unless otherwise informed.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN FORSYTH.

HON. JOHN C. CALHOUN.

No. 7.

Mr. Calhoun to Mr. Forsyth.

STEAMBOAT POTOMAC,

1st June, 1830.

SIR: I have just received your letter of the 31st ultimo, which was handed me by Mr. Archer. It gives me the first intimation that I have had, that the President applied to you to obtain information of what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the subject of the Seminole campaign; and, of course, as I suppose, that you were acting for him, and not for yourself, in your correspondence with Mr. Crawford. Neither the copy of his letter to you, placed in my hands by the President, nor his note covering the copy, gave me the slightest intimation of this fact; but, on the contrary, I had a right to presume, from Mr. Crawford giving you authority to show me his letter if you pleased, that the correspondence originated with yourself, and was under your entire control, and not, as I now infer, "at the request of the President, and for his use." The view in which I regarded the correspond-

ence, and which I was justified to do, judging by the facts before me, fully explains my remarks in my letter to the President, as far as you were concerned with them.

In the direction which this affair has taken, it is not for me to determine whether you ought to furnish me any information, or what it ought to be. Had I supposed, that, under the circumstances in which I was placed, such a right belonged to me, I would have claimed it previously to my answer to the President's letter, so as to have had the advantage, before I made my reply, of whatever light might be furnished from the sources I therein indicated. That there are those who intend that this affair shall operate against me politically, by causing a rupture between myself and the President, and thereby affect, if possible, my standing with the nation, I cannot doubt, for reasons which I have stated in my answer to the President; but I must be permitted to express my surprise that you should suppose that my remarks comprehended you, when they expressly referred to those whose names did not appear in the transaction, and consequently excluded you.

My answer to the President is his property, and not mine; and consequently it belongs to him, and not to me, to determine to whom he shall, or shall not, give copies.

I am, very respectfully, &c.

J. C. CALHOUN.

HON. JOHN FORSYTH.

No. 8.

Mr. Calhoun to General Jackson.

PENDLETON, June 22, 1830.

SIR: I embrace the first leisure moment since my return home to enclose to you a copy of a letter from Mr. Forsyth, the original of which was handed to me on my passage from Washington to Norfolk, on board the steamboat, and also a copy of my answer.

You will learn, by a perusal of Mr. Forsyth's letter, that it refers to the correspondence between us, and that it places the subject of that correspondence in a light in some respects different from what I had previously regarded it. I had supposed, from the complexion of your letters to me, that the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to Mr. Forsyth had been placed by the latter in your hands, without any previous act or agency on your part; but, by Mr. Forsyth's letter to me, I am informed that such is not the fact. It seems that he acted as your agent in the affair. He states that you applied to him to be informed of what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the subject of the Seminole campaign; and I infer, as the information could be obtained only from some one of the members of the cabinet, and as Mr. Forsyth was not one, and, as far as I am informed, not particularly intimate with any of its members, except Mr. Crawford, that the object of your request was to obtain the information through Mr. Forsyth from Mr. Crawford, and that, consequently, in writing to him, and in placing the copy of his letter in your hands, he can be regarded in no other light but that of your agent.

Under this new aspect of this affair, I conceive that I have the right to claim of you to be put in possession of all the additional information, which I might fairly have demanded of Mr. Forsyth, had the correspondence been originally between him and myself, on the supposition on which I acted previously to the receipt of his letter. He avows himself ready, if desired by me, to furnish me with the additional information; but a sense of propriety would not permit me to make the request of him. Considered as *your agent* in this affair, it is not *for me* to make the request of information of *him*. What additional information I conceive myself to be entitled to, my letter to you of the 29th May will sufficiently indicate. A part of the information, it seems from Mr. Forsyth's letter, is already in your possession, and there can be no doubt but the whole would be furnished at your request.

I make this application solely from the desire of obtaining the means of enabling me to unravel this mysterious affair. Facts and circumstances, light of themselves, may, when viewed in connexion, afford important light as to the origin and object of what I firmly believe to be a base political intrigue, got up by those who regard your reputation and the public interest much less than their own personal advancement.

I must remark, in conclusion, that the letter of Mr. Forsyth affords to my mind conclusive proof that the intimations to my prejudice, to which you refer in your letter of the 30th ultimo, and which you seem to think made no impression on your mind, have not been without their intended effect. On no other supposition can I explain the fact, that, without giving me any intimation of the step, you should apply for information, as to my course in the cabinet, to one whom you knew to be hostile to me as Mr. Crawford is, and who could not, as you know, make the disclosure consistently with the principles of honor and fidelity, when my previous correspondence with you ought to have satisfied you that I was prepared to give you, frankly and fully, any information which you might desire, in relation to my course on the occasion.

J. C. CALHOUN.

To President JACKSON.

No. 9.

General Jackson to Mr. Forsyth.

WASHINGTON, June 7, 1830.

SIR: I have received your letter of the 2d instant, enclosing a copy of your letter to Mr. Calhoun, of the 31st ultimo, and his reply thereto, all which I have duly noted.

You have requested a copy of Mr. Calhoun's letter to me of the 29th of May last, for the purpose of its being shown to Mr. Crawford. Mr. Calhoun, in his reply to you, does not consent, nor yet object, to your being furnished with a copy, but refers the matter to my discretion.

A copy of the original letter of Mr. Crawford to you having been submitted to me, it occurred as being proper and correct that you should be apprised of Mr. Calhoun's answer, and therefore it was shown to you. I cannot, on reflection, perceive any impropriety in now according to you

the request you have made, particularly as, on your referring this matter to Mr. Calhoun, he does not object. I accordingly send it, with this injunction, that it be used for no other purpose but the one you have stated, to be shown to Mr. Crawford.

In the letter which you have addressed to Mr. Calhoun, you state as follows, to wit: "Having, at the request of the President to be informed what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the subject of the Seminole campaign, laid before him a copy (except the omission of a name) of a letter from Mr. Crawford," &c. &c. This is construed by Mr. Calhoun into a declaration that I requested you to furnish me with the information. I am satisfied it was not by you so intended, and I would be glad you would so explain it to him. I never conversed with you upon this subject previous to the time when you sent me Mr. Crawford's letter. The facts are these: I had been informed that Mr. Crawford had made a statement concerning this business, which had come to the knowledge of Col. James A. Hamilton, of New York. On meeting with Col. Hamilton, I inquired of him, and received for answer that he had, but remarked that he did not think it proper to communicate without the consent of the writer. I answered, that, being informed that the Marshal of this District had, to a friend of mine, made a similar statement to that said to have been made by Mr. Crawford, I would be glad to see Mr. Crawford's statement, and desired he would write and obtain his consent. My reasons were, that I had, from the uniform friendly professions of Mr. Calhoun, always believed him my friend in all this Seminole business; and I had a desire to know if in this I had been mistaken, and whether it was *possible* for Mr. Calhoun to have acted with such insincerity and duplicity towards me.

I have enclosed Mr. Calhoun a copy of this letter;

And am, Sir, with respectful regard,

Your most obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON.

The Hon. JOHN FORSYTH, *Senator in Congress.*

No. 9.—(Continued.)

Mr. Forsyth to General Jackson.

AUGUSTA, June 17th, 1830.

SIR: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 7th instant, and the copy papers enclosed with it. The papers will be shown to Mr. Crawford, and no other use made of them by me.

I did not intend to convey to Mr. Calhoun the idea that any personal communication ever took place between us, prior to the date of Mr. Crawford's letter, relative to the occurrences in Mr. Monroe's cabinet on the question of the Seminole war. What I intended he should know, and I suppose will now understand, if I have inadvertently misled him, is, that I did not volunteer to procure the information contained in Mr. Crawford's letter, but that it was obtained for your use in compliance with your request. Major Hamilton requested me, in your name, to give to you what I had previously given to him—Mr. Crawford's account of the transaction. With this request I

complied, after having first obtained Mr. Crawford's consent, and received from him his correction of a mistake I had made in repeating his verbal statement.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN FORSYTH.

Gen. ANDREW JACKSON, *President of the United States.*

AUGUSTA, June 17, 1830.

SIR: Gen Jackson having sent to you a copy of his letter to me of the 8th instant, it is proper that you should see the answer to it; you will find a copy on the opposite page.

I am, Sir, with respect,

JOHN FORSYTH.

Hon. JOHN C. CALHOUN.

No. 9.—(Continued.)

General Jackson to Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, June 7, 1830.

SIR: On the 5th inst. I received a letter from Mr Forsyth of the Senate, requesting a copy of your letter to me of the 29th of May last. I have not been able to perceive any objections to comply with his request. A copy of my letter to him on this subject, I have thought it proper, should be sent to you; it is therefore enclosed.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON.

The Hon. J. C. CALHOUN,
Vice-President of the U. States.

No. 10.

General Jackson to Mr. Calhoun.

HERMITAGE, June 19,* 1830.

SIR: Your letter of the 22d June last has just been received, via Washington city. I regret that mine to you of the 7th of May, covering a copy of one to Mr. Forsyth from me of the same date, had not reached you, as it would have prevented you from falling into the gross errors you have, from the unfounded inferences you have drawn from Mr. Forsyth's letter to me, and would have informed you that I had no conversation or communication with Mr. Forsyth on the subject alluded to, before the receipt of the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter, which I so promptly laid before you. To correct the errors into which the inferences you have drawn from Mr. Forsyth's letter have led you, I herewith again enclose you a copy of my letter

* Intended probably for the 19th July.

to Mr. Forsyth of the 7th of May, and his answer thereto of the 17th June last, which I received on the 8th instant, and I have to regret that any interruption of the mail prevented your receipt of mine of the 7th of May, which was mailed the same time mine to Mr. Forsyth was.

Mr. Forsyth having promised, in his letter to me of the 17th June, that he would explain, and by letter correct you in the unjust and unfounded inferences which you had drawn from his letter; and I must add here, for your information, that, if I understood your other allusions, they are as equally unfounded. I have never heard it even intimated, except in your letter, that the individual to whom I suppose you allude had the slightest knowledge on the subject, or the most remote agency in the matter. In conclusion, I repeat, I have always met the intimations of your having made before the cabinet, in secret council, against me, injurious movements, with flat and positive denial, and brought into view, by way of rebutter, your uniform and full approval of my whole conduct on the Seminole campaign, so far as I, or any of my friends, had heard you on the subject; and the high character you sustained for fair, open, and honorable conduct in all things was entirely opposed to the secret, uncandid, and unmanly course ascribed to you by those intimations, and I banished from my mind what I conceived to be unjust imputations upon your honor, by ascribing duplicity to you, and never, until after the intimations were communicated to me of the suggestions of the Marshal, as stated in my letter to Mr. Forsyth, (a copy of which was enclosed to you.) It was then that I had a desire so see the statement said to have been made by Mr. Crawford, and, when information (informed) by Colonel Hamilton that such statements had been seen in writing, that I made the request to see it, with the object of laying it before you, which I then supposed would meet your prompt and positive negative. But I regret that instead of a negative, which I had a right to expect, I had the poignant mortification to see in your letter an admission of its truth. Understanding the matter now, I feel no interest in this altercation, and leave you and Mr. Crawford, and all concerned, to settle the affair in your own way, and now close this correspondence for ever.

I am, very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON

Hon. J. C. CALHOUN,

Vice-President of the U. States.

No. 11.

Mr. Calhoun to General Jackson.

FORT HILL, 25th August, 1836.

SIR: I received, on the 6th instant, your letter dated the 19th June, but which, I suppose, was intended for the 19th July, with its enclosures. On the 24th of June I received the note of Mr. Forsyth, covering a copy of his letter to you of the 17th same month; but, owing to some delay in the conveyance, for which I am unable to account, I did not receive your letter of the 7th June, covering a copy of your letter to Mr. Forsyth, till the 14th July.

You regret that I did not receive your letter of the 7th June before I wrote mine of the 28th of the same month, on the ground, to use your own language, that it would have prevented me "from falling into the gross errors you have from the unfounded inferences you have drawn from Mr. Forsyth's letter to me." You cannot more sincerely regret than I do that any delay in the mail deprived me of the advantage of the statement in your letter to Mr. Forsyth, seeing that you deemed it material to a correct understanding of the facts; but I must say, after a careful perusal of your letter to him, as well as yours to myself, I am utterly at a loss to perceive the "gross errors" of which you accuse me. As far as I can understand you, they seem to consist in the supposition that I inferred from Mr. Forsyth's letter that you applied to him personally to obtain the information from Mr. Crawford, of what took place in the cabinet on the Seminole question; whereas, in fact, you applied not to him, but to Mr. James Hamilton, of New York; and that it was he, and not you, who applied to Mr. Forsyth to obtain the information. If there be a difference in principle between the two statements, I can only say that I am not responsible for it. The charge of "error" ought to be made against Mr. Forsyth, and not me. His words are: "Having, at the request of the President to be informed what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the subject of the Seminole campaign, laid before him a copy (except the omission of a name) of a letter from Mr. Crawford, which has been since communicated to you," &c. &c. Now, Sir, if I had inferred from these words, as you suppose I did, that you had personally applied to Mr. Forsyth to obtain the information for you, I would have done no more than what I fairly might, without the imputation of "gross errors." But I made no such inference; on the contrary, I have used almost the very words of Mr. Forsyth. My language is: "I had supposed, from the complexion of your letters to me, that the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to Mr. Forsyth had been placed by the latter in your hands, without any previous act or agency on your part; but, by Mr. Forsyth's letter to me, I am informed that such is not the fact. It seems that he acted as your agent in the affair. He states that you applied to him to be informed of what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the subject of the Seminole campaign." In my letter to Mr. Forsyth, I use almost verbatim the same language. As far as I am capable of understanding the force of words, my language does not vary, in the smallest degree, in its sense, from that used by Mr. Forsyth in his letter to me, and most certainly does not more strongly imply than his does that you applied to him personally for the information. But, suppose I had fallen into the "gross errors" of inferring from Mr. Forsyth's letter that you had personally applied to him, when, in fact, it was not you, but your agent, James Hamilton, (of New York,) who applied for you *in your name*, as Mr. Forsyth informed you in his letter of 17th June, it requires more penetration than I possess to discover how the difference can, in the slightest degree, affect the only material question, whether he acted as a mere volunteer, or as your agent. Mr. Forsyth himself decides this question. He tells you expressly, that he did not act as a volunteer; and it is on the ground that he acted for you, and not for himself, that I claimed of you to be put in possession of certain facts connected with the subject of our correspondence, which were in the possession of Mr. Forsyth, and which I deemed important to the full development of this affair; but, instead of complying with so reasonable a request, you reply, not by denying the justice of the request, nor that he acted for you, and not for himself,

but by accusing me of "gross errors," an assumption on your part at once gratuitous and immaterial, that I had inferred that you had applied to Mr. Forsyth personally, when, in fact, the application had been made for you, in your own name, by Mr. Hamilton. I must say, that I cannot see in your statement the least excuse for withholding from me the information requested; and I am constrained to add, that I have looked in vain in the course which you have pursued for the evidence of that frankness which you assured me, in submitting the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to me, has ever characterised your conduct towards those with whom you had been in habits of friendship. As connected with this point, let me call your attention to a fact which has not been explained, though in my opinion it ought to be. It now appears, that when Mr. Forsyth placed the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter in your hands, *he also placed with it* a copy of his letter referred to by Mr. Crawford. Why was it that a copy of this letter of Mr. Forsyth did not accompany Mr. Crawford's, when you placed a copy of the letter in my hands? Calling upon me in the spirit of frankness and friendship, as you informed me you did, I had a right to infer that every document connected with the charge, and in your possession, calculated to afford light, would be placed in my possession; and such, in fact, was my impression, but which I now find to be erroneous. It is with regret that I feel myself bound to state that Mr. Forsyth's letter, with the subsequent correspondence, has given an aspect to the affair very different from what I received from your first letter.

You have stated some suggestions of the Marshal of the District, which were communicated to you, as the reason why you have agitated this old affair at this time. You have not stated what they were, *to whom made*, or by *whom communicated*, which, of course, leaves me in the dark as to their nature or character. But whatever they may be, the course you adopted, considering the friendly relation which I had reason to suppose existed between us, is well calculated to excite surprise. Instead of applying to the Marshal, in order to ascertain what he did say, and from whom he derived his information, and then submitting his statement to me, which course friendship, and the high opinion which you say you entertained for my character "for fair, open, and honorable conduct in all things," manifestly dictated, you applied for information, as to my conduct, to the man who, you knew, felt towards me the strongest enmity. I wish not to be understood that you had mere general information of his ill-will towards me. Your information was of the most specific character, and was of such a nature as ought to have made you distrust any statement of his, calculated to affect my reputation.

Knowing the political machinations that were carrying on against me, and wishing to place me on my guard, a friend of mine placed in my hands, some time since, a copy of a letter written by Mr. Crawford to a Nashville correspondent of his in 1827. It constitutes one of the many means resorted to in order to excite your suspicion against me. In it Mr. Crawford makes an abusive attack upon me; but, not content with thus assailing my character in the dark, he offers to bring into the market the influence which Georgia might have on the presidential election, as a means whereby to depress my political prospects. To avoid the possibility of mistakes, I will give extracts from the letter itself, in full confirmation of what I have stated.

Speaking of the presidential election, Mr. Crawford says that, "the only

difficulty that this State (Georgia) has upon the subject, (your election,) is; that, if Jackson should be elected, Calhoun will come into power."

Again:

"If you can ascertain that Calhoun will not be benefitted by Jackson's election, you will do him a benefit by communicating the information to me. Make what use you please of this letter, and show it to whom you please."

That the letter was clearly intended for your inspection, cannot be doubted. The authority to his correspondent to *make what use* he pleased, and to *show it to whom he pleased*, with the nature of the information sought, whether I was to be benefitted by your election, *which could only be derived from yourself*, leaves no doubt on that point; and I am accordingly informed that you saw the letter.

A proposition of the kind, at that particular period, when the presidential election was most doubtful, and most warmly contested, needs no comment as to its object. To say nothing of its moral and political character, stronger proof could not be offered of the deepest enmity towards me on the part of the writer, which at least ought to have placed you on your guard against all attacks on me from that quarter. The letter will not be denied; but if, contrary to expectation, it should, I stand ready, by highly respectable authority, to maintain its authenticity.

You well know the disinterested, open, and fearless course which myself and my friends were pursuing at this very period, and the weight of enmity which it drew down upon us from your opponents. Little did I then suspect that these secret machinations were carrying on against me at Nashville, or that such propositions could be ventured to be made to you, or, if ventured, without being instantly disclosed to me. Of this, however, I complain not, nor do I intend to recriminate; but I must repeat the expression of my surprise, that you should apply to an individual who you knew, from such decisive proof, to be actuated by the most inveterate hostility towards me, for information of my course in Mr. Monroe's cabinet. It affords to my mind conclusive proof that you had permitted your feelings to be alienated by the artful movements of those who have made you the victim of their intrigue, long before the commencement of this correspondence.

Instead of furnishing me with the information which I claimed, in order to a full understanding of this extraordinary affair, and which you could not justly withhold, you kindly undertake to excuse the individual to whom you supposed some allusion of mine to be made. I know not to whom you refer. I made no allusion to any one particular individual. But, be that as it may, you must excuse me if, on subjects which concern me, I should prefer my judgment to yours, and, of course, if I should not be satisfied with your opinion, as a substitute for the facts by which I might be able to form my own.

After I had so fully demonstrated the candor and sincerity with which I have acted throughout this affair, I did not suppose that you would reiterate your former charges; but having done so, it only remains for me to repeat, in the most positive manner, the contradiction. I never for a moment disguised my sentiment on this or any other political subject. Why should I in this instance? I had violated no duty—no rule of honor, nor obligation of friendship. I did your motives full justice in every stage of the cabinet deliberation, and, after a full investigation, I entirely approved and heartily supported the final decision. In this course I was guided, it is true, not by

feelings of friendship, but solely by a sense of duty. When our country is concerned, there ought to be room neither for friendship nor enmity.

You conclude your letter by saying that you understand the matter now, that you feel no interest in this altercation, and that you would leave me and Mr. Crawford, and all concerned, to settle this affair in our own way, and that you now close the correspondence for ever.

It is not for me to object to the manner you may choose to close the correspondence on your part. On my part, I have no desire to prolong it. The spectacle of the first and second officers of this great republic engaged in a correspondence of this nature, has no attraction for me at any time, and is very far from being agreeable at this critical juncture of our affairs. My consolation is, that it was not of my seeking; and, as I am not responsible for its commencement, I feel no disposition to incur any responsibility for its continuance. Forced into it, to repel unjust and base imputations upon my character, I could not retire in honor while they continued to be reiterated.

Having now fully vindicated my conduct, I will conclude the correspondence also, with a single remark, that I too well know what is due to my rights and self respect, in this unpleasant affair, to permit myself to be diverted into an altercation with Mr. Crawford, or any other individual, whom you may choose to consider as concerned in this affair.*

J. C. CALHOUN.

President JACKSON.

* Mr. Crawford attempted to open a correspondence with me on this subject. I returned his letter, declining all correspondence with him, except through Gen. Jackson. See Appendix Q.

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN MR. MONROE AND GEN. JACKSON, ON THE SEMINOLE AFFAIR, REFERRED TO IN THE LETTER OF THE 29TH MAY.

A.

Mr. Monroe to General Jackson.

WASHINGTON, July 19, 1818.

DEAR SIR: I received, lately, your letter of June 2d, by Mr. Hambly, at my farm in Loudoun, to which I had retired to await your report, and the return of your commissioners from Buenos Ayres. In reply to your letter, I shall express myself with the freedom and candor which I have invariably used in my communications with you. I shall withhold nothing in regard to your attack of the Spanish posts, and occupancy of them, particularly Pensacola, which you ought to know, it being an occurrence of the most delicate and interesting nature, and which, without a circumspect and cautious policy, looking to all the objects which claim attention, may produce the most serious and unfavorable consequences. It is by a knowledge of all the circumstances, and a comprehensive view of the whole subject, that the danger to which this measure is exposed may be avoided, and all the good which you have contemplated by it, as I trust, be fully realised.

In calling you into active service against the Seminoles, and communicating to you the orders which had been given just before to Gen. Gaines, the views and intentions of the Government were fully disclosed in respect to the operations in Florida. In transcending the limit prescribed by those orders, you acted on your own responsibility, on facts and circumstances which were unknown to the Government when the orders were given, many of which, indeed, occurred afterwards, and which you thought imposed on you the measure, as an act of patriotism, essential to the honor and interests of your country.

The United States stand justified in ordering their troops into Florida in pursuit of their enemy. They have this right by the law of nations, if the Seminoles were inhabitants of another country, and had entered Florida to elude our pursuit. Being inhabitants of Florida, with a species of sovereignty over that part of the territory, and a right to the soil, our right to give such an order is the more complete and unquestionable. It is not an act of hostility to Spain. It is the less so, because her Government is bound by treaty to restrain by force of arms, if necessary, the Indians there from committing hostilities against the United States.

But an order by the Government to attack a Spanish post would assume another character. It would authorize war, to which, by the principles of our constitution, the Executive is incompetent. Congress alone possess the power. I am aware that cases may occur, where the commanding general, acting on his own responsibility, may with safety pass this limit, and

with essential advantage to his country. The officers and troops of the neutral power forget the obligations incident to their neutral character; they stimulated the enemy to make war; they furnished them with arms and munitions of war to carry it on; they take an active part in other respects in their favor; they afford them an asylum on their retreat. The general obtaining victory pursues them to this post, the gates of which are shut against him; he attacks and carries it, and rests on those acts for his justification. The affair is then brought before his Government by the power whose post has been thus attacked and carried. If the Government whose officer made the attack had given an order for it, the officer would have no merit in it. He exercised no discretion, nor did he act on his own responsibility. The merit of the service, if there be any in it, would not be his. This is the ground on which this occurrence rests, as to his part. I will now look to the future.

The foreign Government demands—was this your act? or did you authorize it? I did not: it was the act of the general. He performed it for reasons deemed sufficient himself, and on his own responsibility. I demand, then, the surrender of the posts, and his punishment. The evidence justifying the conduct of the American general, and proving the misconduct of those officers, will be embodied, to be laid before the sovereign, as the ground on which their punishment will be expected.

If the Executive refused to evacuate the posts, especially Pensacola, it would amount to a declaration of war, to which it is incompetent. It would be accused with usurping the authority of Congress, and giving a deep and fatal wound to the constitution. By charging the offence on the officers of Spain, we take the ground which you have presented, and we look to you to support it. You must aid in procuring the documents necessary for this purpose. Those which you sent by Mr. Hambly were prepared in too much haste, and do not, I am satisfied, do justice to the cause. This must be attended to without delay.

Should we hold the posts, it is impossible to calculate all the consequences likely to result from it. It is not improbable that war would immediately follow. Spain would be stimulated to declare it; and, once declared, the adventurers of Britain and other countries would, under the Spanish flag, privateer on our commerce. The immense revenue which we now receive would be much diminished, as would be the profits of our valuable productions. The war would probably soon become general; and we do not foresee that we should have a single power in Europe on our side. Why risk these consequences? The events which have occurred in both the Floridas show the incompetency of Spain to maintain her authority; and the progress of the revolutions in South America will require all her forces there. There is much reason to presume that this act will furnish a strong inducement to Spain to cede the territory, provided we do not wound too deeply her pride by holding it. If we hold the posts, her government cannot treat with honor, which, by withdrawing the troops, we afford her an opportunity to do. The manner in which we propose to act, will exculpate you from censure, and promises to obtain all the advantages which you contemplated from the measure, and possibly very soon. From a different course no advantage would be likely to result, and there would be great danger of extensive and serious injuries.

I shall communicate to you, in the confidence in which I write this letter, a copy of the answer which will be given to the Spanish minister, that you

may see distinctly the ground on which we rest, in the expectation that you will give it all the support in your power. The answer will be drawn on a view, and with attention to the general interests of our country, and its relations with other powers.

A charge, no doubt, will be made of a breach of the Constitution; and, to such a charge, the public feeling will be alive. It will be said that you have taken all the power into your own hands, not from the executive alone, but likewise from Congress. The distinction which I have made above, between the act of the Government, refutes that charge. This act, as to the General, will be right, if the facts on which he rests made it a measure of necessity, and they be well proved. There is no war, or breach of the Constitution, unless the Government should refuse to give up the posts; in which event, should Spain embargo our vessels, and war follow, the charge of such breach would be laid against the Government with great force. The last imputation to which I would consent justly to expose myself, is that of infringing a Constitution, to the support of which, on pure principles, my public life has been devoted. In this sentiment, I am satisfied, you fully concur.

Your letters to the department were written in haste, under the pressure of fatigue and infirmity, in a spirit of conscious rectitude; and, in consequence, with less attention to some parts of their contents than would otherwise have been bestowed on them. The passage to which I particularly allude, from memory, for I have not the letter before me, is that in which you speak of incompetency of an imaginary boundary to protect us against the enemy, being the ground on which you bottom all your measures. This is liable to the imputation that you took the Spanish posts for that reason, as a measure of expedience, and not on account of the misconduct of the Spanish officers. The effect of this and such passages, besides other objections to them, would be to invalidate the ground on which you stand, and furnish weapons to adversaries who would be glad to seize them. If you think proper to authorize the Secretary, or myself, to correct those passages, it will be done with care, though, should you have copies, as I presume you have, you had better do it yourself.

The policy of Europe respecting South America is not yet settled. A congress of the allied powers is to be held this year, (November is spoken of,) to decide that question. England proposes to restore the colonies to Spain with free trade and colonial governments. Russia is less favorable, as are all the others. We have a Russian document, written by order of the Emperor, as the basis of instructions to his Ministers at the several courts, speaking of the British proposition favorably, but stating that it must be considered and decided on by the allies, and the result published, to produce a moral effect on the colonies, on the failure of which, force is spoken of. The settlement of the dispute between Spain and Portugal is made a preliminary. We partake in no councils whose object is not their complete independence. Intimations have been given us that Spain is not unwilling, and is even preparing for war with the United States, in the hope of making it general, and uniting Europe against us and her colonies, on the principle that she has no hope of saving them. Her pertinacious refusal to cede the Floridas to us heretofore, though evidently her interest to do it, gives some coloring to the suggestions. If we engage in a war, it is of the greatest importance that our people be united, and, with that view, that Spain commence it; and, above all, that the Government be free from the charge of committing a breach of the Constitution.

I hope that you have recovered your health. You see that the state of the world is unsettled, and that any future movement is likely to be directed against us. There may be very important occasions for your services, which will be relied on. You must have the object in view, and be prepared to render them.

B.

Gen. Andrew Jackson to Mr. Monroe.

NASHVILLE, August 19, 1818.

SIR: Your letter of the 19th July, apprizing me of the course to be pursued in relation to the Floridas, has been received. In a future communication, it is my intention to submit my views of all the questions springing from the subject, with the fulness and candor which the importance of the topic, and the part I have acted in it, demand. At present, I will confine myself to the consideration of a part of your letter, which has a particular bearing on myself, and which seems to have originated in a misconception of the import of the order under which I have commenced the Seminole campaign. In making this examination, I will make use of all the freedom which is courted by your letter, and which I deem necessary to afford you a clear view of the construction which was given to the order, and the motives under which I proceeded to execute its intentions.

It is stated in the second paragraph of your letter, that I *transcended the limits of my order*, and that I *acted on my own responsibility*.

To these two points I mean at present to confine myself. But, before entering on a proof of their applicability to my acts in Florida, allow me fairly to state, that the assumption of responsibility will never be shrunk from when the public can thereby be promoted. I have passed through difficulties and exposures for the honor and benefit of my country; and whenever still, for this purpose, it shall become necessary to assume a further liability, no scruple will be urged or felt. But when it shall be required of me to do so, and the result be danger and injury to that country, the inducement will be lost, and my consent will be wanting.

This principle is held to be incontrovertible, that an order, generally, to perform a certain service, or effect a certain object, without any specification of the means to be adopted, or limits to govern the executive officer, leaves an *entire discretion* with the officer as to the choice and application of means, but preserves the responsibility for his acts on the authority from which the order emanated. Under such an order *all the acts* of the inferior are acts of the superior; and in no way can the subordinate officer be impeached for his measures, except on the score of deficiency in judgment and skill. It is also a grammatical truth, that the limits of such an order cannot be *transcended* without an entire desertion of the objects it contemplated; for as long as the main legitimate design is kept in view, the policy of the measures adopted to accomplish it is alone to be considered. If these be adopted as the proper rules of construction, and we apply them to my order of December 26, 1817, it will be at once seen, that, both in description and operative principle, they embrace that order exactly. The requisitions of the order are for the commanding general to assume the immedi-

his command at fort Scott, to concentrate all the contiguous and disposable force of the division on that quarter, to call on the executives of adjacent States for an auxiliary militia force, and concludes with this comprehensive command: "With this view you may be prepared to concentrate your forces, and adopt the necessary measures to terminate a conflict, which it has ever been the desire of the President, from motives of humanity, to avoid, but which is now made necessary by their settled hostility."

In no part of this document is there a reference to any previous order, either to myself or another officer, with a view to point to me the measures thought advisable, or the limits of my power in choosing and effecting them. It states that Gen. Gaines has been ordered to Amelia island, and then proceeds to inform me that "subsequent orders have been given to General Gaines, (of which copies will be furnished you,) that you would be directed to take the command, and directing him to re-assume, should he deem the public interest to require it, the command at fort Scott, until you should arrive there." Lastly, it mentions that "he was instructed to penetrate the Seminole towns through the Floridas, provided the strength of his command at Amelia would justify his engaging in offensive operations. The principle determining the weight of references, in subsequent orders, to instructions previously given, is well settled. Such references are usually made with one of these two intentions—either the order is given to a second officer, to effect a certain purpose which was intended to be effected by another officer, and the instructions of the first are referred to as the guide of the second; or the order contains and is designed for an extension of authority, and only refers to anterior communications to give a full view of what has been previously attempted and performed. In the first case it is always necessary to connect the different orders by a specific provision, that no doubt may exist as to the extent of the command; and thus the several requisitions and instructions are amalgamated, and the limits of the agent plainly and securely established. In the second, no such provision is necessary; for an entire discretion in the choice and use of means being previously vested, the reference, if there be any, is only descriptive of the powers antecedently given, and the results of measures attempted under such specific limitation. But admitting, that, in my order of December 26, 1817, there is such a reference as I contemplated in the first case, allow me to examine its character and amount. It is stated that "orders have been given to General Gaines, (copies of which will be furnished you,)" but without affirming that they are to be considered as binding on me, or in any way connected with the comprehensive command that I should terminate the Seminole conflict. On the contrary, so far are they from being designated as my guide and limits in entering Florida, that, in stating their substance in the ensuing sentence, no allusion whatever is made either to *means* or *limitation*.

How, then, can it be said with propriety that I have *transcended the limits* of my orders, or *acted on my own responsibility*? My order was as comprehensive as it could be, and contained neither the minute original instructions, or a reference to others previously given, to guide and govern me. The fullest discretion was left with me in the selection and application of means to effect the specific legitimate objects of the campaign; and for the exercise of a sound discretion on principles of policy am I alone responsible. But allow me to repeat, that responsibility is not feared by me, if the general good requires its assumption. I never have shrunk from it,

and never will; but against its imposition on me contrary to principle, and without the prospect of any politic result, I must contend with all the feelings of a soldier and a citizen. Being advised that you are at your country seat in Loudoun, where I expect this will reach you, I enclose you a copy of the order to me of the 26th December, 1817, and copies of the orders of General Gaines therein referred to; from a perusal of which you will perceive that the order to me has no reference to those prohibitory orders to General Gaines that you have referred to.

It will afford me pleasure to aid the Government in procuring any testimony that may be necessary to prove the hostility of the officers of Spain to the United States. I had supposed that the evidence furnished had established that fact—that the officers of Spain had identified themselves with our enemy, and that St. Mark's and Pensacola were under the complete control of the Indians, although the Governor of Pensacola at least had force sufficient to have controlled the Indians, had he chosen to have used it in that way. For the purpose of procuring the necessary evidence of the hostile acts of the Governor of Pensacola, I despatched Captain Young, topographical engineer, and as soon as obtained will be furnished you. I trust, on a view of all my communications, (copies of which have been forwarded by Capt. Gadsden,) you will find that they do not bear the construction you have given them. They were written under bad health, great fatigue, and in haste. My bad health continues: I labor under great bodily debility.

Accept assurances of my sincere regard and esteem; and am, respectfully,
Your most obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON.

JAMES MONROE, *President U. S.*

E.

James Monroe to Gen. Andrew Jackson.

WASHINGTON, *October 20, 1818.*

DEAR SIR: I received your letter of the 19th of August, while I was at home, on my farm in Albemarle; and there appearing to be no necessity for giving it an immediate answer, I delayed it until my return here.

I was sorry to find that you understood your instructions relative to operations in Florida differently from what we intended. I was satisfied, however, that you had good reason for your conduct, and have acted in all things on that principle. By supposing that you understood them as we did, I concluded that you proceeded on your own responsibility alone, in which, knowing the purity of your motives, I have done all that I could to justify the measure. I well knew, also, the misconduct of the Spanish authorities in that quarter, not of recent date only.

Finding that you had a different view of your power, it remains only to do justice to you on that ground. Nothing can be further from my intention than to expose you to a responsibility, in any sense, which you did not contemplate.

The best course to be pursued seems to me to be for you to write a letter to the Department, in which you will state, that, having reason to think

that a difference of opinion existed between you and the Executive, relative to the extent of your powers, you thought it due to yourself to state your view of them, and on which you acted. This will be answered, so as to explain ours, in a friendly manner by Mr. Calhoun, who has very just and liberal sentiments on the subject. This will be necessary in the case of a call for papers by Congress, or may be. Thus we shall all stand on the ground of honor, each doing justice to the other, which is the ground on which we wish to place each other.

I hope that your health is improved, and Mrs. Monroe unites in her best respects to Mrs. Jackson.

With great respect and sincere regard,
I am dear Sir, yours,

JAMES MONROE.

Major Gen. A. JACKSON, *Nashville, Tennessee.*

D.

Extract from General Jackson's letter of November 15, 1818, to Mr. Monroe.

“DEAR SIR: On my return from the Chickasaw treaty, I found it necessary to pass by Milton's Bluff, where I had established some hands for the culture of cotton, hearing it had been laid out for a town and the lots sold, to have as much of my crop preserved as existing circumstances would permit. From thence I took Huntsville in my route, and did not reach the Hermitage until the 12th instant, and on the 13th received your letter of the 20th ult.; from an attentive perusal of which, I have concluded that you have not yet seen my despatches from Fort Gadsden, of the 5th of May last, which it is reported reached the Department of War by due course of mail, and owing to the negligence of the clerks was thrown aside as a bundle of revolutionary and pension claims. This I sincerely regret, as it would have brought to your view the light in which I viewed my orders. The closing paragraph of that despatch is in the following words:

“I trust, therefore, that the measures which have been adopted in pursuance of your instructions, under a firm conviction that they alone are calculated to ensure peace and security to the southern frontier of Georgia.”

The moment, therefore, that you assume the ground that I transcend my power, the letter referred to above will, at once, unfold to your mind the view I had taken of them, and make manifest the difference of opinion that exists. Indeed, there are no data at present upon which such a letter as you wish written to the Secretary of War can be bottomed. I have no ground that a difference of opinion exists between the Government and myself, relative to the powers given me in my orders, unless I advert either to your private and confidential letters, or the public prints, neither of which can be made the basis of an official communication to the Secretary of War. Had I ever, or were I now to receive an official letter from the Secretary of War, explanatory of the light in which it was intended by the Government that my orders should be viewed, I would with pleasure give my understanding of them.”

E.

General Jackson to James Monroe.

HERMITAGE, NEAR NASHVILLE,

December 7, 1818.

DEAR SIR: I have just received your message to both Houses of Congress, forwarded by you, and have read it with great attention and satisfaction. The Florida question being now fairly before Congress, I hope that body will take measures to secure our southern frontier from a repetition of massacre and murder.

From the report of Col. King, received and forwarded to the Department of War, you will discover that the Indians had concentrated their forces on the Choctaw Hotchy, which gave rise to the affair between them and Captain Boyles, which Col. King reports.

The collection of the Indians is said to have taken place at this point on their hearing that Pensacola was to be restored to Spain, and that the Indians have declared they will never submit to the United States. If this be the fact, and as to myself I have no doubt, as soon as Spain is in possession of Pensacola, we may expect to hear of a renewal of all the horrid scenes of massacre on our frontier that existed before the campaign, unless Captain Boyles, on his second visit, may be fortunate enough to destroy this operation, which you may rely springs from foreign excitement.

Col. Sherburne, Chickasaw agent, requested me to name to you, that he was wearied with his situation, of which I have no doubt: his age and former habits of life but little calculated him for happiness amidst a savage nation. But being dependent for the support of himself and sister on the perquisites of his office, he cannot resign; but it would be a great accommodation to him to be transferred to Newport, should a vacancy in any office occur that he was competent to fill. I have no doubt but he is an amiable old man; and from his revolutionary services, I sincerely feel for him. He is unacquainted with Indians, and all business that relates to them; but at the treaty, as soon as he did understand our wishes and that of the Government, he aided us with all his might. The Colonel never can be happy amidst the Indians. It would afford me great pleasure to hear that the Colonel was comfortably seated in an office in Newport, where he could spend his declining years in peace and happiness with his own countrymen and friends.

Accept assurances of my high respect and esteem, and believe me to be, respectfully, your most obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON.

JAMES MONROE,

President of the United States.

F.

Mr. Monroe to General Jackson.

WASHINGTON, December 21, 1830.

DEAR SIR: I received your letter of November 13 some time past, and should have answered it sooner but for the great pressure of business on me, proceeding from duties connected with the measures of Congress.

The step suggested in mine to you of October 20 will, I am inclined to believe, be unnecessary. My sole object in it was to enable you to place your view of the authority under which you acted in Florida on the strongest ground possible, so as to do complete justice to yourself. I was persuaded that you had not done yourself justice in that respect, in your correspondence with the Department, and thought that it would be better that the explanation should commence with you, than be invited by the Department. It appeared to me that that would be the most delicate course in regard to yourself. There is, it is true, nothing in the Department to indicate a difference of opinion between you and the Executive, respecting the import of your instructions, and for that reason, that it would have been difficult to have expressed that sentiment without implying by it a censure on your conduct, than which nothing could be more remote from our disposition or intention.

On reviewing your communication by Captain Gadsden, there were three objects pre-eminently in view: the first, to preserve the Constitution from injury; the second, to deprive Spain and the allied powers of any just cause of war; and the third, to improve the occurrence to the best advantage of the country, and of the honor of those engaged in it. In every step which I have since taken, I have pursued those objects with the utmost zeal, and according to my best judgment. In what concerns you personally, I have omitted nothing in my power to do you justice, nor shall I in the sequel.

The decision in the three great points above stated, respecting the course to be pursued by the administration, was unanimously concurred in; and I have good reason to believe that it has been maintained since, in every particular, by all, with perfect integrity. It will be gratifying to you to know that a letter of instructions has been drawn by the Secretary of State to our Minister at Madrid, in reply to a letter of Mr. Pizzaro, which has been published, in which all the proceedings in Florida, and in regard to it, have been freely reviewed, and placed in a light which will, I think, be satisfactory to all. This letter will be reported to Congress in a few days, and published of course.

On one circumstance it seems proper that I should now give you an explanation. Your letter of January 6 was received while I was seriously indisposed. Observing that it was from you, I handed it to Mr. Calhoun to read, after reading one or two lines, only, myself. The order to you to take the command in that quarter had before then been issued. He remarked, after perusing the letter, that it was a confidential one, relating to Florida, which I must answer. I asked him if he had forwarded to you the orders of Gen. Gaines on that subject. He replied that he had. Your letter to me, with many others from friends, was put aside, in consequence of my indisposition and the great pressure on me at the time, and never recurred to until after my return from Loudoun, on the receipt of yours by Mr. Hambly, and then on the suggestion of Mr. Calhoun.

G.

George McDuffie to Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, *May 14th*, 1830.

DEAR SIR: In answer to the inquiries contained in your note of this morning, I submit the following statement I very distinctly recollect to have

heard Mr. Crawford (I think in the summer of 1818) in conversation with Eldred Simpkins, Esq. relative to the proceedings of Gen. Jackson in the Seminole war, and to the course pursued by the cabinet, touching those proceedings. Mr. Crawford spoke without any kind of reserve as to the respective parts taken by the different members of the cabinet while the subject was under deliberation. He stated that you had been in favor of an inquiry into the conduct of Gen. Jackson, and that he was the only member of the cabinet that had concurred with you. He spoke in strong terms of disapprobation of the course pursued by Gen. Jackson, not only in his military proceedings, but in prematurely bringing the grounds of his defence before the country, and forestalling public opinion, thus anticipating the administration. On this point he remarked, that if the administration could not give direction to public opinion, but permitted a military officer, who had violated his orders, to anticipate them, they had no business to be at Washington, and had better return home. I also remember that the National Intelligencer, which was lying on the sofa where Mr. Crawford was sitting, contained an article explanatory of the grounds upon which the administration had proceeded in regard to Gen. Jackson's military movements. Mr. Crawford adverted to some part of the article, which laid down a principle of the law of nations, if I mistake not, which went to show that a neutral territory could only be invaded in fresh pursuit of an enemy, and added, "Mr. Adams denies all that." He represented Mr. Adams as going much further in justifying Gen. Jackson than even Mr. Monroe, stating that the latter was induced to pass over the conduct of Gen. Jackson without public censure, not from a belief that he had not violated his orders and exceeded his power, but from political considerations connected with our relations with Spain.

Your obedient servant,
GEO. McDUFFIE.

H.

Extract of a letter from the Honorable Robert S. Garnett, formerly a Member of Congress from the State of Virginia, dated Tappahannock, January 12, 1831.

"MY DEAR SIR: A very extraordinary letter I have seen in the Constitutional Whig, purporting to give a correct account of the part which the several members of Mr. Monroe's cabinet took when the conduct of General Jackson was before them, has induced me to offer you the following statement.

"Soon after Colonel Taylor's election to the Senate, and arrival at the seat of Government, we paid a visit to Mr. Monroe, and, in the course of the day, Col. T. desired Mr. M. to give him some account of the course that had been pursued towards General Jackson in regard to the Seminole war, &c. In this conversation, Mr. Monroe declared that there had been no division in his cabinet, as to the course which should be pursued towards the General. This excited my astonishment, because, in a conversation with Mr. Crawford, either before the debate commenced, or while it was pending, Mr. Crawford had used this expression to me—'General Jackson ought to be condemned.' I noted this expression down in a journal I kept, and

subsequently repeated it frequently. Mr. C. Beverly told me that he had mentioned it to General Jackson, when he was at his house in Tennessee, and, I think, said that the General expressed much surprise.

“Hon. J. C. CALHOUN.”

—◆—
Extract from Mr. Garnett's diary for the 1st February, 1819, referred to above.

“The night before last, Colonel Taylor proposed we should go up and see the President, as Everett said he frequently complained of our not going, though we lived so near. Newton would not go, because he had to shave and put on a clean shirt. We found him in the drawing room, with Hay, Everett, Moore, and Findlay. M. and F. and E. soon went out, and so did Hay, who was going to Secretary Thompson's. The President then talked very freely about public affairs—gave us an account of the proceedings of the Government in relation to the Seminole war. He stated what I have frequently heard before, that the whole cabinet were perfectly agreed that he should not censure General Jackson. It is, however, well understood that Mr. Crawford, out of the cabinet, used his endeavor to have Cobb's resolutions passed; and I could not forbear telling the President, that, in conversation with me about Cobb's resolutions, while they were pending, Mr. Crawford said Jackson ought to be censured. He expressed surprise, and seemed to look regret. He says the members of the cabinet are still in harmony among themselves, apparently.

—◆—
J.

John C. Calhoun to Mr. Monroe.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1830.

DEAR SIR: It has become important to me, in consequence of a recent circumstance, to ascertain whether Gen. Jackson's letter to you of the 6th January, 1818—I mean the one in which allusion is made to Mr. J. Rhea—was seen, when received, by any one except myself, and, if it was, by whom. I will thank you to inform me by the return mail; and, also, whether the letter above alluded to was before the cabinet, or was alluded to by any of its members, during the deliberation on the Seminole affair.

With sincere regard,

I am, &c. &c.

J. C. CALHOUN.

J. MONROE, Esq.

—◆—
K.

James Monroe to John C. Calhoun.

OAK HILL, May 19, 1830.

DEAR SIR: I have received your letter of the 17th, and hasten to answer it. I well remember, that, when I received the letter from General Jackson,

to which you allude, of the 16th of January, 1818, I was sick in bed, and could not read it. You were either present, or came in immediately afterwards, and I handed it to you for perusal. After reading it, you replaced it, with a remark that it required my attention, or would require an answer; but without any notice of its contents. Mr. Crawford came in soon afterwards, and I handed it also to him for perusal. He read it, and returned it in like manner, without making any comment on its contents, further than that it related to the Seminole war, or something to that effect. I never showed it to any other person, and I am not certain whether it was he or you who observed that it related to the Seminole war. Having made all the arrangements respecting that war, and being some time confined by indisposition, the letter was laid aside and forgotten by me, and I never read it until after the conclusion of the war, and then I did it on an intimation from you that it required my attention. You ask whether that letter was before the cabinet in the deliberation on the despatches received from the General, communicating the result of that war, or alluded to by any member in the administration. My impression decidedly is, that it was not before the cabinet, nor do I recollect or think that it was alluded to in the deliberation on the subject. Had it been, I could not, I presume, have forgotten it. I received the despatches referred to here, and had made up my mind before I left home as to the part I ought to take in reference to its management, especially if I should be supported in the opinion formed by the administration. That support was afforded it, and I pursued the course which my judgment dictated, with a view to the honor and interest of my country, and the honor of the General who commanded.

With sincere regard, I am, dear Sir, yours,
JAMES MONROE.

Hon. J. C. CALHOUN.

L.

John C. Calhoun to Mr. Wirt.

WASHINGTON, May 28, 1830.

DEAR SIR: Circumstances which I need not explain render it necessary for me, in self defence, to call on you for a statement of my course in the meeting of the cabinet, in the summer of 1818, on the Seminole war. I wish you also to state, whether a private letter from Gen. Jackson to Mr. Monroe, such as discovered in the enclosed extract of a letter from Mr. Crawford to Mr. Forsyth, was before the cabinet during the deliberation, or whether any allusion was made to any letter of that description.

With sincere regard,
I am, &c. &c.

J. C. CALHOUN.

Hon. Mr. WIRT.

M.

Mr. Wirt to Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, May 28, 1830.

DEAR SIR: Your letter of yesterday relates to a meeting of the cabinet in the summer of 1818, relative to the Seminole war. I should not feel my-

self at liberty to disclose the proceeding of any cabinet meeting without the concurrence of the President and of all the members who attended it; but as your inquiry relates to your own course only, and I can speak of that without involving any one else, I see no impropriety in doing so at your request. Among other ideas thrown out for consideration, according to the usual course of cabinet consultations, I think that, at the first meeting, you suggested the propriety of an inquiry into the conduct of the commanding general; but I remember that the course ultimately adopted had your hearty concurrence; and I remember it the more distinctly because you mentioned it repeatedly to me afterwards, as a striking evidence of the practical wisdom of the President, who suggested it. Thus much I feel myself authorized by the call to say of those deliberations. The circumstances mentioned in the extract you enclose, purporting to be an "extract of a letter from W. H. Crawford, Esq. to John Forsyth, Esq., dated April 30, 1830," have no place in my recollection. The letter from General Jackson to President Monroe, therein mentioned, is entirely new to me. According to the description of the letter, given of it in the extract, it is one of so singular a character, that, if it had been exhibited at any meeting at which I was present, I *think* that I could not have forgotten it. The occurrence is said to have taken place twelve years ago. I kept no notes in writing of any of those deliberations, and am speaking merely from memory. But still I think, that if such a letter had been produced and read in my presence, I should have retained some recollection of it; whereas it strikes me, in the description, as a thing perfectly new, and of which I never heard before. In the close of the extract, the writer says: "After that letter was produced, I should have opposed the infliction of punishment upon the general, who had considered the silence of the President as a tacit consent." I have no recollection that *punishment* had been proposed by any one, unless an *inquiry* into the official conduct of the general can be regarded as *punishment*. It strikes me, too, that if that letter had been produced, and Mr. Crawford had placed his implied charge of opinion on the inference of acquiescence which he supposed the general to be authorized to draw from the President's silence, it could not have escaped observation, and such a discussion as would have tended to have fixed the occurrence on my memory, that the general had not asked the President for an acquiescence to be inferred from silence, but for a positive *hint* of his approbation through "some confidential member of Congress, say Johnny Ray." Upon the whole, Sir, if these things did really occur in my presence, I can only say that they have left not the slightest trace on my memory.

I remain, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,

WM. WIRT.

The Hon. JOHN C. CALHOUN,
Vice President U. S.

N.

Copy of a letter to Mr. Adams, 12th January, 1831.

WASHINGTON, 12th Jan. 1831.

SIR: A short time before the last adjournment of Congress, a copy of a letter from Mr. Crawford to Mr. Forsyth, in relation to the deliberation of

the cabinet on the Seminole question, was placed in the hands of General Jackson, and became the subject of a correspondence between him and myself. In the course of that correspondence, it became necessary, in order to ascertain the truth or error of some of the statements made by Mr. Crawford, to refer to some of the other members of the cabinet, and I accordingly addressed notes to Mr. Monroe and Mr. Wirt, from both of whom I obtained statements. In selecting those gentlemen, instead of yourself and Mr. Crowninshield, I was not in the least degree influenced by any want of confidence in either of you, but simply by feelings of delicacy growing out of political relations, and which I trust to corresponding feelings on your part properly to appreciate.

I learn by a letter from Mr. Crawford, addressed to me subsequent to the close of my correspondence with Gen. Jackson, that he has written to you, and obtained your answer on the subject to which it refers, though he has not furnished me with a copy of his letter to you, nor that of your answer.

This step on his part has, of course, removed the delicacy which I at first felt, and which then prevented me from addressing you.

The part I took in the cabinet deliberation was dictated by a sense of duty, uninfluenced by either the feelings of friendship or enmity. That Gen. Jackson transcended his orders in taking St. Mark's and Pensacola, I have never doubted, then or since. In my opinion, the Executive neither did or could constitutionally give orders to take either of those places, or any other Spanish post. Under this impression, I was decidedly in favor, in the early stage of the deliberation, of bringing the subject before a court of inquiry, but finally yielded my opinion to considerations growing out of the political aspect of the question, as connected with Spain, which were presented by you and Mr. Monroe; but, in yielding to them, I still believed, and do now, that, apart from them, and considered under the military aspect of the subject, as at first view, my opinion was correct.

Having thus concurred in the final decision of the cabinet, I gave it a faithful support, without however abandoning the correctness of my first conceptions. I make this preliminary statement in order that you may perceive why my inquiry should be directed only to what might seem a mere collateral circumstance, whether the letter of Gen. Jackson to Mr. Monroe, in which allusion is made to John Ray, was before the cabinet, which, though not calculated to affect the question of the correctness of my course, however decided, from the prominence that Mr. Crawford has given it, has assumed no small degree of importance in the correspondence. He, in his letter to Mr. Forsyth, says: "Indeed my own views on the subject had undergone a material change after the cabinet had been convened. Mr. Calhoun made some allusion to a letter the General had written the President, who had forgotten that he had received such a letter, but said, if he had received such an one, he could find it, and went directly to his cabinet, and brought the letter out. In it Gen. Jackson approved of the determination of the President to break up Amelia island and Galveztown, and gave it also as his opinion, that the Floridas ought to be taken by the United States. He added, that it might be a delicate matter for the Executive to decide, but, if the President approved of it, he had only to give a hint to some confidential member of Congress, say Johnny Ray, and he would do it, and take the responsibility of it on himself."

The object of my addressing you is, to obtain a statement from you, whether such a letter was, or was not, before the cabinet during its deliberation.

As connected with the subject of my inquiry, I must ask of you the favor to furnish me, if you can with propriety, with a copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to you, and a copy of your answer. I make the request on the assumption that the correspondence can contain nothing that would render it improper that a copy should be placed in my possession. I would make the request of Mr. Crawford himself, instead of you, had I not declined all communication with him in relation to the subject of the correspondence between Gen. Jackson and myself, except through the General, through which channel no opportunity to make the request has been afforded me.

O.

John Q. Adams to J. C. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, 14th January, 1831.

SIR: I received this morning your letter of the 12th instant, and, in giving to it an immediate and explicit answer, I trust you will perceive the propriety of my confining myself to the direct object of your inquiries.

In the course of the last summer, I received a letter from Mr. Crawford, referring to the consultations of Mr. Monroe with the heads of the Departments, in the summer of 1818, upon the proceedings of General Jackson in Florida, on the occasion of the Seminole war, and alluding to a letter from General Jackson to Mr. Monroe, which he stated to have been produced at one of those meetings, and to which his own letter appeared to attach some importance.

Mr. Crawford did not state to me the purpose of his inquiries, nor was I aware that any previous correspondence in relation to the subject had taken place. But as the contents of his letter appeared to me to be of peculiar interest to the character of Mr. Monroe, I answered him that I had no recollection of the production of such a letter as that to which he referred, and requested his permission to communicate his letter to Mr. Monroe himself. To this answer I have received no reply.

Neither the letter of Mr. Crawford, nor the letter book containing the copy of my answer to it, are at this moment in my possession, having left them both at my residence in Quincy. The letter from Mr. Crawford did not purport to be confidential; but, as it related to transactions sacredly confidential in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe, I have not thought myself at liberty to furnish a copy of it without his permission, even to Mr. Monroe: the same principle applies to your request for a copy; but I will immediately write and direct a copy of my answer to be made, which, when received, shall be cheerfully communicated to you.

I am, with respectful consideration, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

JOHN C. CALHOUN, Esq.

P.

Mr. Crowninshield to Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, January 30, 1831.

DEAR SIR: My recollection having been called to a letter received from the Hon. W. H. Crawford in July, 1830, wherein he asks my attention to

“circumstances that transpired during the cabinet deliberations on the events of the Seminole war,” and my reply thereto: It is proper for me to state, that I answered Mr. Crawford as though he alluded to transactions which took place while I was in Mr. Monroe’s cabinet; but, since my arrival here this session, I learn, for the first time, that the cabinet meeting alluded to by Mr. Crawford, was held after I retired from the cabinet.* I left Washington, in company with President Monroe and yourself, for Norfolk, by the way of Annapolis, on the 28th May, 1818. Now, Sir, I do not pretend to know one word of what was said or done at any subsequent meeting; and I do therefore disclaim and say that my letter in answer to Mr. Crawford must not be interpreted so as to affirm or deny any cabinet transactions which took place after I left the cabinet.

It is difficult for me to account how I could have blended other things, so as to connect them with events of which I could know nothing. It is a long time since those things occurred, and memory is treacherous; and that, I beg you to believe, is the only reason of the misapprehension on my part,

I am, with high consideration,
Your obedient servant,

B. W. CROWNINSHIELD.

HON. J. C. CALHOUN, *Vice President.*

* Mr. Crowninshield could not have been present at any cabinet council on the Seminole affair. The first meeting on that subject took place on the 15th or 16th of July, 1818; Mr. Monroe having returned on the 14th, from his residence in Loudoun. The National Intelligencer of the 7th July announced the arrival of Mr. Crowninshield at his residence in Massachusetts, on the 9th. He resigned in October following, without having returned to Washington. Nor could he have been present at any meeting of the cabinet on the subject of the capture of St. Mark’s or Pensacola, in which I was. The Intelligencer of the 29th of May, 1818, announces the departure of the President, (Mr. Monroe,) Mr. Crowninshield, and myself, for Norfolk, before information was received at Washington of either St. Mark’s or Pensacola. The two former returned to Washington. I proceeded to my residence in Carolina, and did not return to Washington until the 9th of July, subsequent to Mr. Crowninshield’s arrival in Massachusetts.

Q.

Mr. Calhoun to Mr. Crawford, returning his letter of 2d October, 1818.

FORT HILL, October 30, 1818.

SIR: The last mail brought me your letter of the 2d inst. marked the 23d, which I herewith return.

I cannot consent to correspond with you on a subject to which the controversy is not with you, but General Jackson. You, I voluntarily assumed the character of the informant. Under only can I know you, which of course precludes all communication in relation to the controversy, except through General Jackson. Regarding you in the light I do, you may rest assured that no part, however coarse, nor charges against me, however false, provoke me to raise you to the level of a principal, by sub-

the place of General Jackson in the correspondence. Should you, however, submit to the degradation of the position which you have thus voluntarily taken, and will send this or any other statement to General Jackson, and induce him to make it the subject of any further communication to me, as confirming in his opinion your former statement, or weakening my refutation, I will be prepared, by the most demonstrative proof, drawn from the paper itself, to show such palpable errors in your present statement as to destroy all confidence in your assertions; leaving it, however, to those who have the best means of judging to determine whether the want of truth be owing to a decayed memory or some other cause.

Having been taught by the past the necessity of taking all possible precaution where I have any thing to do with you, I deem it prudent not to deprive myself of the advantage which your paper affords me, and have accordingly taken a copy, as a precautionary measure.

I am, &c.

J. C. CALHOUN

W. H. CRAWFORD, Esq.

