

the estimate of the man. Mr. Van Buren vindicated equally the rights of the chief magistrate, and his own personal decorum; and left the committee without any thing to complain of, although unsuccessful in all their objects. He also had another opportunity of vindicating his personal and official decorum in another visit which he received about the same time. Mr. Biddle called to see the President—apparently a call of respect on the chief magistrate—about the same time, but evidently with the design to be consulted, and to appear as the great restorer of the currency. Mr. Van Buren received the visit according to its apparent intent, with entire civility, and without a word on public affairs. Believing Mr. Biddle to be at the bottom of the suspension, he could not treat him with the confidence and respect which a consultation would imply. He (Mr. Biddle) felt the slight, and caused this notice to be put in the papers:

“Being on other business at Washington, Mr. Biddle took occasion to call on the President of the United States, to pay his respects to him in that character, and especially, to afford the President an opportunity, if he chose to embrace it, to speak of the present state of things, and to confer, if he saw fit, with the head of the largest banking institution in the country—and that the institution in which such general application has been made for relief. During the interview, however, the President remained profoundly silent upon the great and interesting topics of the day; and as Mr. Biddle did not think it his business to introduce them, not a word in relation to them was said.”

Returning to New York, the committee convoked another general meeting of the citizens, as required to do at the time of their appointment; and made their report to it, recommending further forbearance, and further reliance on the ballot box, although (as they said) history recorded many popular insurrections where the provocation was less. A passage from this report will show its spirit, and to what excess a community may be excited about nothing, by the mutual inflammation of each other's passions and complaints, combined with a power to act upon the business and interests of the people.

“From this correspondence it is obvious, fellow-citizens, that we must abandon all hope that either the justice of our claims or the severity of our sufferings will induce the Executive to abandon or relax the policy which has produced such desolating effects—and it remains

for us to consider what more is to be done in this awful crisis of our affairs. Our first duty under losses and distresses which we have endured, is to cherish with religious care the blessings which we yet enjoy, and which can be protected only by a strict observance of the laws upon which society depends for security and happiness. We do not disguise our opinion that the pages of history record, and the opinions of mankind justify, numerous instances of popular insurrection, the provocation to which was less severe than the evils of which we complain. But in these cases, the outraged and oppressed had no other means of redress. Our case is different. If we can succeed in an effort to bring public opinion into sympathy with the views which we entertain, the Executive will abandon the policy which oppresses, instead of protecting the people. Do not despair because the time at which the ballot box can exercise its healing influence appears so remote—the sagacity of the practical politician will perceive the change in public sentiment before you are aware of its approach. But the effort to produce this change must be vigorous and untiring.”

The meeting adopted corresponding resolutions. Despairing of acting on the President, the move was to act upon the people—to rouse and combine them against an administration which was destroying their industry, and to remove from power (at the elections) those who were destroying the industry of the country. Thus:

“Resolved, That the interests of the capitalists, merchants, manufacturers, mechanics and industrious classes, are dependent upon each other, and any measures of the government which prostrate the active business men of the community, will also deprive honest industry of its reward; and we call upon all our fellow-citizens to unite with us in removing from power those who persist in a system that is destroying the prosperity of our country.”

Another resolve summed up the list of grievances of which they complained, and enumerated the causes of the pervading ruin which had been brought upon the country. Thus:

“Resolved, That the chief causes of the existing distress are the defeat of Mr. Clay's land bill, the removal of the public deposits, the refusal to re-charter the Bank of the United States, and the issuing of the specie circular. The land bill was passed by the people's representatives, and vetoed by the President—the bill rechartering the bank was passed by the people's representatives, and vetoed by the President. The people's representatives declared by a solemn resolution, that the public deposits