

of the honorable gentleman, Mr. W. was fearful that the senator from Missouri would do execution upon every member of the Senate but himself, and be left here alone in his glory. Mr. W. said he recurred to the remarks of the senator from Missouri with feelings of regret, rather than of anger or excitement; and that he could not but hope, that when the senator from Missouri had calmly reflected upon this subject, he would himself see much to regret in the course he had pursued in relation to the Committee on Public Lands, and much to recall that he had uttered under feelings of temporary excitement. Sir (said Mr. W.), being deeply solicitous to preserve unbroken the ranks of the democratic party in this body, participating with the people in grateful recollection of the distinguished services rendered by the senator from Missouri to the democracy of the Union, he would pass by many of the remarks made by that senator on this subject.

"[Mr. Benton here rose from his chair, and demanded, with much warmth, that Mr. Walker should not pass by one of them. Mr. W. asked, what one? Mr. B. replied, in an angry tone, Not one, sir. Then Mr. W. said he would examine them all, and in a spirit of perfect freedom; that he would endeavor to return blow for blow; and that, if the senator from Missouri desired, as it appeared he did, an angry controversy with him, in all its consequences, in and out of this house, he could be gratified.]

"Sir (said Mr. W.), why has the senator from Missouri assailed the Committee on Public Lands, and himself, as its humble organ? He was not the author of this measure, so much denounced by the senator from Missouri, nor had he said one word upon the subject. The measure originated with the senator from Virginia [Mr. Rives]. He was the author of the measure, and had been, and still was, its able, zealous, and successful advocate. Why, then, had the senator from Missouri assailed him (Mr. W.), and permitted the author of the measure to escape unpunished? Sir, are the arrows which appear to be aimed by the senator from Missouri at the humble organ of the Committee on Public lands, who reported this bill, intended to inflict a wound in another quarter? Is one senator the apparent object of assault, when another is designed as the real victim? Sir, when the senator from Missouri, without any provocation, like a thunderbolt from an unclouded sky, broke upon the Senate in a perfect tempest of wrath and fury, bursting upon his poor head like a tropical tornado, did he intend to sweep before the avenging storm another individual more obnoxious to his censure?

"Sir (said Mr. W.), the senator from Missouri has thrice repeated the prayer, 'God save the country from the Committee on Public Lands;' but Mr. W. fully believed if the prayer of the country could be heard within these walls, it would be, God save us from the wild, visionary, ruinous, and impracticable schemes of the

senator of Missouri, for exclusive gold and silver currency; and such is not only the prayer of the country, but of the Senate, with scarcely a dissenting voice. Sir, if the senator from Missouri could, by his mandate, in direct opposition to the views of the President, heretofore expressed, sweep from existence all the banks of the States, and establish his exclusive constitutional currency of gold and silver, he would bring upon this country scenes of ruin and distress without a parallel—an immediate bankruptcy of nearly every debtor, and of almost every creditor to whom large amounts were due, a prodigious depreciation in the price of all property and all products, and an immediate cessation by States and individuals of nearly every work of private enterprise or public improvement. The country would be involved in one universal bankruptcy, and near the grave of the nation's prosperity would perhaps repose the scattered fragments of those great and glorious institutions which give happiness to millions here, and hopes to millions more of disenthralment from despotic power. Sir, in resistance to the power of the Bank of the United States, in opposition to the re-establishment of any similar institution, the senator from Missouri would find Mr. W. with him; but he could not enlist as a recruit in this new crusade against the banks of his own and every other State in the Union. These institutions, whether for good or evil, are created by the States, cherished and sustained by them, in many cases owned in whole or in part by the States, and closely united with their prosperity; and what right have we to destroy them? What right had he, a humble servant of the people of Mississippi, to say to his own, or any other State, your State legislation is wrong—your State institution, your State banks, must be annihilated, and we will legislate here to effect this object. Are we the masters or servants of the sovereign States, that we dare speak to them in language like this—that we dare attempt to prostrate here those institutions which are created and maintained by those very States which we represent on this floor? These may be the opinions entertained by some senators of their duty to the States they represent, but they were not his (Mr. W.'s) views or his opinions. He was sincerely desirous to co-operate with his State in limiting any dangerous powers of the banks, in enlarging the circulation of gold and silver, and in suppressing the small note currency, so as to avoid that explosion which was to be apprehended from excessive issues of bank paper. But a total annihilation of all the banks of his own State, now possessing a chartered capital of near forty millions of dollars, would, Mr. W. knew, produce almost universal bankruptcy, and was not, he believed, anticipated by any one of his constituents.

"But the senator from Missouri tells us that this measure of the committee is a repeal of the constitution, by authorizing the receipt of paper

money in revenue. A constitution never has a period cannot be designed. This species made receivable for of Congress, passed in tion of the constitution force until eighteen was so received, as a eighteen hundred and hundred and sixteen, Congress then passed pired, it was so author all that period. Now expired, there is that law still in force, e notes of the specie-pa to be received in reve joint resolution of ei teen, adopted by both approved by President "Where is the distin regards the reception of count, between the tw senator from Missouri bill of the committee a tion, denounces direc United States. Congr legislature, can make a ver a tender in paymen to another; but that C ture, or an individua tutional rights, and drafts, in payment of a universal adoption in t never doubted by any session by the senator distinction of the senate incomprehensible to him lieved it was to every s discernible only by the solar microscope. It which, like the logarithm of the hyperbolic curve, proached without reaching ghost of an idea, not breadth, thickness, shape, but without position—a ing, which flitted before of the honorable senator his fitful somnambulism, ment of gold, silver, an senator delighted to occu from Missouri might h high his piles of metal; in his Quixotic flight, o States, putting to the swo holders, directory, and which they were charter reveries, have demolished consumed their paper by quence; he might have with a metallic currency lions in circulation, an ac