

that he might obtain for the aged gentleman a position in the custom-house, earnestly solicited the collector to befriend him.

"We must find something for him," said the sympathetic collector, and he sent for Nathaniel Schultz, to whom he imparted the request. The result of their conference was that Mr. Sebring was notified that a position was open to him at the custom-house. When he presented himself there, he feelingly said to the democratic official, who kindly hoped that he would always regard him as willing to be of service to him: "But I am a federalist; I have opposed your party all my life." "Oh, confound it!" interjected the collector, "that has nothing to do with it. You have served your country in war; you have been a leading merchant, and now you are poor. True, you have been a federalist, but you have been loyal to your country." Although Mr. Sebring was over eighty years of age, it is said, the position enabled him to earn a livelihood, "for he was good at figures and was of great service in the auditor's department."¹

The construction of the Mohawk and Hudson Railroad, extending from the city of Albany to Schenectady, nearly sixteen miles long, begun on July 29, 1830, and completed in the spring of 1832, was a work of no little importance at that time. An invitation to enjoy an excursion on it in the fall of 1831 was accepted by a number of prominent officials and merchants of the city of New York, among whom was Collector Samuel Swartwout. The *Albany Argus*, of September 26, 1831, gives the following account of the noteworthy event:

"On Saturday, September 24th, a numerous company, at the request of the president and directors of the Mohawk and Hudson Railroad Company, enjoyed a very gratifying ride upon the road. The company consisted of the governor, lieutenant-governor, members of the senate, now in session as a court of errors, our senators in congress, the chancellor, and judges of the supreme and district courts, state officers, the president of the board of assistants and members of the common council of the city of New York, the mayor, recorder, and corporation of the city, and several citizens of New York, and Schenectady.

"Owing to a defect in one of the supply-pipes of the English locomotive, that powerful engine was not brought into service, and the party, having been delayed in consequence, did not leave the head of Lydius Street until nearly twelve o'clock. They then started with a train of ten cars, three drawn by the American locomotive 'DeWitt Clinton,' and seven by a single horse each. The appearance of this fine cavalcade, if it may be so called, was highly imposing.

"The trip was performed by the locomotive in forty-six minutes, and by

¹ The old merchants of New York city. By Walter Barrett, vol. ili., pp. 19, 20.