

with the manly defence of the misrepresented official, who dispassionately wrote the censorious secretary the following answer :

“ Custom-house, New York, Collector's Office, May 22, 1837.

“ Sir:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, and beg leave to state, that I regret that you should have believed the various reports of the newspapers in regard to the language said to have been made use of by me on the 17th instant. I will give you the precise words made use of by me, and leave you to judge whether there was any impropriety in them.

“ Several gentlemen called upon me to request that I should meet the merchants at their exchange, and inform them of the result of my visit to Washington. I did so, and when there, stated, that immediately on the receipt of your communication of the 12th instant, I set out for Washington; that when I arrived there I waited upon the secretary of the treasury, and expressed to him my apprehensions that the order could not be carried out, and begged to know whether some expedients could not be adopted to relieve the merchants from specie payments; that the secretary showed me the law, read it, and observed that it was imperative, and could not be disregarded; that upon this I went to see the president, who gave me the same assurances, expressing, at the same time, his deep sympathy for the merchants who were so unfortunately situated; that as no relief could be offered through the authority of the government, I had offered to act without its orders, provided I was permitted in any way so to do, and that I would throw myself upon the people and congress for my justification; but that this proposition was promptly discountenanced by you. In conclusion I remarked, that notwithstanding the government could not authorize any deviation from the law, I was perfectly willing to take such responsibility, and that I believed the people and congress would bear me out in it. This same declaration was made in your, and the president's hearing, without exciting your alarm in the least at the time.

“ In renewing it here, *I did not mean to be understood as having acted on it, or assumed it; but simply expressed my belief, in case it should be done, and I was willing to run the hazard, that I, or any other person so doing, would be fully sustained by congress.*

“ *The expression, therefore, of such a belief was not criminal, although to carry it out might have been; but this I did not do.*

“ *The instructions contained in your letter of the 12th instant, and in subsequent orders, have been strictly carried into effect. Not a dollar for bonds, or cash duties has been received at this office since Mr. Ogden received your letter of the 14th instant, in any thing but in specie.<sup>1</sup> I have not authorized or*

<sup>1</sup> The collector being at that time in Washington. Henry Ogden was the cashier of customs.