

**MAJOR DOWNING'S BIOGRAPHY OF SAM PATCH,
THE JUMPER.**

NOTE, BY THE EDITOR. There are some striking parallels between the race run by the renowned Sam Patch, of jumping memory, who figured in this jumping world in the year, (*anno Domini*) one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine, and the no less renowned Major Jack Downing, who is figuring away 'in the full tide of successful experiment' at this present era. We think it fortunate for the memory of the jumping hero, as well as for the world, that his wonderful achievements have been recorded by so illustrious a genius and accomplished writer as Major Downing. It is fitting that their memory should go down to posterity together. They were both humble in their origin, and both were aspiring and lofty in their ambition. Neither of them however ever stooped to run after popularity, for popularity always runs after them. Sam commenced with taking small jumps, and Jack commenced with reaching after small offices. Sam's ambition soon led him to leap from high bridges and factory walls, and Jack began anon to think of a Governor's chair and a seat in the Cabinet at Washington. Sam at length would stop nothing short of jumping down the falls of Genesee and Niagara, and Jack has fixed his eye upon the lofty mark and is pressing forward with full vigor for the Presidency of the United States. Sam's last jump was a fatal one, and we sincerely hope the parallel may not be carried out, but that the Major may yet see many good days, and continue to serve his country as faithfully as he has hitherto done.

But we must explain how Major Downing came to be the biographer of Sam Patch.

While Mr. Downing (we say Mr., because it was

before he received any office) was attending upon the Legislature of Maine in 1830, one day when the wheels of government were clogged and some of the Senators had run away and there was nothing doing, Mr. Downing came into our room, and sat down and looked over a file of newspapers. He soon got upon the achievements of Sam Patch, whose career had a short time before closed, and he read his history through. Mr. Downing's head was full of the matter. He never read any thing before that filled him with such intense interest. He had got upon the track of a kindred spirit, and he was all animation. He went home with us and spent the night; but he could talk of nothing and think of nothing but Sam Patch. He had got his story by heart, and he was talking it over in his sleep all night. In the morning he rose pale and nervous. Says he, 'I believe that story of Sam Patch has been ground over in my head more than forty times to-night, and its got so now it comes through my head in lines all about the same length, jest like rolls out of a carding machine; and if you 'll give me some paper and pen and ink, I 'll put it down.' We furnished him accordingly, and he sat down and wrote the following splendid piece of biography, which we published in the Courier at the time and now insert in the volume of his life and writings.

BIOGRAPHY OF SAM PATCH.

Pawtucket is a famous place,
Where cotton cloth is made,
And hundreds think it no disgrace
To labour at the trade.

Among the spinners there was one,
Whose name was Samuel Patch;
He moped about, and did his stent—
Folks thought him no great scratch.

But still a maggot, in his head,
Told Sam he was a ninny,
To spend his life in twirling thread,
Just like a spinning Jenney.

And if he would become renown'd,
And live in song or story,
Twas time he should be looking round
For deeds of fame and glory.

'What shall I do?' quoth honest Sam,
'There is no war a-brewing ;
And duels are but dirty things,
Scarce worth a body's doing.

'And if I would be President,
I see I'm up a tree,
For neither prints, nor Congress-men,
Have nominated me.'

But still that maggot in his head
Told Sam he was a gump,
For if he could do nothing else,
Most surely he could *jump*.

Ay, right, quoth Sam, and out he went,
And on the bridge he stood,
And down he jump'd full twenty feet,
And plung'd into the flood.

And when he safely swam to land,
He stood there like a stump,
And all the gaping crowd cried out,
'O what a glorious jump.'

New light now shone in Samuel's eyes,
His heart went pit a pat ;
'Go, bring a ladder here,' he cries ;
'I'll jump you more than that.'

The longest ladder in the town
Against the factory was rear'd,
And Sam clomb up, and then jump'd down,
And loud and long the gapers cheer'd.

Besides the maggot in his head,
Sam's ear now felt a flea ;
'I'll raise some greater breezes yet ;
What's this dull town to me ?'

And off he went on foot, full trot,
High hopes of fame his bosom fired,
At Paterson, in Jarsay State,
He stopt awhile, for Sam was tired ;

And there he mounted for a jump,
And crowds came round to view it,
And all began to gape and stare,
And cry, 'How dare you do it ?'

But Sam ne'er heeded what they said,
His nerves want made to quiver,
And down he jump'd some fifty feet,
And splash'd into the river.

'Hoo-rah,' the mob cried out amain,
'Hoo-rah,' from every throat was pouring,
And Echo cried, 'Hoo-rah' again,
Like a thousand lions roaring.

Sam's fame now spread both far and wide,
And brighter grew from day to day,
And wheresoe'er a crowd convened,
Patch was the lion of the play.

From shipmasts he would jump in sport,
And spring from highest factory walls ;
And proclamation soon was made,
That he would leap Niagara falls



**"While Sam approached those awful falls,
And leapt them like a frog."**

'What for?' inquired an honest Hodge,
'Why scare to death our wives and mothers?'
'To show that some things *can* be done,'
Quoth Sam, 'as well as others.'

Ten thousand people thronged the shores,
And stood there all agog,
While Sam approached those awful falls,
And leapt them like a frog.

And when they saw his neck was safe,
And he once more stood on his feet,
They set up such a deafening cheer,
Niagara's roar was fairly beat.

Patch being but a scurvy name,
They solemnly did there enact,
That he henceforward should be call'd
'Squire Samuel O'Catract.'

And here our hero should have stopt,
And hūsbanded his brilliant fame;
But, ah, he took one leap too much,
And most all heroes do the same.

Napoleon's last great battle prov'd
His dreadful overthrow,
And Sam's last jump was a fearful one,
And in death it laid him low.

'Twas at the falls of Genessee,
He jump'd down six score feet and five,
And in the waters deep he sunk,
And never rose again alive.

The crowd, with fingers in their mouths,
Turn'd homeward, one by one,
And oft with sheepish looks they said,
'Poor Sam's last job is done.'

APPENDIX.

In which are published some of Major Downing's letters, that he never wrote.

Note by the Editor. The following paragraph from Mr. Walsh's National Gazette, published some two or three months ago, comes in so pat upon the present occasion, that we cannot refrain from copying it.

'It has been the fate of all successful authors, to have counterfeits who deal with their originals as Hamlet says that some players imitate nature. The Rabelais, the Swifts, the Voltaires suffered in their day by the productions of interlopers of the sort;—mere bunglers attempted to personate them, and confounded the less discriminating or critical part of the reading public. Major Jack Downing has paid in like manner, the penalty of genius and popularity; and he has complained of the hardship and injustice, in a characteristic vein. We humbly advise him to write over the whole story of President Jackson's late expedition. It might confidently be predicted that a full narrative from his pen, *duly authenticated*, would obtain as much vogue in these United States, as did Peter Plymley's Letters in Great Britain.'

Major Downing's letters were commenced in the *Portland Courier*, in January 1830, and have been

continued in that paper regularly up to the present time, Nov. 1833. The *real* Major has never sent any letter to any other paper. Though counterfeit or imitation letters occasionally appeared in other papers, it was not till President Jackson's tour to New England, that they were published in any considerable numbers. At that time the counterfeiters took a new start. Roused by the Major's account of their 'coming on full chisel,' and of his shaking hands for the President at Philadelphia, every body betook themselves to writing Jack Downing, till their letters almost overshadowed the land. The great mass of them were about as much like the original letters, as a hawk is like a hand-saw. Most of them had nothing to recommend them but extreme bad spelling, without point, wit, or moral. Others, which were written with some ability, were often deformed by low blackguardism, indelicacy, or profanity, qualities which it is believed are not to be found in the writings of the genuine Major. A few of the best specimens of the imitations are copied in the following pages. We cannot but remark however, in passing, that it appears to us to be an unjustifiable invasion of the Major's rights, for others to assume his name. It is really as much a forgery in point of honor and equity, as it would be for them to affix to their letters the name of Andrew Jackson. If they choose to attempt to write in the Major's style, they are at liberty to do it, as they would be to attempt the style of any other author; but we believe all honorable men will say, *they have no moral right to assume his name.*

No. I.

*Being the genuine letter of old Mr. Zophar Downing,
'almost eighty-three yere old.'*

[*Note.*—The following letter, we believe, was sent originally in the New York Commercial Advertiser, though we are not sure but it was a Baltimore paper. We regard it as the best picture, 'drawd off from nater,' that we have seen among the numerous imitations of the true letters of the Downing family. One thing is certain about it, whether the Major has an uncle in the western States or not, this letter bears indubitable evidence of having been written by a person *eighty three years old.*]

{ Uppington, Western Reserve,
} Tuesday, June 5, A. D. 1833, N. S.

TO MY NEFEW JOHN DOWNING:—I am got to be almost eighty three Yere old, and I'm in my eighty third year now, and its so long since I have took any Pen in my hand to write any thing nor a Letter to any Boddy living for now going on a very long Time. And what makes it particular bad for me is that my Fingers is got stiff with Rhumatiz and cold, and is all Thums, as much as tho they was froze in the Winter. —Your Aunt is sick abed; she ketch'd cold some Time in Aperil, and I don't know when she will ever git over it; she is in her eighty second Year most as old as I be, we are both very old and prety much done with this World, so to speake. I did not ever expect to write any more Letters to my Frinds because I'm in my eighty third Year and am too old most to write Letters. But you writ a Letter to me from the City of Washington and it was throw'd out of the Stage Wensday as it drove by. And when I redd about your goin to take the President' of These United States to Downingvil then I said to your Aunt my dear I must try and write an Answer to Jonny's Letter.

I was jeest about as old as you be John when the Great Washington died, 14 day of December, and was with him and spoke with him seventeen year before, when he left the Army and wisht I might live many yeares, and what you writ to me makes me think a good deal of that time. I shant forget it to my dyin day—but I hope you wont have Ardint Sperrits in your Town on the Occasion. I dont drink any more Flip nor Tody sence 17 August A. D. 1831 and am better fort, and hope Brother Joshua has stopped. Two of my Cows was lost last year by Destemper and one of Mr. Doolittles who lives oposite, is a hard worken Man. Some Destemper was here this yere but I follerd what was said in the Temperance Almanick and they was cured in time to git over it. I desire that my Brother Joshua woud write a Letter to me to let me know whether he is going to make out as well with his Ternips as he did 3 year ago, he wrote to your Aunt about it. I tryde that Plan here, but it dont do in this Soil, it is to dry most of it. Your Aunt tells me she dont think Brother Joshua can be so strong of his Age as I be, seeing he hant writ any of us since that Account of his Garding Sauce turnin out so remarkable good that year.

It is thirty-two years ago next month since I was in Downingville, how is Deacon Wiloby and his family and his daughter Sooky was uncommon humer-some, but your aunt always used to say she thot Sooky was a little too fond of seeing peepel perlite and that she was too espirin for Downingvil when she was young and a comely child. I thank you John for some newspapers you sent to me last when so much was writ about the President and the Vice President, oné spell I was afeard that the poor salvages in Georgia State was agoin to suffer till the great Proclamation to the Nuliphiers as they are called which you sent to me, but I hope they are not now, they are a sufferin Peepel certin. If you do take the Pres-

dent east I hope there is no boddy but what will treat him respect. You know John I dont know much about politix, but I know something of my bible, and I hope I shall always read in it while I continue to live, and it says in the 2nd Book of Samuel, about Absalom's setting by the gate and shakin hands and kissin every boddy that passed by, and whisperin in their ears what he would do if he was king, and you know mor about the Vice President, and I ask you if that man aint adoin so too, and if it is not some boddys duty to speak to the President about it. But my hand shakes some, writin so much, and give my love and aunts to all our relations and to the neighbours of yours that I used to know. I am your loving Uncle,

ZOPHAR DOWNING.

No. II.

BANK REPORT.

To the Editor of the N. Y. Daily Advertiser.

Major Downing's Official Report on the United States Bank.
Published by 'authority.'

Rip Raps, August 4th, 1833.

DEAR SIR,—I have jest got here after examinin the Bank; and it was the toughest job, ever I had in my life. The General was so bent on my doing it, that I had to 'go ahead,' or I'd sneak'd out the first day. I was nigh upon a week about it, figerin and siferin all the while. Mr. Biddle see quick enuf it was no fool's journey I come on; and I made some of his folks scratch their heads, I tell you. I gin 'em no notice of my comin, and I jump'd right in the thickest on 'em there one day, when they were tum-

blin in and shellin out the munny like corn. 'Now,' says I, 'my boys, I advise all on ye to brush up your multiplication tables, for I am down upon you with aligation, and the rule of three, and vulgar fractions; and if I find a penny out of place, the General shall know it. I'm no green horn, nor member of Congress, nor Judge Clayton, nor Mr. Cambreleng, neither,' says I. As soon as Mr. Biddle read the letter the General sent by me, says, he 'Major, I'm glad the General has sent some one at last that knows something, and can give a strait account;' and with that he called all the Bank folks, and tell'd 'em to bring their books together. 'Now,' says he, 'Major, which eend shall we begin at first.' 'It makes no odds which,' says I, 'all I care about is to see if both eends meet; and if they don't, Mr. Biddle,' says I, 'i'ts all over with you and the bank—you'll all go, hook and line,'—and then we off coats and went at it. I found some of them are fellers there plagy sharp at siferin. They'd do a sum by a kinder short Dilworth quick as a flash. I always use a slate—it comes kinder natural to me; and I chalk'd her off there the first day and figur'd out nigh upon 100 pretty considerable tuf sums. There was more than three cart load of books about us, and every one on 'em bigger than the Deacon's family Bible. And sich an etarnal batch of figerin I never see, and there wasn't a blot or scratch in the whole on 'em.

I put a good many questions to Mr. Biddle, for the General gin me a long string on 'em; and I thought some would stagger him, but he answered them all jest as glib as our boys in Downingville do the catakize, from the chief 'eend of man,' clean through the petitions—and he did it all in a mighty civil way too, ther was only one he kinder tried to git round, and that was—how he come to have so few of the General's folks among the Directors until very lately? 'Why,' says he, 'Major, and Major,' says he (and then he got

up and took a pinch of snuff and offered me one) say he, 'Major, the Bank knows no party; and in the first go off, you know, the General's friends were all above matters of so little importance as Banks and Banking. If we had put a branch in Downingville,' says he 'the General would not have had occasion to ask such a question,' and with that he made me a bow; and went home and took dinner with him. It is plag curious to hear him talk about millions and thousands and I got as glib too at it as he is; and how on earth I shall git back agin to ninepences and four-pence happenies, I can't tell.

Arter I had been figerin away there nigh upon a week, and used up four or five slate pencils, and spi my mouth as dry as a cob, rubbin out the sums as fast as I did them, I writ to the General, and tell'd him it was no use; I could find no mistake; but so long as the Bank was at work, it was pretty much like counting a flock of sheep in a fall day when they are jest led into a new stubble, for it was all the while crossing and mixing, and the only way was, to lock up all the Banks, and as fast as you can count 'em black their noses.

'Now,' says I one day to Squire Biddle, 'I'll jes take a look at your money bags, for they tell the General you han't got stuff enuf in the Bank to make him a pair of spectacles; none of your rags,' says I, 'but the real grit;' and with that he call'd two or three chaps in Quaker coats, and they opened a large place about as big as the 'east room' and sich a sight I never see—boxes, bags and kags, all full, and should say nigh upon a hundred cord. Says I, 'Squire Biddle, what on earth is all this? for I am stumped. 'O,' says he, 'Major, that's our Safety Fund. 'How you talk!' says I. 'Now,' says I, 'is that all genwine?' 'Every dollar of it,' says he. 'Will you count it, Major?' says he. 'Not to-day,' says I 'but as the General wants me to be particular, I'll

jest hussle some of 'em;' and at it I went, hammer and file. It raly did me good, for I did not think there was so much real chink in all creation. So when I got tired, I set down on a pile, and took out my wallet, and begun to count over some of the 'safety fund' notes I got shaved with on the grand tower. 'Here,' says I, 'Squire Biddle, I have a small trifle I should like to barter with you; it's all "safety fund,"' says I; 'and Mr. Van Buren's head is on most all on 'em.' But as soon as he put his eye on 'em, he shook his head. I see he had his eye teeth cut. 'Well,' says I, 'it's no matter;' but it lifted my dander considerable.

'Now,' says I, 'Mr. Biddle, I've got one more question to put to you, and then I'm through. You say your bills are better than the hard dollars; this puzzles me, and the Ginerall too. Now, how is this?' 'Well,' says he, 'Major, I'll tell you: Suppose you had a bushel of potatoes in Downingville, and you wanted to send them to Washington, how much would it cost to get them there?' 'Well,' says I, 'about two shillins lawful—for I sent a barrel there to the Ginerall, last fall, and that cost me a dollar freight.' 'Well,' says he, 'suppose I've got potatoes in Washington jest as good as yours, and I take your potatoes in Downingville, and give you an order to receive a bushel of potatoes in Washington, wouldn't you save two shillins lawful by that? We sometimes charge,' says he, 'a trifle for drafts, when the places are distant, but never as much as it would cost to carry the dollars;' and with that we looked into the accounts agin, and there it was. Says I, 'Squire Biddle, I see it now as clear as a whistle.'

When I got back to Washington, I found the Ginerall off to the 'Rip Raps,' and so I arter him. One feller there tell'd me I couldn't go to the Rip Raps—that the Ginerall was thre to keep off business; but as soon as I told him who I was, he ordered a boat and I paddled off.

The Ginerall and I have talked over all the Bank business; he says it is not best to publish my report, as he wants it for the message; and it would only set them *Stock fish* nibblin agin in Wall Street. I made him stare when I tell'd him about the dollars I saw there; and once and awhile he would rinkle his face up like a ball of rivilins; and when I tell'd him Bid-dle would n't give me any of his 'Safety Fund' for any of Mr. Van Buren's that I had with me, the Ginerall took out his wallet, and slung it more than five rods into the brakers.

We are now pretty busy, fitting and jointing the beams and rafters of the message; and if Mr. Van Buren dont get back before we begin to shingle it. I guess that his Safety Fund will stand but a poor chance.

The Ginerall don't care much about having his head for a sign board, but says he, 'Major, when they put my head on one eend of a Bank Bill, and Mr. Van Buren's on tother eend, and "promise to pay Andrew Jackson," and then blow up, it's too bad—I won't allow it—it shant be.' The Ginerall says, if he allows Amos Kendle to make his report about the State Banks, it is but fair to let me publish mine about Square Biddle's Bank. So I am getting mine ready.

We have a fine cool time here, and ain't bothered with Office seekers; we can see 'em in droves all along shore, waitin for a chance. One fellow swam off last night to get appointed to some office—the Ginerall thinks of making him minister to the King of the Sandwich Islands, on account of their being all good swimmers there.

Yours,

J. DOWNING, Major, Downingville
Militia, 2d Brigade.

No. III.

Giving some account of Peleg Bissel's Churn.

Rip Raps, Aug. 17, 1833.

To the Editor of the New-York Daily Advertiser.

MY GOOD FRIEND.—“*The Government*” will leave here on Saturday, so you must tell all our friends to stop sending any more letters here. We go strait to Washington, to put things to rights there for winter.

I and the Ginerall have got things now pretty considerable snug; and it is raly curious to see how much more easy and simple all the public affairs go on than they did a spell ago, when Mr. Adams was President. If it warnt for Congress meetin we cou'd jest go about pretty much where we pleased, and keep things strait too: and I begin to think now with the Ginerall, that ater all, there is no great shakes in managin the affairs of the nation. We have pretty much all on us ben joggin about now since last grass; and things are jest as strait and clear now as they was then. The Ginerall has nigh upon made up his mind, that there is no use to have any more Congress. They only bother us—they wou'd do more good to stay at home, and write letters to us tellin what is goin on among 'em at home. It would save a considerable sum of money too; and I'm also sartin that there is a plagy raft of fellows on wages that dont earn nothin. Howsoever, we are goin on makin things more simple every day, and we once and a while nock off a pretty considerable number of cogg wheels and trunnel heads.

The Ginerall says he likes things simple as a mouse trap. But what I like most is, he wont have no one about him who outranks me, so there is me, and

Major Barry, and Major Smith, and Major Earl, and Major Donaldson, and Major Lewis, and Major Eaton;—and the major part of a pretty considerable of a man to do the printing, and tell the folks where we be, and once and a while where the land sales and contracts be too. There is enuff on us to do all that's wanted. Every day jest ater breakfast, the Ginerall lights his pipe, and begins to think pretty hard, and I and Major Donaldson begin to open letters for him; and there is more than three bushels every day, and all the while coming. We dont git through more than a bushel a day; and never trouble long ones, unless they come from Mr. Van Buren, or Mr. Kindle, or some other of our great folks. Then we sort 'em out, jest as Zekel Bigelow does the mackerel at his Pack-in Yard, for tho' there are plagy many more sorts than he finds among fish, we ony make three sorts, and keep three big baskets, one marked 'not red,' another 'red, and worth nothin,' and another 'red, and to be answered.' And then all the Ginerall has to do is to say, 'Major, I reckon we best say so and so to that,' and I say 'jest so,' or not, as the notion takes me—and then we go at it.

We keep all the Secretaries, and the Vice President, and some District Attornys, and a good many more of our folks, and Amos Kindle, moving about; and they tell us jest how the cat jumps. And as I said afore, if it warnt for Congress meetin once a year, we'd put the Government in a one horse wagon and go jest where we liked.

The Ginerall was amazingly tickled t'other day. Peleg Bissel—(you know Peleg, who is all the while whitlin, and sawin, and makin clocks, and apple parers, and churns, and lives nigh Seth Sprague's School house, down to Downingville,) well, Peleg sent the Ginerall a new churn of his own invention; and he calls it the 'Jackson Churn,' he wants a patent for it. *The cute critur* says, in his letter to the Ginerall, that

that are churn is jest like his government—its ony got one wheel, and a smasher; and that it will make more butter than any other churn, and out of eny most anything. The Ginerall is so well pleased with it, he will set and turn it nearly all day. Says he, 'Major, I like this ere churn amazingly, that Bissel is a knowin fellow. If that churn had been made by Congress, it would have more than fifty wheels and springs, and make no more butter ater all. Major,' says he, 'tell Peleg I thank him; and send him a patent.'

And so I did; and I telled him in the letter, that the Ginerall would keep his churn in the hall of the white house, to let folks see that it did n't require as many cog wheels to make butter as they think on, and then when they come up chamber, in the Cabinet Room, and find ony me and the President, they 'll understand it the better. When the Ginerall come to sign this letter, 'well,' says he, 'Major, that's just what I was thinkin on. We get every day an everlastin bach of letters from Mr. Van Buren and Amos Kindle, and they are so plagy jagged, that we cant make 'em fit exactly with some others, eny most as jagged, from the South and West, and all from our folks too. One wants one thing, and one wants t'other. Some of our folks down South say, if the Bank is put down, we shall all be split up into splinters there. And jest so, ony t'other way, they say, we shant find in a week any of our folks north if the Bank is re chartered, and some talk of the Nullifiers in Georgia going for Mr. Van Buren, and that we must look out sharp, and not do nothin agin 'em. And some say that are tower of Mr. Webster away West, and his speeches, bother some on 'em plagily. I was a little stumped for a spell myself; and I tell'd the Ginerall, says I 'Ginerall, if you expect me to satisfy all these folks, you're mistaken, we cant do it,' says I. 'Well then,' says he, 'we must send for

Mr. Van Buren.' This kinder nettled me, and says I, 'Gineral, you ha'nt forgot that are churn already'—'no, no,' says he, 'we'll stick to that Major.' 'Well then,' says I, 'do you think that Mr. Van Buren will use that are churn? he keeps his bread buttered,' says I, 'by more wheels than that are churn's got.' 'Well Major,' says the Gineral, 'he is a plagy curious critter, ater all—he'll make wheels turn sometimes right agin one another, yet he gits along—and when he lets his slice fall, or some one nocks it out of his hand, it always somehow falls butter side up'—'well,' says I, 'Gineral, dont you know why?' 'not exactly,' says he, 'Major'—'well,' says I, 'I'll tell you—he butters both sides at once,' says I. The Gineral drew his face all into a rumpel for about a minute, and then he snorted right out.

The Gineral talks of goin to the Hermitage next spring—he says he thinks he has done enuf for the country—and I think so too—he says I may go along with him or stay and lend Mr. Van Buren a hand—we'll say something about this in the Message.

Yours as before,

J. DOWNING, Major.

Downingville Militia, 2d Brigade.

No. IV.

The Public Crib at Washington.

Washington, August 30, 1833.

To Mr. Dwight—New-York Daily Advertiser.

MY GOOD OLD FRIEND—Ever since we got 'the Gove nment' back here from the Rip Raps, we have been s busy as if we was all on us cocking hay just afore a shower.

I tell'd you some time ago that I and the General was fittin and jointin the beams and rafters of the message, but almost every day some plaguy new motion comes in from Mr. Van Buren, and some other of our folks, and we have to chizzle new mortises, and run new braces and string pieces, so that I begin to think it will look curious enuf when its done. The General says he dont care how it fronts, only he is determined to show a sharp corner to the Nullifiers. We shall have a good deal to say about the *Grand Tower*; there is nothin since the 8th of January at New-Orleans tickles the General half so much. Every time we talk about it, the General gits right up, and says he, 'Major, I ony wish I was fifty years younger, and then,' says he, 'give me the yankees east of Horse Neck, and I'd like no better sport than to have nullification all over the rest of creation.'

When things dont go right, and the General gits a little wrathy, if I ony tell him the yankees are ready to back him, he is as firm as granite. It would make you crawl all over to read that letter we writ to France, when we come to hear that the King there kinder shuffled round that bill we drewed on him. 'He wont pay it, wont he?' Says he—'Major, what do you think of that?'—'why,' says I, 'General, I think its a nasty mean action—and a rascally one too, says I.' 'Well,' says he, 'that's enuf,'—and then we writ the letter,—its jest like Zekel Bigelow's speech—it cuts, shaves, and makes the hair fly—and if it dont bring the money, I'm mistaken.

If Mr. Livingston had stayd one week longer in York, the General was for sending me right out.

The most curious part of 'the Government' here, is to manage the office seekers. You see, things aint now as they was afore Mr. Van Buren's time, then it was kinder divided round among the Departments.

The Post Master General appointed all the Post Masters and their folks. The Secretary of the

Treasury appointed all the folks in the Custom Houses, and all folks who collected money. These two had an everlastin batch of fellers to appint, and made them feel pretty considerable big, and then the War Secretary had a good slice in appinting the cadets, and Ingen Agents, and all the contracts was kinder sifted round among the Departments; and so by the time a new President was to be made, some of these Secretaries was a leetle bigger than the President himself. Now this is the way they kinder jockeyed Mr. Adams, who got to be the smallest man at Washington, by lettin other folks plant his corn, and do his huskin; and afore he knowd it, his own field was all in weeds—and theirs well howed, rich and clean as a whistle.

But things aint so now, we've got ony one crib, and that's a whappin one too, and ony one door to it; and when we shell out our corn, we take good care and know well who gets it, and where he is going to plant it; and that aint all—we make 'em agree about the *Huskin Frolic*,* for that's the best ont arter all.

The longer I am in 'the Government' the more I larn. But I must allow that of all the inventions I've hearn on of Mr. Van Buren's, this is about the slickest.

There is ony one thing wantin, and that he is tryin for pretty hard—and that is the Bank. If he can ony get that in the crib too, Virginy fences would n't stop our cattle.

Ony think what an everlastin raft of fellows we should have—all the Presidents and Cashiers, and Clerks, and Money Counters, about the crib, from Downingville to New-Orleans!—and that aint the best ont; we would have a branch alongside every post office to keep our postages safe.

* The Major, we presume, means the Elections, or Hustings, by this metaphor.

I should like this well enuf if I was sartin I and the Ginerol and Mr. Van Buren was to be here all the while, to keep a good look out on the crib door. But the Ginerol talks of goin hum to put the Hermitage to rights; and I am in the notion that Congress is a leetle too strong for 'the Government' when the Ginerol aint in it—and I shall go with him. I am eny most fag'd out myself, and I begin to think with the Ginerol, I have done enuf for the country.

We are lookin for Amos Kindle now every hour. He writ the Ginerol tother day, and told him my 'Bank Report' warn't true, and that I must have got a loan of Squire Biddle. Now that's jist the way with some folks. What they dont know they guess at; and it's jist so with old Miss Crane, who keeps the tavern this side Downingville—jist as sure as any one goes by without stopping, the old critur says, 'There goes so and so, and has got no money, too, and he knows I would n't trust him.'

Howsumever, no one can make the Ginerol rathy with me. He knows I am the best friend about him; whenever they gets things in any kind of a twist or a snarl, says he, 'Major, do you unravel that. I'm the big wheel and you are the smasher,' says he; and then we jist give Peleg Bissel's churn a turn or two and all is right.

You don't print my letters right—you git some words wrong and spell 'em bad. Jist so the printers sarved the Ginerol's letters too; and folks thought he didn't know nothin, till we got to Cambridge, where they made a doctor on him.

Your friend,

J. DOWNING, Major,
Downingville Militia, 2d Brigade.

No. V.

Preparation of the Message

Washington, 2d Nov. 1833.

*To my old friend, Mr. Dwight, of the New York
Daily Advertiser.*

The Congressmen are jest beginnin to arrive here, and I suppose in a short time we shall have them here as thick as huckleberries; and the Ginerol is brushin round now, and says the Message must be finished and painted off hand, and we are all as busy as bees in gittin it dove tailed together; and after next week, the Ginerol says, there cant be any more alterations. It is the first message I ever had any hand in; and tho' I say it, I guess you will say it is about as complete a thing as ever was sent express any where.

I have been to work on it ever since we was at the Rip Raps; and tho' it has been sometimes all pulled to bits, to git in some notions we did n't think on, yet it will look pritty slick, I tell you when it's done; and we will lay on paint enuf to kiver up all the cracks and seams.

We shall give a pritty good lick at the Bank, and won't leave as much on 't standing as would make a good sized oven. It is curious now to see how easy it is to build up, or nock all to bits, any thing on paper. Now jest see about the Bank. There it stands in Chestnut street, with its hundred cord of specie, and its cart load of books; and its branches here and there, and all busy and full of clarks, and directors, and folks in Europe, and all about creation dealin with it; and the brokers in Wall street all busy about it; and Biddle's bills goin about, and most folks

thinkin they are better than hard dollars; and all the old men and women holdin the stock, supposin it will go up agin as high as they paid for it; and I and the Ginerol, and Amos Kindle, and Mr. Van Buren, talkin over it; and one line in the Message nocks it all into kindlin wood. For you see when 'the Government' says a thing must be jest so! there is no help for it. We can't stand to chat about trifles. The Ginerol has smashed three pipes the last time we talked about it. 'Biddle and the Bank must be smashed,' says he, 'Major;'—and so smash they go, Congress or no Congress.

The next thing was the Ingins. Here the Ginerol is at home, and I don't pretend to say nothin for I never did like an Ingin, and never can. The Cherokees give us a good deal of trouble in Georgia last year; but the Ginerol took sides with Georgia, because he had a good many friends there, and Mr. Van Buren had too; for that State was the only one that nominated him Vice-President a spell ago; and if he had got in there, and Mr. Crawford President, who was ailin all over with some plagy *appleplexy*—I and the Ginerol would never have been hearn on arterwards. But no matter—the Ginerol says he didn't make that treaty with the Cherokees; and it was made so long ago, he has enymost forgot it: and treaties oughtent to last forever. But this treaty with the Creeks in Alabama he did make, and he knows all about it; and he means to stand by it, and turn all the squatters off the land in Alabama, jest as they wanted him to do in Georgia; but he would n't. There is trouble enuf about it, I tell you; and you dont know nothing about it in York. But the Ginerol is tickled to death about it; and as soon as he saw the Proclamation of the Governor of Alabama, you never see a critur so spruced up as the Ginerol was. Major, says he, we shall have another Nullification this Congress, arter all. You need 'nt ~~see~~

much about it; says he, in the Message,—we'll keep that for a Proclamation. Well, says I, General, you are a master hand at gettin into trouble. But, says he, Major, aint I a master one in gittin out of one, says he?

We've got an old trunk up chamber, full of troubles—old Laws, and Treaties, and Contracts, and State Claims; and whenever we want any powder, all we've got to do is to open that, and look among old papers and get up a row in no time. The General likes this a leetle better than I do; for the most of the labor falls on me, and the ony way I can git rid of it, is to make our folks down stairs do it, if I see it gives any of 'em a boost with his party—for I dont care nothin about any thing here but the General; and if I can git him threw this Congress, its pretty much all I care about, and he too; for ater that I'm goin with him to the Hermitage, for I expect by that time there wont be much more left of us than our beards and shoe strings.

Your friend, J. DOWNING, Major,
Downingville Militia, 2d Brigade.

No. VI.

SIR GEORGE DOWNING.

Some account of Sir George Downing of London, supposed to be one of Major Downing's ancestors.

From the New York Daily Advertiser.

THE DOWNINGS.—The celebrity of Major Jack Downing has created an intense and very natural curiosity in the public mind to know something of his origin and ancestry. Hoping that some of the down-

east antiquaries and genealogists will favor the world with the information desired, I submit to your disposal the following imperfect notice of Sir George Downing, one of the Major's ancestors, which I have drawn from an interesting and learned work now in a course of publication, in numbers, entitled 'Memorial of the graduates of Harvard University, in Cambridge, Mass. Commencing with the first class, 1642. By John Farmer, Cor. Sec. of the N. H. Hist. Society.

George Downing was born in London in 1624, and accompanied his parents to this country when about thirteen years of age. His father, Emanuel Downing, a great friend of New England, was brother-in-law to John Winthrop, one of the principal founders and first governor of Massachusetts. George received his education at Harvard College. About 1646 he returned to England, when he was soon brought into notice, being, as Gov. Winthrop says, 'a very able scholar, and of ready wit and fluent utterance.' He was appointed chaplain in the regiment of Col. John Okey, in the army of Lord Fairfax, who had command of the Parliament forces in the north. In 1653 he was commissary general, and about the same time scout-master-general of the English army in Scotland. In the same year he was employed in negotiations with the Duke of Savoy. He seems to have been fitted by nature for scenes of political manœuvring; and his principles were of such flexible character, that he could easily accommodate them to any service which the times required.

In 1655 he visited the French king on public business, and communicated his instructions in Latin. In 1657 he was appointed minister to Holland. In March, 1662, while in that country, in order to show his zeal and love for his majesty, he procured the arrest of John Okey, Miles Corbet, and John Barkstead, three of the Judges who had condemned to

death Charles I., and sent them to England for trial. Okey had been the friend of Downing, who served in his regiment as chaplain. With the other two he had co-operated in the cause of the Parliament. His conduct, therefore, in this transaction, was justly reprobated.

He also spake of Cromwell as a traitor and rebel. In 1663, he was created a baronet. He informed Pepys that, when in Holland, 'he had so good spys, that he hath had the keys taken out of De Witt's (the Dutch minister) pocket when he was abed, and his closet opened and papers brought to him and laid in his hands for an hour, and carried back and laid in the place again, and the keys put into his pocket. He says he hath had their most private debates, that have been between but two or three of them, brought to him, and in an hour after that hath sent word thereof to the king.' In 1671, he was again sent to Holland, but returning before he had executed the business of his mission to the satisfaction of the king, was imprisoned in the tower. He was afterwards restored to royal favor. In the difficulties which the New England colonies had with Charles II., from 1669, Mr. Downing was represented as having been very friendly to Massachusetts. He died in 1624 at the age of 60.

Major Jack Downing, of Downingville, seems to have inherited his distinguished ancestor's talents for war, business, and diplomacy, and, like him, to possess ready wit and fluent utterance, and to bask in the sunshine of royal favor. Whether he resembles him in other respects, time must disclose.