

into the proceedings of Senators Kerr and Merrick, as regards the matter of General Nathan Towson's memorial to the United States Senate, when a nomination to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of General Alexander Macomb was before that body."

By this letter of the honorable chairman, I am required "to inform the House of Delegates, through them (the committee,) for what *reasons* and under what circumstances the claims of General Towson, your (my) illustrious fellow citizen were overlooked, by *the Senate*, when they had under consideration the vacancy caused by the death of *Macomb*, and confirmed the nomination of General Wool of New York."

I am unwilling to suppose, that the House of Delegates of Maryland either expected or designed to authorise this call. Had that honorable body desired to know the *reasons* for any action of the Senate of the United States, and had felt themselves authorised to call for those reasons, they would, in view of their own high dignity, and the character of the body whose *reasons* they wished to investigate, have addressed themselves directly to the Senate itself, and not to one of its humblest members. They have usually I believe, heretofore made their own Senators the organs through whom they have, as occasion seemed to require, communicated their wishes and opinions to the Senate; and though there is no precedent for requiring of the Senate their *reasons* for any act they may have performed, I still must suppose that had the House of Delegates designed to claim such a right, they would have asserted it boldly, and in the usual and approved form of a legislative resolve; to be laid directly before the body to which it was addressed, rather than in the mode here pursued by the honorable chairman of their committee. It seems to me, therefore, that I am constrained to decline making any answer to the inquiries of the honorable chairman; no less by a proper regard to the dignity both of the House of Delegates of Maryland and of the Senate of the United States, than by the natural impossibility of my knowing the reasons which may have governed the Senate in its action, otherwise than from a declaration of those reasons by the Senate itself. The reasons which may have governed individual members, I might learn to some extent, by inquiring of them individually, but the reasons of the Senate can be known only from the Senate itself, and I am yet without authority to ask for a formal declaration of them.

As to the subject matter of the inquiries in the honorable chairman's letter, I beg permission simply to remark, that I have yet to learn that the name of General Towson was ever before the Senate in connexion with "the vacancy caused by the death of Macomb," and now filled by the distinguished General Winfield Scott, or in connection with the office now held by General Wool of New York; and if any should desire to know the *reason* of this, I must respectfully refer them to the President of the United States, with whom resides exclusively the nominating power.