

about ~~thirty~~ 25 gentlemen and 12 ladies. We were invited at 5 o'clock and were all in the parlor by half past five but did not go to the table until past six. The Presidents Secretary (Mr. Walker) his nephew, is master of ceremonies. The ladies are each generally assigned to the care of a particular gentleman ^{other than their husbands} between whom is an introduction for that purpose, and each gentleman is told when to take seat at the table. The President takes his seat at one side of the table in the middle and his lady opposite and the gentlemen with ladies take seats as ordered each side of them and at each end are seated the gentlemen who ^{are} without ladies in care. I was by Mr. Walker assigned to take charge of Mrs. Barrak who was then with her husband Mr. Barrak of Pennsylvania, an accomplished lady, & directed to take seat at the left hand of & next to the President. This brought us to a conspicuous position at table but the lady though modest was entirely unembarrassed which gave us assurance & support and all passed pleasantly. The table is about ten yards (30 feet) long and at least two yards wide no seats are placed on the table but the carpet is on, the glasses, wine, plates knives and forks & spoons. The seats are on a side table covered by servants & flatter papered to each guest who helps himself. First soup 2 fish, then turkey, birds, and then a great succession of French dishes - the dessert of Ice cream, Charlotte-Rus - fruits & nuts. We were at table about two hours. On returning to parlor coffee was served & all left in a few minutes, being near nine o'clock. I have thought you might